# TAI BULLETIN





December 2025/mid-January 2026

Kislev/Tevet 5786

# For the miracles: high hopes of Hanukkah

# FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY



David Wirtschafter Critical thinking would have us be doubtful about the existence of miracles. Divine intervention might make for a good story, but outcomes are more likely to be grounded in rational explanations.

The Hannukah blessing *Al Ha'Nisim* 

(For the Miracles), which we are encouraged to sing each night after the candle lighting, invites us to think about things less literally. "For the miracles, wonders, marvels, salvation and deliverances You granted to our ancestors" does not ask us to recognize any particular claim of the Hannukah story as a fact. Rather, it invites us to think about miracles as a feeling.

In the rabbinic view, defeating the Greek-Assyrians (Seleucid dynasty) is not reducible to a set of geopolitical data points. It is about the possibility of outcomes that are better than circumstances initially suggest. It is about holding on to hope even when things seem hopeless. "Miraculous" means an occasion calls not only for critical assessment but profound gratitude.

The fragility of the cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, reduction in SNAP benefits, and fights over congressional redistricting have left many feeling on edge. Hannukah is a reminder that things are not always as bleak as they might seem. Change is possible. Remaining hopeful is no guarantee of success, but abandoning it is to ensure defeat.

May the lights of Hannukah reignite our love of wonders, miracles and marvels. And may we remain dedicated to achieving modern miracles of our own.



# Each candle we light tells a story

# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dr. Mark Schachman

to know what time of year it is. The days are getting shorter, the leaves have changed colors and fallen from the trees, and temperatures are all over the place, one day a high of 68 and the next day you wake up and it's snowing.

My neighbor put up his Christmas lawn

decorations two

You don't have

to look at a calendar

weeks before Thanksgiving, and as I write this my daughters are planning where they will shop on Black Friday. But now it's time to move on to Hanukkah.

As we prepare to light the menorah this Hanukkah, we are reminded of the enduring power of faith and community. Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the oil that burned for eight days. Each candle we light tells a story of resilience, hope and the triumph of spirit over adversity. Temple Adath Israel will celebrate Hanukkah this year with our latke sale, at the community Hanukkah Market and the Social Action Committee's annual carnival. (Look for details elsewhere in this issue.)

This year, our congregation has another reason to celebrate: the centennial of our synagogue. One hundred

Hanukkah is about the freedom to be true to what we believe without denying the freedom of those who believe otherwise. It's about lighting our candle, while not being threatened by or threatening anyone else's candle.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

years ago, a group of dedicated individuals laid the foundation for a spiritual home that has nurtured generations. Just as Hanukkah connects us to our ancient heritage, our centennial connects us to the vision and commitment of those who came before us. It honors the story of our congregation, the families who built it, the leaders who guided it, and the members who continue to sustain it.

A synagogue centennial celebration is not a religious holiday but a historical and communal milestone. It marks 100 years since the founding of our *Bait Mikdash*, reflecting the endurance and growth of a local Jewish community. While Hanukkah connects Jews globally through shared rituals, a centennial celebration is localized, focusing on the congregation's unique story, achievements and contributions to Jewish life.

Though different in nature – one a religious holiday, the other a communal milestone – Hanukkah and our centennial share common threads: memory, identity and hope. They invite us to celebrate our heritage, affirm our values, and strengthen the bonds that unite us.

As we kindle the Hanukkah lights this season, let us also shine a light on the remarkable journey of our synagogue. May these celebrations inspire us to carry forward the legacy of faith, learning and community for generations to come.

# New Belin endowment fund will benefit TAI youth

A new endowment fund has been established at Temple Adath Israel thanks to the generosity of Robert and Jo Belin, who have been TAI members for decades.

The Belin Family Youth Endowed Enrichment Fund will provide financial support to enhance Jewish life for temple youth, including the cost of Religious School camps, retreats and other events. It also may be used for physical enhancements to Religious School classrooms.

The fund will be administered by the Belin family, who will approve the expenditures. Money in the fund will be invested and overseen by the Endowment Committee in keeping with temple bylaws. Donations to the fund may be made by any individual, corporation, foundation, trust, estate or other legal entity through gifts, bequests or other gift vehicles.



# A Deeper Connection: Sunday Explorations of Shabbat Melodies with Lauren Hill

Sunday, Dec. 7 9:45-11 a.m @ TAI

Have you ever felt moved by a Shabbat melody, but wondered why? Join us for a series of Sunday sessions dedicated to exploring the rich tapestry of Shabbat music. Music creates emotional experiences that words alone cannot. In a warm and supportive community, we'll discuss our personal and intellectual responses to a variety of melodies—both those we cherish and those that might be new to us. Join Music Coordinator Lauren Hill to discover how our shared words and music connect us to personal histories, resonate in our hearts, and enrich our understanding of Shabbat.





Elissa Weinstein, Director

Religious School is ready for some fun (Hanukkah, trips and social activities for different classes and, of course, lots of good things to eat). Several of our classes are planning to decorate cookies, while others are learning Hanukkah songs; everyone is going to spin the dreidel. Our 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade class will gather for Gelt and Games, an afternoon of pizza, fun and togetherness. The annual Hanukkah Carnival on Dec. 14 will close out Religious School for 2025; special thanks to the Social Action Committee for putting on this great event.

When we return from winter break on Jan. 11, our ninth-graders will take a day trip to Cincinnati to visit the Holocaust Museum and have lunch. Our 10<sup>th</sup>-grade class will already be in Washington, D.C., taking part in a L'Taken Social Justice Seminar with teens from across the county. During the four-day program, presented by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, students will learn how to advocate for public policy that reflects the Jewish commitment to social justice, including going to Capitol Hill. They also will do some sightseeing and attend services. Later in January, we look forward to celebrating the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. with a morning filled with learning and a schoolwide service project.

Our first tzedakah collection of the year went well. We collected 100 new or gently used books for donation. Our next collection – winter clothing for kids and very gently used tennis shoes or boots – begins this month. Our building centennial enrichment also is going well. Each class will be submitting information for our Religious School time capsule.

## FROM **SISTERHOOD**

Elissa Weinstein,

**President** 

In December we're looking forward to getting together for our second annual cookie exchange. Last year we had so

Shalom Sisters! Or

artists! We had a good

time painting pottery in November. Again, the

company was fantastic

(our sisters are the best).

should I say Shalom

much fun sharing recipes and tasting delicious baked goods. We can't wait to do it again and hope more women can join us. We're also adding a white elephant aspect to this program, so be prepared for a fun afternoon. Look for an upcoming email with details plus information about membership and onegs. Please make an effort to join Sisterhood and host an oneg this year.

Sisterhood is looking forward to spending this year with you!







# vodka W latke

A SPIRITED HANUKKAH EVENING AT TAI

LATKE BAR

BRISKET

COCKTAILS

6 p.m. Saturday, Dec.13 Adults \$8 per person MOCKTAILS

FRIENDS & FUN

KIDS' ACTIVITIES

Registration required; go to Bit.ly/VodkaLatke25



## Holiday volunteer opportunities

• Lexington's Stanley Rose Lodge #289 of B'nai B'rith provides volunteers for Meals on Wheels on Christmas Day, which gets food to clients while allowing regular volunteers to celebrate Christmas with their families.

The Meals on Wheels kitchens are at Trinity Baptist Church, 1675 Strader Dr., and Second Presbyterian Church, 460 E. Main St. Teams of at least two (driver and navigator) pick up meals about 10:45 a.m. and deliver them within 2 hours. Six teams are needed per site.

To volunteer (feel free to bring family or friends), contact Austin Cantor by email at ahcantor64@gmail.com or text to (859) 608-4770. Please indicate if someone is coming with you, who they are, and your site preference, cell phone number and email.

• TAI's Social Action Committee provides Christmas dinner to the Catholic Action Center each year. Volunteers



are needed in the kitchen at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 24, to help with food prep. If the kitchen isn't your thing, the Catholic Action Center also welcomes servers for the meal at 5 p.m. Christmas Day. The CAC is off Winchester Road at 1055 Industry Road. To volunteer for either day, contact Mary Engel at kyengels727@gmail.com.

# SATURDAY CINEMA SERIES

6 P.M.

DEC. 6: "YOU AND ME"
DIRECTED BY FRITZ LANG

JAN. 10: "THE BREAKING POINT"

**DIRECTED BY MICHAEL CURTIZ** 

Pizza provided!

Beverages, side dishes invited!

Contributions welcome!

Informative introductory remarks by Randall Roorda. Scintillating discussion to follow.

Series continues Feb. 14 with "Born Yesterday"





## PB&J assembly line

About 15 volunteers turned out in late October to make about 200 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the Catholic Action Center. The event, in the Mersack & Stern Social Hall, was sponsored by TAI's Social Action Committee.





## **News From**



#### **Give Jewish on BG Gives Day**

6 a.m.-11:59 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 2. BG Gives Day is the new name of the Good Giving Challenge. Giving a gift could help JFB secure additional match dollars. Go to BGgives.org.

#### **Jewish Community Basketball**

7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9. Pickup basketball at Lexington Ice Center, 560 Eureka Springs Dr. \$5 suggested donation to cover facility costs and insurance. For more information and to RSVP, contact Joseph Eskin at joseph@jewishlexington.org.

#### **Jewish Senior Support Group**

11 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 24, at JFB offices at TAI. Jewish Family Services, in partnership with TAI and OZS, offers a senior support group that is a safe place to share experiences, concerns and needs related to aging. Led by Paula Mertens, director of JFS. For more information, contact Paula confidentially at (859) 269-8244 or email her at jfs@jewishlexington.org.

#### Maggid: Jewish Storytelling

7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at Void Sake Co., 819 National Ave. Sharing stories about Jewish references in pop culture. Yalla Y'all Falafel will be selling food; drinks available from Void Sake. Questions? Contact Ilona Szekely at Ilona.szekely@yahoo.com or Joy Fisher at joy@jewishlexington.org.



Jo and Bob Belin became greatgrandparents with the birth of Andie Isabel Nick on Oct. 6. Andie is the daughter of Jordan and Julie Nick of New York City; her grandmother is Dottie Belin Nick.



### **WORSHIP, STUDY SCHEDULE**



Dec. 5

Shabbat 7 p.m.

<u>Dec. 6</u>

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m. Vayishlach:

Genesis 32:4-36:43

Dec. 12

Shabbat 7 p.m.

Dec. 13

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m.

Vayeishev

Genesis 37:1-40:23

Dec. 19

Hanukkah Shabbat 7 p.m.

Dec. 20

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m.

Miketz: Genesis 41:1-44:17

Dec. 26

Shabbat 7 p.m.

Dec. 27

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m.

Vayigash:

Genesis 44:18-47:27

an. 2

Shabbat 7 p.m.

Jan. 3

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m

Parsha 11 a.m.

Vayechi:

Genesis 47:28-50:26

Jan. 9

Shabbat 7 p.m.

Jan. 10

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m.

Sh'mot: Exodus: 1:1-6:1

Jan. 16

MLK Shabbat with guest speaker Dr. Nikki Brown

7 p.m.

Jan. 17

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m.

Va-eira: Exodus 6:2-9:35

Jan. 23

Shabbat 7 p.m.

Jan. 24

Jewish Texts/Kollel

9 a.m.

Parsha 11 a.m.

Bo: Exodus 10:1-13:16

#### **KOLLEL STUDY GROUP**

Kollel meets at 9 a.m. Saturdays, alternating with Jewish Texts. The group explores cultural, ethical and historical aspects of our 4,000-year tradition. The emphasis is on dialogue and exploration. You may join the group any time.

#### **JEWISH TEXTS STUDY**

We will discuss selected readings in rabbinic literature at 9 a.m.

Saturdays, alternating with Kollel Study Group.

The discussion is

always lively and informative, and you may join any time.

#### **PARSHA**

Join us each Saturday morning at 11 as we take a look at the Torah portion for the week. Sessions are not held when there is a bar or bat mitzvah service.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

#### **Executive Committee**

Thursday, Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 12, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Board of Directors**

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 6:30 p.m.



Temple Adath Israel is a Reform Jewish congregation linked to a tradition of welcoming those searching for a community committed to honoring the dignity we all share as children of the one God by embracing these enduring Jewish values: AVODAH (Worship); TALMUD TORAH (Torah Study); TZEDEK (Social Justice); and KEHILAH (Community). Our mission is to inspire our congregants' Jewish engagement and to ensure a vibrant Jewish present and future by nurturing the many generations of our community. We share a commitment to the Reform Jewish foundational beliefs of furthering individual and communal spiritual growth, while recognizing a range of personal philosophies, practices and needs. We are the community center through which our families can celebrate faith, justice, and the blessings of family lives present and future.



Arlene "Cooky" Gerson of Baltimore. She is a psychologist who became a bat mitzvah and was confirmed at TAI.



### YAHRZEIT ... These we remember ...



#### Dec. 5

Harry Abraham Hilda Abraham Baum Maury Bederman Franklyn Donald Cerel Bert T. Combs Martin "Sonny" Cravens Michael Mayer Elkouby Sam Engel David Forman Hilda Franks Abe Goldenberg Joe Grobstein Sarah Esther Grobstein Rose Kuperstein Julie Lauderback Irvin G. Levy Judith Dean Liebman Helen Sopkin Lowenthal Marci Mainus George R. McVey Ben H. Miller **Fdna Miller** Harry M. Miller Irving Jerome Miner Harry Paskowitz Mordecai Podet Wolfe William Rosenstein Hyman Shraberg Irene Spickard Mrs. Ben Steinberg Sarah Stuart Lester Waldman James Wenneker Norman A. Wides

#### Dec. 12

Annalee Blum Faith Miller Cole Helen Glixon David Kahn

A. Barnett Winters

Nat Yesowitch

Sally Zwicker

Saul Kaufman Leonard Kozman Ben Krinsky Greg LaZur Jean Mizell Harry Moss Bessie Mulinsky Norma Yonover Podet Louise Bruetsch Samuel Rabiner Agatha Reed Judge Samuel M. Rosenstein Morris Rozen Beryl Schottenstein Estelle Steinberg Byrd Taulbee Simon Weil

#### Dec. 19

Theresa R. Abraham Susan Adams Frances Bailey Clive M. Beck Trevor Brown Rabbi Maurice Davis Sue Deehne Lillian Lowenthal **Epstein** Rose Garden Edythe Gewirtzman Israel Gorman Ruth Gorman Jeannette Graham Dr. Ernst Jokl Abraham Kesten Jennie G. Loevenhart Norma E. Mayer Miriam Rattner Norman Rosenberg Anna Schwartz Bertha Spence Carl Starr Arthur Stevens Glendell Garber Vicendese Gertrude Yanoff

#### Dec. 26 Philip Aberson

Adolph Abraham Richard Balmer Adrienne Mazo Cohen Sonia Cohen Joel Diamond Dr. Irving Gail Heiss Joe Hirsh Evelyn Baker Hymson David Isaacs Solomon Kahn Rubin Kuperstein Ellen Liebman Phyllis Liebman **Edward Novick** Dorothy Plavin Dora G. Pollack Jack B. Robinson Patrick Rodden Betty Rosenthal Herman A. Sampliner Joseph Sampliner Alice Scheeline Deborah Genensky Snvder Edward Sulkin Sello Wollstein

#### Jan. 2

Alice Yarus

Dr. William Bloom Dana Bloomfield Hannah Doctrow Ruth Edelman Helene S. Fogel Allan Forman Harold D. Frankel Kaye G. Frankel Elaine Gellin Rose Goldberg Mary Goldschmidt Sara Kaufmann Joseph Lowenthal Gus H. Milner Julia Petsonk Rose Pressman Idah Rubin

Harold Dueker Swanson Sol Victor Jonas Weil Rosalind Weisenberg Robert Young

#### Jan. 9

Usha Prakash Akolkar Ignatius (Nash) Arellano Jack Cherin Jacob Concors Harriet Marcus Fields Harold Fine Dr. Jospeh M. Fine Don Forman Edith Frankel Nathan Frankel Jr. Harry Gantz Carol Jean Gardner David Gerson Benjamin Goldfarb Louis Kossay Lydia Lang **Edward Robert** Markhoff Marcy Madison Karvn Martin Kathaleen McDonald Franklin Moosnick Luther Pushell Rosita Rosenzweig Steven Richard Rozen Rose Sachs Marie Salmon

Carolyn Siegel Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern Albert Sugarman Herschel Weil **Brett Steven** Weinstock

#### Jan. 16

Harriet Baker Sidney Ross Bazell Leon Block Saul Burg Tom Creamer Adam Goodman Bernard Kaplan **Irving Kramer** Paula Leichtman James Levenson Sr. Rene N. Levy Maurice B. Loevenhart Frederick A. Meyer Leo Michaels I. Jay Miller Jr. Bertha Olshan Richard Glen Reiss Jack Shapero David Shraberg Mrs. Al Smitha Dan Sondergard Bertha Lauer Speyer Nanette Wile Strauss Ruben Weisenberg Sam Welikv Philipp Wurmser

#### In Memoriam ...

Jerry Cerel, husband of Jan Cerel, father of Sylvia Cerel-Suhl (Jerry Suhl) and Julie Cerel (Ron Phillippi), grandfather of Adam Suhl, Sara Suhl and Lucy Phillippi

Laura Hanes Feahr, sister of Deborah Sogin (David), aunt of Celia Sogin and Ari Sogin

**Audrey Rooney** 

May their memories be for a blessing

### **CONTRIBUTIONS**

# ELLSWORTH CAMP SHALOM SCHOLARSHIP FUND Cindy Ellsworth

#### **ENRICHMENT FUND**

**Lou and Bobbi Shain** in memory of Jerry Cerel and Lillian Shain

#### **FLOWER FUND**

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#### **GENERAL FUND**

Francis Colvin in appreciation of the temple bulletin Ellie Sutter

In memory of Jerry Sander:

Steven Drysdale, Ben Kaufmann and Janet Zusman, Cheri Ross, Nat Sandler, Sheldon and Marion Steiner

In memory of Jerry Cerel:

The Bronner and Banks families; Lance, Sheila and Riley Ferguson; Ann and Bill Giles; Ernie and Wendy Grindstaff; Nancy and Phil Hoffman; Sanford Levy; Brian and Katherine McCarty; Melinda Moore; Pete and Deb Nelson; Angie and Rich Ornstein; Art and Simone Salomon; Harold and Marianne Sherman; David and Pat Shraberg

#### THE VICTORIA GREENBERG RABBINICAL INTERN FUND

**Karen Sander** in honor of Austin and Susan Cantor, Rick and Linda Greenberg, and Alan and Eva Kaplan

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**Sharon Helfand and Bill Prewitt** in thanks for Uniongrams

#### SKULLER-COHEN-CEREL FUND

In memory of Jerry Cerel:

Christopher Daifotis, Ben Kaufmann and Janet Zusman, Odette Kaplan and Mark Wiljanen, Kim and Rob Rosenstein, Samye and Darryl Stith, Harold and Claire Weinberg

#### YOUTH EDUCATION FUND

Debbie Masters and Nick Fain in memory of Jerry Cerel















**This Space Available** 

#### TEMPLE ADATH ISRAEL 124 N. ASHLAND AVENUE LEXINGTON, KY 40502-1595 (859) 269-2979

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Kristen Hoffman Secretary

Rich Ornstein Immediate Past President

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#### TEMPLE FUNDS

Contributions may be made to any of the following funds. Acknowledgment will be made to the individual or family honored and will be listed in the Bulletin. Please check the fund of your choice. **All donations not specifically directed to one of the funds listed below will be placed in the Temple Hineni: Here I Am Reserve Fund.** 

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