



# the bulleTIn

*Temple Israel established 1914*



*“But one whose deeds exceed their wisdom, to what may that be compared? To a tree whose branches are few but roots are many, so that even if all the winds in the world come and blow upon it, they cannot move it out of its place.”*

*Pirke Avot 3:17*

# TEMPLE ISRAEL'S MISSION

Temple Israel founded in 1914 is a Reform Congregation affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism. Temple Israel is truly our House of Worship, Study and Gathering. For over a century, our synagogue embodies the ritual warmth and ceremonial beauty of our Jewish tradition while serving as the center for worship, life-cycle celebration and events, education, social justice, and activities and gatherings for all ages. We are an inclusive and actively engaged community. We welcome singles and couples, interfaith couples and families, LGBTQ Jews and those seeking to convert to Judaism. Temple Israel values the diversity of Jewish expression and community.

## SAVE THE DATES

**Saturday, January 3, 10:30 a.m.**

"Time" for Learning: Tevet @ Temple Offices

**Friday, January 9, 7:30 p.m.**

Birthday Shabbat

**Friday, January 23, 6:00 p.m.**

Anniversary Shabbat

**Saturday, January 24, 10:30 a.m.**

"Time" for Learning: Shevat @ Temple Offices

**Monday, January 26, 6:00 p.m.**

Brotherhood After Hours @ Kilkenny's on 15th

**Friday, January 30, 4:00 p.m.**

Shabbat Services @ Zarrow Pointe

**Friday, January 30, 6:00 p.m.**

Zamru L'Shabbat

**Sunday, February 1, 11:00 a.m.**

Community Tu B'Shevat Seder

**Sunday, February 8, 4:45 p.m.**

"Soup-er" Bowl Sunday

**Friday, February 13, 7:30 p.m.**

Birthday Shabbat

**Friday, February 20, 6:00 p.m.**

Zamru L'Shabbat

**Saturday, February 21, 10:30 a.m.**

"Time" for Learning: Adar

**Sunday, February 22, 9:30 a.m.**

Breakfast by Brotherhood

**Friday, February 27, 4:00 p.m.**

Shabbat Services @ Zarrow Pointe

**Friday, February 27, 6:00 p.m.**

Anniversary Shabbat

**Saturday, February 28, 7:00 p.m.**

Adults Purim Murder Mystery

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Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (**REDI**) means recognizing the holiness of each individual and affirming and reflecting the actual diversity of Jewish people. The URJ is dedicated to representing individuals across the gender spectrum, including transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive individuals.

For more information about the Reform Movement's stance on inclusivity and a quick guide to pronouns, please visit <https://urj.org/what-we-do/audacious-hospitality/quick-guide-pronouns>.



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## RABBI REMARKS

by Batsheva Appel  
Interim Rabbi



### ***What Tu B'Shevat Teaches About Growth***

Tu B'Shevat, the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat, begins this year on the evening of February 2. Originally, it was not a festival at all—it was a date on the calendar for determining the “birthday” of trees so our ancestors could calculate tithes. In its earliest form, Tu B'Shevat had more to do with taxes than with trees.

Over time, though, the day grew deeper roots. In the 16th century, Jewish mystics in Tzfat, in the northern part of

Eretz Israel, created a seder using fruits and the produce of the land to explore the four seasons and the four spiritual realms of Lurianic Kabbalah. The holiday that began as an agricultural bookkeeping necessity became a doorway into wonder.

In the modern era, Tu B'Shevat has taken on yet another layer: as a connection to the Land of Israel, where the almond trees begin to bloom, just as winter still surrounds us here in Tulsa. Even when the landscape is quiet, the sap is rising. Something is happening beneath the surface—slow, steady, and full of promise.

Tu B'Shevat also calls us toward environmental responsibility. Judaism teaches that we are stewards of creation, and our tradition emphasizes the care of trees specifically. This year, as we continue work on our new building, the protection and preservation of the surrounding trees has been one of our concerns. How we shape our physical space reflects our values.

The holiday reminds us that growth requires nourishment. Just as trees need water, sunlight, and time, our sacred community depends on the contributions—financial, spiritual, and emotional—of those who call it home. Judaism can seem mysterious, yet connection can begin with something as simple as mindfully eating fruit.

Most of all, Tu B'Shevat teaches patience and hope. We plant seeds when we can. Growth follows its own season. It may appear slow, but eventually we witness the beauty of what we have nurtured together.



## P R E S I D E N T ' S   M E S S A G E

Brina Reinstein, *Temple Israel Board President*

I'm not a fan of daylight saving time! I don't know about you, but when it's dark at 6 PM, I am wondering why I am not in bed already. The dark is, well, dark, and it seems to make everything a bit more difficult.

*I prefer light.*

Over and over, our tradition understands that in the midst of darkness, our people always created light. It is simply who we are. We use light to welcome every Sabbath, and then to end it and welcome a new week. We light candles to remember the people in our lives who have died. The Torah is referred to as a "light", guiding ethical behavior and spiritual growth. We just celebrated Hanukkah, the festival of lights, emphasizing hope and resilience.

We are choosing light at Temple Israel as we move forward with our NextDor project; building our beautiful new Temple! We are anxiously awaiting the official groundbreaking ceremony. We continue to meet the needs of our congregation by creating a welcoming space in the Sylvan Auditorium at the Jewish Community Center. We are continuing to offer meaningful programming and congregational dinners.

More exciting news: We have asked Rabbi Appel to stay with us for a second year, and she has agreed! We will be forming our new search committee to help us find a new settled rabbi. This process will begin in March 2026.

We have also hired a new Director of Outreach and Engagement. Zach Singer began in mid-December, and we hope you have had a chance to meet him. Please see Zach's profile on page 13.

The lights are on at Temple Israel as we move towards the future.



### *Tu B'Shevat Seder*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 11:00 AM-12:30 PM

JOIN US AS WE WELCOME THE "NEW YEAR OF THE TREES" WITH A FAMILY-FRIENDLY TU B'SHEVAT SEDER. WATCH THE ITINERARY FOR MORE DETAILS.



# TEMPLE FAMILY

by Lesley Bumgarner  
*Director of Congregational Life*



## ***From Darkness Into Light***

As we enter 2026, the shortest, darkest days of the calendar year are behind us. Hanukkah arrived during the season of these short days, with a tradition of kindling candles to add joy, light, and celebration to the darkness. As we begin a new calendar year, I am thinking of the many ways we can add joy and light to our own lives and to the lives of others. There are many ways that we can each bring light to the darkness, both literally and figuratively.

Gathering together as a community is a mitzvah that lightens our spirits. Join us for Shabbat services; see old friends or make new friends during our festive Pre-Onegs or Onegs. Join members of your Temple Family to do good in our community; our Social Justice committee would love to welcome new members. Enjoy relaxing time with Brotherhood at their Brotherhood After Hours Events. Browse the Sisterhood Judaica shop, which is open 30 minutes prior to Shabbat Services. A small Judaica shop is also set up in the Temple Israel offices for all of your Judaica needs, available by appointment Monday-Friday from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM. Watch your iTinerary for more details. Study with us at Rabbi Appel's monthly Saturday study sessions. And in months to come we are planning a Souper Bowl Sunday Gathering, a Purim Murder Mystery Event, and an overnight out of town trip.

My spirits are lightened by the wonderful addition to our staff of Zach Singer, our new Director of Outreach and Engagement. I know you will all join in welcoming him warmly into our Temple Israel Family. I look forward to many creative collaborations with Zach, adding joy, light, and opportunities to connect in our community.

## ***Touchdown at Temple!***

Do you make a special homemade soup? Are you a chili cooking expert? Are you a football fan? You are invited to gather with you Temple Israel family to watch the Super Bowl and enjoy some delicious soup and chili.

If you bring a crock pot of your special chili or soup, admission is free. If you are simply coming with your appetite, the cost to attend is \$8 per person. Temple Israel will provide soft drinks, crackers and rolls, and cookies. Watch your iTinerary for more information and to sign up!



Kick off time is 5:30 PM, and this "souper" event begins at 4:45 PM! Prizes will be awarded for the most delicious chili and most delicious soup. We look forward to sampling your specialties!

# TEMPLE EDUCATION

by Kelsey Holder  
Director of Education & Communication



As I write this, I am a little tired but a lot happy. We just wrapped up our fall semester of Shorashim, and we have thrived! From new programs to a new "Pre-Aleph" pre-k class to our new temporary home, our families and students embraced learning and community.

Our curriculum took us into the Ketuvim, "Writings", of the Bible. Through stories and Psalms, we explored Jewish virtues and Jewish prayer. This paired nicely with our efforts to incorporate Hebrew instruction as a component of life-long Jewish learning.

Our Youth Education Committee focused on strong programming to bring students and families together for fun and community. For our latest TJs ("Temple Juniors") our resident Pickle Maven, Zac Waxman, starred in our "Pickle of a TJs" where we pickled every veggie in sight. Since we are at the JCC where courts abound, we set up some nets and played pickleball. To celebrate the end of the semester, we came together for a Hanukkah Festival with Krav Maga, "Chef Draniki" and his latke class, traditional dancing, and Dreidel Mayhem.

I want to say thank you to all our community partners, our families, our clergy, and all our teachers and teen helpers. Our children learn and play in this Jewish space for learning and community that you help create. A picture is worth 1,000 words, they say. Enjoy!



"Hanukkah Drama"



"Chef Draniki" entralls the crowd with a lesson in latkes..



Krav Maga with Shahaf was a hit for the whole family!



Dreidel  
Mayhem!



Learning About Kosher in "Small Bites"



## SOCIAL JUSTICE

by Ethan Jones,  
Committee Chair

*"Thou shalt not be a victim. Thou shalt not be a perpetrator. But above all, thou shalt not be a bystander." –Yehuda Bauer*



*Suzanne Vandergriff, recipient of the  
2025 Tikkun Olam Award*

care costs, job loss, or difficulty maintaining a roof over their heads. Queer and trans people worried about attacks on our right to affirm who we are, to love who we love, to live in dignity and freedom. The Social Justice Committee wants your ideas on how to help. Come join us, and we can envision a project that might make a difference.

As a committee, we continue to focus on immigration. How can we help our neighbors who now live in more fear than ever, who are terrified that the next time they go to a legally required immigration check-in, a school event, a doctor's appointment, or even their place of worship, that they'll disappear with no word to their families?

Beth Schaefer, in her song "History Will Ask" puts it plainly: "There's no time for silence, no time to wait, no time to gamble humanity's fate. History will ask what we did on this day."

History is asking, and I'm asking. The Social Justice Committee is active and strong, meeting one Thursday each month to plan and implement service projects throughout the year. Email me at [ednjones42@gmail.com](mailto:ednjones42@gmail.com), and I will get you connected to the committee.

For this edition of the BulleTIn, I would like to reiterate my message from Social Justice Shabbat. Our religion requires us to be active participants in repairing the world. Deuteronomy instructs us, "Justice, justice, shall you pursue." Psalm 82 exhorts us to "give justice to the weak and the fatherless, maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute." Micah tell us to "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." Commandments to do justice run through our scriptures like veins through marble, inseparable and integral to the beauty and strength of the whole.

We need you. You have ideas and causes that you care about. For example, young families with kids in schools, worried about the state of the education system in Oklahoma. Friends and neighbors who are struggling financially as they face skyrocketing health-



*Social Justice Committee along with  
Brotherhood and generous individual donors  
provided QuikTrip cards to Veterans at  
Coffee Bunker in honor of Veteran's Day*

## TEMPLE TAKES



Paint & Sip



First Night Hanukkah Lighting



A "Pickle" of a TJs





## TEMPLE TAKES

### Social Justice Shabbat



### Sisterhood Simcha



### Brotherhood & Sisterhood Jukebox Classics Dance

## BROTHERHOOD

by Craig Kovin,  
*Brotherhood President*

I would like to start off by stating what an honor and privilege it is to be Brotherhood President. I have learned so much from my colleagues on the Board and have relished our successes. I want to thank every Board member for all their efforts in helping Brotherhood reach our goals this past year. I also want to thank our partner auxiliary, Sisterhood. The Jukebox Classics Dance could not have taken place without their help and input.



*Brotherhood After Hours at Bros. Houligan*

For those willing to brave the January cold, Brotherhood has scheduled another Brotherhood After Hours. It will take place on January 26th at 6PM at the famous Kilkenny's Irish Pub on Cherry Street. Come join your friends at this great Irish pub and enjoy Ballyragget brie in pastry, cottage pie, boxties and Guinness chocolate cake for dessert. Not sure what they are? Then come have dinner with your Temple Israel friends, try new foods, and enjoy the evening.

I am also pleased to announce that on February 22nd at 9:30 AM, Ginnie Graham will be our guest speaker at the next Brotherhood Breakfast. Ginnie has a bachelor's degree in journalism and a Master's of Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma. Ginnie is a long-time columnist and reporter, including nearly 30 years with the Tulsa World. She has a vast knowledge of Tulsa and Oklahoma politics. Today, you can find Ginnie on Substack.

Brotherhood is hoping to have another event scheduled during the winter months but at this time, plans are still being developed. Once they are set, all the information will be in the iTlnerary.

Brotherhood wishes our Temple Israel Family a very Happy, Healthy New Year.

## SISTERHOOD

by Donna Gantner,  
*Sisterhood President*

Happy New Year to all! May it be filled with hope, health, happiness, and everything good.

Thank you for making our Second Annual Brotherhood/Sisterhood Jukebox Classics Dance a resounding success! It was a fantastic evening filled with great food, wonderful music, lively games, and plenty of laughter. A special thank you goes to all of the planners and helpers behind the scenes. You know who you are, and we appreciate you!

*Continued on Page 11*



*Continued from Page 10*

On December 7th, Sisterhood had the pleasure of joining with the Sisterhoods of B'nai Emunah and the Jewish Federation of Tulsa for a "Sisterhood Simcha" at CAP Tulsa. Together, we packed "Go Bags" for moms to take with them to the hospital when they deliver their babies. The project was both well-supported and well-attended. Thank you to everyone who donated items or volunteered your time. It was a joyful and meaningful morning, and so rewarding to know that we helped new moms feel supported and cared for. I look forward to more Sisterhood projects in 2026, because WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER!



*Sisterhood Simcha at CAP Tulsa*

We have many wonderful events and fun gatherings planned for the coming year. Stay tuned for more details!

**A R Z A**

by Mark Lobo,  
*Committee Chair*

### ***Can ARZA Survive Zionism?***



The word and concept of Zionism (developed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) has different meanings for different people, and, unfortunately, is being used by some in a negative way in the public square and in social media, especially since October 7, 2023.

How can we, as Reform Jews living in Tulsa, as Zionists, support the existence of the state of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people despite the challenges? Fortunately, the strength of the network of interfaith organizations and programming helps us maintain dialogue. While we might tend to avoid using the word "Zionism" for fear of dividing or ending the conversation, it remains important to affirm our support for the existence of the State of Israel as a refuge, while allowing room for disagreement about the actions of its government. The Reform Movement is very vocal in its support for Israel, and it is important that we not cloak or diminish our support.

I believe that ARZA can thrive in its work to encourage, legitimize, and even celebrate Zionism with our support. As Reform Jews we understand that we view Israel from a unique perspective. We see this unique perspective in Israel in the Israeli Reform movement's focus on social justice, human rights, and promoting peace.

If you are able to support ARZA with your membership for 2026/5786, please do so. Please check your statement to see if you already have paid for an ARZA membership (\$50). If not, you can opt in by calling the TI office, or you can send a check to the office in that amount, specifying it is for ARZA dues. Your ARZA membership enables support for the Reform Movement in Israel and Israel programming at TI.

## SIMCHA + SORROW

*contributions & memorial gifts to Temple Israel*

### **Al & Marlene Tilkin Fund**

by Jon & Angie Stolper

*Honoring the passing of a dear  
friend, Seth Gutman  
by Sandi Tilkin*

### **Cemetery Beautification Fund**

*In Loving Memory of Edith Sylvan  
by Marilyn Sylvan*

### **General Fund**

Anonymous

*In Honor of  
Jenny Labow & Lesley Bumgarner  
by Curtis & Regina Scissons*

*In Loving Memory of  
Don & Rita Newman  
by Carol Miller*

*Thank you for  
Mi Shebeirach Prayers  
Happy Hanukkah Rabbi Appel &  
Cantorial Soloist Jenny Labow  
Happy Hanukkah Jory Budd  
Happy Hanukkah Alea Walker  
Happy Hanukkah Rabbi Sherman  
by Curtis & Regina Scissons*

### **Judy Halpern Social Justice Fund**

*In Loving Memory of  
Harry Bookbinder  
by Marc & Irene Bookbinder*

### **Landscape Fund**

*In Loving Memory of  
Isabel Sanditen  
by Carol Miller*

### **Music Fund**

*In Loving Memory of  
Ruth Aronowitz  
In Loving Memory of  
Naomi Aronowitz  
In Loving Memory of  
Max Aronowitz  
by Marcia Weinstein*

*In Loving Memory of  
Estelle Gordon  
by Marc & Irene Bookbinder*

### **nextDor Fund**

*In Memory of Loved Ones  
by Roy & Evelyn Jones*

### **Rabbi Charles P. Sherman Members Helping Members Fund**

Anonymous

*In Honor of TI Staff & Rabbi Appel  
Happy Hanukkah Temple Israel  
by Curtis & Regina Scissons*

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

*by Curtis & Regina Scissons  
by Peg Kishner & Jim Brennan  
by Roy & Evelyn Jones  
by Janice & Phil Wilner  
by Isaac Galoob*

### **Security Fund**

*In Loving Memory of Lee Kutner  
by Marcia Weinstein*

*In Loving Memory of Dorothy Wittels  
In Loving Memory of Herb Miller  
In Loving Memory of Alan Utay  
by Carol Miller*

### **Queen Esther Fund**

by Jon & Angie Stolper

*In loving Memory of Doug Stahl  
by Marc & Irene Bookbinder*

*To make a donation, please  
contact the Temple offices,  
send your donation via USPS,  
or visit the Temple website at  
[www. templetulsa.com/donate/](http://www.templetulsa.com/donate/)*

**Please note** our current  
mailing address:  
P.O. Box 700158  
Tulsa, OK 74170



## ALL IN THE FAMILY

### MAZEL TOV!

*Mazel tov* to **Micah & Nicholas Stoner** on their recent wedding. Micah is the daughter of Stacie Viner and the granddaughter of Ron Viner.



*Mazel tov* to **John & Leah Clayman** for the arrival of two new grandsons! **Jacob & Katie Clayman** welcomed Marshall Parks on April 30, and **Stephen & Emma Clayman** welcomed Sacha Francis on December 8.

### TODAH RABAH

Thank you to **Shahaf Feinkuchen**, our Israeli Shaliach, for teaching Krav Maga at Shorashim's Hanukkah Festival. It was a big hit with our families!

Thank you to **Jeff Sloan** for his assistance setting up our TI Hanukkiah at our temporary home this year!

Thank you to **Maura Pollak** for bringing her dance skills to the Shorashim Hanukkah Festival!

Thanks to **Zac Waxman**, a/k/a **The Pickle Maven**, a/k/a **Chef Draniki**, for leading cooking classes twice this fall!

## WELCOME!

Zach Singer joins Temple Israel as the new Director of Outreach & Engagement.




A Tulsa native returning home after nearly three decades in Tucson, Los Angeles, New York, and Miami, Zach brings a deep belief in the power of story, community, and renewal. He is a filmmaker, writer, and editor and is currently earning his MFA in Screenwriting at the David Lynch Graduate School of Cinematic Arts. His work explores creativity, healing, and turning lived experience into insight through challenging times.

Zach is passionate about helping people feel seen, supported, and connected. He is excited to build programs that strengthen relationships, create new pathways of engagement, and deepen the sense of home within the Temple Israel family.

He is the proud father of Aviela.



# JANUARY CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SHABBAT
				1 	2 Shabbat Services, 6:00 PM	3 "Time" for Learning: Tevet 10:30 AM
4 No Shorashim	5	6 Executive Committee, 5:30 PM	7 No Midrasha	8 Social Justice Committee, 7:00 PM	9 Birthday Shabbat, 7:30 PM 	10
11 Shorashim 9 AM - 12:30 PM Sisterhood Board Meeting, 1:00 PM	12	13 Board of Trustees, 5:30 PM	14 Midrasha @ JFT 6:30 PM	15	16 Shabbat Services, 6:00 PM	17
18 Shorashim 9 AM - 12:30 PM	19	20 Brotherhood Board Meeting, 5:30 PM	21 Midrasha @ JFT 6:30 PM	22	23 Anniversary Shabbat, 6:00 PM 	24 "Time" for Learning: Shevat 10:30 AM
25 Shorashim 9 AM - 12:30 PM	26 Brotherhood After Hours, 6:00 PM	27	28 Midrasha @ JFT 6:30 PM	29	30 Zarrow Pointe Shabbat Services, 4:00 PM Zamru L'Shabbat, 6:00 PM	31

**Temple Offices will be closed**

**Thursday, January 1, in observance of New Year's Day  
and Monday, January 19, in observance of  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**






Birthday Shabbat



Anniversary Shabbat



## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SHABBAT
<b>1</b> <b>Shorashim</b> 9 AM - 12:30 PM  <b>Community Tu B'Shevat Seder</b> 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Executive Committee,</b> 5:30 PM	<b>4</b> <b>Midrasha @ JFT</b> 6:30 PM	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <b>Shabbat Services,</b> 6:00 PM	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>Shorashim</b> 9 AM - 12:30 PM  <b>Sisterhood Board Meeting,</b> 1:00 PM 	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Board of Trustees,</b> 5:30 PM	<b>11</b> <b>Midrasha @ JFT</b> 6:30 PM	<b>12</b> <b>Social Justice Committee,</b> 7:00 PM	<b>13</b> <b>Birthday Shabbat,</b> 7:30 PM 	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>No Shorashim</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>Brotherhood Board Meeting,</b> 5:30 PM	<b>18</b> <b>Midrasha @ JFT</b> 6:30 PM	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <b>Zamru L'Shabbat,</b> 6:00 PM	<b>21</b> <b>"Time" for Learning: Adar</b> 10:30 AM
<b>22</b> <b>Shorashim</b> 9 AM - 12:30 PM  <b>Breakfast by Brotherhood,</b> 9:30 AM	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>Midrasha @ JFT</b> 6:30 PM	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> <b>Zarrow Pointe Shabbat Services,</b> 4:00 PM  <b>Anniversary Shabbat,</b> 6:00 PM 	<b>28</b> <b>Adults Purim Murder Mystery</b> 7:00 PM



**"Soup-er Bowl Sunday, February 8, 4:45 PM**

Watch for more news and updates about our programs in our bi-weekly e-mail correspondence, the iTlnerary. Refer to it for planning your time with us!



**Birthday Shabbat**



**Anniversary Shabbat**

For your convenience, the **bulleTin** is also available on our website at [www.templetulsa.com/bulletin](http://www.templetulsa.com/bulletin). If you would prefer to view the Temple Israel newsletter *online* instead of receiving a printed copy, please let Jenny know at [jenny@templetulsa.com](mailto:jenny@templetulsa.com).



P.O. Box 700158  
Tulsa, OK 74170

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**Rabbi Batsheva Appel**, *Interim Rabbi*  
rabbiappel@templetulsa.com

**Jenny Labow**, *Cantorial Soloist & Office Manager*  
jenny@templetulsa.com

**Jory Budd**, *Staff Accountant & Human Resources*  
jory@templetulsa.com

**Lesley Bumgarner**, *Director of Congregational Life*  
lesley@templetulsa.com

**Kelsey Holder**, *Director of Education & Communication*  
kelsey@templetulsa.com

**Zach Singer**, *Director of Outreach & Engagement*  
zach@templetulsa.com

**Alea Walker**, *Bookkeeper*  
alea@templetulsa.com

**Paul Sweet**, *Accompanist*

**Rabbi Michael Weinstein**, *Senior Rabbi (on Sabbatical)*  
rabbi@templetulsa.com

**Rabbi Charles P. Sherman**, *Rabbi Emeritus*

## SISTERHOOD JUDAICA SHOP

[templetulsashop@gmail.com](mailto:templetulsashop@gmail.com)

**NOW OPEN** 30 minutes before every Shabbat  
Service or by appointment.

**Questions, ideas or feedback  
about this bulletin?**

Contact us at:  
[kelsey@templetulsa.com](mailto:kelsey@templetulsa.com)

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