Connecting with Israel

page 4
Experiencing Israel
— By Jon Chaiken, Temple President

To the Jewish Foundation for subsidizing congregants’ trips to Israel, which proved to be a consequential experience for our members.

Wise Temple extends a heartfelt thank you to the Jewish Foundation for subsidizing congregants’ trips to Israel, which proved to be a consequential experience for our members.

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Wise Journey

7 New Wise Journey Microsite
7 Wise Journey Anniversary Fund
8 The Joy of the Opening Ceremony
10 Do You Know This Feeling?
11 Plum Street Temple Tours
12 Isaac Mayer Wise: Face-to-Face with U.S. Presidents
26 How Plum Street Temple Came to Be

Features

3 From Rabbi Lewis Kamrass
3 From Jon Chaiken, Temple President
4 Israel: ‘We Do Not Take a Trip; a Trip Takes Us’
13 A Touch of Torah with Rabbi Michael Danziger
20 Zach Green: ‘This Is the Most Jewish I’ve Felt’
31 David Tochterman: There Is a First Time for Everything

Social Justice

19 Your Christmas Season Mitzvot
19 Bedtime Bundles

Community

21 Get Away From It All: Wise Temple Family Retreat
21 Chicken Soup Cook Off
24 Contributions
30 Mazel Tov
30 Condolences

Worship and Holidays

14 B’nai Mitzvah
15 Worship Services
18 Wise Temple’s Communal Chanukah Lighting
22 Many Ways to Worship
23 Uncommon Styles of Jewish Music Come to Wise Temple
23 Support Judaism in Israel

Calendar/Listing of Events

15 4-Page Pull-out
From Rabbi Kamrass

D’varim Min HaLev – ד"ראים מינ הלכה
Words from the Heart
—By Rabbi Lewis Kamrass

Israel is not simply a place or a destination on a map. It is, in fact, the map of Jewish identity that we Jews have carried with us around the world in every land and in every age. And we carry it still. For an unprecedented 1,878 years in human history, Israel was not a country, but it was still a land that called to us. And our people’s voices and souls called to it, turning to face Jerusalem in our prayers three times a day, hoping at each Passover Seder’s conclusion that perhaps next year, our dreams of re-establishing a national homeland might be realized.

Israel is a multi-faceted and glimmering word that captures our sense of people and community (Israel – the Jewish people), our ideals (Israel – the hoped for place of better times and a promise of tomorrow), our heritage (Israel – the land that was a tangible anchor to our past, the soil out of which our principles and our collective story grew). It is our map that has guided us, and indeed challenged us to aspirations and hopes through nearly 400 years.

Last summer, 143 Wise Temple members traveled together to Israel. Following the trip, they characterized their feelings as: “enriched,” “transformed,” “enlightened,” “deepened,” “changed,” and “inspired.” Perhaps you have never been to Israel (what about our next trip in two or three years?), perhaps it has been many years since you have. Regardless of your travel history to that sliver of land on a distant shore, that place has traveled with you in your own journey since your first days as a Jew. It has called to you and challenged you. And it still does.

That is why each of us is called to deepen our personal relationship with Israel. Not simply because it is a country far away that we love, and not merely because it is a striking and varied physical landscape among the many beautiful places on Earth. Our relationship with Israel is bigger than a destination: it is a fundamental building block of the Jewish soul we carry. When we relate more personally to Israel (the place, the ideal, the landscape, the state, the people, and the complexity of it all), we draw ourselves to that map of the soul that we have always carried. We draw out what is deep within, and pass along to friends, family, and the next generations what all the prior generations have given to us.

Next year in Jerusalem is the refrain. But the call is that this year, even this moment, that may we be ever more drawn to the Jerusalem that resides in each of our souls.

Faithfully,

Rabbi Lewis H. Kamrass

From the President

Experiencing Israel
—By Jon Chaiken, Temple President

What is our connection to Israel? On the surface it would seem like an easy question to answer, but in reality it is a bit more complicated. Yes Israel, for most of us, has existed our entire lifetime as a predominately Jewish state, but Jews existed for thousands of years prior to 1948, so what is the difference? How does the presence of a non-secular state like Israel conflict with the secular environment we have come to appreciate here in the United States? How do we feel about a state that welcomes support from us related to their right to exist, but has factions that refuse to recognize any of the very platforms we, as non-Orthodox Jews, choose to identify with? Then, there is the question of what would life be like for us as Jews if a Jewish state didn’t exist?

The truth is, that while Israel may not ultimately be where we as American Jews live every day, the very existence of a Jewish state, with roots going back 5,777 years is significantly important to us all. It insures and validates our right to not only exist, but to practice our faith when, where, and how we want. As 143 of us experienced this past summer, expressing different views often is met with push-back from the ultra-religious. As I learned while on the Wise Temple Israel trip, Anat Hoffman and the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC) actively strive to advance pluralism inside Israel. So if we truly believe the freedoms we enjoy should be enjoyed in Israel as well, supporting groups like IRAC is an important part of progress.

Lastly, our congregation has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to enhance our local connection to Israel as we pause to honor our past, embrace the future, and celebrate today with all the Wise Journey celebrations that will be taking place in the coming months. I urge you all to participate early and often!  

Israel IQ

Over the course of its 115-year existence, the Jewish National Fund has planted more than 240 million trees across 250,000 acres in Israel, all in an effort to create “green lungs” around its often-congested towns and cities.
‘We Do Not Take a Trip; a Trip Takes Us.’

John Steinbeck wrote those words in his 1962 travel memoir, *Travels with Charley*. The book details a road trip around the United States, but his words could just as easily apply to Wise Temple congregants’ transformative trips to Israel this summer. Regardless of whether or not you’ve been, you can connect, or re-connect, to Israel through these stories of community, kinship, and bravery.

**Israel IQ**

Israel has the 8th-highest life expectancy in the world at 82.5, according to 2015 data from the World Health Organization. (Japan ranked first overall.)

**Barbara and Mark Williams: Community**

Three years ago, Barbara Williams’ husband Mark expressed a strong desire to visit Israel. The country was not on her bucket list; too, she believed Mark’s emerging Alzheimer’s and the resulting physical implications would make the trip difficult. But after learning about plans for Wise Temple’s community trip, she took it as a sign. “I thought, ‘This could be our last opportunity, and if it really means that much to Mark, we’ll go,’” she said.

Barbara was concerned about the physical demands of such a trip. A chat with Rabbi Kamrass allayed those fears, but more were to come. “When we got our bus assignments, all the couples I knew were on a different bus, and I panicked,” she recalled. “Who would I ask for help if I needed it?”

She admitted to feeling frightened as she stepped off the plane, but within a day “everybody was helping us,” she said. Because of that, Mark was able to do almost everything, like climbing the steps to the top of the Tower of David and down to the Dead Sea. Their travel mates recounted the endearing way the duo held on to each other wherever they went. “I never left his side,” Barbara said. Mark even celebrated his 67th birthday on the trip with their new friends.

**The Takeaway:** Immersing yourself in an experience often gives you a community on whom you can depend.

**Gary and Susan Winters: Kinship**

“Despite those deep ties to the Temple, Susan admitted she and her husband Gary hadn’t been particularly active in it since their two sons graduated. A trip to Israel seemed like the perfect chance to reconnect. ‘It turned out to be an amazing opportunity,’ Susan said. ‘By the end, I had a renewed connection to the Temple and deep love and respect for the people and the country of Israel.’”

She wasn’t the only one. Gary, who is not Jewish by birth, had a revelation. “A guest speaker on the trip had told us, ‘Jews are not a religion, they are a family,’” he recalled. “I was raised in an Italian Catholic family, and I had always described myself as Jewish by marriage. On our final day in Jerusalem, everyone on our bus was sharing the most meaningful moments of the trip. I said that I would have to adjust my description now – I was no longer a Jew by marriage, I was an adoptee.”

Suddenly, that utterance became ‘We Do Not Take a Trip; a Trip Takes Us.’
friends. “We made what we believe will be new lifelong friendships which have enhanced our sense of belonging as part of the Wise Temple community,” Barbara said.

Since their return, Barbara said Mark has been thanking her every single day. For her part, “sharing life and experiences with Mark is my joy,” she said.

THE TAKEAWAY: Immersing yourself in an experience often gives you a community on whom you can depend.

Gary and Susan Winters: Kinship

“My family has belonged to Wise Temple, I think, since it began,” said Susan Trautenberg Winters. “My grandfather was confirmed by Rabbi Wise.”

Despite those deep ties to the Temple, Susan admitted she and her husband Gary hadn’t been particularly active in it since their two sons graduated. A trip to Israel seemed like the perfect chance to reconnect. “It turned out to be an amazing opportunity,” Susan said. “By the end, I had a renewed connection to the Temple and deep love and respect for the people and the country of Israel.”

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Israel IQ

The Dead Sea is the lowest point on Earth, with a location of 1,315 feet below sea level.
Susan’s favorite Israel moment. “I didn’t know he was going to say that,” she said. “It was the absolute highlight of my trip.”

THE TAKEAWAY: New experiences ignite new feelings – for yourself and others.

The Weiskopf-Susskind Family: Bravery

David Weiskopf and Amy Susskind had always been an adventurous couple. They’ve gone on safari in Tanzania, honeymooned in New Zealand, and even climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro. But then, Amy got pregnant, and as often happens when kids enter the picture, that zest for adventure got pushed to the wayside. So when the trip to Israel presented itself, the couple was interested, but hesitant. “I went as a teenager, and I knew the travel and all the activities would be exhausting for the kids,” said Amy. Plus, David had security concerns. But after speaking with the rabbis, they decided to go, and frame it to the children – Kate, 8 and Zach, 6 – as a big adventure.

The two more than rose to the occasion, Amy said. “They both are really into Judaism, and I saw the wonder in their eyes the entire time,” she recalled.

In fact, seeing Israel through their children’s eyes was one of the reasons Amy and David took the trip. “On our first night in Jerusalem, we went to Friday night services, and the rabbi asked the congregants to raise their hands to say one word describing how they were feeling,” David recounted. “We were sitting in the back, and Kate is really short, and the rabbi couldn’t see her. She went out into the aisle, and when she got called on she said ‘home.’” As parents, they couldn’t have been more proud, not just that she said it at all, but also that she was confident enough to say it out loud.

Now, Kate and Zach can’t wait to go back – and they just might. “This experience helped me realize that we can do this kind of trip with kids,” Amy said. “They just brought it up again this morning.”

THE TAKEAWAY: Stepping outside of your comfort zone has great rewards.
This year we have a special opportunity to contribute to the Wise Journey Anniversary Fund.

As you consider your year-end charitable giving and tax planning, please consider gifts to Wise Temple. It is up to us to ensure the future of our congregation, and to communicate to future generations, not only the vision we inherited, but the vision we shaped and built for them.

*In Judaism, tzedakah is not merely an act of giving; it is a moral commitment of faith.*

*Making an endowment or legacy gift is a clear statement about the values and beliefs that have shaped your life.*

Preserve and enhance the rich legacy of our congregation and of the Plum Street Temple.

Nourish Jewish life for yourself, your children, your grandchildren, and for the generations to come.

Thank you for your trust and continued support of your congregation.

For more Information about Wise Temple Endowments: www.wisetemple.org/endowment

To discuss generous contributions of any level, contact:

Lynn Warm, Wise Journey Anniversary Chair, 513-378-3804.

Mail donations to: Wise Temple, 8329 Ridge Road, Cincinnati, OH 45215

All contributions of cash or appreciated stocks are entirely tax deductible.
Relive the Joy of the Wise Journey

In September 2016, we began a celebration to honor the past, embrace the future, and celebrate today. During the Wise Journey Opening Ceremony, marking 175 years as a congregation and 150 years of Plum Street Temple, we...

...saw all ages proudly wearing t-shirts representing a century of vibrant Jewish life at Wise Temple...watched with anticipation and awe at the first words being written in our commemorative Torah...were wrapped in the words of the Torah, feeling its warmth and rich history as we would a friendly embrace.

Later that afternoon, the first members of our congregation stood to take their turns scribing, and many were overcome with emotion at the meaningful moment.

Their words follow – make sure yours are next.
See page 10 to learn how you, too, can take part in this powerful experience.

“I didn’t expect to feel so moved by the experience.”
“I scribed today in memory of my parents who would have been moved by the writing of the Torah.”

“Scribing gave me a feeling of total calmness and a sense of serenity flowing through my body. I was almost in a trance and felt I had arrived in a place and time that I had been headed toward all my life.”

“As I stood on the bimah next to my husband and the sofer, I felt so proud of my Jewish heritage and so thankful for those who came before me. I could hear my mom’s voice saying, ‘One day you’ll understand and appreciate your Jewish identity and heritage even more than you do now.’ How right she was!”

“My experience on the bimah with the scribe, putting a letter on the parchment, was to experience in that one moment a feeling of immortality...for as long as this Torah shall exist, so will something I have done exist! That’s a pretty powerful, bursting-with-joy, seeing-future-generations-to-come moment!”
Journey Opening Ceremony

“For most of my life, Torah has been that ‘thing’ we pull out a few times each year to read from. And ‘we’ really meant other people, as I did not have a bar mitzvah and do not read Hebrew. Scribing in the Torah today made it real; it made Torah ‘mine,’ as I am now a part of it.”

“As I begin, finally, my own journey to learn Hebrew, I could not have asked for a more meaningful way to take the first steps.”

“My heart was pounding when we approached to add our letters. I watched my children with pride and then my hand trembled as I added a letter. This is a moment I’ll never forget.”

“I think about the future generations – possibly my grandchildren – reading from the Torah that I scribed a letter in on his or her bar or bat mitzvah, and am in awe.”

“I never thought scribing would change the way I see my Jewish life, but it did in such a positive way. Scribing connects you to your Judaism and your community.”
Have you ever felt like you missed out on something? Something special?

After the fact, you hear friends or family talk about…
...that move-me-to-tears musical,
...that bring-the-house-down party,
...or that come-from-behind winning game.
You wish you would have known about it. You wish you hadn’t stayed home. You wish you hadn't missed out.

Do you know that feeling?

This year, Wise Temple turns 175 years old, and Plum Street turns 150. As a result, this year will be filled with
...move-me-to-tears moments,
...once-in-a-lifetime experiences,
...memory-making events,
...and uniquely special celebrations.

People are going to be talking about it. Be one of those people.
Not one who hears about it after the fact, and then realizes you missed something special... really special.
How do you make sure you don't miss out on single a thing? Simple.

Read your email.
We know we send a lot of email, but it's because there are a lot of things happening at Wise Temple!

Check out the website:
www.wisetemple.org/wisejourney

In uniquely special ways, this year will celebrate 175 years of meaningful worship, innovation, and vibrant Jewish life at Wise Temple, as well as 150 years of powerful moments, memorable life-cycle events, spiritual connection, and Reform Jewish history at Plum Street.

Choose to attend.

Sign Up to Scribe a letter in the Torah

Not sure what this means exactly? Watch the video at www.wisetemple.org/wisejourney. Really. Watch the video. It will give you a glimpse of how special this is and why you don’t want to miss it.

Still not sure? Ask one of the hundreds of congregants who have already participated. Their enthusiasm and heart-warming experiences are sure to convince you.

Scribing Dates:
December 4, 18
January 15, 16
February 12
March 5
April 23, 30
Rockwern Organ Concert

Experience the splendor of Plum Street Temple’s Rockwern organ, in an organ concert like you’ve never heard. In partnership with and support from the Rockwern Foundation and the University of Cincinnati College – Conservatory of Music (CCM), we bring accomplished organists to demonstrate the beauty and power of this masterful musical instrument.

Open to the general public. Reception to follow.

Craig Cramer, Professor of Organ, Notre Dame
February 26, 2017
4:00 PM at Plum Street Temple

One of the most traveled organists of his generation, Cramer maintains an active recital career across the country and in Europe. He has performed in 44 of the United States as well as in Canada. He is regularly invited to play some of the most important historic organs in the world, ones dating back to the 1600s and 1700s. And now he plays historic Plum Street Temple’s Rockwern organ.

In addition to being a Professor of Organ at the University of Notre Dame, Cramer also serves as organist at St. David of Wales Episcopal Church in Elkhart, Indiana. Cramer has a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Organ Performance. The Eastman School of Music also awarded him the prestigious Performer's Certificate in Organ. He has studied with Russell Saunders, William Hays, James Drake, David Boe, and André Marchal (Paris).

Dr. Cramer’s performances are frequently heard on the nationally syndicated program Pipedreams (American Public Radio). Cramer performed the complete organ works of Bach during a series of 18 concerts using a distinguished set of mechanical-action organs in the state of Indiana. He has 15 CD recordings to his credit.

Explore Plum Street Temple

Discover the secrets of Plum Street Temple – one of just 12 National Historic buildings in Cincinnati – with this behind-the-scenes tour led by Rabbi Kamrass. You’ll learn all about its architecture and history, plus hear a few little-known stories from the past on this unique and personal tour.

Register now at www.wisetemple.org/tourpst.
Isaac Mayer Wise was a mover and a shaker in his day, having had the opportunity to go places and meet people ordinary folks didn’t. In addition to being “our rabbi,” did you know that he personally met several presidents of the United States over the course of his lifetime? As we head out of election season, let’s take a look back at the U.S. presidents with whom Rabbi Wise came face-to-face.

**Abraham Lincoln**

In 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant issued his now-infamous Order No. 11, which called for the expulsion of all Jews in the military districts of Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Why? To sideline the black market in Southern cotton, which Grant believed was being run mostly by Jews. Rabbi Wise was part of a group who went to convince President Lincoln to revoke the order. It worked. Wise and a few others then called on the President to thank him, and Wise later wrote of their meeting, “We went to the White House…and spoke about a half an hour to the President…in on open and frank manner…Having expressed our thanks for his promptness…in revoking Grant’s order, the President gave utterance to his surprise that such an order should have been issued.”

**Andrew Johnson**

In 1874 (after leaving office in 1869), former President Johnson was the keynote speaker at the dedication of a Temple in Nashville, Tennessee. Rabbi Wise rode in the same carriage with Johnson prior to the dedication ceremony and gave an introductory address from the pulpit. While the words of Johnson’s speech were recorded in history, we are left to wonder about the conversation that took place in that carriage.

**Ulysses S. Grant**

In 1876, Rabbi Wise met Grant when the president welcomed leaders of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) at the White House. The UAHC meeting was being held in Washington to mark America’s centennial. It has been noted that when Rabbi Wise introduced himself to the president during a tour of the White House, President Grant replied, “I know all about you, Doctor, especially in connection with Order No. 11.”

**William Howard Taft**

Isaac Mayer Wise was first friends with Taft’s father, Alphonso Taft, a prominent Cincinnatian and Wise’s contemporary. Growing up in the Queen City, the younger Taft would sometimes accompany his father to Plum Street Temple to listen to Rabbi Wise’s sermons, and over the years, the Wise and Taft families would come to dine at each other’s homes. The friendship among these prominent men reminds us of Cincinnati’s place in history. We can only imagine what they discussed during dinner!

Rabbi Wise not only changed the face of Jewish Cincinnati and Reform Judaism, but was a powerful participant and influential leader in the larger community in which he lived. I can’t think of a better historical role model in this regard. Maybe we won’t get any closer to presidents than by seeing them on television, but each of us should be inspired to get involved in our community at-large and further the ideals of our historical leader and namesake.

*Note: Isaac Mayer Wise also met Presidents James Polk and Zachary Taylor. To learn more about these encounters, please see “The Innovation of Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise” in the Fall 2016 issue of Kesher.*

—By Cynthia Burgin
Can we talk about the weather?

It’s only in the last several years that I recall noticing the two seasonal inserts in the Gevurot, the second blessing of the Amidah in our services. One of the lines, describing God, says, “morid hatal – who causes dew to fall.” The other is, “mashiv haruach u’morid hagashem – who causes the wind to blow and the rains to fall.” The former is inserted in the summer months, between Pesach and Sukkot, and the latter is recited during these winter months, until the spring.

When I first heard these in camp and youth group settings, and at my home Temple, I really did not understand their significance. Why mention these natural phenomena in the context of God’s power to give life, to heal, to save?

It was not until my first year of rabbinical school, spent in Jerusalem, that these lines came to make sense to me. Living in the land promised to our people throughout Torah, I found a new connection to the prayer, to our history, and to Israel and its people.

No Doppler radar could have predicted the weather in Israel more accurately than did these lines in the Gevurot. Within days of the end of Sukkot, Jerusalem and the surrounding Judean Hills became breezy, and began to see rain that had been noticeably absent during the summer months. It was the same with the arrival of Pesach and the switch back to morid hatal, as we saw a dramatic shift to dewy mornings and warm, sunny days. It didn’t seem to surprise the Israelis around me and, as I consider the words we Jews pray, wherever we are living, I see why.

As we pray, some part of us is always directed toward Israel, which is considered home for the Jewish people, whether we have been there or not. Israel began as a promise – “I, the Eternal, am the God of your father Abraham, God of Isaac: the land on which you [Jacob] are lying I will give to you and your descendants.” ( Genesis 28:13) – then it became our actual home, then an ideal to which we yearned to return. And now? Now, it is home again. A full half of the world’s Jews live there, where the dew falls and the winds blow right when our traditional prayers say they will.

With half the Jewish people there, we can’t help but be connected to Israel, the singular living laboratory for Jewish living in a modern national context. We connect through visiting, as many of us did this past summer, stories of which you’ll read throughout these pages. We connect through study, cultural experiences, engagement with political affairs, and through personal relationships.

And we connect through our tradition. Even when we observe it by praying 6,195 miles away, we are in connection with our Promised Land and our brothers and sisters who live there. We are connected with the millennia of yearning for that place, and we are connected with it in this moment as we Jews, wherever we are gathered, have the same conversation – talking about the weather!  

As we pray, some part of us is always directed toward Israel, which is considered home for the Jewish people, whether we have been there or not.
B’nai Mitzvah

December 3, 10:45 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bat Mitzvah of Fiona Schaffzin,
daughter of Jenny and Josh Schaffzin.

January 14, 10:45 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bar Mitzvah of Jake Messer,
son of Erica and Douglas Messer, and
Priscilla Cummins and Michael Oldham.

December 10, 10:45 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bar Mitzvah of Sam Prangley,
son of Lauren and Bob Prangley and
grandson of Lynn and Rich Moschel.

January 21, 10:45 AM
Wise Center
Bar Mitzvah of Jack Brownlee,
son of John and Karen Brownlee.

December 17, 10:45 AM
Wise Center
Bar Mitzvah of Gabriel A. Litwin
son of Amy and Scott Litwin and
grandson of Dr. Richard and
Adrienne Freiberg.

January 28, 9:00 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bat Mitzvah of Danielle Kaplan,
daughter of Debi and Rich Kaplan.

January 7, 9:00 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bar Mitzvah of Bryce Green,
son of Zachary and Dr. Jennifer Green.

January 28, 11:15 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bat Mitzvah of Evelyn Astafiev-Holmes
daughter of Dr. Pamela Holmes and
Mr. Boris Astafiev.

January 7, 11:15 AM
Plum Street Temple
Bar Mitzvah of Sean Daniel Cooper,
son of Sherry Steele Cooper
and the late Dr. Robert Cooper.

February 4, 10:45 AM
Wise Center
Bat Mitzvah of Teddy Tessel,
daughter of Marc and Shelly Tessel.

Israel IQ
In 2015, the small, seaside city of Netanya – known as the Israeli Riviera –
became Cincinnati’s 10th sister city, a partnership where each location pledges to
create a connection with the other’s community. Learn more about Netanya at
www.netanya.muni.il.

Israel IQ
In 2010, Tel Aviv became the world’s third-largest sushi center per capita, after
Tokyo and New York.
Holidays

Shabbat Chanukah Service and Dinner
Friday, December 30
6:15 PM service, 7:15 PM dinner

Worship Services

Shabbat Evening Services
Fridays, 6:15 PM at Wise Center
(unless otherwise indicated)

DECEMBER
December 2 – Family Shabbat – First Friday; Shabbat Service, Temple Musicians
December 9 – NextGen Shabbat
6:30 PM, Plum Street Temple
December 9 – Shabbat Service,
Shir Chadash
December 16 – Ohm Shalom
Meditation Service
December 16 – Shabbat Service,
Kol Rinah
December 23 – Shabbat Service,
Birthday and Anniversary Blessings
December 30 – Shabbat Chanukah
Service, Temple Musicians

JANUARY
January 6 – Family Shabbat – First Friday, Shabbat Service
January 13 – NextGen Shabbat
6:30 PM, Plum Street Temple
January 13 – Shabbat Service
January 20 – Shabbat Service,
Birthday and Anniversary Blessings
January 27 – Shabbat Service
January 27 – Shabbat Limmud

FEBRUARY
February 3 – Family Shabbat – First Friday, Shabbat Service
February 10 – NextGen Shabbat
6:30 PM, Plum Street Temple
February 10 – Shabbat Service
with Brotherhood participation
February 17 – All Music Shabbat
Service

February 17 – Shabbat Service, Birthday and Anniversary Blessings
February 24 – Shabbat Service with
Musicians-in-Residence Elana Jagoda
and Saul Kaye. See page 23 for
details.
February 25 – Saturday Afternoon
Meditation Workshop with Musician-
in-Residence Saul Kaye. See page 23
details.
February 25 – NextGen Saturday
Evening Havdalah and Coffee House
with Musician-in-Residence Saul Kaye.
See page 23 for details.

Family Shabbat Retreat
Friday, January 20 at 5:00 PM to
Saturday, January 21 at 8:00 AM
See page 21 for details.

Shabbat Morning Services
Saturdays
9:30 AM Service
10:45 AM Torah Study
December 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
January 7, 14, 21, 28
February 4, 11, 18, 25

Shabbat Morning
B’nai Mitzvah Services
See page 14.

Wise Journey

Scribing Dates
Sunday, December 4
Sunday, December 18
Sunday, January 15
Monday, January 16
Sunday, February 12
See page 10 for details.

Plum Street Temple Tours
Sunday, February 26 at 3:15 PM
www.wisetemple.org/tourpst

Rockwern Organ Concert with
Craig Cramer
Sunday, February 26 at 4:00 PM
Plum Street Temple
See page 11 for details.

Brotherhood

Rick Lepton, President
president@wisebrotherhood.org
www.wisetemple.org/brotherhood

Monthly Meeting
Thursdays, January 12, February 9
5:45 PM

Burgers and Beer with Rabbi
Danziger
Wednesday, December 7
6:00 PM, Bravo, West Chester

Lighthouse Youth Services Activity
Thursday, December 15
5:30 PM, Offsite Dinner

IHN Dinner and Sleepover
Thursday, December 22
6:00 PM

Brotherhood Bowling
Sunday, December 25
1:00 PM, Crossgate Lanes

13th Annual Cincinnati Chicken Soup
Cook Off
Sunday, January 29
12:15 PM

Eitz Chayim – Adult Education

Samantha Berinsky: 513-793-2556
sberinsky@wisetemple.org
www.wisetemple.org/adulteducation

Tuesdays with Torah
Noon – 1:00 PM
RSVP: www.wisetemple.org/tuesdays
withtorah

Inside Out, From a Jewish Lens
Rabbi Karen Thomashow
December 6 and 13
Our emotional life can be as
complex as anything else. How we
approach, feel, and process joy,
desire, and shame, for example, has
a bearing on our everyday lives. Our
tradition offers much wisdom and
insight regarding these three
particular emotions. Each week, we
will take up a different feeling
through the lens of Judaism.
Doubt and Debate
Rabbinic Intern Sam Pollak
January 24 and 31
Over 2,000 years of rabbinic tradition, Jews have wrestled with faith and with one another. We’ll study a few exciting stories from the Talmud to uncover some of the questions our ancient teachers asked and the solutions they suggest. What can we find in their struggles to help us understand our wrestling with Judaism today?

Putting God Second: How to Save Religion from Itself
Barbara Dragul
February 7 and 14
In his book, which this class is titled after, Rabbi Dr. Donniel Hartman contends that “a life of faith, while obligating moral sensitivity, also very often activates a critical flaw that supports and encourages immoral impulses.” Through careful analysis, Rabbi Hartman offers insight as to how and why religions (particularly Judaism) so often undermine their own deepest values. As a solution, he offers a radical idea: putting God second. This class will provide an overview of Hartman’s book as well as a context for discussing the challenging questions with which Rabbi Hartman is wrestling with himself.

The Many Faces of God: The Evolution of Jewish Theology Community
Rabbi Gavi Ruit
February 21 and 28
Most of us know that as Jews, we are the beneficiaries of a long and varied tradition. But have you ever wondered how that tradition got to be in the form we practice today? Or pondered why God seems so different in the Bible compared to most of our liturgy? Or wondered how Judaism and Jewish thought has responded to challenges such as the destruction of the Temple, expulsions, or competition from the rise of rationalism and scientific thought? In this two-session course, Rabbi Ruit takes us on a journey through Jewish tradition to answer these and many other questions that come with the evolution of Jewish theology.

iEngage
The Tribes of Israel: A Shared Homeland for a Divided People
Monday, December 12
Monday, January 9
Monday, February 13
5:15 PM
This second iEngage video lecture series confronts the challenge of creating a Jewish and democratic public space in the modern State of Israel – a shared common space for a people divided along “tribal” affiliations: religious, ideological, national, and geographic. We’ll ponder: What is the significance of the State of Israel as a Jewish public sphere? How does a people divided along religious, geographic, and ideological lines build a shared society? The Tribes of Israel begins a conversation to restructure the relationship between the collective and the individual tribes that comprise Israel.

iEngage includes nine video lectures by Rabbi Dr. Donniel Hartman, followed by an interview with an iEngage Israel team member or leading expert on the issue at hand. After the video presentation, Rabbis Lewis Kamrass and Karen Thomashow will facilitate meaningful discussion on each topic.

Talmud and Rabbinic Judaism Text Class
Tuesdays, 5:00 PM
December 13, January 17, February 21

Downtown Lunch and Learn
Thursday, January 26
11:45 AM at First Financial Center
Optional lunch available for order.

Gideon: Leadership Lessons with Rabbinic Intern Sam Pollak
The Five Books of Moses are full of powerful stories and characters, but what about those from other parts of the Bible? The book of Judges contains some of our most dramatic narratives, and as a sample, we’ll study the judge Gideon. We’ll read excerpts from his story in an attempt to determine what kind of leader he is: reluctantly humble, or cleverly ambitious? What can we learn from Gideon about leadership today?

Religious School
Terri Snavely: 513-793-2997
tsnavely@wisetemple.org
www.wisetemple.org/religiousschool

Religious School
Sundays 9:15 – 11:45 AM
December 4, 11
January 8, 15, 22, 29
February 5, 12, 26

No Religious School
December 18, 25
January 1
February 19

Midweek Hebrew
Wednesdays, 4:30 – 6:00 PM
December 7, 14
January 11, 18, 25
February 1, 8, 15, 22

Gesher
Sundays, 9:30 – 11:45 AM
December 11 – Grade 3
January 8 – Grade 5
January 9 – Grade 4

Family Programs
Sundays, 9:15 – 11:45 AM
January 8 – 8th Grade Family Program
January 22 – 7th Grade Family Program
February 5 – Open Room Family Day
February 12 – 2nd Grade Family Program with Sofer Neil Yerman

Special Programs
December 4
9:15 – 11:00 AM
6th Grade B’nai Mitzvah Family Program with Sofer Neil Yerman
thought? In this two-session course, has responded to challenges such as how Judaism and Jewish thought wondered how that tradition got to are the beneficiaries of a long and February 21 and 28

The Many Faces of God: The Rabbi Hartman is wrestling with challenging questions with which Hartman offers a radical idea: putting God deepest values. As a solution, he why religions (particularly Judaism) Hartman offers insight as to how and can we find in their struggles to help us understand our wrestling with and the solutions they suggest. What questions our ancient teachers asked Talmud to uncover some of the series confronts the challenge of sphere? How does a people divided national, and geographic. We'll study a few exciting stories from the tradition, Jews have wrestled with Barbara Dragul Religion from Itself

February 19

Samantha Berinsky: 513-793-2556 sberinsky@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/yofi YoFI Shababa Worship
2nd and 4th Saturdays each month 10:00 – 11:00 AM December 10, 24 January 14, 28 February 11, 25 See page 22 for details.

YoFI (ages 0 – 6) Young Family Involvement Cara Swillinger: 513-793-2556 cswillinger@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/yofi

Youth Activities Melissa Bellows: 513-793-2556 mbellows@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/yofi

Youth and Family Programs Saturday, December 3 5:00 PM at WOOTY Lock-in Sunday, December 11 11:45 AM – 3:00 PM NFTY Junior Youth Group City-wide Event Friday, January 20 – Sunday, January 22 Offsite (HUC-JIR Campus) NFTY Ohio Valley Winter Kallah Friday, February 17 – Monday, February 20, Offsite (Chicago) NFTY Convention 2017

Miscellaneous Temple Office: 513-793-2556 info@wisetemple.org

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30 PM Overeater’s Anonymous Meeting Wednesdays at 12:00 PM

January 8
9:15 – 11:00 AM 7th Grade Field Day

January 15
10:00 – 11:00 AM 7th and 8th Grade Minimister

January 22
9:15 – 11:00 AM 8th Grade Minimister

February 5
9:15 – 11:00 AM 6th Grade Sacred Choices

February 26
10:30 – 11:00 AM 1st Grade Torah Play

February 26
11:00 AM Religious School Program with Musician-in-Residence Elana Jagoda

Kulanu
Sundays, 5:30 – 7:00 PM unless noted (Optional dinner 5:00 – 5:30 PM) December 4, 11 January 8 (Valley), 15 (Rockdale), 22 (Valley), 29 February 5 (1:00 – 2:40 PM), 12, 26

Confirmation Class
Sundays February 5, 1:00 – 1:45 PM February 12, 4:00 – 5:30 PM

Family Shabbat
1st Friday of each month at 6:15 PM December 2 January 6 February 3

Senior Adults
Samantha Berinsky: 513-793-2556 sberinsky@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/senioradults

Chanukah Party
Tuesday, December 27 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Jewish Film Festival Showing Monday, January 23 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Sarah Weiss: Jewish Relations (JCRC) Thursday, February 16 1:30 – 2:30 PM

Sisterhood
Lisa Cooper, President sisterhood@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/sisterhood

Chanukah Boutique
Sunday, December 11 9:00 – 11:30 AM

Two Hours, Eight Nights
Thursday, December 15 7:00 – 9:00 PM Come make holiday art with artist and educator, Beth Goldstein

Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 4, 9:45 AM

Sisterhood Mah Jongg
Thursdays at 11:00 AM Sherri Tieger: 513-821-8881 Stt105@fuse.net

WiseUP – Social Justice Projects
Samantha Berinsky: 513-793-2556 sberinsky@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/wisupregistration RSVP for IHN: www.wisetemple.org/ihn

Cincinnati Homeless Families at Wise Center (IHNE) December 18 – 25 Various opportunities starting at 5:30 PM each evening Empower yourself to reach out and welcome four families to Wise Center and be part of the interfaith community in action, helping homeless families achieve sustainable independence.

St. Francis Seraph Soup Kitchen Tuesday, December 20 3:00 – 7:00 PM at 1615 Vine St.

Over-the-Rhine Soup Kitchen Sunday, December 25 9:45 AM – 1:00 PM at 1620 Vine St. See page 19 for details.

Drop Inn Center Sunday, December 25 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM at 411 Gest St. See page 19 for details.

Mental Health of Northern Kentucky Gift Wrapping and Serving Lunch Sunday, December 25 7:30 AM – 1:00 PM at Northern Kentucky Convention Center See page 19 for details.

Freestore Foodbank Saturday, January 28, 2017 1:00 – 3:00 PM 15 volunteers needed. Project leader: Mert Friedman

YoFI (ages 0 – 6) Young Family Involvement Cara Swillinger: 513-793-2556 cswillinger@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/yofi

YoFI Shababa Worship 2nd and 4th Saturdays each month 10:00 – 11:00 AM December 10, 24 January 14, 28 February 11, 25 See page 22 for details.

Youth Activities Melissa Bellows: 513-793-2556 mbellows@wisetemple.org www.wisetemple.org/yofi

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Miscellaneous Temple Office: 513-793-2556 info@wisetemple.org

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30 PM Overeater’s Anonymous Meeting Wednesdays at 12:00 PM

DECEMBER 2016/JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017 | 17
**Back by Popular Demand...**

Wise Temple’s Communal Chanukah Lighting!

Join fellow congregants on the holiday’s seventh night, Friday, December 30, where the lights will be low but spirits high, to illuminate the chapel with your menorah. All kinds are welcome, from a child’s Batman-theme to your great-great-great grandmother’s ornate sconce. Don’t forget to bring your eight candles!

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**5:30 PM**
Young Families Chanukah Party
Hosted by YoFI

Come for the lights, stay for the bites! This annual holiday soiree for children ages 0–6 and their siblings, parents, and extended family will feature food, music, and a bevy of Chanukah activities.

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**6:15 PM**
Chanukah Shabbat Service

Celebrate the holiday with every congregant’s favorite Wise Temple ritual: the communal lighting of family menorahs. Enjoy a multi-generational service with songs by Temple Musicians.

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**7:15 PM**
Congregational Chanukah Dinner

RSVP by December 23 to enjoy hor d’oeuvres, mains, and sides. Register online at www.wisetemple.org/chanukahdinner.

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**Don’t Miss These Holiday Activities**

**Chanukah Boutique**
(Sponsored by Sisterhood)

Sunday, December 11 at 9:00 – 11:30 AM
- A variety of gifts priced from $1 – $20, all benefitting the Sisterhood’s ongoing charity work.
- Volunteers needed for prep and to help the kids’ shop.
  Contact Robin Hartmann at muscles3@aol.com

**Seniors’ Celebration**

Tuesday, December 27 at 1:00 PM
- Eat latkes, enjoy great entertainment, and meet friends for a festive time!
- Hosted by Kathy Teitelman. RSVP to pteitelman@cinci.rr.com or 513-791-4077.

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**Children’s Chanukah Activity Kits**

The Temple library can provide stories, crafts, and other activity ideas for families, educators, or caregivers who want to immerse young ones in all things Festival of Lights. Contact librarian Andrea Rapp at arapp@wisetemple.org.

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**Prayer Book Dedications**

Searching for a meaningful Chanukah gift? For a $36 minimum donation, Wise Temple will place a dedication bookplate on the inside front cover in a Shabbat prayer book for your loved one.
- Wise will notify the recipient of your generosity.
- Contact Cara Swillinger at cswillinger@wisetemple.org or purchase a book at www.wisetemple.org/donate.
Your Christmas Season Mitzvot

Sunday, December 25
Mental Health America of Northern Kentucky and Southwest Ohio
Northern Kentucky Convention Center
1 W. Rivercenter Blvd, Covington, KY
Gift Wrapping: 7:30 – 9:00 AM
Soup Kitchen: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
• Wrap toys, coats, blankets, and personal care items for those in need. No limit to the number of gift wrap volunteers. For ages 12+
• Project leader: Linda Shaw
• Help serve a free lunch to nearly 2,000 people in Northern Kentucky. 18 servers needed, ages 18+
• Project leader: Ken Seelig

Over-the-Rhine Soup Kitchen
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
1620 Vine Street, Over-the-Rhine
• Prepare and serve a holiday lunch to Over-the-Rhine’s homeless and less fortunate neighbors. 8 – 10 volunteers needed, ages 10+
• Project leaders: Stacey Bie and Lew Ebstein

Drop Inn Center Soup Kitchen
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
17 W. 12th Street, Downtown
Prepare and serve a special holiday lunch to approximately 200 guests at Cincinnati’s largest homeless shelter. 10 volunteers needed, ages 12+

Create a Bedtime Bundle for a Child in Need
Provide comfort to children of the YWCA Domestic Violence Shelter by donating a Bedtime Bundle.
A Bedtime Bundle includes a new pillowcase filled with the following purchased items for a child ages newborn to 16:
• Toothbrush and toothpaste
• Underwear/diapers
• A small toy, stuffed animal, or book
Thanks to your generosity, children will receive a Bedtime Bundle when they enter the shelter.
From November 28 to December 16, place your bundles in the crib in the Wise Center lobby. Cash or check donations made payable to Wise Temple Sisterhood are also encouraged so additional bundles and other essential supplies may be purchased.

Questions? Contact Lori Drasnin at 513-985-9587 or lori.drasnin@yahoo.com.

“The Torah begins with acts of kindness.”
—Talmud

Register for these events online at www.wisetemple.org/socialjusticersvp.
Zach Green
‘Right Now Is The Most Jewish I’ve Felt’

Zach Green doesn’t cry easily. As a former U.S. Marine and firefighter, one can only imagine the emotional situations he’s faced. But on this occasion, he couldn’t – and didn’t want to – stop the tears from falling.

Zach, his wife Jennifer, and 12-year-old son Bryce, were in Israel on a 10-day trip with 143 other members of Wise Temple. Zach had been before on business, but on this trip, he had a different agenda: to reconnect with his Jewish faith. “My son is becoming a bar mitzvah in six months, and my wife had never been to Israel before; plus, we really wanted the opportunity to deepen our Jewish identity and faith as a family,” he said of why it felt like the right time to go.

The trip would present a series of chance encounters that would likely make anyone tear up. While Zach said he loved every day of the excursion – even noting that these travels changed the way he views the world – a few meaningful moments stood out. One happened when the group first visited the Western Wall. “I was in awe to see my son walk up to the Wall wearing his new kippah, press his fingers against it, and begin to recite the Shema in Hebrew,” said Zach, who has Holocaust survivors in his family. “It reminded me of my ancestors and their continuing legacy.”

Then, there was the first Shabbat. The evening sun was shining directly on the Western Wall as the group sat at the top of Hebrew Union College and began to pray. The stunning view, the warm company of now-close congregants, and the spirituality of the prayers, hit Zach all at once. “Here we are, saying the same Hebrew words from the same prayers I’ve been saying for four decades, but now we are overlooking King David’s Tower and the Wall,” he said. “I realized the very words we were saying were referring to the place right where I was standing. I was seeing with my eyes what I had heard for so long with my ears.” And that’s when the tears fell. “I’ve never been moved spiritually or religiously to the point of crying,” he admitted. “I’m not a touchy-feely, emotional guy, but there I was, crying. I felt an energy that was different than anything I’ve ever felt before. This was not just an experience of the trip, this is one of those experiences I’ll take to my grave.”

That energy stayed with him into his first Shabbat at Wise Temple following the trip. “Before, I always felt like a stranger when I went to Shabbat services,” he said. “I didn’t know where to sit and I didn’t know most of the people. But now I know a lot more people and it feels more meaningful.” Zach believes one of the most important aspects of Judaism is the community, and feels he has now strengthened his connections. “We went through so much together in those 10 days,” he said. “We cried together, prayed together, and looked out for each other. It’s amazing how close we became – I have friends that I’ve had for 10 years that I’m not even nearly as close to.”

And that feeling of closeness now also extends to Israel. “I sometimes feel that Israel is the whipping boy that everyone likes to beat up on, and after the trip, it feels like someone saying something about my family,” he said. “I can honestly say that right now is the most Jewish I have ever felt.”
Get Away From It All: Wise Temple Family Retreat

An opportunity awaits to “get away from it all,” to enjoy some quality time with your family, and to experience the beauty of Shabbat together.

The Wise Temple Family Retreat, January 20-21 is a chance to engage in learning, fun, music, spirituality, and community-building, a chance to create lasting Jewish memories for you and your family.

- Shabbat dinner
- Creative participatory services
- Interactive family activities
- Swimming in the indoor pool
- Playing games
- Experimenting with new Jewish ideas, music, art, and more

Your family will connect with one another and friends – new and old. Come for two days and one night of growth, bonding, and fun. Leave refreshed, reconnected, and renewed.

Details: Gather at a lovely lodge hotel nestled in a serene setting. Friday evening, January 20 until Saturday evening, January 21.

Geared toward parents and children ages 12 and under. Younger siblings welcome. 2

Due to the generosity of the Jewish Foundation, the fees for the retreat will be significantly reduced. Register at www.wise temple.org/familyretreat

13th Annual Cincinnati Chicken Soup Cook Off
presented by Wise Temple Brotherhood

Sunday, January 29 • 12:15 PM at Wise Center
11:45 AM Religious School Family Entry

All you can eat soup, silent auction, live music, and camaraderie. An afternoon of fun. The best chicken soups in Cincinnati. Support our community.

Visit www.chickensoupcookoff.org for details on how you can enter or volunteer.
There is no shortage of Shabbat services at Wise Temple, and just as many worship styles to choose from. You are sure to find an experience that best speaks to you, your needs, and where you are on your journey. Every Friday starting at 6:15 PM (unless otherwise noted).

Limmud Shabbat (Learning Service)
January 27 and May 19, 2017
Experience worship with learning interspersed throughout.

Ohm Shalom (Meditation Service)
December 16, 2016 and March 17, 2017
A spiritual Shabbat prayer experience that will relax your body, renew your mind, and refresh your soul.

Music Shabbat
February 17, 2017
Music is a powerful and inviting form of spirituality. Welcome Shabbat with an engaging musical journey, where you will be asked to “sing a new song unto God.”

Healing Shabbat
April 21, 2017
Readings, meditations, and musical prayers on the theme of personal and communal healing.

NextGen
2nd Friday of each month;
6:30 PM; Plum Street Temple
An alternative Shabbat experience for young adults ages 22–35. Unwind from a busy week with live music, drinks, and spiritual refreshment.

YoFI Shababa
(For ages 0-6 and their families)
2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month;
9:30 AM
Singing, dancing, storytelling and prayer, while growing and enjoying.

Family Shabbat
First Friday of each month
Pray, sing, play, laugh, eat, and learn with other elementary school families.

In addition to these unique alternatives, Wise also offers regular Friday evening worship, Saturday worship, and Torah study, and usually a B’nai Mitzvah service, often resulting in five worship options in one weekend.

Learn more at www.wisetemple.org/worship.

Israel IQ
The technology that led to the world’s first cell phone call in 1973 was developed in Israel. Other notable Israeli tech innovations? Voicemail, instant messaging, and everyone’s favorite traffic-dodging app, Waze. In fact, these days, many are calling Israel the next Silicon Valley – Silicon Wadi, if you will.
Uncommon Styles of Jewish Music Come to Wise Temple

For our weekend-long 2017 program, Wise Temple welcomes Elana Jagoda and Saul Kaye, a San Francisco-based couple each pioneering a new style of Jewish music: Jagoda, folk, and Kaye, blues. Elana is an educator, performer, prayer leader, and composer who has released four albums and has had more than 50,000 CDs of her family-centric music distributed nationally. Saul has toured around the world, including Israel, sharing his innovative genre of Jewish blues. (Think: Muddy Waters meets Shlomo Carlebach.)

While different stylistically, both Jagoda and Kaye have the same goal when sharing their talents: to shake up and revitalize the genre of Jewish music. Have a listen to their unique brand of tunes at any one of the following Wise events:

**Shabbat**
Friday night service featuring music by Elana Jagoda and Saul Kaye
February 24

**Saturday Afternoon Meditation Workshop**
Hosted by Saul Kaye
February 25 at 2:00 PM

**NextGen** (young professionals ages 22 – 35)
Saturday evening Havdalah and coffee house with Saul Kaye
February 25
8:00 – 10:00 PM

**Religious School**
Sunday morning family concert with Elana Jagoda for preschool through Grade 3
February 26

Support Judaism in Israel
Regardless of whether or not you’ve been, you can forge a connection to Israel by supporting one of the many organizations who help promote Judaism and its validity in the region. Below are four of our rabbis’ favorites. Learn more by visiting them online.

**Association of Reform Zionism in America (AZRA)**
http://www.arza.org/
AZRA’s mission is to help Reform Jews in the United States form an identity with Israel. It does this through education and assistance in bringing Reform Jews to Israel, with pre- and post-trip events that enhance the experience.

**Women of the Wall**
http://www.womenofthewall.org.il/
This organization works to attain social and legal recognition of a woman’s right to wear prayer shawls, pray, and read from the Torah at the Western Wall through advocacy and education.

**The Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism (IMPJ)**
http://www.reform.org.il/eng/
This is Israel’s liberal Jewish religious movement, which works to “nurture a Jewish way of life in the Jewish society of the state of Israel.” It does this through social justice, study sessions, and prayer services in the country.

**Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC)**
http://www.irac.org/
Founded in 1987 as the public and legal advocacy arm of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (see above), IRAC works as a civil and human rights organization addressing issues of religion and state in Israel. It works to secure state recognition, funding and equal status for the Reform and Conservative community, among many other initiatives.
We acknowledge with appreciation...

JUDITH S. CARSCH LIBRARY FUND
In Honor of:
Birth of granddaughter Lillian by Dave and Jean Simmons
Anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. David Simmons by Gail and Fred Zelman
Leadership of Rabbi Thomashow in Israel 2016
In Loving Memory of:
Irwin Katzman by Ann Rubenstein

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Anniversary of Donna and Larry Freeman by Ann and Bob Unger
Anniversary of Donna and Larry Freeman by Sharon Marshall
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Melissa and Jay Bernstein
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Fran and Fred Felser
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Roberta Fisher
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Barb and Joel Fogel and Family
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Louise Freedman
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Gail and William Gillman
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Phyllis and Larry Kahn
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Arlene and Bill Katz
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Sharon Marshall
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Birthday of Cherie Fine by Rose Shmal
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Susan Shmal and Gene Caroewell
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Ann and Bob Unger
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Shelly and Kenneth Weisbacher
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Margo and Alan Zeff
Anniversary of Gloria and Alter Peerless by Sharon and Steven Marshall

In Loving Memory of:
Marlin Marshall by Melissa and Jay Bernstein
Marlin Marshall by Jon Marshall
Marlin Marshall by Sharon and Steven Marshall
Marlin Marshall by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Schwab
Marlin Marshall by Susan Shmalo and Gene Carswell
Mother of Barry Rubenstein and Family by Margo and Allen Zeff
Joseph Schneider by Margo and Allen Zeff

BRENDA AND SANDY HERMAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND
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Hortense Kabel by Sue Voos
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Richard Lazar by Sue Voos
Gregory Lichtenfeld by Linda and Brian Canteel

CONTRIBUTIONS

Anniversary of Margo and Alan Zeff by Gail and William Gillman
Anniversary of Margo and Alan Zeff by Lorynne Gillman
Anniversary of Margo and Alan Zeff by Sharon and Steven Marshall
Anniversary of Margo and Alan Zeff by Ann and Bob Unger
Anniversary of Margo and Alan Zeff by Cathy Star
Anniversary of Margo and Alan Zeff by Shelly and Ken Weisbacher
Birthday of Margo Zeff by Shelly and Ken Weisbacher

RENEW AND RABBI LEWIS H. KAMRASS SOCIAL ACTION FUND
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Sara Wolkoff by Jan and Henry Miller

PLUM STREET TEMPLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND
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Birth of Lillian Becker by Janet and Roger Ach
Birth of Lillian Becker by Carolyn Millman and Natalie Zukerman and Family
Great granddaughter of Polly and Jacob Stein by Karen and Edward Saeks
Bat Mitzvah of Mona Kerstine by Ellen and Stewart Dunsker
Bar Mitzvah of Dick Kerstine by Ellen and Stewart Dunsker
Bat Mitzvah of Mona Kerstine by Jacqueline Mack and Dr. Edward Silberstein
Bar Mitzvah of Richard Kerstine by Jacqueline Mack and Dr. Edward Silberstein
Anniversary of Dr. Howard and Nancy Starnbach by Mary and George Croog
Sue Voos by Joyce Alpiner
Sue Voos by Dolores Goldfinger
Bat Mitzvah of Sue Voos by Lorraine Forst
Sue Voos by Betty Gooten

In Honor of:
Sandy, son of Heni Bakst by Paula Holstein
Oliver “Tony” William Birkhead by Leah Levine
Gerald Gilberg by Nancy and Mark Kanter
Gerald Gilberg by Dianne and J. David Rosenberg
Virginia Felson by Dian Levine
Sue Fidgeholtz by Dian Levine
Hortense Kabel by Leah Levine
Hortense Kabel by Robin and Paul Newland
Hortense Kabel by Diane Oestreicher
Irwin Katzman by Kathy and Dr. Louis Clayton
Irwin Katzman by Paula Holstein
Irwin Katzman by Dian Levine
Dovian “Butch” Krieger by Bonnie, Kerry, Alex and Amy Burte
Gregory Lichtenfeld by Paula Holstein
Gregory Lichtenfeld by Dawn Paugh
Marvin Margolis by Amy Diamond
Marvin Margolis by Alice and Barry Lucas
Marvin Margolis by Robin and Paul Newland
Marvin Margolis by Melissa and Steve Schwartz
Marvin Margolis by Lynn and Alex Warm
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Martha Friedman Mervis by Jacqueline Mack and Edward Silberstein
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24 | WWW.WISETEMPLE.ORG
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Joseph Schneider by Beatrice Schaan
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William Wilkie by Lorraine Forst
Doris Zippenstein by Leah Levine

PRAYERBOOK FUND
In Honor of:
Bat Mitzvah of Cara Alpem by Robert, Lena, and Jessica Alpem
Birthday of Lillian Becker by Mr. and Mrs. Tom Zemboch
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Gregory Lichtenfeld by Dawn Paugh
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BESS SHAVZIN LIBRARY FUND
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Birth of Jude Beresin by Mary Lee and Louie Sirk
Birth of Aviva Hazel Danziger by Mary Lee and Louie Sirk
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Darrell Goldberg by Elizabeth Mason
Irwin Katzman by Julie and Dr. John Cohen
Irwin Katzman by Mary Lee and Louie Sirk
Gregory Lichtenfeld by Sylvia and Michael Sears
Marvin Margolis by Mary Lee and Louie Sirk
Art Shavin by Elizabeth Mason

MARVIN B. STEINBERG FUND
In Honor of:
Birth of Miles Lev Chermak by Susan and Barry Somerstein
Rhonda and Larry Sheakley by Janet and Irv Silberstein
In Loving Memory of:
Father of Mike Stern and Family by Susan and Barry Somerstein

JULIAN VIGRAN LEARNING RESOURCE FUND
In Honor of:
Birthday of Cherie Fine by Marilyn and Alan Weinstein
Engagement of Jake by Marilyn and Alan Weinstein
Husband of Beverly Hirschberg by Marilyn and Alan Weinstein
In Loving Memory of:
Sandy Bakst by Phylis and Ray Fine
Emily Bowman by Marilyn and Alan Weinstein
Marvin Margolis by Marilyn and Alan Weinstein
Totsie Moskovitz by Marilyn and Alan Weinstein
The sister of Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Silverman by Agnes and Stanley Richter

WISE TEMPLE YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND
In Loving Memory of:
Irwin Katzman by Hillary and Joel Deutch
Herbert Lang by Deborah and Jeffrey Sussman

Y.E.S. FUND
In Honor of:
Wedding of Liana Heldman by Nancy and Donald Seltz
Birth of Jaqueline Michelle Rosmarin by Herschell Levine

AUFSPRUNG ADULT EDUCATION FUND
In Honor of:
Bat Mitzvah of Zell Schulman by Helen Greenberg
B’nai Mitzvah of Mona and Richard Kerstine

RECOGNITION, ARTS AND JUDAICA FUND
In Honor of:
Tzedakah by Sherry and Mark Kaplan

WISE CENTER CAPITAL ENDOWMENT FUND
In Loving Memory of:
Irwin Katzman by Deborah Kirshner and Paul Heldman

NANCY GOODMAN MEMORIAL FUND
In Honor of:
Shelly and Alan Tarshis by Nancy and Charlie Postow

RABBI KAMRASS’ DISCRETIONARY FUND
In Honor of:
Dr. and Mrs. Douglas Etting by Beatrice E. Schaan
Bar Mitzvah of Ryan Ferguson by Sandy and Max Wrobel
Adam and Michael Finner by Allen and Nancy Finner
Bar and Bat Mitzvah of Mona and Dick Kerstine by Helene Banks
Birth of Ari Raviv Morvay by Karen and Eddie Saeks
Gloria and Alter Peerless by Harriette and Jim Katz
B’nai Mitzvah of Cheryl and Alex Salkin
Wedding of Isabel and Nate by Alan and Shelley Tarshis and Family

RABBI THOMASHOW’S DISCRETIONARY FUND
In Honor of:
Andrea Araya and Corbin Pomerantz by Julie and Dave Buckner
Bar Mitzvah of Matthew Cohen by Louise and Thomas Wides
Anniversary of Dr. and Mrs. Stewart Dunsker by the Revelson Family
B’nai Mitzvah of Cheryl and Alex Salkin by the Salkin Family
Tzedakah by Jennifer and Robert Oestreicher

RABBI DANZIGER’S DISCRETIONARY FUND
In Honor of:
Birth of daughter Aviva by Dawn Paugh
Birth of daughter Aviva by Ida Schwartz

Israel IQ
Of the 8,550-square miles Israel occupies (roughly the size of New Jersey), more than half of the country’s 7.8-strong population live on the country’s narrowest part, near the Mediterranean Sea.
How Plum Street Temple Came to Be

—By Cynthia Burgin

Much like the Wise Temple community, the design of our founder Isaac M. Wise’s Plum Street Temple mirrors many cultures. Below, we invite you to relive the construction of the 150-year-old structure, and urge you to not just visit it, but to experience it. Book your tour at www.wisetemple.org/tourpst.

When you enter Plum Street Temple you can’t help but notice the magnificence of the building. But take a minute and imagine the boldness of Isaac Mayer Wise and his congregation in erecting such a resplendent place in the 1860s. Think of all the work that went into the creation of the building. Not just the laborers who placed the bricks, but the dedication of Rabbi Wise and the congregational leaders. They had a dream and they set out to get congregational support, both literally and figuratively.

Before Plum Street
In the early 1840s, the founders of our congregation (B’nai Yeshurun) needed a place to worship. They started holding services in a house at 3rd and Broadway. They grew too big for the house, so they rented a space at 6th and Broadway. In 1848, they bought property on Lodge Street (now known as Ruth Lyons Way) and this property became known as the Lodge Street Synagogue.

The congregation favored reform and progress in their worship service. To further their ideas, the congregation pursued Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise for his vision of American Judaism and hired him as its rabbi. Rabbi Wise moved to Cincinnati in 1854, and under his leadership, the congregation grew quickly and needed an even larger house of worship. In 1858, the congregation was reported to be the second largest congregation in the United States with a membership of 220.

The Architectural Inspiration

German cities of Berlin, Cologne, Leipzig, Granada, Spain.

because of its Moorish architecture, which resembled the grand Alhambra palace in the Byzantine style. Rabbi Wise called the Temple architectural style is predominately Moorish-Byzantine.

The Temple was built quickly and was dedicated on August 24, 1866. There was praise.

The Temple was closed for that period. Work took three months to complete and stencil work the Temple is now known for.

The cost exceeded $250,000, largely due to post Civil War inflation. While the grand structure was in place, the inside walls were not added for another eight years.

James Keys Wilson to draw up the plans.

By 1865, the new building was a go.

On May 12 of that year, they laid the cornerstone and started construction. Rabbi Wise stated that “it shall not be a house of mourning or weeping; it shall be a permanent resting-place; such as the people and righteous children sing His heart desires, as the soul yearns to dwell in a place to worship. They started holding services in a house at 3rd and Broadway.

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It was thought that neither the building nor the location matched the dignity or the size of the congregation. Rabbi Wise put it this way: “The honor of Judaism in Cincinnati and throughout the West requires that K.K. B’naï Yeshurun, hitherto the banner-bearer of reform and progress on this side of the Alleghenies, requires that K.K. B’naï Yeshurun should come out of Lodge Street into the broad daylight of a more suitable locality.”

The Building Process

At the annual congregational meeting in 1860, a committee was appointed to develop a plan to build a new, larger temple. Soon thereafter, they realized that the building project would have to be delayed due to the Civil War. Even so, plans for the new building continued to progress. The congregation held a meeting in April 1863 and unanimously decided to build. Fund-raising began immediately and only a month later, in May of 1863, the congregation purchased a lot at the corner of 8th and Plum. They hired architect James Keys Wilson to draw up the plans.

By 1865, the new building was a go. On May 12 of that year, they laid the cornerstone and started construction. Rabbi Wise stated that “it shall not be a house of mourning or weeping; it shall be a temple, a permanent resting-place; such as the heart desires, as the soul yearns to dwell in it forevermore; where God rejoices over His people and righteous children sing His praise.”

The Temple was built quickly and was dedicated on August 24, 1866. There was a grand procession from the old synagogue to the new Temple. As a daily paper wrote at the time, “Cincinnati never before had seen so much grandeur pressed into so small a space.” Although originally budgeted at a cost of $35,000 for the land and $55,000 for the building, the total cost exceeded $250,000, largely due to post Civil War inflation. While the grand structure was in place, the inside walls were just bare plaster. The intricate painted stencil work the Temple is now known for was not added for another eight years. That work took three months to complete and the Temple was closed for that period.

The Architectural Inspiration

Believe it or not, the Moorish style of architecture was quite popular in Central European synagogues in the mid-19th century. Scholars credit the popularity of Moorish style synagogues to the fact that German Jews had great admiration of the Spanish Jews, or Sephardic Jewry, as the Sephardim were generally educated and active participants in European culture. This led German Jewish intellectuals and historians to delve into the study of Spanish Jewry, and to copy what they could. Since there was no Jewish architectural tradition, the Moorish style was very appealing as it provided the structure for expressing their pride in Judaism and freedom to build magnificent synagogues.

The Temple architectural style is predominately Moorish-Byzantine. Moorish features include the interior pillars and graceful arches, interlaced, geometric patterns of wall designs, and two minaret-like exterior towers. The interior floor plan and the domes in the ceiling are features of the Byzantine style. Rabbi Wise called Plum Street his “Alhambra Temple” because of its Moorish architecture, which resembled the grand Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain.

Moorish synagogues were built in the German cities of Berlin, Cologne, Leipzig, Mainz, and Frankfurt, as well as Budapest and Prague. Before coming to America, Rabbi Wise traveled through Germany and saw many of the Moorish synagogues there, and no doubt kept those images in his mind. Several temples, more or less resembling the style of Plum Street, were built around the same period, such as Temple Emanuel of San Francisco, which was destroyed by fire associated with the 1906 earthquake, and Central Synagogue in Manhattan, which is still in use. 

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Our Legacy

Next time you are in Plum Street Temple, take a look around – a real look.
Many of the original features are still present in the building. The pews that you sit in (although they have been re-covered several times), the wood flooring you walk on, as well as the pulpit and its furnishings, are all original elements. The same is true of the chandeliers, organ, stained glass, plaster molding and the Ner Tamid. So much history is right before our eyes! Take in all the majesty and allow it to transport you back in time. Envision the congregation as they first entered the Temple in 1866. What must they have thought? Imagine what those who came before us would say today if they could time-travel to Cincinnati in 2016. Would they be surprised to see that their beloved temple was still standing and still being used 150 years later? Would they be proud of our commitment to the past as a way to secure our congregation's future? I believe the answer would be a resounding "Yes!"

Further significant developments in the history of the Temple include adding electric to the building and sandblasting the brick to remove the grayish-white paint of the exterior. An extensive renovation project took place in 1994-95, when much work was done to preserve the historic beauty of the Temple. To learn more about Plum Street Temple and to see more photos, please visit wisetemple.org/plumstreet.

The Meaning Behind the Design

The design of the building says a lot about the special significance of the space. The pews are arranged so that men and women could sit together and pray together. There was an American flag proudly displayed on the bimah. Also, the magnificent organ and choir loft were signs that choirs and instrumental music were being incorporated as an important part of the worship service.

These features were new to Judaism at the time and represented a significant part of Rabbi Wise's dream of a Judaism that would be relevant to Jews in America. These details were not merely design elements, but part of the backbone of what became Reform Judaism. Interestingly, five-point stars are part of the decor within Plum Street Temple and reflect Wise's patriotic views of being Jewish and American. Rabbi Wise believed that “the Jew must become an American, in order to gain the proud self-consciousness of the free-born man…”

Historic Landmark Status

Plum Street Temple was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975. This distinction is overseen by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. Normally, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes are not eligible, but an exception is made if a property’s significance derives from its architectural distinction or historical importance. The qualification took years, with lots of paperwork and government approvals, but the congregational leaders didn’t give up. The purpose of landmark designation is “to identify and recognize nationally significant sites and to encourage their owners to preserve them,” according to the National Park Service. The landmark status gives the property an added layer of protection as well as the architectural distinction and recognition it richly deserves.
Our Legacy

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Mazel Tov...

Births
Faith and Aaron Ataman on the birth of their daughter, Amy Marmer and John Ataman on the birth of their granddaughter, and Leah Levine on the birth of her great-granddaughter, Shoshana Ataman.

Lindsey and Rabbi Michael Danziger on the birth of their daughter, Aviva Hazel Danziger.

Glen and Margie Meyer on the birth of their granddaughter, Lucy Isabelle Smock.

Danielle and Ken Revelson on the birth of their grandson, Hudson Keane Rice.

Diane and David Rosenberg on the birth of their granddaughter, Nora Gray Axe.

Lauren Scharf on the birth of her grandson, Lev Cohen Star.

Jan and Don Shuller on the birth of their granddaughter, Coraline “Cora” Lee Nickles.

Robin and Barry Snyder on the birth of their granddaughter, Callie Surdyk.

Judy and Steve Stein on the birth of their granddaughter, and Polly and Jacob Stein on the birth of their great-granddaughter, Mireille Shea Rieben.

Shelley and Dr. Alan Tarshis, and the late Dr. Nancy Goodman on the birth of their grandson, Charles Gregory Tarshis.

Ellen and Bill Wyler, on the birth of their granddaughter, Juliana Ortiz Wyler.

Engagement
Karen and David Hoguet on the engagement of their daughter, Jennifer Hoguet to Pete Sneider.

Weddings
Amy and Joel Fingerman on the marriage of their daughter, and Shirley Fingerman on the marriage of her granddaughter, Mollie Fingerman to Stuart Watton.

Debbie Kirshner and Paul Heldman on the marriage of their daughter and Anne Heldman on the marriage of her granddaughter, Liana Heldman to Jared Kraemer.

Betsy and Peter Levick on the marriage of their son, Steven Levick to Jamie Schwarz.

Dr. Elizabeth Petuchowski on the marriage of her grandson, Benjamin Petuchowski to Janna Fisher.

Elaine Fink and Bob Shapiro on the marriage of their daughter, Lily Fink Shapiro to Gavin Taylor.

Shelley and Dr. Alan Tarshis and the late Dr. Nancy Goodman on the marriage of their daughter, Ibby Tarshis to Nate Boroyan.

Ann and Bob Unger on the marriage of their son, Michael Unger to Ashley Read.

Condolences To...

Laurel and Ron Abrams on the death of her mother, Mildred M. Heller.

Tara and Bob Bebber on the death of his mother Joyce Bebber.

Deborah and Randy Birckhead on the death of his brother, Oliver “Tony” William Birckhead, Ill.

Family of Florence Heines Bloom.

Family of Ethel S. Brower.

Debbie Lehman-Cohen and Greg Cohen on the death of his mother and Ben and Ethan Cohen on the death of their grandmother, Marcia Josselson Cohen.

Cheryl and Steve Czulewicz on the death of his mother and Lexi and Marc Czulewicz on the death of their grandmother, Barbara Czulewicz.

Carol and Ken Kabel on the death of his mother and Hope and Grace Kabel on the death of their grandmother, Hortense Kabel.

Karen Young-Kanterman and Lenny Kanterman on the death of her mother, Jennie Miller.

Julie and Rick Kantor on the death of her mother, Nancy Samuels on the death of her sister, and Herschell Levine on the death of his special friend, Mary Jane Segal.


Mary Gerson and David Lichtenfeld on the death of their son, Gregory I. Lichtenfeld.

Drew and Heather Locaputo on the death of his father and Ella and Molly Locaputo on the death of their grandfather, John J. Locaputo.

Ann and Michael Margolis on the death of his father and Sara and Ben Margolis on the death of their grandfather, Marvin Margolis.

Jackie and Mitch Meyers on the death of their son and JoAnn and Eliot Meyers on the death of his brother, Barry A. Meyers.

Judy and Andy Orent on the death of her brother, Richard Stephen Cohn.

Jori and Neil Roth on the death of his mother, Ann Roth.

Barb and John Wells on the death of her mother, Jessie Schlossberg.
David Tochterman stepped on the plane, and scanned the rows of seats in front of him—though not without curiously peering into the cockpit first.

The aircraft looked just like the ones he’d seen on TV. Sure, flying for the first time was cool, but 16-year-old David was more excited about where he was headed that day in June: a four-week long NFTY trip to Israel. “When I boarded the plane, I was so excited,” he said. “It was almost surreal.” As it turns out, the flight began a series of firsts for the Wise Temple Youth Group board member.

After landing, David took his first steps on Israeli ground, eager to experience the events ahead. “I didn’t look at the itinerary before the trip because I wanted to be surprised,” he said. One unexpected eye-opener? The landscape in the Negev. “There were no trees and no grass for miles. I had never seen anything like it.”

In the days that followed, David found himself taken by Israel’s deep history and rich culture, gaining new perspectives and knowledge everywhere he went. Sleeping under the desert skies, hiking from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean and listening to Anne Frank’s best friend speak at Yad Vashem were just a few highlights. When the group climbed to the top of Mt. Shlomo, he was moved by the view and filled with a sense of Israeli pride. It was then that he remembered the Israeli flag he and a few others had found on the side of the road a few days earlier. And so David and his new friends took the blue-and-white square emblazoned with the Star of David out of his backpack and stuck it in the dirt. He smiled and looked out at the view again.

Back on the bus, David’s wonder grew as the group drove through a tunnel. The light at the end was getting closer. “We reached the light and there it was—Jerusalem,” he recalled. “You can feel the spirituality. It was breathtaking.” David marveled at the beauty of the city, and realized the magnitude of the moment. “I’ve seen all these pictures and I’ve heard so many stories, but to be there was unbelievable,” he said. Yet he also knew he was getting closer to the one place he looked forward to visiting most of all.

When the group approached the Western Wall, David felt a flood of emotions. As he read a prayer and tucked a small note into a crack, tears ran down the baseball catcher’s cheeks. “Being at the holiest site in Judaism, it was probably the most powerful feeling I’ve ever had.”

The emotions, experiences, and knowledge from the trip have answered some big questions for the high school junior. “Before I went, I was like, ‘OK, I’m a Jew and therefore I’m connected to Israel somehow,’ but I didn’t know what that connection was,” he said. “I didn’t realize what that connection could be until I went there.” Now, for David, Israel is much more than a place to visit. “Israel feels like a second home,” he said. “I now feel, as a Jew, I have a moral and a religious responsibility to support Israel.”

The trip sparked other changes in his life, too: he now attends services at Wise Temple, and has started re-reading his copy of the Bible. “I think it’s interesting and amazing to read the stories that happened in the places I visited this summer.” He is even considering a return to Israel for college or a gap year. “It’s opened my eyes to things I can look forward to after high school,” said David, who is set to graduate next May. “It’s a place I want to revisit.”
Experience Jewish Music Like Never Before
Elana Jagoda and Saul Kaye bring their folksy and bluesy styles of Jewish music to Wise Temple! See page 23 for more details.

Shabbat
Friday Night Service Featuring Music by Elana Jagoda and Saul Kaye
February 24, service at 6:15; 7:15 dinner
Each of their own artist with their own style of music, Elana and Saul come together for this musical prayer service.
RSVP at www.wisetemple.org/musician

Saturday Afternoon Meditation Workshop with Saul Kaye
February 25 at 2:00 PM
In this journey into the soul of Judaism, you'll explore new and ancient modalities of Jewish spiritual practice through song and meditation.

NextGen (young professionals ages 22 – 35)
Saturday Evening Havdalah and Coffee House with Saul Kaye
February 25 at 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Join Saul for a special service that uses all five senses to mark an end to Shabbat, but will carry you into the week ahead.

Religious School
Sunday Morning Family Concert with Elana Jagoda
February 26 at 11:00 AM
Elana is known to rock out during her family-focused folk concerts, and this event promises to be no different!