

Rabbi David Wolpe's

Off The Pulpit

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A Holy Room

What do four walls and a roof make? A potential for holiness.

A room has special significance in Jewish tradition. Students in Eastern Europe studied in "cheder," which means room. The holiest site in Jewish history, the *kadosh kedoshim*, was a room in the Temple. While not disdaining the beauties or wonder of nature, rooms hold much of the wonder and specialness of Judaism.

Your synagogue has rooms where people pray and where they meet. Both can be vessels of *kedushah*. Committees, too, can do sacred work. We may imagine that a meeting must be mundane, but in that room where funds are allocated for education or *tzedakah*, or decisions made to enable people to join and pray with the community, holiness lives. We are easily captured by the fantasy that holiness is the preserve of great figures of the past, or special, learned individuals; of mountaintops and ancient

sites. Yet in each humble room holiness can dwell. Next time you sit around a cracked tabletop in hard chairs, giving up an evening to go over budgets or plan activities, know that you are doing God's work. You just need the right people, and a room.

Rabbi Wolpe's new book *David: The Divided Heart* is available now.