

Shoftim: No Going Back

The Prayer for Our Country that we recite every Shabbat morning concludes with a vision of peace foreseen by the prophet Isaiah: “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

We pray that this vision become reality sooner than later. Until then, the reality of war is not lost on us, nor on the Israelites. As they prepare for the inevitable conflict that will come with their conquest of the Promised Land, the people are given their marching orders—or, rather, their stay-at-home orders. Should the time of battle arrive, “The officials shall address the troops, as follows: ‘Is there anyone who has built a new house but has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another dedicate it’” (Deuteronomy 20:5).

The new homeowner, vintner, and bridegroom who have built but not dedicated, planted but not harvested, engaged but not married are all to return home from the battlefield to see through their commitments and tie up the loose ends that they had left behind.

As we approach 700 days of the war in Gaza still ongoing, I think about all those men and women—recent graduates, newlyweds, soon-to-be parents—for whom there is no going back home. Lives have been put on hold if not, tragically, cut short; dreams have been deferred, some to remain forever unfulfilled. The only direction is forward, yet even what lies ahead is far from certain.

And so we turn to prayer once again—and this time we needn’t look further than the previous verse, which concludes the Prayer for the Soldiers of the IDF:

“For it is the LORD your God Who marches with you to do battle for you against your enemy, to bring you victory.”

Amen.
Shabbat shalom.
- Rabbi Moe Howard



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Affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

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Special thanks to the staff and lay leaders who make Shabbat services exceptional:

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MINCHA & KABBALAT SHABBAT

in Kohn Chapel
Every Friday at 5:45
Also available to watch on YouTube

DAILY MINYAN

in Kohn Chapel
Monday–Friday at 7:30 a.m. and
5:45 p.m. (in person)

Saturday 9:00 p.m. (online only)

Sunday (and National Holidays, when
held in-person) 8:30 a.m.



SINAI TEMPLE

6 ELUL 5785 | 30 AUGUST 2025



PARASHAT SHOF‘TIM | שופטים

Torah reading begins: Deuteronomy 19:14 (page 1099)

Maftir: Deuteronomy 21:7-9 (page 1106)

Haftarah: Isaiah 51:12-23 (page 1108) | The Fourth Haftarah of
Consolation

“What’s the Point? A Sermon for Elul:” Sermon by Rabbi Nicole Guzik

SHABBAT SERVICE

in Ziegler Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.

The Bar Mitzvah of Noah Nikravesh

Also available to watch on YouTube

TORAH AT THE TABLE

in CC Library Classroom at 9:00 a.m.

Honor or remember someone special
with a meaningful gift to Sinai Temple.
Scan this QR code to make a contribu-
tion in their name and create a lasting
tribute.



Find us on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@SinaiTemplePresents

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MEHRZAD ROSHAN

At Sinai Temple, membership is more than an affiliation — it is belonging to a sacred community rooted in tradition, connection, and purpose. As members, we are part of a multigenerational family that celebrates together, learns together, and lifts one another up in times of need.

Membership means showing up — not only for services and programs, but for one another. It means supporting our clergy, educators, and staff who inspire us daily. It means investing in the future of Jewish life through our schools, our youth, and our commitment to Conservative Judaism and to Israel.

Please join us in our sacred work. As we approach the High Holy Days, I invite you to reflect on what membership means to you. Let us continue building a community where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued.

Together, we are stronger.
Together, we are Sinai.

Together Again at Sinai Temple

As we look toward the beginning of a new year together at Sinai Temple, we want to take a moment to reach out to you. Our synagogue is more than just a building—it's a community, a family, and a place where we celebrate, learn, and support one another through every stage of life.

We know that life can get busy, and sometimes membership falls to the side. But we would truly love to welcome you back. By renewing your membership, you'll not only stay connected to meaningful traditions and services, but you'll also help strengthen the very community that has always been at the heart of Sinai.

This coming year is filled with opportunities—holiday celebrations, adult learning, youth programs, volunteer projects, and so much more. Your presence makes a difference.

If you'd like to rejoin, you can renew online at sinaitemple.org or call our office at dont know who's number. And if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out—we'd be happy to talk with you.

We miss you, and we hope to see you back soon.

Shabbat shalom,

Jamie Berman

Membership Vice President

WANT TO PLAN AN EVENT

Host your next event at Sinai Temple, where exquisite catering meets a stunning setting to create unforgettable experiences. Let our expert caterers transform your special occasion into a celebration filled with flavor, elegance, and impeccable service.

For more information, please contact Judy Begin at jbegin@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3222.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Dor Chadash End of Summer Party Sunday, August 31, 10:30 a.m.

Join us for a joyful end-of-summer morning filled with music, creativity, and connection for young families, grandparents, and the community. This special event supports Dor Chadash, Sinai Temple's initiative dedicated to nurturing young family programming.

Shuk to the Core: An Israeli Vendor Fair Thursday, September 4, 2:30-6:30 p.m.

Come support our Israeli brothers and sisters during this challenging time. Suggested Cover Charge of \$5USD per Adult at entrance to help cover the cost of travel, Children Free. Please register for further communications or to volunteer!

From Tragedy to Hope: Building Bridges After 9/11 Thursday, September 11, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Join us at Sinai Temple for a conversation with Co-Senior Rabbi Erez Sherman and Sharaka, amplifying moderate Arab voices for peace and partnership in the Middle East.

Weekly Parsha Class

Every Thursday at 8:30 a.m. starting Aug. 7th

Join us as Sinai Temple's rotating clergy lead an in-depth exploration of the weekly Parsha. This class is offered exclusively online.

Sinai Temple Women's Mission to Israel October 2025 Led by Rabbi Nicole Guzik

October 27 – November 2, 2025

For more information, email Gary Fayman at gfayman@sinaitemple.org. Deadline is 9/1.

Siddur Project

Share your personal prayers, art, or music for a new Sinai Temple Siddur created by and for our community. Submit your original works to inspire others and enrich our collective prayer experience. Submissions are sent to siddurproject@sinaitemple.org. Scan the QR below for more information.



YOM KIPPUR BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

Many Sinai Temple congregants find it meaningful to remember loved ones by including their names in the annual Book of Remembrance, which is distributed on Yom Kippur for the Yizkor service.

To include a loved one's name in the 5786 Book of Remembrance, please go to <https://bit.ly/4k8wSCW>, or scan the QR code below to enter the information online and pay with a credit card. Alternatively, enter the names below and return the form, along with a check (payable to Sinai Temple) in the amount of \$20 per individual, by Friday, September 5, 2025.



SPONSOR AN ONEG SHABBAT



Honor a simcha or yahrzeit by sponsoring an oneg! Your sponsorship will be featured in the Shabbat bulletin and announced

To sponsor, contact Judy Begin at jbegin@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3222.



Scan the QR code to RSVP and to learn about more events.

For more information contact Amanda Harrison at aharrison@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3246