

Lech Lecha: Of Stars and Dust

“We are made of star-stuff,” said the great (Jewish) astronomer Carl Sagan. The same elements forming the stardust of outer space form the cells of our bodies, so that—quite literally—“the cosmos is within us.”

The Torah made the same observation of our people, albeit metaphorically. God announces to our forefather Abraham (then Abram) that his offspring will be k’afar ha-aretz — “as the dust of the earth,” so ubiquitous as to be uncountable. Later, God bids Abram to number the stars in the heavens; as innumerable as they are, “so shall your offspring be.” The Jewish people, God promises, will be as universal as stars and dust—if not stardust.

But rabbis throughout history, and history itself, have read these comparisons differently. Jews, at one-fifth of one percent of the world’s population, are far from countless, nor has our growth ever met with worldwide acclaim. The medieval Italian commentator Ovadia Sforno likens the Jews to dust in that both are trodden over. In a similar vein, the Hasidic Rabbi Chaim of Sanz points out that the Jews, like stars, appear minuscule from afar. Yet dust outlasts the greatest empires, as the Jews have outlasted all of their oppressors; and stars, though small from an earthly perspective, are vast in the heavens’ eyes, as Jews are vast in Heaven’s eyes. We are, in spirit if not body, the stuff of stars and of dust.

“We are a way,” concludes Carl Sagan, “for the universe to know itself.” Though he spoke of humanity, such is true of his own tribe. We, the Jewish people, are a way for the universe to know itself: so long as we are around, it knows it’s not going anywhere.

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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Shabbat Daycare

Upper Traub | 9:45-11:45 a.m.

Potty Trained- 5-yrs-old

12 kids max

Shabbat Lounge

Youth Lounge & Rickles Gym

9:45-11:45 a.m. | Grade: 3rd- 5th

18 kids max

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

10 CHESHVAN 5786 | 1 NOVEMBER 2025



PARASHAT LECH LECHA | לך לך

Torah reading begins: Genesis 12:1 (page 69)

Maftir: Genesis 13:16-18 (page 76)

Haftarah: Isaiah 40:27-41:16 (page 95)

“Unexpected Journeys:” Sermon by Rabbi Erez Sherman

SHABBAT SERVICE

in Ziegler Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.

Also available to watch on [YouTube](#)

TORAH AT THE TABLE

in Blumenthal 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 contribution in their name and create a lasting tribute.



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

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MEHRZAD ROSHAN

Last week, we had the opportunity to visit four of Utah’s remarkable national parks: Escalante, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, and Zion.

Each park offered its own beauty and character, and together they created an unforgettable experience filled with awe and inspiration. The towering arches, sculpted cliffs, the weeping wall, the enormity of the landscape, and the sky filled with thousands of stars reminded us of the power of nature and creation. There were moments of quiet reflection, gratitude, and wonder.

Of all the places we visited, Zion National Park left the most lasting impression. It is a place where one can pause, breathe deeply, and feel connected to something much greater.

I was surprised to learn about the meaning behind the park’s name.

The word Zion comes from Hebrew and means “sanctuary” or “place of refuge.” Today, it remains a symbol of Jerusalem and the Land of Israel. The word also inspired the Zionism movement.

Standing in Zion National Park, surrounded by its beauty, I understood their choice. It truly feels like a sanctuary. The experience reminded us that spirituality is not confined to synagogue or prayer alone. Sometimes, we find it in nature, in the beauty of creation, and in moments that simply leave us in awe.

Jewish Day Schools: Shaping the Leaders of Tomorrow

We are proud to share the article below written by Eszter Neuman, Chair of Sinai Akiba Academy. Eszter’s thoughtful piece was recently published in *eJewish Philanthropy* and highlights the important role that Jewish Day Schools play in shaping our Jewish leaders.

Check out the article: <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com>

Sinai Temple Sisterhood

Sinai Temple Sisterhood enriches members’ lives through programs, classes, and volunteer opportunities. We run the Gift Shop and cater luncheons, with proceeds supporting Sinai Temple, its schools, partial Jewish camp scholarships for members’ families, and the wider community. Classes include Mah Jongg, Arts & Crafts, Balance, Calligraphy, and Needlepoint.

For more information, contact Marilyn Stern at marilynstern1@yahoo.com or visit sinaitemple.org/sisterhood. To receive our monthly newsletter, email Natalia Rojas at nrojas@sinaitemple.org.



TEMPLE EVENTS

One Day in October
Sunday, November 2 | 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Join us for an exclusive screening of One Day in October, a new anthology series based on true stories of survival and resilience from October 7, 2023. The episode “Sunrise” will be followed by a conversation moderated by Rabbi Sherman with Oct 7 survivors, special guests, and Fernando Szew, President of Fox Entertainment Global.

Informational Session: Hanukkah in Israel with Rabbi Gavriella Kornsgold
Tuesday, November 4 | 9:30 – 10:15 AM | Online

Join Rabbi Kornsgold to learn more about Sinai Temple’s upcoming trip to Israel and how you can be part of this meaningful journey.

The Impact of Antisemitism on Jewish Emotional Wellbeing

Tuesday, November 4 | 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Join the Sinai Temple Mental Health Center as we welcome the Jewish Community Mental Health Initiative. We will learn from JCMHI about ways we can support ourselves and each other in the face of rising antisemitism. This workshop will highlight our community’s strength, capacity for healing, and shared sense of resilience.

Informational Session: Men’s Volunteer Trip with Rabbi Avi Taff
Wednesday, November 5 | 5:00 – 5:45 PM

Join Rabbi Taff to learn more about Sinai Temple’s upcoming trip to Israel and how you can be part of this meaningful journey.

Foundations – Rebellious Torah: A Journey of Dialogue, Critique, and Spiritual Reflection with Rabbi Tova Leibovic-Douglas

Thursday, November 6 | 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Join us in a transformative exploration of the Torah and Rabbinic literature, where ancient texts become vibrant landscapes for discussion and critique. In this class, we will dive deep into the characters and stories of the Torah, not as passive narratives, but as dynamic invitations for intellectual and spiritual engagement.

Sinai Temple Attends a Clipper’s Game!
Monday, November 10 | 7:10 PM | Intuit Dome

Sinai Temple is heading to the new Intuit Dome to cheer on our favorite team the Clippers as they take on the Atlanta Hawks. Early access to the game! Arrive at 5:30 PM to watch your Clipper’s warm up. Game starts at 7:10 PM.

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.

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.

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