

A pair of sunglasses with green lenses is positioned diagonally across the frame. The background is a solid blue color. The text "WINTER & SPRING at SINAI" is overlaid on the image in white, bold, sans-serif font. The word "SINAI" is significantly larger than the other words.

# WINTER & SPRING at SINAI

CHICAGO SINAI CONGREGATION

[chicagosinai.org](http://chicagosinai.org) | 312-867-7000

# WINTER & SPRING at SINAI

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## UPCOMING SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS

Contact Rabbi Benoff at [rabbibenoff@chicagosinai.org](mailto:rabbibenoff@chicagosinai.org) to get involved or to learn more about these ongoing social action projects:

- **Stone Temple Community Garden** - weekly gardening in North Lawndale. All produce grown goes back to the community.
- **Blessings in a Backpack** - weekly packing at Sinai for students at nearby schools.
- **Sunday Supper at Fourth Presbyterian** - prepare and serve a hot meal for those in need.
- **RefugeeOne** - support a refugee family as they resettle in Chicago.
- **RAC-IL** - ongoing state-based advocacy work. Volunteers needed throughout the year.
- **Pilsen Food Pantry** - support the food pantry, social services, and community programing in Pilsen.
- **Chicago Night Ministry** - participate in sandwich making projects at Sinai and deliver food with the Night Ministry in under-served neighborhoods.
- **Spirit of Sinai Service Trip** - planning is beginning for 2026. More information forthcoming soon.

# WORSHIP

## **Shabbat Guest Speaker & Dinner with Rabbi Elka Abrahamson**

**Friday, February 28 | 6:15PM | In-person**



We are thrilled to welcome Rabbi Elka Abrahamson back to Chicago Sinai as our Shabbat guest speaker. Rabbi Abrahamson is the President of The Wexner Foundation, where she leads efforts to strengthen Jewish leadership in North America and public service leadership in Israel. She has been with the Foundation for many years, including roles as Director of the Graduate Fellowship Program and Vice President.

A native Minnesotan, Rabbi Abrahamson was ordained at HUC-JIR and has served as an Associate Rabbi and Co-Senior Rabbi at Mount Zion Temple in St. Paul, Minnesota. She has also led High Holy Days at Chicago Sinai Congregation in the past.

Rabbi Abrahamson is an engaging speaker and teacher, a popular scholar-in-residence, and has been recognized as one of the 50 most influential rabbis in North America by Newsweek. She is also a passionate student and teacher of Mussar and enjoys watching football, especially when the Vikings (or Buckeyes) are winning.

*Registration for dinner will be required.*

## **Second Night Passover Seder Sunday, April 13**

Join with your Sinai Family to celebrate Passover during a Second Night Seder.

*Location and time to be determined.*

*Registration will be required.*



## **Confirmation Service and Celebratory Reception**

**Friday, May 16 | 6:15pm**

Join us as we honor the Confirmation Class of 5785. This year's confirmation students will present reflections on their year of learning and come together with the congregation to confirm their commitment to Judaism. Following the service, we will have a festive oneg with the Confirmands and their families.

## **Shavuot in Partnership with the Chicago Jewish Community**

**Sunday, June 1**

Join us for a night of learning and community building. There is a custom in Jewish tradition on Shavuot to study Torah and enjoy sweet treats throughout the night.

*Location, time and more details to come!*

# LEARN

## Parent Book Club

### ***How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen***

**Begins Wednesday, January 8 | 5:30-6:30PM**

Are you navigating the ups and downs of parenting and looking for a supportive space to learn, share, and grow? Our monthly book club is the perfect place.

Each month we dive into a new section of *How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen* by Joanna Faber and Julie King.

*Registration will be required.*

## Introduction to Judaism

**Wednesdays | 6-7:30PM**

**Unit 2: January 15- February 26**

**Unit 3: April 2-May 14**

We welcome you to come and learn with us, wherever you are on your Jewish journey. The course is a general overview of key Jewish topics and ideas. There are no pre-requisites for this class, other than an eagerness to learn!

*Registration will be required.*

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## Scholar-In-Residence Weekend Featuring Dr. Betsy Stone

**Friday, January 24 and Sunday, January 26**

Betsy Stone is a retired psychologist who consults with camps, synagogues, clergy and Jewish institutions. She is the author of *Refuah Shlema*, a compilation of her previous eJP articles, recently published by Amazon.



- **Generational Difference**

**Friday, January 24 | 5PM | In-person**

Each generation is impacted by sociological, cultural, and historical trends. These influence how we see the world. Understanding these trends helps us to build bridges with other people. Join Dr. Betsy Stone to learn about generational trends and how they impact us in our personal and professional lives.

Dr. Stone will also deliver the sermon at Shabbat Services.

*Registration will be required.*

- **Stress and Anxiety in Our Lives and the Lives of Our Children**

**Sunday, January 26 | 10AM | In-person**

Data tells us that we, and our children, are living through a time of increasing stress. How does it impact our brains, our bodies, and our behavior? What can we do to manage ourselves and to help our children navigate the world?



## **Rabbi Dalia Marx**

### ***From Time to Time: Journeys in the Jewish Calendar***

**Sunday, February 2 | 10AM | In-person**



Can you picture a festive celebration on the day that begins the tax year? Tu BiShvat was originally a day like that!

Tu BiShvat, the “New Year of the Trees”, was created to calculate tithes from fruits that grow on trees, a kind of income tax day based on tithes, but it became much more than addressing this technical procedure - it is a multifaceted celebration dealing with social justice, environmental care, love of the land and more.

Come, learn, experience and celebrate a Jewish festival that like a tree evolves and changes its character throughout the ages.

Rabbi Dalia Marx, Ph.D., a professor at the Jerusalem campus of the Hebrew Union College, is the author of the recent book *From Time to Time: Journeys in the Jewish Calendar*. This book is a delightful and insightful road map for Jewish time travel, helping modern readers navigate the deeper meanings of each moment and season on the Jewish calendar.

## **Beyond the Labels:**

### **Raising and Supporting Neurodiverse Children**

**Wednesday, February 19 | Time TBD**

Beyond the Labels: Raising and Supporting Neurodiverse Children is a parent education program led by Dr. Sol Rappaport and Dr. Kara Anast, experts in child psychology and neurodiversity. This session is designed to provide parents with insights and strategies to better understand, raise, and support children who are neurodiverse, such as those with ADHD, autism, learning differences, or other developmental variations. This initiative has been made possible through the support of The Jewish United Fund.

## **Let's Talk About It – JCFS Program Weekend**

**Friday, February 21 | 6:15PM | In-person**

***(other events throughout the weekend TBD)***

During Shabbat services, we will hear from a speaker on the topic of estrangement, and we will explore the complexities of estranged relationships.

## **Together with Tots**

**Tuesdays and/or Fridays | 12-1PM | In-person**

Together with Tots' hands-on classes are designed for you, or a caregiver, and your child (12-24 months) to explore and discover the wonderful world of play and learning. Together, you will experience art, dramatic play, songs, fingerplays, and much more, all under the expert guidance of an early childhood educator.



***Registration will be required.***

# ACT

## Mitzvah Day

**Sunday, January 19 | 10AM-12PM | In-person**

On the Sunday of MLK Jr. weekend, join us for our annual Mitzvah Day. We will be celebrating Sinai's long-standing commitment to social action and honor the memory and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. We will have a range of projects in the building that will be meaningful for all ages!

*Registration will be required.*



## Tu BiShvat Lobby Day

**Thursday, February 13 | Zoom**

Celebrate Tu BiShvat by advocating for environmental justice. In partnership with the Jewish Earth Alliance, we will develop the basic skills of lobbying, learn the vital actions our leaders can take, and speak to our local representatives via Zoom.

## Maot Chitim

**Sunday, April 6 | 10-11AM | In-person**

Chicago Sinai has teamed up with Maot Chitim of Greater Chicago to deliver boxes of food in preparation for Passover to members of the Chicagoland Jewish Community in need. As a volunteer, you will be assigned delivery to 2-3 families in nearby Chicago communities (including Lakeview, Near North, Lincoln Park, DePaul, Wrigleyville, North Halsted, West Loop, and West Town).

*Registration will be required.*

# ENGAGE

## **Torah on Tap: The Power of Jewish Storytelling**

**Thursday, January 9 | 6:30PM | In-person**

This month we will explore the Jewish tradition of storytelling! Together, we will delve into the history and significance of this tradition, uncovering how stories sustain us as individuals and as a community.

This discussion will allow us to reflect on how stories have the power to inspire growth, deepen connections, and guide us toward understanding. You will also have the chance to consider your own personal stories, and the role they play in shaping your identity and community.

Torah on Tap is a monthly series for people in their 20's and 30's to come together as a community and participate in Jewish learning.

*Registration will be required.*

## **Sinai Forum: A Legacy of Healing and Tradition with Dr. Thom Lobe**

**Thursday, January 16 | 11:30AM Lunch | 12:30PM Program Begins**



Join us for this bimonthly program featuring remarkable Sinai members who share their expertise and experiences. Speakers inspire learning and connection, fostering meaningful conversations within our congregation.

This Sinai Forum will feature Dr. Thom Lobe, a renowned Pediatric Surgeon and Mohel. In this intimate conversation, Dr. Lobe will discuss his 50 year medical career, what his work as a mohel means to him, and his experience combining the two. This event will provide

wonderful insights from his extraordinary career, and an opportunity to reflect on the intersection of medical innovation, mentorship, and Jewish tradition.

*Registration will be required.*

## **Prospective Preschool Parent Coffee**

**Friday, January 17 | 10AM | In-person**



We're excited to invite you to a casual coffee gathering at Sinai Preschool! This is a great opportunity to learn about our programs, see our classes in action, and connect with current and prospective parents. Explore our classrooms and discover what makes Sinai's Preschool a special place for your child.

## ENGAGE *continued*

### **jBaby New Parents Connect**

**January, February, March, and April**

Meet other first-time parents and their babies, share ideas, ask questions, and learn from experts in relevant topics such as infant and child development, sleep, changing relationships, food and nutrition, and more.

This program is made possible by a grant from jBaby Chicago, a program of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.

*Registration will be required.*

### **Sinai Outings: Tu BiShvat at Lincoln Park Conservatory**

**Thursday, February 13 | 2PM**

Sinai Outings is a program designed to engage adults through adventures and learning opportunities around the city.

Celebrate Tu BiShvat, the “New Year of the Trees,” with a special Sinai Outing at the Lincoln Park Conservatory!

In the midst of February’s gray skies, this outing offers a vibrant escape into the lush greenery of the conservatory. Together, we will explore the stunning plant collections, while getting to know other Sinai members. We can’t wait to celebrate with you!

*Registration will be required.*



***Save the Date for future Sinai Outings***

**Wednesday, April 9**

**Tuesday, June 10**

*Time and Location to be determined.*



## **Torah on Tap: Tu BiShvat and Environmental Justice**

**Thursday, February 27 | 6:00PM | In-person**

Celebrate Tu BiShvat, the “New Year of the Trees”, with an evening of conversation about environmental justice and Jewish teachings on caring for the Earth. Together, we’ll explore the connection between the Tu BiShvat’s themes of renewal and sustainability, and how our tradition calls us to protect and preserve the natural world.

*Registration will be required.*

## **Purim Spiel and Carnival**

**Sunday, March 9 | 10AM | In-person**

It’s time to *Defy Tragedy* with our *Wicked Purim Spiel*! Join us as we retell the story of Esther through the lens of the iconic musical, exploring unlikely heroes, misunderstood villains, and the powerful question: Who’s truly wicked?

Come in costume, sing Purim songs, and enjoy our annual Purim Carnival filled with games and prizes immediately following the spiel.

*Registration will be required.*



## **Sinai Forum: A Conversation on Community, Leadership, and the Future of Chicago Public Schools with Ellen Rosenfeld**

**Thursday, March 13 | 11:30AM Lunch | 12:30PM Program Begins**



Hear from Ellen Rosenfeld, a newly elected CPS school board member and parent, and Sinai congregant. Ellen believes that her “diverse experiences have equipped her with a deep understanding of the complexities and opportunities within our education system, especially in CPS”.

This Sinai Forum will address the current state of District 4 and the importance of Chicago’s newly elected school board.

*Registration will be required.*

## **Women’s Retreat**

**Friday, April 4-Sunday, April 6 | OSRUI**

Join us for the 9th Annual Women’s Retreat, a special time to connect with other Sinai women, pray, and restore and refresh our souls. This year, we’ll be heading up to OSRUI (our Reform Summer Camp in Wisconsin) for a weekend of relaxation, rejuvenation, and learning. Enjoy meaningful moments, fun activities, and the opportunity to deepen friendships while making new ones. It’s the perfect chance to unwind, recharge, and have a whole lot of fun!

*Registration will be required.*

## ENGAGE *continued*

### **Torah on Tap: Slavery, the Exodus, and Jewish History**

Thursday, April 10 | 7PM | In-person

Jewish history is deeply rooted in the powerful themes of slavery and freedom. Explore the story of the Exodus and its timeless message, while also examining the history of slavery in Judaism and Jewish America. And of course, we'll enjoy some pre-Passover pizza.

*Registration will be required.*

### **Torah on Tap: Exploring Lag B'Omer**

Thursday, May 15 | 6:30PM | In-person

Learn about the history and significance of Lag B'Omer! Together, we'll explore the origins of this unique holiday, its connection to Jewish tradition, and how it has evolved over time.

*Registration will be required.*

***Save the Date for the next Torah on Tap***

June 17 | 6:30PM | Location to be determined

### **Sinai Alumni Reunion**

Friday, June 13 | 6:15PM | In-person and Zoom

Chicago Sinai has a rich history, and it's the people who have been part of it that make Sinai such a special community.

If you were confirmed at Sinai, we would like to celebrate you. Join us at Shabbat services to reconnect with one another and reflect on the lasting impact Sinai has had on our lives. Rejoice in our shared experiences and the community we've built.

*More details to follow.*



### **Music and Movement with Sarah Parker**

**In-person:** Children ages 3 months - 2 years with a parent or caregiver

These interactive classes bring music and movement to life! Live and recorded music, along with creative and traditional songs and fingerplays, are fun, stimulating, and developmentally appropriate for our youngest learners.

*Dates and times are to be determined.*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Jason Taylor – *Co-President*

Alec Harris – *Immediate Past President*

Penny Pollack – *Vice President*

Alexandra Salomon – *Vice President*

Daniel Laytin – *Vice President*

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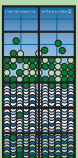
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