

Announcements – March 10

Welcome, everyone. I'm so glad you could join us in our sanctuary or your own sacred space.

Thank you to Robin Kressbach for lighting our Shabbat candles this evening.

Thank you to our musicians Phoenix Bird, Randy Deutch and Erin McAdams.

We would also like to welcome Rev. Glen Luhrs and the members of St. Paul's United Methodist Church who are visiting tonight. A special thank you to their docent, Arlene Dryer, as well.

2-3 minutes. That's the average duration of a TV commercial break, assuming live coverage. Some days, my family and I complain about commercials, some days we watch them and find a new product or two, and some days we just ignore them like white noise.

2-3 minutes. That's the average duration of my comments at Shabbat. As you can imagine, I've gotten feedback. Folks who share directly with me have been supportive, favorable, and inviting. Input which has been offered second hand indicate my comments are too long and irrelevant. Both views are fair, and I take neither as a win nor a failure. But it is a conundrum.

But that is apropos for leading this incredibly diverse and passionate congregation of ours. Pleasing everyone is not only impossible, it is also not the objective.

What is the objective, however, is transparency, vision, and with a little luck, some inspiration. The topics I share with you are things that our congregation deserves to know. The consistent heartbeat of Shabbat provides the timely venue. Nothing would pain me more than for our congregation to say, "I never knew" or "You never told me," or "Had I known." So for 2-3 minutes on most Shabbats, I'm telling you about the things that I see, have learned, or am sensing from this vantage point called the Temple Presidency.

For 2-3 minutes I've tried to make public the value of Temple, its purpose, and our respective membership here. I've been candid about our challenges to be financially self-sustaining. I've spoken of community building and member engagement, imploring us to connect with one another so that we are the warm and welcoming place we intend to be. I've described some possibilities for our building, blending modern with historic so we can carry on l'dor v'dor. I've shared the brilliance of our clergy and staff who work tirelessly on our congregation's behalf. And I've asked our congregation to participate IN our congregation – in services, at programs, at special events and the like – so that we ARE a congregation. These messages pave the way for us to celebrate successes like our recent fundraiser that, through the hard work of a dedicated team and the generosity of members and community friends, added over \$100K to our coffers.

I'll puzzle on this comments conundrum a bit and see I can find a better middle ground. In the meantime, at least know these messages are brought to you with good intentions, a good understanding of our present, and hope for our future. Temple Beth-El is OUR Temple – not mine, not the Board's, not the clergy or staff's – so it is in our collective best interest to know as much as we can about this sacred institution that we all love, even if it's thru a little white noise every now and then.

Here are some upcoming events at the Temple:

1. Join us Thursday, March 16, at 1 p.m. at Temple Beth-El to get deputized to register people to vote! Volunteer Deputy Registrars are entrusted with officially registering voters in Texas. If you would like to attend, please get in touch with Ross Halfant.
2. Join us for the annual Men's Seder on Wednesday, March 29, at 7:00 p.m. at the Barn Door Restaurant. The cost is \$35 per person, including seder items, kosher wine, salad, dinner, dessert, fruit, and tea and coffee. Please register by visiting the Temple website.
3. Also on Wednesday, March 29, at 7:00 p.m. is the Women's Seder at Temple Beth-El. The cost is \$18 for Temple Members, \$25 for non Members. Ritual seder foods and dessert will be served. If you plan to attend, we recommend eating dinner before the event. Please register by visiting the Temple website.
4. Don't miss out on our TBE Trip to Eastern Europe this October! Experience great centers of Jewish culture and creativity, examine and mourn the Holocaust and meet those revitalizing Jewish life in Poland and Germany on this trip as you visit Warsaw and Berlin. Please see the Temple website to view the full itinerary and register. The registration deadline is March 20.

Everything going on at Temple is listed on our website calendar and in our weekly email, which arrives in your inbox around 4 p.m. every Thursday.

Announcements – March 24

Welcome, everyone. I'm so glad you could join us in our sanctuary or your own sacred space.

Mazal tov to Ellen Barshop

Thank you to Ellen Barshop, Lauren Barshop and Kayla Bistre-Varon (Bis-tray Vaa-roan) and Jody Reddy for lighting candles.

We would also like to thank the Temple Band members: Rabbi Alan Berlin, Rami El-Farrah, Sarek Gutierrez, Brandon Henson, Dan Klein, and Erin McAdams.

Here are some upcoming events at the Temple:

5. **Passover**

- Passover is almost here, and we have multiple ways to observe the holiday.
Next Wednesday, March 29 at 7pm we have both the **Men's Seder** at the Barn Door and the **Women's Seder** at Temple Beth-El. There is still time to sign up for both events.
- Passover begins on Wednesday, April 5th.
 - **First Day Festival Worship Service** will be Thursday, April 6 at 10:30 a.m.
 - Our **Community Seder** will be at 6:00 p.m. that same evening. The deadline to sign up for Seder is March 31.
 - **Last Day Passover Festival Worship Service with Yizkor-Memorial Payers** are on Wednesday, April 12 at 10:30 a.m.
 - As a reminder, the Temple offices will be closed both the first and last days of the holiday.

6. Eric Sundby

- Please join us this Sunday, March 26 at 9:30 a.m. in the Barshop Auditorium for “The Last Prisoners of War: Art Restitution, The Holocaust and Nazi-Looted Art in America” from guest speaker Eric Sundby, Vice President of the Holocaust Art Restitution Project. You can RSVP through the link in the weekly email or on the Temple website.

Everything going on at Temple is listed on our website calendar and in our weekly email, which arrives in your inbox around 4 p.m. every Thursday