



September 2023

☆ Today...and for Generations ☆

Volume XXXVIII, Issue 8

Is Oppenheimer a Jewish Movie?



edy of J. Robert Oppenheimer. The Jewish themes in this film are even more apparent than in the "Barbie" movie featured here last month.

The movie depicts seminal events in the life of Julius Robert Oppenheimer, best known for leading the research for the atomic bomb at the Los Alamos Laboratory. He was born to Jewish immigrant parents from Prussia and was raised in affluent Manhattan.

The Oppenheims were assimilated Jews affiliated with New York's Society for Ethical Culture. The organization was founded by Felix Adler, the son of Rabbi Samuel Adler, a leading figure in European Reform Judaism. The society embraced a global intellectual culture. Jews in the organization were taught to give up their biblical identity, distinguishing themselves instead through social concern and good deeds.

Robert and his brother Frank attended the Society's Ethical Culture school and were raised on a curriculum of "the advanced liberal concepts of social justice, racial equality, and intellectual freedom." Since the Ethical school did not discriminate because of race, color, or creed in a time of quotas, it had a disproportionately large number of Jewish students.

As such, Oppenheimer was raised on liberal ideals and later surrounded himself with like-minded left-wing ideologues. In his passionate fight against

fascism, he used the communist party to send donations to the refugees of the Spanish Civil War. Oppenheimer became a communist "fellow traveler" although not a party member. He later sent aid to his Jewish colleagues in Germany to stop the rise of the Nazis and fight fascism.

A different cinematic approach to Judaism is reflected through the depiction of Isidore Isaac Rabi, Oppenheimer's colleague and lifelong supporter. Raised in an Orthodox Jewish home on the Lower East Side, Rabi, in the film, is depicted as a warm-hearted *Galitzyaner* who peppers his remarks in Yiddish expressions Oppenheimer does not understand. Oppenheimer was more comfortable with Sanskrit than Hebrew, and after the first test of the atomic bomb, he quoted the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds." Rabi lamented, "Why not the Talmud?"

In Rabi, we see a more traditional Jew, one who is not only viscerally concerned with the apparent moral conflicts with developing the bomb but also warmly expresses his concern for the welfare of his mentor, constantly encouraging him, "Eat!"

Finally, there is the treatment of Lewis Strauss, Oppenheimer's nemesis. As chair of the Atomic Energy Commission, Strauss led a crusade against Oppenheimer's security clearance. Strauss was an arch-conservative and a protégé of Herbert Hoover. On several occasions, the men's disagreements on policy — Strauss was security-minded and supported the development of the hydrogen bomb; Oppenheimer favored nuclear transparency in the international community and fought the production of thermonuclear weapons — manifested in Oppenheimer publicly humiliating Strauss, earning his suspicion and his hatred.

Strauss (who pronounced his name

Straws) was an active Reform Jew. He was the president of Manhattan's flagship Reform congregation Temple Emanu-El for over a decade, a member of the executive committee of the American Jewish Committee, and honorary president of the Jewish Agricultural Society.

Ultimately, this film not only tells the story of scientific giants and their struggles but also depicts a kaleidoscope of Jewish identities. These religious identities are also very much apparent in contemporary Jewish life. Do we most identify as ethical Jews, organizational Jews, observant Jews, or *Tikkun Olam* politically oriented Jews? And does our religious approach stand up to our day's ever more complex moral dilemmas?

In the end, this movie addresses the idea of repentance, and the inevitability of falling short in a morally complex world, a significant theme of our Season of Repentance. Like the greats of decades past, we face the moral ambiguities of war and peace in an atomic age and robust political divisions in dealing with our enemies and allies.. What are the implications of our own Jewish choices in grappling with the challenges of modern society?

Elie Wiesel once wrote of the great scientist: "Oppenheimer embodies the questions, not the answers. He endlessly posed riddles, not solutions." Likewise, the Nolan film leaves us with more questions than answers, which makes it a Jewish movie, to be sure.

I look forward to grappling with our own religious, cultural, and ethical dilemmas in the coming year.

L'shana Tova,
Rabbi Judy Chessin



THE LIGHT

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Our Lives

Do you have news or need prayers? Contact the Temple office at 937-435-3400 to share a birth, marriage or seek get-well wishes. Your congregation cares about you!

The congregation sends prayers of *Refuah Shlema* to:

Madalyn Ammons, Arlene Graham, Bill Kell, Benjy Klein, Carla Scherr, Ron Solomon, Laurie Verson, and Peter Wells.

The Congregation is saddened to announce the passing of our beloved member Jackie Fishman. Jackie was an active Temple Beth Or member who sponsored countless *Oneg Shabbat* receptions, and worked tirelessly on our board and many committees. She was a beloved matriarch for generations of Temple Beth Or children until she could no longer attend services. She is greatly missed. May her memory be a blessing.

We mourn the loss of David G. London with his wife Kim Dinsmore and daughters Allie and Kevin Fields and Stephanie and Adam Cronstein. Dave was a past president of our congregation and has been involved in every aspect of running Temple Beth Or for decades. He was an avid enthusiast of Torah Study, a regular Brisketeer, and the purveyor of fine whiskeys and smoked salmon at countless events, and an all-around *mensch*. He will be sorely missed.

The congregation sends a hearty *Mazel Tov* to:

Kevin and Karen Bressler and family on the birth of their granddaughter Hallie Olivia Appel. Proud parents are Kaitlin and Brant Appel.

September Yahrzeit Remembrances

Temple Beth Or remembers our loved ones on the Sabbath nearest the anniversary of their passing or *yahrzeit*. The following names will be read during services this month.

September 1

Allen Beckerman 8/30
Sylvia R. Moss 8/30
Edward Nieman 8/31
Lillian S. Cream 9/1
Robert Gordon 9/1
Beatrice Grossman 9/1
Faye Siegel 9/1
Martin Robins 9/2
Lewis Plotkin 9/3
Adam Spalter 9/3
Gustav Carsch 9/4
Thelma Karp 9/4
Mary Seidenschmidt 9/4
Scott Nelson 9/5

September 8

Eddie Rose 9/6
Tom Carsch 9/7
Abraham Moltz 9/7
Stanley Goldberg 9/8
Mindy Ross Lakin 9/8
Jean Ballon 9/9
Kurt S. Farnbacher 9/9
Howard Kolodny 9/9
Aaron Lauber 9/9
Ellie Waldbaum-Baier 9/9
Martin Cauper 9/10
Randal Knight 9/10
Richard Lyden 9/11
Max Scheiner 9/11
Isaac Kruke 9/12
Jerome Sherman 9/12
Radene Goldberg Stump 9/12

September 15

Hilda Davis 9/13
James H. Fortner 9/13
Numa Lavy 9/14
Jean Shwartz 9/14
Freda Swillinger 9/14
Joel L. Bernstein 9/15
Miriam Burte 9/15
Gilbert Cramer 9/15
Kayla Klein 9/16
Sol J. Weiner 9/16
Randal Knight 9/17

September 22

Cecelia Spiegelman 9/20
Malcolm Block 9/21
David Shapiro 9/22
Sam Simon 9/22
Pasha Bettman 9/23
Senia Katz 9/23
Frank Steiner 9/23
Ann Arnoff 9/24
David Fishman 9/24
Tina Marie Kleinman 9/24
Gus Holstine 9/25
Pat Factora 9/26
Jerome Lehrer 9/26
Melia Levine 9/26
Ruth Penn 9/26

September 29

Jennifer Berks 9/27
Lori Etta Ellman 9/27
Leah Gerber 9/27
Ted Halasz 9/27
Bill Lanham 9/27
Sam Novick 9/27
Robert Fortner 9/28
Paul Molnar 9/28
Herbert Strauss 9/28
Sarah Silverman 9/30
William Alfred Clark 10/1
Martin J. Dicker 10/1
Leo Finkelstein, Jr. 10/1
Lou Droz 10/2
Morton Gross 10/2
Theodore Paull 10/2
Mildred Sanderson 10/2
Dr. Harry H. Epstein 10/3
Sarah Karp 10/3
Aliya Rachel Lindsay 10/3
Stephen MacPherson 10/3
Lester Stein 10/3



We Couldn't Do It Without You!

Temple Beth Or could not accomplish anything without teamwork. Thanks to every contribution of prayer, time and funds, we can fulfill our mission of being a warm, welcoming place for ALL.

Financial Donations

General Fund

In Memory of:

Eric Schiff
Marilyn Marx
Lorraine Schiff
Marilyn Marx

In Honor of:

Mimi and Stuart Rose's Special Anniversary
Larry Glickler and Charles Quinn
The leadership of Rabbi Judy Chessin
Shelley and Kim Goldenberg

In Memory of:

Gennady Katz
Yana Kleinman
Albert Youra
Mary and Gary Youra

Edwin Klein
Benjy Klein

Sydell Merl

Pamela and Stuart Merl

Rose Landerman

Myrna Nelson

Marsha Goldberg

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Jonah Chesen

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Caryl and Don Weckstein

Stanley Levine

Shara and Steven Taylor

Irwin Grossman

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Ken Schumacher

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Marni Flagel

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Mimi and Stuart Rose's 10th Anniversary
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In Memory of:

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In Honor of:

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In Memory of:

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Adult Education Fund

In Memory of:

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Jane and Gary Hochstein
Laurie and Dave Verson
Karen and John Granby
Marc Low
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Oneg Shabbat Fund

Get Well:

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Thank you to our Donors!

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Scot & Linda Denmark
Mark Dlott & Dale Goldberg
Alex & Lyuda Fishman
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Carla Scherr
Ira Segalewitz
Craig & Andrea Self
Lois Solganik
Dan Weiner
Gary & Mary Youra

Temple's many funds provide a meaningful way to mark the life cycle events we all experience. From a birth to a graduation, from the recovery from an illness to a promotion or marriage, we all experience joy and sadness throughout our lives. To express your caring and concern, please send your tribute card and minimum \$10 donation to the Temple office. All donations are tax deductible.

From Career to Every Day



Every Rosh Hashanah, we talk about the year to come and the year that was. And in at least one

form, I talk about the slinky of life. A slinky is a circle, a strand that winds its way up and up and up. Stretched out, it can be like a straight line but put together; it can look like rungs on a circular ladder.

I often think of the year the same as a slinky, linear in some ways, circular in other ways, but always a slightly different place than where we were yesterday or last year.

Last year, on Rosh Hashanah, I talked about the meaning of the question “How are you?” and its ability to be more than just a greeting. Today, the answer to that question would vary by the day. As many of you know, Rachel and I are getting ready to meet our first child in January (if all goes according to schedule).

Rachel and I work and care for children in some capacity every working day.

As a pediatrician, Rachel spends days in clinics keeping kids healthy through check-ups and primary care. She also spends long hours (sometimes 24+ hours in a row) managing the care of the most ill children in the pediatric intensive



care unit at Children’s Hospital of Cincinnati.

Meanwhile, I spend my days planning lessons, teaching, and working with teachers to ensure our *Makor* program is as successful as possible. I stand in front of students at local schools and universities and teach about Judaism, holidays, and religion in general. And I help with all the small day-to-day needs of our *Makor* Sunday school.

But when we come home, it’s just Rachel and I (and our dog, Wrigley).

Not so long from now, we look forward to welcoming our first child as our family grows from two to three. Taking care of students and children will not just be our professions but our daily life, and we couldn’t be more excited to start writing this next chapter of our family life.

Working in a synagogue comes with

the benefit of having a huge community that is always willing to help at a moment’s notice. And I know we will be able to call on so many people to guide us and provide the support we need as we learn what it means to be parents, in addition to being Rabbi and Doctor.

The slinky of life keeps on propelling us forward, and next year, I hope to have so many new and beautiful lessons (and pictures) to share with our community.

L’shanah Tovah u’Metukah u’Beriah

To a happy, sweet (and especially for us this year), healthy new year,

Rabbi Ben Azriel

Volunteer Collaborations

Join the JCRC (Jewish Community Relations Council) and Dayton’s synagogues and organizations in helping the Dayton Food Bank several times this year. We are looking for five volunteers for each event. The first event is called Spread the LuLov(e), September 27, 8:30 am – noon.

Save the date for Tuesday, December 19th 9:00-11:00 am to join the Mac(and cheese)abees Team assembling holiday gifts for seniors.

Call the office to secure your volunteer spot.





AT THE DAYTON FOOD BANK

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

8:30AM - 12:00PM @ DAYTON FOODBANK

56 Armor Place, Dayton, 45417

RSVP by September 18 at jewishdayton.org

Any questions may be directed to Cathy Gardner at cgardner@jfgd.net.

In proximity with Sukkot, we ask you to join our LuLOVE team for a morning of service. We are seeking volunteers, age 16 or older, to help load vehicles with food in the Foodbank's drive thru. Please wear closed-toe shoes and dress for cool weather, if applicable.

This JCRC project is being held in collaboration with: Beth Abraham Synagogue, Beth Jacob Synagogue, Chabad, Temple Beth Or and Temple Israel.



Adult Education

Chai Mitzvah September 14th 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

(Designed to “grow your Judaism”)



Due to generous financial underwriting from Rabbi Chessin, Adult Education at Temple Beth Or has been able to host *Chai Mitzvah* for a couple of years. Adult Education is pleased to offer a new *Chai Mitzvah* program that honors and celebrates each month of the year, as well as a woman of the Bible, whose life illustrates that month's focus. The heart of all *Chai Mitzvah* programming is respectful, honest discussion that values diverse viewpoints. You are encouraged to register for as many monthly discussions as you can make time for. Let's talk together to grow our Judaism individually. To register, call 937-435-3400, or visit: <https://templebethor.com/adult-education>

An Exploration of the Jewish Short Story September 27th

Please join the Zoom discussion, on September 27th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Each month's discussion will center on one short story that has Jewish content or is written by a Jewish author. We intend to have fun and learn from each other's understanding of the stories. You are encouraged to register for one session or as many monthly discussions as you would like. To register, call 937-435-3400 or visit: <https://templebethor.com/adult-education>



Music is Prayer

In March, Adult Education at Temple Beth Or began something new. Each month, the Committee provides a link to a musical selection related to Judaism that we find compelling. We hope you will take a few minutes each month to listen.

Go to <https://templebethor.com/adult-education> to access the music.



Enjoy! Additionally, the Committee is interested in your feedback to this initiative. Please take a few minutes to email the Committee with your thoughts about any selections you listen to ruth.schumacher@wright.edu. Thank you.

"Music is prayer."

Ludwig Boerne (German-Jewish political writer and satirist, late 1700's, early 1800's)

The Adult Education Committee (AEC) of Temple Beth Or believes that congregants represent a rich set of skills, abilities and interests that can benefit others. Please contact the AEC (ruth.schumacher@wright.edu; 937-672-3368). We want to support YOU!



Help Make Our New Year Sweet!

If you are willing to help sweeten our *Rosh Hashanah* evening reception (Friday, September 15), sign up here:

bit.ly/451zcVa

September Chai-Lights

Friday, September 1, 6:30 p.m. In Person & Streaming

"Rock of Ages" musical *Shabbat* with Marc Rossio and Rabbi Ben Azriel.

Friday, September 8, 6:30 p.m. In Person & Streaming

Selichot Shabbat led by Rabbi Judy Chessin.

Saturday, September 9, 10:00 a.m. On Zoom

Apocryphal Study: Join Rabbi Chessin and our study group.

Saturday, September 9, 8:30 p.m. at Temple Israel

Community *Selichot* Service: Our community rabbis and the Dayton Jewish Chorale will lead the *Selichot* Service which marks the beginning of the 5784 High Holiday season. The service will take place at Temple Israel with a dessert reception at 8:30 p.m. followed by the Service at 9:00 p.m.

Friday, September 14, 7:00 p.m. On Zoom

Chai Mitzvah: You are encouraged to register for as many monthly discussions as you can make time for. Let's talk together to grow our Judaism individually. Please see page 9 for details.

Friday, September 15, 7:30 p.m. In Person

Erev Rosh Hashanah: Join us *Erev Rosh Hashanah*. Live and Streaming.

Saturday, September 16

10 a.m. *Rosh Hashanah* Service, live and streaming;
1:00 p.m. Family Interactive Service (live only)

Sunday, September 17, 2:00 p.m. at Frost Farmstead

Join us for *Rosh Hashanah* Day 2 at Frost Farmstead. See page 8 for details.

Friday, September 22, 6:30 p.m. On Zoom

Zoomagogue – *Shabbat* Zoom (only) Service with Rabbi Judy Chessin.

Sunday, September 24, 7:30 p.m. In Person & Streaming

Kol Nidre: Join us for *Kol Nidre* Service, live and streaming

Monday, September 25

10 a.m. *Yom Kippur* Service, live and streaming;
11:30 Family Service
Discussion and study throughout the day
4:00 pm *Yizkor*
5:00 pm *Neilah*
Followed by light break-the-fast

Wednesday, September 27, 7:00 p.m. On Zoom

An Exploration of the Jewish Short Story: Please see page 6 for details.

Friday, September 29, 5:30 p.m. In Person

Southern Fried Chicken in the *Sukkah*: Crispy Crunchy Chicken will be provided, please bring a dessert.



Together Again High Holy Days 5784 with Temple Beth Or

Temple Beth Or invites you to join us
for the High Holy Days.

We offer in-person and live streaming services
for Rosh Hashanah
and Yom Kippur.

Erev Rosh Hashanah, Friday, Sept. 15

7:30 p.m. In-Person and Live Streaming

Rosh Hashanah, Saturday, Sept. 16

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. In-Person and Live Streaming
12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. Food Trucks
1:00 p.m. Family Interactive Outdoor Service

Rosh Hashanah Day 2, Sunday, Sept. 17

2:00 p.m. at Frost Farmstead

Visit templebethor.com for service times & updates

Kol Nidre, Sunday, Sept. 24

7:30 p.m. In-Person and Live Streaming Service

Yom Kippur, Monday, Sept. 25

10:00 a.m. In-Person and Live Streaming Service
11:30 a.m. LIVE Outdoor Family Service

4:00 p.m. *Yizkor* In-Person Service
In-Person *Ne'ilah*

Visit templebethor.com
for service times & updates



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 Today... and for Generations

TEMPLE BETH OR

GOES TO

FROST FARMSTEAD

185 S VALLEY RD, XENIA, OH 45385

ROSH HASHANNAH DAY 2
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 @ 2PM

JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF FLOWER PICKING,
 COMMUNITY GATHERING, TASHLICH, APPLES &
 HONEY AS WE CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR

U-PICK
FLOWER
BOUQUET

FLOWER PETAL
TASHLICH