



**Suncoast Jewish Alliance
Newsletter
September-October 2025**



We wish you a sweet and joyful New Year filled with peace, health and happiness.



As Florida “season” approaches, the Alliance calendar gets busier than ever with programs we create for our members and with our community programming collaborators. Here are a few recent examples:

Bay Plaza Jewish Group
Jewish War Veterans of Nokomis
Temple Beth Shalom Men’s Club and Education Committee
Cascades Jewish Club
Temple Emanuel Program on Book Banning (coming in January 2026)
Jewish Congregation of Venice

? Do you know a group that might be interested in programs provided by the Alliance?
Contact us via suncoastjewishalliance@gmail.com to begin our mutual exploration.

We are pleased that *The Observer* and *The Herald Tribune* continue to publish Alliance editorials and letters to the editor. Look for one about Turning Point USA this weekend.

We encourage Alliance members to speak out about issues that concern you, notably about proposed policies and practices in the public domain that are contrary to our Jewish values. Keep in mind that the Alliance is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, advocacy group. Even on highly emotionally-charged topics, we want to keep open the doors of respectful conversation, give-and-take, and sharing of ideas. If you would like help with writing letters to the editors, op-eds, activity proposals and collaborations, please contact us at suncoastjewishalliance@gmail.com.



Planning for the Future



Take part in our donor match program through the end of this year!

A very generous donor is matching any gift up to \$2,000, over and above the basic membership of \$18 per person. Help us achieve this short-term financial goal! Tax-free donations can be made on our website (suncoastjewishalliance.com) or mailed to the Alliance at P.O. Box 5244, Sarasota, Florida 34277



Weekly Demonstrations to bring home the Israeli Hostages



Come join Alliance members and many other of our Sarasota neighbors at the weekly demonstrations on behalf of the Israeli Hostages in Gaza. We gather for 20-30 minutes, 10am Saturdays at the downtown Sarasota Farmers Market, and on Sundays at 6pm in front of 481 Ringling Blvd on St Armand's Circle.



27 OCT
MON
6:00PM

An evening with
OMER SHEM TOV
Hostage Survivor and Activist

Join us for an inspiring evening as Omer reflects on his harrowing journey through **505** days of captivity, his release, recovery, and his unwavering advocacy for the hostages still held today.

Sponsored by:

In Partnership with:

The Ora - 578 McIntosh Rd.
Sarasota, FL 34232
FREE - RSVP required

TO REGISTER, VISIT:
www.OmerInSarasota.com

Special thanks to: Arad Social, Impact Suncoast, LLC, and Three North Management/
Allison & Matt Branson
For more information: GiselePintchuck@yahoo.com Content may not be suitable for young audiences



Omer Shem Tov Speaks at the Ora

On October 27, 2025, a free of charge Alliance co-sponsored program with Israeli Omer Shem Tov is scheduled at the ORA. Omer spent 505 days captive by Hamas. The required preregistration is already ***sold out***. The Alliance has requested additional seating and if they become available, the organizers will contact members on their waiting list directly. All participants will be screened for security purpose; photo ID-and ticket required.

Alliance Leadership at Work



Pictured left to right: Norman Olshansky, David Kaufman on zoom, Wendy Wicks, Karen Kade, Julie Friedman and Uzi Baram. Not pictured are Lisa Barzell and Tess Koncick.

Just like any nonprofit organization, the Alliance is always looking for members to join our leadership team. Elections happen in January, so now is the time to be thinking of nominations (including of yourself) for the board, committee work and special projects.



Christian Responsibility to Fight Antisemitism

Rev. Dr. Wes Bixby, First Congregational United Church of Christ Sarasota, led a fascinating evening of lively discussion at our September 14th Living Room Conversation (captured in the photos above). Many thanks to Sheila and Chuck Weiss for hosting this program at their home in the Meadows.



We are already scheduling our members-only Living Room Conversations into 2026; we are asking for members to open their homes for these casual gatherings. Alliance board members coordinate registrations and the potluck arrangements. Hosts customarily provide seating and tables, paper and plasticware for sharing food and schmoozing. Most LRC's have encompassed 18 to 22 members, but we are happy to accommodate smaller groups if that would work best for you.

? Would you be interested in planning or hosting a Living Room Conversation? Perhaps you have access to a free meeting space at your clubhouse or in your building? Contact us at

suncoastjewishalliance@gmail.com if you want to find out more. We plan LRCs in different parts of the Sarasota-Manatee area.

If you have not received this invitation, please email Julie at suncoastjewishalliance1@gmail.com today!



*Come to a Living Room Conversation with Friends
and Potluck Dinner*



IMMIGRATION JUSTICE COALITION

Discussion led by Maria Robayo and Juan Pablo Salas of the Immigration Justice Coalition of Southwest Florida and facilitated by Uzi Baram, Alliance Board Member

Sunday November 2, 2025, starting at 5 pm

Hosted by Lisa Barzel

Please RSVP to suncoastjewishalliance1@gmail.com
by October 20th for directions to their home and
for suggestions on what you can bring for the potluck

Immigration Justice Coalition Living Room Conversation on November 2, 2025

Alliance members will hear from two local leaders of the Immigration Justice Coalition of Southwest Florida. Participants will discuss what US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is doing here in Florida from people directly impacted. Many of you recall that earlier in the spring, an Alliance LRC focused on our own, Jewish families' experiences with coming to America, before so many restrictive laws were enacted. How does what our parents told us about our grandparents shape how we feel about immigrants in today's climate?



The Alliance continues to be actively engaged with the IJCSWF Executive Committee. Photos below are from their recent event co-sponsored with Lutheran Services Florida highlighting the art and talent within the refugee community and a panel discussion on the plight of immigrants locally. Alliance members Wendy and Conrad Wicks enjoyed the Refugee Artist Presentation on September 12th



Programs offered by Alliance Collaborators (links are on our website)



Information about the Gallant event is available at the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee or by emailing info@jfedsrq.org.



**Temple
Emanu-El**

*Sponsored by the Social Justice Committee
& Israel Committee*

LEADING WITH LOVE:

Building a Just, Inclusive Society in the
Face of a Hate-filled World

Thursday, November 6, 2025 | 7:00 PM

In this timely and powerful program, Rabbi Jonah Pesner, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, will explore how we can lead with love even in a polarized world filled with division and fear. At a time of rising antisemitism and hate, many of us feel afraid, angry, and uncertain. As we respond to acts of violence and extremism, we must also protect the very values that have kept Jews and other minorities safe in America: free speech, due process, and the rule of law. Even in moments of fear, we must resist efforts to weaponize our pain and instead choose a path rooted in justice, compassion, and courage.

Dessert Reception following.

*This program is made possible by the
generosity of Fran & Jack Braverman and
Jadwiga Brown in memory of Donald Brown.*



RABBI JONAH PESNER

*Director of the Religious Action
Center of Reform Judaism*

Temple Emanu-El
151 McIntosh Rd
Sarasota, FL 34232

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED
BY NOVEMBER 2**
SarasotaTemple.org

Questions?

Contact Jadwiga Brown
jadwigabrown@gmail.com

StandWithUs

Temple Emanu-El proudly sponsors this program.

**In response to the alarming rise in antisemitism,
we invite you to an essential program focused
on empowering our community and supporting
our Jewish neighbors.**

**This vital session will equip you with the knowledge
and tools to:**

- **Effectively support** your Jewish neighbors and community members.
- **Educate Jewish students and parents** (K-College) about their rights and available resources.
- Learn how to help Jewish students **confidently navigate** the current antisemitic environment, addressing challenges from online hate speech and conspiracy theories to physical attacks and institutional bias.

StandWithUs, a leading organization in combating antisemitism, offers significant answers and actionable strategies. We're honored to host:

Carly Gammill, Director of Legal Policy at StandWithUs
Julie Paris, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director at StandWithUs

They will share their expertise on how to help our youth maintain their Jewish identity with confidence and how to respond legally and effectively to antisemitic challenges.

Carly Gammill

Julie Paris

PEN
SARASOTA *Public Education Network*

INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS: THE PROMISES AND POSSIBILITIES OF SARASOTA'S DISTRICT SCHOOLS

**November 8, 2025
9am-12:30pm**
Venice United Church of Christ
620 Shamrock Blvd
Venice, FL 34293

JOIN US for a powerful half-day event exploring the history, impact, and future of Sarasota's public schools. Hear from local leaders, engage in thoughtful discussions, and learn how to advocate for the strong, equitable education our students deserve.

- ✓ **Free & Open to the Public**
- 📁 **Materials & resources available**

Let's protect the promise of public education—together.

For more information, contact:
jill@pensarasota.org

SCAN HERE



SURE Protests Deportations



Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE) organizes weekly prayer vigils on Sundays 5:00–6:00pm at Payne Park Pavilion, downtown Sarasota, in solidarity with concurrent vigils outside the Big Cypress Detention Center (*a.k.a.*, Alligator Alcatraz). SURE invites all people of faith and conscience to participate in these prayer vigils and publicly oppose the expansion of Florida's detention and deportation machine. The organization urges elected officials to invest in community-based solutions such as legal assistance, affordable housing, trauma-informed care and reunification of families.

DONATE TO MAKE SURE NO
NEIGHBOR GOES TO BED HUNGRY

FOOD FOR OUR NEIGHBORS COMIDAS PARA NUESTROS VECINOS



**Many people in our
community are unable to
leave their homes.**

**Food for Neighbors collects
and distributes food to
people at their homes.**

Where to Donate:

Unitarian Universalists of
Sarasota (UUSRQ)
Reeb Room-Food Pantry
3975 Fruitville Rd.,
Sarasota 34232

Pantry Open:

Sunday: 10:15am - 2pm
Monday: 9:30am - 11:30am
Thursday: 3pm - 5pm

\$ Donations:

Checks to be made to UUSRQ
Memo Line: Social Justice Food



Be sure to check out our website at: suncoastjewishalliance.org and our Facebook Group Page "Suncoast Jewish Alliance":
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1945583362510611> for more information.