

# Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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What to do in a recession, 1958.

Sunday Morning Service
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

March 23, 1958

WHAT TO DO IN A RECESSION

by

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

As is well known to you, my dear friends, we are, and have been for some time, in the midst of a severe economic recession.

We had been encouraged by eminent authorities, including the President of the United States, to believe that the latter part of March would see the beginning of an upward trend. This, unfortunately, has not taken place. Here and there, there have been instances of increased production, of rehiring of workers; but in the main the trend has continued downward. The latest unemployment figures, for February, is some five million two hundred thousand. The largest unemployment in our country in sixteen years. And the figure is probably considerably higher for it does not include many people who are on part time jobs and short work-weeks with sharply reduced incomes.

Our industrial centers have been especially hard-hit. There are some two hundred thousand out of work in the Detroit area; over sixty thousand in greater Cleveland. Capital outlays, plant and equipment expansions are considerably lower. It appears that the present recession is more severe than that of 1953-54 and of 1948-49. The best opinion has it that the downward trend may continue through the second and probably the third quarter of this year and will, it is hoped, reverse itself in the last quarter of fifty eight.

Thus, American business and industry face the prospect of hard, uphill months

I believe that everyone should keep in mind the general course of our country — the fact that the long-term-growth forces which built our economy are present today, as strong as ever. We have a growing population—growing by 3 million a year. This is like adding a city the size of Los Angeles to our consumer market every 12 months.

We have a people constantly demanding improved living standards. We have an urgent need for schools, municipal construction, highways and other public facilities. We have the plant, the working force, the creative ingenuity and the managerial talent to meet these growing demands. New technological developments are creating new products and services and employment opportunities all the time.

So, when we look at these things, we can see that confidence in the future of this country rests on a solid base. We can view our present situation in its true light as a time for Americans to plan steadily for an expanding America of the future.

And by and large I believe this statement voices the general conviction of our people.

Another factor which has undergirded the confidence of the American people in this period of recession has been the conviction that government is much more a factor today in our national economy - in fact the dominant factor - and that government is much more aware of its economic responsibilities in the given situation and that it is much better equipped and prepared to intervene and to relieve economic distress than it was, say, in the early thirties.

In these intervening years between the terrible depression of thirty-two and today, many measures have been taken by government to avert a repetition of that disastrous depression — to avert a slide into a depression spiral which leads to a breakdown of national economy.

It has learned, for example, how to use the control of credit and the regulation of taxes either to curb or to stimulate business activities.

And the inevitable hardships of unemployment are today mitigated by a well established system of unemployment insurance benefits, which also gives a breathing spell to our economy in that the purchasing power of millions of our people is not suddenly and completely cut off.

Our government has already put into operation certain anti-recession measures. The curtailment of credit, for example, which many believe was the direct cause of this recession, has been considerably relaxed and money has been made easier again by the lowering of interest rates. Public works of all kinds are being speeded up. The building of schools - of low-priced houses - of slum clearance - of highway construction - the spending for national defense - flood controls - dams and reclamation projects — many of these are being put speedily into operation, or their operations are being accelerated.

It has been wisely proposed by the President of the United States that the duration of unemployment compensation benefits be extended for a longer period than the average in the nation of some 26 weeks - for in many instances this period has already run out for many of our unemployed.

There is a strong likelihood that before long taxes will be considerably

reduced to put more money into the hands of producers and consumers and to stimulate a revival of business.

These are some of the factors which have kept within bounds, so to speak, the tensions and the apprehensions of our people - plus the fact, of course, that 93% of our working population is still gainfully employed.

Having said all this, it appears to me that this period of recession is a good time for the American people to ask itself, Is all this necessary? Why recession? Why should this most prosperous nation, possessed of nigh limitless material resources; possessed of what our Secretary of the Treasury called "the plant, the working force, the creative ingenuity and the managerial talent to meet not only the present demands but also the growing demands of our people" - why should this nation, every few years, throw millions of its citizens out of employment, bring insecurity and unmappiness into their lives, and subject our people as a whole to deepest concern and confusion and dislocation and loss? WHY?

Is this the best that free enterprize can do? Is this the best that our vaunted, competitive industrialism - our free enterprize capitalism can achieve for the American people? Is this our answer to Communism? Must it always be a cycle of boom and bust and boom only to bust again? If so, the prospect is bleak indeed.

Must we always over-produce in one year, or in two years, to such a degree that our normal markets become glutted and we are then forced to close down our plants in part or in whole? Must we always work under pressure, three shifts for a spell and then lay off our workers and send them to the unemployment offices? Must we always tolerate a condition where millions of our people are, every three or four years, subjected to the indignity of forced unemployment and idleness which cost a human being so much in self-respect and dignity when he finds himself unable to provide for his family? Is it not possible to rationalize our system of production in such a way that these periods do not occur with the

frequency with which they have been occurring - nearly every three or four years?

And if such radical readjustments are inevitable in our free system of enterprize,
then ought we not to make more reasonable - more dependable provisions for those
who are forced out of unemployment through no fault of their own, so that they will
not have to carry on with unemployment insurance benefits which seldom exceed
maximally -- maximally -- \$33.00 a week? No one can support a family on \$33.00 a
week today!

Perhaps this is the price which we must pay for free enterprize. But the question in my mind is how long will our people be satisfied to pay that price? Why should they remain loyal to a system which fails them time and time again? And should a recession lengthen and worsen into a depression, what becomes of our political leadership in the free world? What becomes of the confidence with which we have sought to inspire the free nations in the world in a democratic economy, when we cannot take care of our own? A time of recession is a good time to think of these things. Seriously. Frankly.

Perhaps those men in our various organizations who have become so concerned about a free citizen's "right to work" — perhaps they would give us the answer — how to insure the right to work for five and a half million unemployed — men who want to work — who are able-bodied and competent and who wish to earn a living for themselves and their families — but who are denied, by our system, periodically, and sometimes for long stretches of time, theright to work! . . . .

I see where the Catholic Bishops of Ohio have come out against this latest attempt which is being made, under this misleading slogan of the "right to work", to destroy the effectiveness of organized labor in our State. I applaud the action of these Catholic Bishops.

The same group of people which are now clamoring for this theoretic "right to work", they or their organizations, back in 1930, fought bitterly, in this State against the enactment of Unemployment Insurance, which has proved such a life-saver in successive periods of recession and which the President of the United States is

today urging that the benefits of Unemployment Insurance be extended.

I know this episode very well. It was in our own Temple, back in 1929 and '30 that a group of Cleveland men and women, representatives of the Consumer's League, and other civic-minded bodies, studied, for a period of nearly two years, the subject of unemployment insurance. It was in The Temple that the first draft of an Unemployment Insurance Law was written to be presented to the Legislature in Columbus. Even in those years - in the desperate years - at a time when sixteen million of our people were out of employment and heads of families were selling apples on street corners to earn a few pennies to buy bread for their families, even in those years our Bill, which was introduced in the Ohio Legislature, was bitterly fought by powerful business organizations in this State on the ground that it was un-American - radical - socialistic: that it was rewarding idleness! I assume that it is the same people who are today seeking, through a misleading device and formula of the "right to work" -- to destroy the effectiveness of organized labor in our State.

My own feeling in this matter, my dear friends, is as follows:— of course every man in a free society should have the right to work. But every man, once he finds work, also has the duty, the moral duty, to join an organization of fellow workers which achieved for him, and those like him, through its organized efforts in the past, whatever favorable conditions he now enjoys in his employment and which will protect him in the future. Everyone is obligated to share in the responsibilities if he wishes to avail himself of the rewards of collective efforts. The theoretic "right to work", which no one questions, is qualified by a man's moral responsibility to assume the obligations and the commitments of collective organization which assures him the very things which he seeks in his employment.

Now organized labor, of course, is not without its short-comings. At times its leaders have abused their power and their trust. At times they are most unreasonable. But so is management. And it has been gratifying to note recently the the courageous and statesmanlike action which the responsible leaders of labor have taken in an effort to clean the house of labor of its grafters and corruptionists.

permanent remedial measures, or whether they will be content with quick restorative measures which will bring on another boom next year and a bust the following year.

Government, local, regional and federal, face a strong challenge to economic statesmanship. Not political expedience - not what the next election may do in response to present economic conditions and the measures introduced to correct them, but the long range rectification guided by economic statesmanship which will give balance and stability to our great industrial potential — the greatest in the world.



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Organized later is not without its short-comings. So a mangiment. at their to lever ten alived their the stationents return which its respectors haden been tolen in cleaning labor how of the Justies and Countruits \_ But us fee worst and no fee exmount an bey there in the modern until attract at show organization of to austry men o- not any to frotal there were which when deriver it. 11). I recensor is an arcanis for rother frault and herest start - FalloyR.HS ARCHIVES

# .. Any tax-cut action must "be good over the longer period"

at a very early date. Others are more remote. But, looking, for example, at the higher rate of activity in the municipal-bond field, we see that a great many municipalities are apparently going ahead with construction programs at a much more rapid rate than they were a year ago.

Preliminary estimates based on reports covering the first two months indicate that new municipal security issues for new capital in the first quarter of 1958 will show an increase of approximately 27 per cent over a year ago, and will amount

to about 2.25 billion dollars.

A little over one third of the new State and local issues are for schools with about one sixth of the total earmarked for highways, bridges, and so on. All in all, the present quarter is expected to be at a very high level in most categories of State and local capital financing.

Q Are State and local governments doing what they can in the way of public works to help the current situation?

A I know that some of the States definitely are.

I was very encouraged just a few days ago when I met with a committee of the Governors' conference at Nashville, Tenn., to hear reports of what some States are doing in accelerating needed public-works programs which are providing job opportunities as well as community betterment. This Nashville meeting of the Joint Federal-State Action Committee adopted a statement which commended the States that have taken leadership in speeding up public works and urged that other States take similar action.

The meeting suggested that States should consider moving forward to 1958 projects scheduled for 1959, and move to early 1958 projects scheduled for late 1958. In this way, substantial progress is being made in providing essential hospitals, schools, highways, and so on, in a year when men,

money and materials are more readily available.

The staffs of the Joint Federal-State Action Committee were ordered to review the public-works measures taken in the States and indicate what further action, if any, should properly be taken by the State and federal governments. We also recommended that the States encourage their counties, cities, towns and school districts to consider actively the speeding up of construction of locally required public-works projects so as to help provide employment while still obtaining needed sound public works.

## THREAT OF BIGGER DEBT-

Q Will a tax reduction make an immediate large deficit

in the Treasury for a period of a year or two?

A A large tax reduction would certainly have a serious impact upon our debt situation. Now, one has to weigh that, not only in terms of the total amount of money which is involved, but how it might affect the course which the economy will take in the future.

Q How would you estimate the current lag in tax revenues

-is that very substantial due to the recession?

A There has been some decline in withheld taxes, but it is too early to give any kind of comprehensive analysis on

this point.

Q Couldn't the amount of the deficiency from tax receipts, plus the amount you would have to deduct as a result of any new tax rates, create a very sizable deficit for the next year

A Yes, it could. The size of the deficit that might be generated would be influenced by the rate at which we collect taxes over the next several months, by the rate of federal expenditures that are carried on, by new programs, and, of course, any modification which might be made in the tax structure that would lessen the revenues. All these things would have to be taken into account in determining the impact of tax changes upon the fiscal position of the country. It could be large—or not so large—depending upon the direction in which these various factors move.

Q In other words, some of the tax rates might be produc-

tive of larger receipts?

A There would certainly be some short-term reductions in receipts. I think it is speculative as to how much gain would be made in the future. This is a matter about which there could be varying judgments, and to be realistically precise is just not possible.

#### OUTLOOK FOR THE BUDGET—

Q What I was really asking is whether you foresaw a temporarily unbalanced budget which might be balanced and a surplus gotten within, let us say, two or three years-

A This is another imponderable; one could only have a judgment. I think that one would have to wait until we see further the kinds of programs that are developed through this Congress, as well as to examine the present and future rate of expenditures. Programs that could go into effect now might have relatively small impacts so far as the budget in the next several months is concerned, but have a very great impact on the budget in future years.

Q Are you going to be able to operate within the present

280-billion-dollar debt ceiling?

A Obviously, this depends not only upon the rate of revenue collections and, certainly, of course, upon the rate at which expenditures are made; but it also depends upon the effects of new programs that originate either with the Administration or in the Congress.

Q How would you explain the hesitancy of the Administration to come out as yet with a tax-cut plan? What are the

factors that are causing you to hesitate?

A It is not a question of being hesitant; it is a question of being prudent in the real best interest of every American. I am quite sure that everyone in this country would want us to be sure that the action taken will be good for America not only for the next few weeks but over the longer period.

Q Do you look for the bottom of the recession to be reached in the next few weeks-or do you think it has already

been reached?

A It is difficult to pick out a specific time when a change will be visible. We do have the basic ingredients of a sound economic system; we have the ingredients for growth in this country; and I believe the kind of adjustment period which we are going through will not be a prolonged one.

To try to be more specific than that, I think, is to try to

simplify what is a very complex problem.

Q There are some members of Congress who have said this is a "planned" recession and that the Administration brought about this readjustment through measures taken last year in order to arrest or stop inflation. What do you think about this point of view?

A I am sure that there is no basis for such a charge. This Administration, and all of the people in this country, want to maintain a sound rate of sustainable growth, and I do not believe that anybody would deliberately plan difficult eco-

nomic times.

Q Do you feel that the Government has an obligation to stimulate the making of profits in business?

A The primary thing that we try to do is to establish a climate-an economic climate-within which businesses can (Continued on next page)

# ... This is time "to plan steadily for an expanding America"

operate in such a manner as is consistent with our philosophy of a free and competitive system, so that we have jobs for the workers, we generate incentives for investment and so have a rate of growth and development that is consistent with the increase in our population and the demands of our people.

Q There have been many different kinds of tax cuts proposed. What would be the dollar impact of, say, a 10 per cent

cut in everyone's income tax?

A The 10 per cent cut of individual income taxes would cause a revenue decrease of 3.7 billion dollars in one full year. For a married man with two children, with earnings of \$5,000 a year, it would mean a tax cut of \$42 a year, or 81 cents a week.

We have worked out the dollar impact of several other reductions which have been suggested by some people in a table which may be of interest. [See chart on page 50.]

Q Would you say that if you present a tax program you will merely be concentrating on the corporate and individual rates, or will you look at the whole tax structure—excise taxes and all sorts of tax regulations—or would you just limit it to a few things?

A In making any analysis of this kind one must look at not only the whole tax structure as it exists, you must look at all of the immediate implications which flow from any approach to the problem, and you must, as well, examine all kinds of

implications on a longer-term basis.

For example, the usefulness of the various forms of tax reductions would depend not only on what people did with the additional funds released by the tax reduction, but also on the effects of the tax reduction on their decisions about spending their regular incomes and other available funds.

After all, we have an economy operating at a rate of over 430 billion dollars a year, as measured by the gross national product. One has to bear in mind that an increase of 5 billion or even 10 billion in available funds through tax reduction is only a little over 1 or 2 per cent of the total gross national product.

Q There has been a lot of discussion about what is now called an "across the board" type of tax revision. Would you favor that approach—that is, taking into account the entire tax structure rather than one particular group of rates?

A We would certainly examine every possible approach and, certainly, one of them would be looking over the whole field of taxes as they currently exist. We would want, then, to base our judgment upon the factors that were current at the time a decision might be made and upon the course of the economy and upon what we thought that the short and long-term effects might be.

# "COMPLICATIONS IN TAX LAW"-

As a continuing thing, we in the Treasury are deeply concerned about complications in the tax law and the tax forms. Many of the complications are connected with relief provisions which have been adopted to ease the burdens of high rates. Others are perhaps the result of undue refinements in tax theory. It seems to me that to protect the voluntary tax system, which is the basis of our revenue collection today, we must set up tax simplifications as a major goal.

Q Would you say that you are going to submit, when you do make a decision, a program to Congress or would you expect Congress to project a program which you would examine?

A As I have said, whatever decision that we make will be reached after we have examined the impact of the current developments on the future course of the economy and after we have consulted with the congressional leaders.

Q With the leaders of both parties?

A Yes, we would consult with the leaders of both parties.

Q Are you keeping in close touch with the leaders of both parties now?

A Yes, we are.

Q With the idea of finding out to what extent they are pressing for immediate action or to what extent they would go along with you or wait for your program? Is that the reason for the consultations?

A Well, primarily it is to have a sharing of judgments and ideas and to exchange thinking as to what weight is to be given to certain factors in the economy. We have to be concerned not with getting into some kind of a race to do things first but with doing what is the best thing in the long run for all of the people of the United States.

Q As a whole, how would you evaluate the tax-cut idea? Would you regard it as one of a number of factors or would you call it almost a principal factor in promoting recovery,

if you should decide on it?

future.

A I would not want to try to designate tax considerations in order of magnitude of importance. Whatever actions are taken have to be taken with this in mind: We want to do those things which governments reasonably and prudently would do and which would help to promote confidence. We want to avoid trying to do those things which create doubt.

## U. S. "AS STRONG AS EVER"-

Q What advice would you give to the business people and the country generally as to what measures could be taken by the country outside of Government to promote recovery? What are some of the things the public can do to promote

A This, I think, is most important. I believe that everyone should keep in mind the general course of our country—the fact that the long-term-growth forces which built our economy are present today, as strong as ever. We have a growing population—growing by 3 million a year. This is like adding a city the size of Los Angeles to our consumer market every 12 months.

We have a people constantly demanding improved living standards. We have an urgent need for schools, municipal construction, highways and other public facilities. We have the plant, the working force, the creative ingenuity and the managerial talent to meet these growing demands. New technological developments are creating new products and services and employment opportunities all the time.

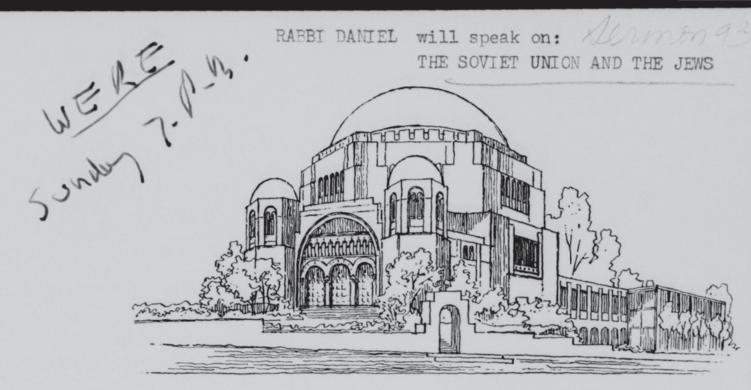
So, when we look at these things, we can see that confidence in the future of this country rests on a solid base. We can view our present situation in its true light as a time for Americans to plan steadily for an expanding America of the

Q You say that this is a time of opportunity—a good time to plan for the future. What are some of the specific things Americans should do?

A This is a time to think in terms of "do it now." Now is a time for the wise businessman to get the salesmen he is going to need for the expanding America of the future. He should be building the plants and doing the research that he is going to need to make the products a growing America will demand.

We should strive to improve efficiency, to achieve more production per dollar of cost and to avoid inflation of costs and thus of prices. We should be planning up and down the line for all the things that this expanded America of the future is going to want and must have.

THE TEMPLE
CLEVELAND, OHIO
March 23, 1958
Vol. XLIV No. 23



Remember . . .

A Night of Music You'll

Never Forget

Tuesday, April 1, 8:30 P. M.

Severance Hall

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE March 23, 1958 10:30 A.M.

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

will speak on

WHAT TO DO IN A RECESSION

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES 5:30 to 6:10 SATURDAY MORNING SERVICES 11:15 to 12:00

#### The Temple

Rabbis:

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER
Associate Rabbi
Director of Religious Education

HERBERT H. ROSE Assistant Rabbi

Staff:

MILDRED B. EISENBERG Ass't. Director of Religious Education

> LEO S. BAMBERGER Executive Secretary

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A. M. LUNTZ	President
LEO W. NEUMARK	
ELI GOLDSTON	.Vice-President
MAX EISNER	
EDWARD D. FRIEDMAN Asse	

#### ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers which will grace the altar on Sunday morning, March 23rd, are contributed in memory of parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Mayer, by Mr. and Mrs. Philmore J. Haber.

#### MUSIC FOR SUNDAY

Organ	
Prelude in F	Groton
Night—A Meditation	Foote
Aria	Tenaglia
Opening Psalm-How Goodly	Spicker
Bor'chu (Congregational)	Sulzer
Sh'ma-Boruch (Congregational)	Traditional
Mi Chomocho (Congregational)	Sulzer
Kedusha	Federlein
Silent Devotion—May the Words Mr. Humphrey	Schlesinger
Before the Address:	wather.

Come Now, and Let Us Reason Together Mrs. Strasser

Olenu-Vaanachnu

Goldste

#### **PASSOVER SERVICES**

Services for the First Day of Passover will be held in The Temple on Saturday, April 5, at 10:30 in the morning, and for the Concluding Day of the holiday on Friday, April 11, at 10:30 A.M. A special program of music has been prepared for each occasion. A Memorial Service is read on the concluding day.

Nursery School service will be available on both holidays in Room 13 of The Temple School Building.

# In Memoriam

The Temple notes with deep sorrow the passing of

SOL M. KOLISKEY JENNIE LIEBER RAE GOLDBERG MARVIN A. KANE

and extends heartfelt sympathy to the members of their bereaved families.



#### THE PROGRAM OF THE TEMPLE CONCERT

APRIL 1, 1958

SEVERANCE HALL

"Fanfare to Israel"

Paul Ben-Haim

(Played in honor of the Tenth Anniversary of the State of Israel)

"Quiet City"

Copland

Soloists: Richard Smith, Trumpet
Harvey McGuire, English Horn

"Cortege Funebre"

Bloch

from "Three Jewish Poems"

Symphony No. 4 in A major

Mendelssohn

Op. 90 ("Italian")

Allegro vivace

Andante con moto

Con moto moderato

Saltarello: Presto

Songs

Soloist: Cantor Moshe Koussevitzky

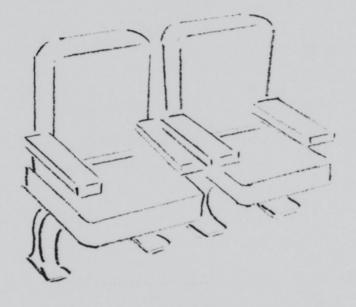
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22 Wieniawski

Allegro moderato

Romanza: Andante non troppo

Allegro moderato — a la Zingara

Soloist: Josef Gingold, Violin



# YOUR 2 SEATS

# WILL MAKE OUR SEVERANCE CONCERT A SELL-OUT!

You won't believe this, but—if we sell only two more seats to the "Night of Music"—at Severance Hall—we will have a complete sell-out.

Think of it-two more seats-your two seats-will fill the Hall.

Two more seats to a wonderful concert—The Cleveland Symphony—Dr. George Szell—Cantor Moshe Koussevitzky—a pleasurable evening.

Two more seats—the ones you buy—will make an important donation to The Temple Building Program.

Your two seats are no farther than a call to The Temple Office, SW 1-7755.

#### BOX SEATS 100.00 Seat

There are only 170 seats in this section. All these seats are reserved, and your generous support is solicited.

#### MAIN FLOOR 15.00 Seat

Every seat in Severance Hall offers comfort and good listening.

These seats will be unreserved.

#### DRESS CIRCLE 50.00 Seat

Among the best seats for listening, these seats will be reserved.

#### BALCONY 10.00 Seat

No seat in the hall is second-best. These seats too are unreserved. No section will be oversold.

The ticket price includes a donation to The Temple Building Fund

Published weekly except during the summer vacation. Fifty cents per annum.

Lhe Cemple Aulletin THE TEMPLE EAST 105TH ST. & ANSEL ROAD SW 1-7755

Second Class mail privileges authorized at Cleveland, Ohio

#### DATES TO REMEMBER

Sunday, March 23 — Sunday Morning Services

Monday, March 24 - Adult Hebrew Classes

Tuesday, March 25 — Temple Women's Association Tuesday Sewing

Sunday, March 30 — Sunday Morning Services

Monday, March 31 — Adult Hebrew Classes
Religious School Theater Party

Tuesday, April 1 — Temple Women's Association Tuesday Sewing Temple Men's Club Concert

THE TEMPLE LIBRARY is open Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The Library will be closed on Sunday mornings until the conclusion of services.

THE TEMPLE MUSEUM will be open at the close of Sunday Morning Services and during all major organization meetings. Arrangements may be made to view the Museum by special appointment at The Temple Office.

THE ISRAELI GIFT SHOP is open during Tuesday sewing sessions. Selections may be made at all times from the display case in the Ansel Road Lobby by contacting The Temple Office.