



INFO
PACKET

MARCH OF THE LIVING

MAY 1 - 14,
2024



MAYERSON JCC
of Cincinnati

FROM DARKNESS
TO LIGHT

WE ARE
STILL HERE



MARCH OF THE LIVING

MAY 1 - 14, 2024

Join Jewish teens from all over the world on this trip of a lifetime! Go to Poland on Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) and march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the largest concentration camp complex built during World War II. Then travel to Israel to observe Yom HaZikaron (Israel Memorial Day) and celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day).

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*This trip is organized by the Mayerson JCC, in partnership with the Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center. Travel grants are generously funded by The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati and administered by the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. Cincy Journey grants are not need based and are offered to Cincinnati Jewish high school seniors who have not already used their Israel travel grants.

FROM POLAND
TO ISRAEL



an all expense
paid trip.*

FROM DARKNESS
TO LIGHT

This trip is an excused
absence for most high
schools in Cincinnati.

Open to Cincinnati high
school seniors with at least
one Jewish parent.



MAYERSONJCC.ORG/MOTL
#NEVERFORGET

Testimonials



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS:

"March of the Living is an experience that is hard to explain. You will go through the highest of highs, and the lowest of lows. But, you aren't doing it alone. You have amazing chaperones and a group of teens you may or may not have known well before the trip. This trip will bond your delegation in ways you can't even imagine prior to the trip. You go through everything together which ultimately makes your connections stronger.

Physically being on the grounds of where our ancestors perished was hard, but extremely important. We are the ones continuing on their legacy. Therefore, learning first-hand what they went through is the best way to keep their memory alive. You literally and figuratively go from darkness (Poland) to light (Israel). Whether you have been to Israel many times, once, or never, arriving there from Poland gives you a whole new sense of gratitude to be in the Jewish homeland.

This trip was truly life changing and I could not recommend it enough to any Jewish teen."

—Hannah Peri, MOTL 2023 Delegate

"I know it's not very original if I say this, but March of the Living was truly a once-in-a-lifetime, unforgettable experience. The memories you make marching from Auschwitz to Birkenau in Poland to then celebrating our land's independence and having shabbat services at the Western Wall is something I wouldn't ever trade for the world. There is no greater feeling than being surrounded by thousands of other Jewish teens from all across the planet in the holy land of Israel. If you choose to embark on this experience, make sure to take in every second of it."

—Hannah Pollock, MOTL 2023 Delegate

"March of the Living was such a valuable, unforgettable, eye-opening experience; I am so glad I had the opportunity to go on the trip. Being able to experience such highs and lows of Jewish history with teens I had mostly only just met, but quickly got so close with, was amazing. I highly recommend all Jewish teens to experience the trip because it is a life-changing experience you truly cannot understand and appreciate until you have done it."

—Ben Vigran, MOTL 2023 Delegate

"Going on March of the Living was one of the best decisions I have ever made. To me, the trip ended up being incredibly inspiring and motivating. I found myself wanting to explain everything in detail to anyone who would listen when I got back. I wanted people to understand what I had seen and been through and help them to understand why learning about events like the Holocaust and Israel's fight for independence is so important.

Going on this trip taught so much more in-depth information about the Holocaust and I got to learn about people's personal stories, which made it so much more impactful. And then, after getting to go to Poland and learn all about the painful past, we got to go to Israel and learn all about our bright future. Going to Israel and seeing all that culture and being so surrounded by my religion in a way I've never experienced before made me feel so much more Jewish in that moment and more connected to my faith. Getting to experience that made me realize in a sense what being Jewish means to me and inspired me to make the changes in my daily and religious life that I wanted to see in myself when I got home."

—Jami Richards, MOTL 2023 Delegate

Testimonials



STUDENT TESTIMONIAL & POEM:

“March of the Living was the most life-changing time of my life. It helped me discover a different part of my Judaism. It also helped me step out of my comfort zone, leaving everything at home behind me and being in the moment. My biggest take away from my trip was that we aren’t just victims, but survivors. We are strong group of people who stick together as family even in times of need.

During this trip, I let out emotions and feeling that no other human could describe. But I somehow put it into words in a poem:

We are the light in the darkest of days
We are the beautiful flowers blooming in the once boring fields
We are the waves crashing onto the silent sand
We are the voices of yesterday. We are the voices that tell about the Shoah.
We remember the victims’ names. And we don’t let their memories disappear.
Each step we take is in memory of the ones who passed.
6 million Jews. They weren’t JUST people. They were mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters.
They were once a family. Now they are just a memory.
But they aren’t just a number or a statistic. They were human beings that deserved life and love.
And to never be forgotten.

—Alexys Rudd, 2023 MOTL Delegate

PARENT TESTIMONIALS:

“One word to describe what the MOTL meant to my son is connection. Connection with a difficult past, connection with other kids from around the world, connection with the importance of Israel and a deep connection with his Jewish identity. I could not have thought of a more meaningful experience right before he leaves for college.”

—Evelyn Fleider, MOTL 2023 Parent

“As parents, we were ready to encourage Ben to attend MOTL, but we were delighted to learn his older siblings had already instilled in him that he ‘needed’ to go. Our son reconnected with some old friends and made new ones from across the country. He was able to see firsthand what he learned throughout his day school and Sunday school teachings. The journey was full of many emotions and was definitely eye opening to walk in his ancestors footsteps at concentration camps and hear stories from survivors. The MOTL experience comes at such an important time in a young adult’s life – right before they leave for college and start defining what being Jewish means to them. I feel confident Ben has taken the journey to heart and it will help remind him the value of being Jewish and the respect he has for his religion and all that it means to him!”

—Tara & Ross Vigran, MOTL 2023 Parents

Sample Itinerary



While in Poland, we will tour a variety of communities and places that were major parts of Jewish life before the Holocaust. In Tykocin, Lublin, and Krakow we will see synagogues and other landmarks that were fully populated before the war and learn about the thriving Jewish life that existed there. We will visit places that were major early parts of the genocide, such as the Umschlagplatz, which was used as a gathering area to deport the Jews of Warsaw, and the Podgorze Ghetto in Krakow. We will visit some of the major concentration camps: Treblinka, Majdanek, Auschwitz, and Birkenau, and learn about the atrocities that happened there. On Holocaust Remembrance Day, we will march in solidarity from Auschwitz to Birkenau with over 10,000 other Jewish people. Throughout the entire experience, participants will have the chance to speak with survivors and Holocaust educators, allowing them to explore their curiosities and emotions.

The week in Israel is spent exploring the history of the Jewish people and learning about the diverse culture of the country. We will spend time in northern cities such as Haifa and Tzfat and experience the south by learning about Bedouin culture, ascending Masada for sunrise and floating in the Dead Sea. We will travel around the center of the country to both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, two major cities with very different environments. The group will have the opportunity to spend time in traditional “shuks” (markets) in both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem for authentic shopping experiences. We will visit the Western Wall and learn about the immense history of the surrounding areas in Jerusalem. We experience darkness and light in Israel as we observe Yom HaZikaron (Israeli Memorial Day) and Yom HaAtzmaut (Israeli Independence Day) just as Israelis do.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE ITINERARY FROM THE 2023 TRIP:

SUNDAY, APRIL 16

Travel to Poland

MONDAY, APRIL 17

Arrive in Krakow

Tour of synagogues and ghetto

Erev Yom Hashoah

Overnight – Krakow

TUESDAY, APRIL 18

YOM HASHOAH

Tour Auschwitz

THE MARCH

Dinner at JCC

Overnight – Krakow

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19

Plashow

Birkenau

Oswiecim

Synagogue/Museum

Overnight – Tarnow

THURSDAY, APRIL 20

Tarnow

Zblitovskaya Gora

Dabroska Tarnowska

Markova

Overnight – Lublin

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

Lublin

Majdanek

Kabbalat Shabbat – Ec Chaim

Overnight- Warsaw

SATURDAY, APRIL 22

Shabbat Services

Walking Tour – ghetto wall,

Umschlagplatz, Mila 18,

Rappaport Memorial

POLIN Museum – meeting with

Righteous Among the Nations

Havdalah

Overnight – Warsaw

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

Treblinka

Warsaw Cemetery

Old Town Warsaw-Renek

DEPART TO ISRAEL!

MONDAY, APRIL 24

Arrive in Israel

Beach & Shechiyanu

Leket – Tikkun Project

Little Switzerland Hike

Lunch – Druze village

Erev Yom HaZikaron program

Overnight – Tel Hai

TUESDAY, APRIL 25

YOM HAZIKARON

Memorial of the 73

Kibbutz Dafna – High School Program

Tzefat

Boat Ride on the Kinneret

Overnight – Karei Deshe

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26

YOM HAATZMAUT

Drive to Jerusalem

Safra Square

Old City

Latrun

Overnight- B’nai Dan – Tel Aviv

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

Masada

Dead Sea

Stand With Us Program

Overnight – Jerusalem

FRIDAY, APRIL 28

Yad VaShem

Har Herzl

Machane Yehuda

Kabbalat Shabbat Services

Kotel

Overnight – Jerusalem

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

Different Shuls for Services

Walking Tour

Seudat Shlisheet

Havdalah

Go to the Airport

Departure

L’hitraot!

Until Next Time in Israel!

Pictures



Cincy Journeys



WHAT IS CINCY JOURNEYS?

Cincy Journeys is a grant program that enables hundreds of Jewish Cincinnati children, teens, and young adults to attend overnight Jewish camp or travel to Israel each year. These grants are not based on financial need.

The Cincy Journeys generous grant program is funded by The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati and administered by the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati.

Israel travel for Jewish teens ages 16-18:

Jewish teens from Cincinnati may be eligible for a **one-time grant of up to \$8,000** for travel to Israel on an approved peer education program like **March of the Living**. Travel to Israel and you'll learn about the past, find you place in the present, and start shaping the future—Israel's, Jewish Cincinnati's, and your own.

Israel travel for Jewish young adults ages 18 to 26:

Jewish Cincinnati's young adults may be eligible for a **one-time grant of up to \$6,250** for travel to Israel on an approved Israel travel program. Being a young adult means lots of questions: where to go next, what to do when you get there, and how to make it all happen. Whatever you're questioning, you can probably find answers in Israel.

Overnight Jewish camp for children ages 6 to 16:

Jewish children from Cincinnati may be eligible for **first- and second-year grants, up to \$3,500**, to attend an approved overnight Jewish camp. At camp, kids will strengthen their bodies, exercise their minds, and develop confidence while creating new friendships—all in an encouraging environment.

APPLY AND LEARN MORE:

cincyjourneys.org | 513-985-1500 | cincyjourneys@jfedcin.org



Strengthening Jewish Cincinnati

FUNDED BY:
Jewish Foundation
of Cincinnati

ADMINISTERED BY:
JEWISH
FEDERATION
CINCINNATI

Pre-Trip Programs



MARCH OF THE LIVING: CINCINNATI DELEGATION 2024 PRE-TRIP PROGRAMS

Prior to traveling to Poland and Israel, a significant amount of time is dedicated to learning about the Holocaust (Shoah) and Israel. This preparatory program, sponsored by the Mayerson JCC, Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, and the Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust and Humanity Center, is meant to strengthen the participants' experiences by providing them with basic concepts and knowledge. During these pre-trip programs, Cincinnati students have the opportunity to connect with one another on a regular basis. Given that students come from a wide variety of secular schools, congregations, and religious backgrounds, and come to the program with diverse backgrounds about the Shoah and Israel, these sessions become an essential component of the March of the Living.

While we recognize that many students have very busy lives, **attendance at all the pre-trip programs is mandatory.** Each session will begin and end as scheduled.

SEMINAR ONE: INTRODUCTION

For parents and participants

Sunday, January 7, 3 - 6pm

Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center

SEMINAR TWO: LIVES BEFORE & THE LONGEST HATRED

Thursday, January 25, 7 - 9pm

Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center

SEMINAR THREE: DARE TO RESIST

Thursday, February 22, 7 - 9pm

Mayerson JCC

SEMINAR FOUR: DESTRUCTION TO REBUILDING

Thursday, March 21, 7 - 9pm

Mayerson JCC

SEMINAR FIVE: ISRAEL TODAY WITH CHAVERIM AND DELEGATE SEND-OFF

For parents and participants

Thursday, April 25, 7 - 9pm

Mayerson JCC



FAQs



Q: What are the dates of the trip?

A: The dates of the 2024 March of the Living trip are May 1 - 14.

Week 1 Poland: May 1 - 7 | **Week 2 Israel:** May 8 - 14

Q: Is this an excused absence from my school?

A: The March of the Living is an excused absence from most schools in Greater Cincinnati. You can check with your guidance counselor for details.

Q: How many people will be going on the trip?

A: It is anticipated that there will be between 20-25 students and two to three adult chaperones.

Q: How do I qualify to get a Cincy Journeys Grant to participate in this trip at no cost?

A: The Cincy Journeys grants are available to high school-aged residents of Greater Cincinnati who have at least one Jewish parent.

You can access the application online by going to CincyJourneys.org/Israel/Apply. You may also refer to the Travel Grant instructions in this packet.

Q: What happens when I miss AP Exams?

A: Students may use the alternate dates for exams. Please check with your school for more details.

Q: What if I need to cancel my attendance on the trip?

A: Canceling is an option. However there are fees associated with cancelation. The closer to the trip dates, the more expensive the fees. Contact Anne Goldstein for questions and cancelation fees (contact information is on the back of this booklet).



FAQs cont.



Q: How much spending money will I need?

A: We suggest bringing \$250 in spending money. The group flight, sleeping accommodations, all meals, in-country transportation, basic health insurance, and all program activities are covered by the core program fees. The only additional money you will need is for items such as snacks, bottled water in Israel (bottled water is provided in Poland, and tap water is safe in Israel), souvenirs, gifts, etc.

Q: What kind of luggage do I need to bring?

A: Each participant will be responsible for his or her own luggage at all times, which includes loading it on and off of buses and into hotel rooms. As such, we recommend bringing one “manageable” piece of luggage (duffel bags and rolling suitcases work best) and one full-size carryon bag.

Be sure to pack at least one change of clothing, toiletries, and all prescription medicine in your carry-on bag in the unlikely event that your checked luggage gets delayed. It is also a smart idea to attach some kind of easy identifier, such as a colored ribbon, to your checked luggage as well as a name label.

Q: What do I need to pack?

A: In Poland, the temperature in April can range from the 40’s to the 70’s, and it rains frequently. In Israel the weather will be warmer and may range from the 50’s to the 80’s. With this in mind, here are some practical packing tips to consider:

- Participants should have a hat, a shirt with sleeves/windbreaker/sweater, sunscreen, and water in their backpacks at all times.
- Bring comfortable walking shoes. No flip flops.
- Please pack modest clothing to be worn when visiting religious sites and concentration camps.
- Because we strive to create a special atmosphere on Shabbat, please bring dressy-casual clothing to be worn at this time.
- See next page for full packing checklist.



Packing List



Weather can go from cold and rainy Poland to hot and sunny Israel, so be prepared with multiple layers. REMEMBER TO LABEL EVERYTHING!

LUGGAGE:

- ☐ 1 suitcase/bag – 50 pound limit, maximum exterior dimension: 62in.
- ☐ 1 backpack (to carry on the plane, for daily use on bus, and for an overnight stay)
- ☐ 1 small bag for easy access on day trips
- ☐ labels for all luggage/bags

SHOES:

- ☐ 1 pair sturdy walking/hiking/gym shoes (lightweight recommended)
- ☐ 1 pair Tevas or other secure water sandals (Closed heel recommended)
- ☐ 1 pair casual for other occasions

CLOTHING:

- ☐ 8 t-shirts or tank tops (one white shirt for Memorial Day)
- ☐ 6 pairs of shorts
- ☐ 3 - 4 pairs of long pants or jeans
- ☐ 15 pairs of underwear
- ☐ 15 pairs of socks
- ☐ 1 - 2 swimsuits
- ☐ 1 sweatshirt or lightweight jacket
- ☐ 2 - 3 pairs of pajamas

FOR GIRLS:

- ☐ 1 outfit for religious sites: dress or skirt/top that covers elbows and knees
- ☐ 1 - 2 outfit(s) for Shabbat/events: skirt/top or dress
- ☐ 1 White shirt

FOR BOYS:

- ☐ 1 white shirt for religious sites
- ☐ 1 - 2 pairs long-pants (dressier, i.e., khakis) for religious sites, Shabbat & events
- ☐ 2 short-sleeved Polo shirts (Shabbat and events)
- ☐ 1 Kipah

TOILETRIES:

- ☐ Dopp kit/cosmetic bag
- ☐ Extra contact lens solution (very expensive in Israel)
- ☐ Shampoo/conditioner
- ☐ Brush/comb
- ☐ Soap and covered soap dish or liquid soap
- ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Shaving equipment
- ☐ Feminine hygiene supplies
- ☐ Toilet paper (sometimes not available at rest stops)
- ☐ Mini packages of Kleenex, chapstick, and anti-bacterial soap or wipes
- ☐ Moisturizer/Vaseline for post Israeli desert hikes

MISCELLANEOUS:

- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Belt
- ☐ Camera and charger
- ☐ Phone and charger
- ☐ Drawstring bag for day trip
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ 1-2 beach towels
- ☐ Extra pair of prescription glasses and/or contact lenses
- ☐ Prescription medicine (enough for 3 weeks + a written prescription)
- ☐ Adapter for Poland/Israel (220 converter)
- ☐ Large plastic bag for clothing that gets wet
- ☐ Journal, pens
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Cincinnati MOTL gear (sweatshirt, hats, shirt, nametag, pins)
- ☐ \$250 in cash

WHAT WE DO NOT RECOMMEND:

Linens and pillows
Expensive jewelry or other valuables such as laptops and expensive electronics

Trip Guidelines



- Proof of COVID vaccination will be needed in order to participate on the trip. All participants are required to be fully vaccinated with boosters.
- Travel Health insurance will be mandatory for all participants.
- There is a zero-tolerance policy as it relates to drinking alcohol, using recreational drugs or abusing prescription medications while on the March of the Living trip. Anyone caught doing so will be sent home immediately at their own expense.
- Participants are expected to adhere to all rules communicated by the group leaders and the MOTL staff and may not engage in any unwanted physical contact at any time or place.
- Participation in gambling activities and/or entrance to casinos is strictly prohibited.
- A curfew will be enforced.
- Participants are forbidden from leaving the group or hotel without adult supervision unless given explicit permission from a group leader.
- Do not bring expensive jewelry, electronics or other items you are afraid could get lost or stolen.

Application Checklist



PLEASE NOTE: Save copies of your completed application and medical forms.

#1: Fully answer all questions on the online forms:

- ☐ Application
- ☐ Medical Form Part 1

#2: Mail or deliver the following items to the Mayerson JCC (address listed below):

- ☐ A JPEG image of yourself emailed to MOTL@mayersonjcc.org
- ☐ A \$500 non-refundable deposit check made out to Mayerson JCC - March of the Living. Write your name on the bottom of the check. No application will be considered without this deposit
There will be no refunds after January 31.
- ☐ Medical Form Part 2, after being completed and signed by your physician
- ☐ A photo copy of your passport
- ☐ A photo copy of your COVID-19 vaccination card

#3: If you are eligible for the Cincy Journeys Grant (to receive this all-expenses-paid grant you cannot have used a high school Israel travel grant before, you must live in Greater Cincinnati, and at least one parent must be Jewish) please apply for the grant at this time. You can find the link to the grant information at MayersonJCC.org/MOTL

Mayerson JCC - March of the Living
Attention: Anne Goldstein
8485 Ridge Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

Anne Goldstein
motl@mayersonjcc.org
513.722.7241