



**INFO  
PACKET**

**MARCH  
OF  
THE  
LIVING**

**APRIL 21 - MAY 4,  
2025**



*Never Again is Now*



**MAYERSON JCC**  
*of Cincinnati*

**FROM DARKNESS  
TO LIGHT**

**WE ARE  
STILL HERE**



# MARCH OF THE LIVING

APRIL 21 - MAY 4, 2025

Join Jewish teens from all over the world to study the history of the Holocaust and to examine the roots of prejudice, intolerance and hatred. Observe Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) in Poland, where you will march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the largest concentration camp complex built during World War II. Afterwards, you will travel to Israel to observe Yom HaZikaron (Israel Memorial Day) and celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day). The program will help strengthen your Jewish identity, create connections with Israel, and build a community of future Jewish leaders. As high school seniors enter adulthood and prepare for life on college campuses in a post-October 7 world, it is more important than ever to be equipped with these important lessons.

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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](http://MAYERSONJCC.ORG/MOTL)  
**#NEVERFORGET**



## 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*



## 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 AN EXAMPLE ITINERARY, BASED ON THE 2023 TRIP:

### DAY 1

Travel to Poland

### DAY 2

Arrive in Krakow  
Tour of synagogues and ghetto  
Erev Yom Hashoah  
Overnight – Krakow

### DAY 3

#### YOM HASHOAH

Tour Auschwitz  
THE MARCH  
Dinner at JCC  
Overnight – Krakow

### DAY 4

Plashow  
Birkenau  
Oswiecim  
Synagogue/Museum  
Overnight – Tarnow

### DAY 5

Tarnow  
Zblitovskaya Gora  
Dabroska Tarnowska  
Markova  
Overnight – Lublin

### DAY 6

Lublin  
Majdanek  
Kabbalat Shabbat – Ec Chaim  
Overnight- Warsaw

### DAY 7

Shabbat Services  
Walking Tour – ghetto wall,  
Umschlagplatz, Mila 18,  
Rappaport Memorial  
POLIN Museum – meeting with  
Righteous Among the Nations  
Havdalah  
Overnight – Warsaw

### DAY 8

Treblinka  
Warsaw Cemetery  
Old Town Warsaw-Renek  
DEPART TO ISRAEL!

### DAY 9

Arrive in Israel  
Beach & Shechyanu  
Leket – Tikkun Project  
Little Switzerland Hike  
Lunch – Druze village  
Erev Yom HaZikaron program  
Overnight – Tel Hai

### DAY 10

YOM HAZIKARON  
Memorial of the 73  
Kibbutz Dafna – High School Program  
Tzefat  
Boat Ride on the Kinneret  
Overnight – Karei Deshe

### DAY 11

#### YOM HAATZMAUT

Drive to Jerusalem  
Safrat Square  
Old City  
Latrun  
Overnight- B’nai Dan – Tel Aviv

### DAY 12

Masada  
Dead Sea  
Stand With Us Program  
Overnight – Jerusalem

### DAY 13

Yad VaShem  
Har Herzl  
Machane Yehuda  
Kabbalat Shabbat Services  
Kotel  
Overnight – Jerusalem

### DAY 14

Different Shuls for Services  
Walking Tour  
Seudat Shlisheet  
Havdalah  
Go to the Airport  
Departure

L’hitraot!

Until Next Time in Israel!

# Pictures





## 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 and young adults ages 16 to 26:

**Two Israel travel grants (for \$8,000 and \$6,250)** can be used by Cincinnati Jewish teens and young adults any time between the ages of 16 to 26 with approved trip providers. Grants must be used for separate experiences and cannot be combined for semester or year-long programs.

### 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](http://cincyjourneys.org) | 513-985-1500 | [cincyjourneys@jfedcin.org](mailto:cincyjourneys@jfedcin.org)



Cincy  
Journeys  
INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE **25** YEARS

Strengthening Jewish Cincinnati

FUNDED BY:  
 Jewish Foundation  
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ADMINISTERED BY:  
 JEWISH  
FEDERATION  
CINCINNATI

# Pre-Trip Programs



## **MARCH OF THE LIVING: CINCINNATI DELEGATION 2025 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 12, 3 - 6pm**

Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center

### **SEMINAR TWO: LIVES BEFORE & THE LONGEST HATRED**

**Thursday, January 30, 7 - 9pm**

Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center

### **SEMINAR THREE: DARE TO RESIST**

**Thursday, February 20, 7 - 9pm**

Mayerson JCC

### **SEMINAR FOUR: DESTRUCTION TO REBUILDING**

**Thursday, March 6, 7 - 9pm**

Mayerson JCC

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

*For parents and participants*

**Sunday, April 6, 7 - 9pm**

Mayerson JCC

# FAQs



## **Q: What are the dates of the trip?**

**A:** The dates of the 2025 March of the Living trip are April 21 - May 4.

**Week 1 Poland:** April 21 - 27 | **Week 2 Israel:** April 28 - May 4

## **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](https://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).





## 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



- 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

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

- A JPEG image of yourself emailed to [MOTL@mayersonjcc.org](mailto: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

**#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](http://MayersonJCC.org/MOTL)

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

**Anne Goldstein**  
**[motl@mayersonjcc.org](mailto:motl@mayersonjcc.org)**  
**513.722.7241**