Proclamation

May is National Jewish American Heritage Month when we honor and recognize the inspiring, rich history of Jewish Americans, and celebrate powerful stories of Jewish life in America.

In 2006, President George W. Bush established Jewish American Heritage Month and proclaimed that "with hard work and determination, Jewish people helped build our country and strengthen our values, and their belief in democracy has enriched our society and helped make our country a beacon of hope for all."

Jewish people, in the midst of persecution, played a significant role in American history, and California's history, making important contributions to the arts, science, technology, and more. They include Albert Einstein and his contributions to physics, Henry Kissinger and his work in U.S. foreign policy, Marcus Loew, Californian and founder of MGM Studios, and Louis Rose, one of San Diego's earliest settlers.

The Jewish American experience encompasses a vast spectrum of racial, cultural, social, political, and economic identities, embracing a multitude of voices, including Jews of color. In the San Francisco Bay Area—where history, activism, and diversity converge—an estimated 350,000+ Jewish individuals form one of the most dynamic and sizable Jewish communities in the United States.

Alameda is home to rich communities of Jewish life, including Temple Israel and Chabad of Alameda, each honoring timeless Jewish traditions and sponsoring community events.

Temple Israel was founded in 1920 by a dozen Jewish Alameda families who were committed to creating a Jewish communal space for themselves and future generations. On May 17, Temple Israel will celebrate its 105th "Centennial + 5" Anniversary because they were not able to celebrate their 100th Anniversary in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Honoring Jewish American Heritage Month also requires bearing witness to the deep pain and anguish felt by Jewish Americans today, as they confront rising acts of violence and hatred both at home and around the world.

Since the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas, and Israel's response in Gaza, there has been a dramatic rise in antisemitic incidents involving Jewish Americans, according to the latest annual *State of Antisemitism in America Report* released by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in February 2025.

The City of Alameda is committed to vigorously condemning and combatting antisemitism wherever it exists and to standing with the Jewish American community against hatred and bigotry.

Now, therefore, I, Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Mayor of the City of Alameda, do hereby proclaim May 2025 as

Jewish American Heritage Month

in the City of Alameda and encourage all Alamedans to learn more about Jewish history and culture through related books, films, and other resources at the Alameda Free Library, and by taking part in local events, including:

> Storytime and Crafts with Miss Jenn, Director of Education at Temple Israel of Alameda, who will read stories, sing songs, and discuss the many important contributions of Jewish Americans to our country.
> Saturday, May 3, 10:30 AM, West End Library

> Jewish American Heritage Month Family Friendly Programs.
> Saturday, May 3, 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM, Main Library

> Jewish Perspectives on Immigration from two Alameda residents who are members of Kehilla Community Synagogue.
> Tuesday, May 6, 6:30 PM, Main Library

> Jewish Heroes, a family program highlighting Jewish Heroes in collaboration with Miss Jenn, from Temple Israel.
> Saturday, May 10, 1:00 PM, Main Library

Local folk musician and Holocaust music scholar, Vilde Chaya leads a workshop and performance on Jewish folk music, including Yiddish, Hebrew, Ladino, and more.
Saturday, May 10, 2:30 PM, Main Library

Rabbi Cynthia Minster presents "Jewish Contributions to Pop Culture," a fascinating look at Jewish contributions to American pop music, film, and culture. The presentation will include film and music clips.
Saturday, May 17, 2:00 PM, Bay Farm Island Library, Leydecker Event Center

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Mayor