



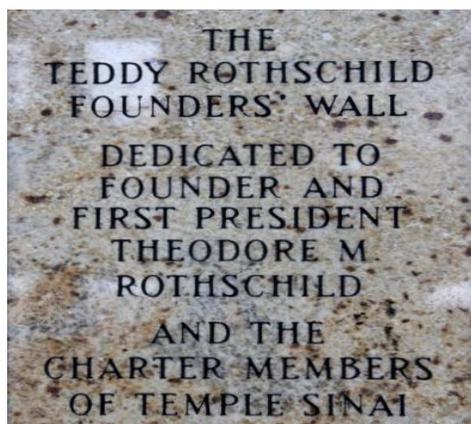
Welcome to Temple Sinai!



Where we started...

Our congregation began in 1959 when two dozen families came together to establish a new Reform congregation in the Rochester, NY area. Their goal to create a synagogue that lived up to Reform Jewish values and that provided a safe and inclusive environment for Jewish spiritual, educational and social fulfillment remains strong and vibrant today. On June 12, 1960, Temple Sinai was granted its charter from the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

In these fifty plus years we have grown to a current membership of approximately 570 households. We are Jewish newcomers and old timers, children and adults, individuals with abilities and disabilities, individuals, couples and families, gay and straight, Jews by birth and by choice, non-Jewish partners and spouses.



Although we have grown, the goals of our founders live on as our goals today. We continue to think of ourselves as a small congregation because we do all we can to maintain a culture of warmth and connectedness with and among our congregants. We nurture and cherish our culture of inclusiveness, our sense of community and our sense of respect for all.

Where we are...



Temple Sinai is a dynamic religious institution, continually growing and evolving to meet the needs of its congregants and of the Jewish people more generally, as defined by our Mission Statement found later in this information.

Both adult and youth education are central to life at Temple Sinai. Our School of Jewish Life and Learning has about 200 students and there are approximately 75-100 adults participating in a myriad of educational programs at any given time, from study of Hebrew and basic Judaism, to Torah and Talmud study, to preparing to become an adult B'nai Mitzvah.

Our youth education is comprehensive, beginning with our pre-school Sprouts program and continuing through high school. The Bogrim program for 11th and 12th grade students was started a number of years ago at the request of some of our students who wanted to continue their studies past Confirmation. There is an emphasis on family education and parents participate in many of our programs, starting in 1st grade when the kids are learning about Shabbat through to 7th grade when students and parents spend a day in study together.

We have numerous committees, including those that help us operate, such as Finance, and Building and Grounds, and those that further our mission, such as Social Action, Women's Chavurah, Religious Practices, School of Jewish Life and Learning and Mitzvah Connection. Our congregants can and do participate in temple life in a wide variety of ways in addition to worship and celebration of life cycle events.

Our Social Action Committee gives congregants the opportunity to make a difference in our larger community by organizing year round donations, advocacy efforts and educational programs. We are very proud of Temple Sinai's participation as a founding congregation of the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN) in which each member congregation hosts homeless families for four weeks a year. Over 150 congregants volunteer for our hosting efforts, from setting up the bedrooms for our guests in the classrooms, providing meals, spending time with our guests during dinner, sleeping over, shopping for

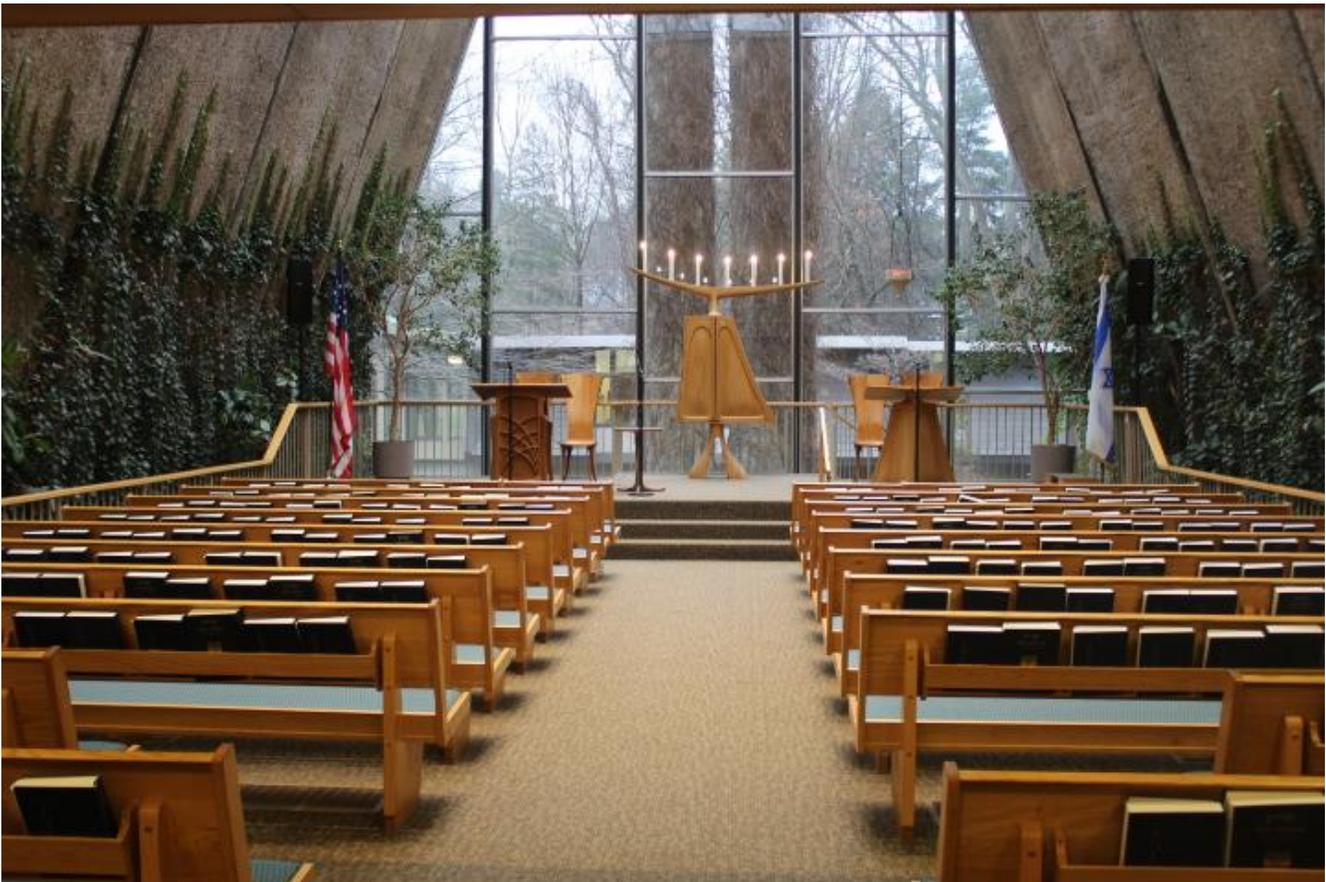
food and supplies and doing laundry after they have left. There is also our annual Mitzvah Day Celebration when all of our students and many congregants participate in community and synagogue projects, inspiring us to do *tikkun olam* year round.

Members serve on the Board of Trustees, join committees, plan holiday celebrations and other temple events and programs, participate in fund raising, study and attend regional and national Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) events. Our officers and board members are chosen based on volunteerism and willingness to participate.

We believe that our congregation has struck a wonderful balance between informality and respect, warmth and decorum that helps everyone feel comfortable. This spirit filters through all aspects of temple life.

Temple Sinai is a diverse and welcoming congregation. Above all, we regard all of our congregants as a very important part of our *Mishpocha*, "Temple Sinai Family."

Our building and sanctuary...



Services were originally held in members' homes and then moved fairly rapidly through a number of other local locations. In 1965 the congregation had grown to 75 families and the current land was purchased. Renowned local architect, James Johnson, was contracted to design the building and construction was completed by 1967. The concrete walls and mammoth pillars were all poured on-site, requiring so much skill and fortitude of the craftsmen involved, that they were presented with an award by their fellow craftsmen for their efforts.

Since then, the building has been modified four times. Following a fire in 1978, the social hall and kitchen were remodeled and expanded. In 1987, when the Temple Sinai Family had grown to nearly 400 families, additions were made to the social hall, foyer, kitchen and education wing. Fourteen years later, in 2001, with membership at 600 families, renovations and the addition of meeting and classrooms was completed. In August 2005, a renovation of our social hall was done. The current facility that now welcomes members and visitors alike is the result of many congregants' vision and a membership with a commitment to Temple Sinai's future.

The sanctuary is truly a sight to behold, giving the impression of being simultaneously indoors and outdoors. The setting gives those within the sanctuary the sensation of being sheltered by the intimacy of the great tent like walls while enjoying the impression of being among the foliage of the wooded world beyond.



Johnson shaped the sanctuary to suggest a tent, symbolizing the nomadic theme in Jewish history and the five sections of each side are thought to represent the ten lost tribes that, under King Jeroboam, once made up the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Through the glass roof, we look upward and are reminded that God once promised Abraham that his descendants “would be as numerous as the stars in the sky.”

Beyond the glass wall, two tablets can be seen soaring towards the sky. These often remind the worshiper of God's covenant with the Jewish people: The Ten Commandments.

Even the bima furniture is unique. The Holy Ark and the Rabbi's lectern were handcrafted by prominent sculptor Wendell Castle; the chairs were designed and carved by Richard Newman, at that time a student of Mr. Castle. The Cantorial Soloist's lectern was designed and built by Neal Barrett. Of the Torahs (the five books of Moses) currently residing in our Ark, one is particularly precious. This scroll was among the 1,564 Torahs confiscated by the Nazis during the Holocaust and later released by the Czech government to British Jews who repaired them and distributed them to synagogues throughout the world. Temple Sinai received this Torah in 1980.

As you enter the building on the sanctuary side, you are greeted with a beautiful metal sculpture that was designed and crafted by the local artist Paul Knoblauch, to honor the Temple's founding families.



Where We Are Going...

We recognize that times are changing more rapidly than ever and the world today is much different than it was when our synagogue was founded. For almost 60 years we have always kept our Mission, Vision and Values as our guiding compass in progressively embracing change.

Our approaches to spirituality, Jewish identity, lifelong learning and social action will continue to change and evolve to meet the future needs of our congregation and community at large. We remain a work in progress, always testing and embracing new ideas and approaches.

Yet there will always be constants that define who we are as a congregation. Our culture of closeness and family will never change. Our progressive approach to Tikkun Olam and Social Justice will grow and also continue to define us.

Our future remains just as exciting and has the same potential as when two dozen families came together in 1959 to create our congregation.



Our Mission...

Temple Sinai is a dynamic religious institution which is continually evolving and growing to meet the needs of congregants and the Jewish people. The congregation is dedicated to upholding the principles of Reform Judaism for this and future generations. We foster Jewish identity and values through individual and group connection to God, Torah, the Jewish people and the land of Israel. We affirm our congregation's ethical and social responsibilities to our community, our nation and the world. We are committed to providing support and care for our congregational family. We welcome and encourage participation in Temple life.

Underlying this Mission are six broad principles:

Achieving Jewish Identity

- Inspire all congregants toward integrating Judaism more actively into their daily lives.
- Nurture congregant involvement in Temple affairs.
- Inspire our youth toward a firm Jewish identity through a variety of opportunities.
- Encourage retention of membership throughout the congregant's life.
- Encourage unaffiliated members of the Jewish community to commit to Reform Judaism by joining Temple Sinai.

Providing Jewish Education

- Provide and encourage an environment for lifelong learning by providing quality educational opportunities, formally and informally for all ages.

Ensuring Temple Sinai for Future Generations

- Foster leadership development.
- Create a secure financial base for the Temple.
- Ensure a well maintained facility with adequate capacity to support the Temple.
- Maintain a viable and active membership base.

Creating a Social Environment

- Provide activities which encourage our membership to utilize the Temple as a place for friendship and social interaction.
- Create a supportive caring community for congregants.

Encouraging Ritual Practice

- Provide meaningful worship experiences for Shabbat and holidays which attract the participation of congregants.
- Encourage participation in Jewish holiday celebration at home and in the synagogue.
- Meet the needs of the congregants connected with Jewish life cycle events.

Participating in Social Action Projects

- Inspire the congregation towards repairing the world through social action opportunities.
- Connect the congregation in meaningful ways to the greater Jewish community locally, nationally and internationally.

Our Vision...

We strive to make Temple Sinai a *sukkat shalom*, a shelter of peace. It is here that we seek space for both personal renewal and gathering spiritual strength through connection with one another and with God. Temple Sinai provides ongoing opportunities to experience our rich Jewish heritage.

Through prayer, study, personal and community connection and work, we find a sense of God's presence in our lives. Temple Sinai provides us a place to connect with others of diverse backgrounds, needs and generations.

Together, we reach out to our local and global communities. We celebrate and commemorate our daily lives, life cycle events and holidays. We work as partners with God to do *tikkun olam*, working towards a just and compassionate world.

Our Core Values...

Spirituality

A synagogue where prayer is engaging, empowering and participatory.

Learning

A synagogue where learning runs deep for people of all ages.

Community

A synagogue where all congregants matter, always feel a sense of welcome and wholeness, and never feel alone.

Good Deeds

A synagogue where congregants strive to alleviate human suffering and participate in causes that create a positive difference in the world.

Our Home

A synagogue facility that is appropriately maintained to meet the changing needs of our congregation.

