

*Save the date for Mount Sinai Jewish Center's*  
**CHANUKAT HABAYIT**  
CELEBRATING THE COMPLETION OF OUR LOWER LEVEL RENOVATION  
י"ט אָלול תשע"ד • SEPTEMBER 14, 2014



**Mount Sinai Jewish Center**

135 Bennett Ave, NY, NY 10040 212 568 1900 [www.mtsinaishul.com](http://www.mtsinaishul.com)







# Mount Sinai Jewish Center

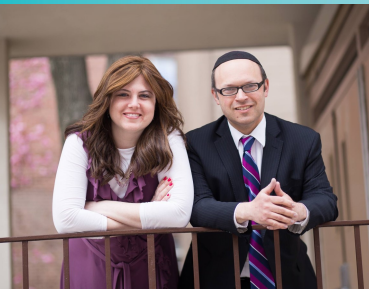
**Torah. Community. Spirituality. Chesed. Growth. Family. Friendship.**



Mount Sinai Jewish Center is a vibrant Modern Orthodox synagogue with a rich history spanning more than **100 years** in Washington Heights. It is the center of a cohesive and inclusive community which maintains traditional halachic observance while engaging the next generation of Jewish leaders. We serve a **diverse** and **multi-generational community** through an array of religious, social, and educational services and programs.



In addition to meaningful daily, Shabbat, and Holiday tefillot, we offer stimulating shiurim on a wide variety of topics; frequent scholars-in-residence; peer-led and individual learning opportunities in our Beit Midrash; a variety of social programs for young professionals, recent college graduates, seniors, married couples, and families; and volunteer opportunities which benefit the broader Washington Heights Jewish community.



*"I got involved in shul leadership because I felt that it was important to give back to a community that has done so much for me. Since the day I moved to the Heights five years ago, Mount Sinai has been my home. It is not only the place where I know that I can see my friends every week. It is a place that welcomes everyone into its space and continuously strives to be the best shul and community that it can be."*

## **Mount Sinai is an incubator for the next generation of Jewish leaders.**



High levels of involvement by our members, volunteers, and lay leaders make us one of the most active and engaging synagogues in the New York area. We serve several hundred members and local residents, provide hospitality to visitors, help with the local food pantry, visit the sick, and more.



Our leadership is comprised primarily of **young professionals** and **graduate students**, while the guidance and involvement of our long-time members are an integral part of the synagogue's recent growth. Mount Sinai is a unique community. The opportunities available to both the young and young-at-heart abound and vary from social to educational to spiritual activities. **Our community members hail from cities and countries across the globe and come together to pray, learn, meet new friends, and embrace their Judaism in the modern world.**

*"I walked past the Beit Midrash during Seuda Shelishit one Shabbos afternoon. It was packed, and filled with the noise of chavrutot excited to be learning together in the last minutes of Shabbos."*



## Just One Example of How Our Community Comes Together

During **Hurricane Sandy**, we hosted more than 200 college students as well as **dozens of families** who lost power. We also **saved a wedding**, almost delayed by a flooded hall, hosting the celebration in our shul with less than 36 hours' notice.

# We have some exciting things to tell you about!

In just the last year (from July 2013 to June 2014):

<b>101</b>	New Members	<b>8</b>	Shiur-By-Your-Peers
<b>80</b>	People engaged	<b>125+</b>	People hosted through shabbat meal hospitality
<b>30</b>	Babies born	<b>140</b>	Challot sold to raise money for local charities
<b>2,184</b>	Minyanim	<b>60</b>	Volunteers for community service day
<b>400+</b>	People each week for Friday night davening	<b>11</b>	Community-wide shabbat and holiday meals in our social hall
<b>317</b>	Shiurim (gemara, halacha, tefillah, machshava and more)	<b>1</b>	All-day BBQ with Wandering Que
<b>63</b>	Masechtot of mishnayot learned collectively for the Chevra Kadisha breakfast communal siyum	<b>1</b>	Ski trip
<b>232</b>	Days of daf yomi finishing	<b>100</b>	Cubic yards of foundation fill as part of our renovation project
	<b>5</b> masechtot of gemara (since beginning masechet yoma in November)	<b>20,000</b>	Kilowatt hours of electricity generated from our new solar panels (since activated in January)
<b>9</b>	Scholars-in-residence / guest lecturers		

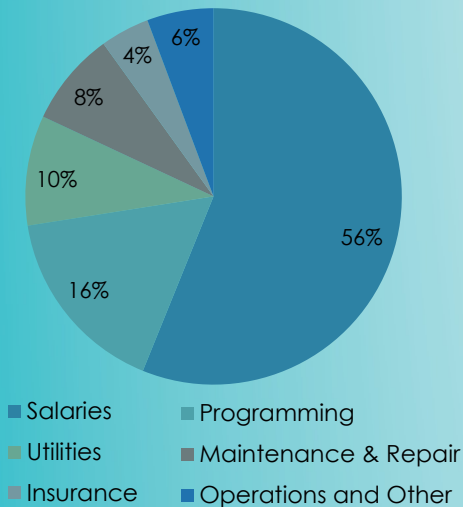


*"Mount Sinai is the center of my social life, I've made so many new friends here"*

## Financial Overview

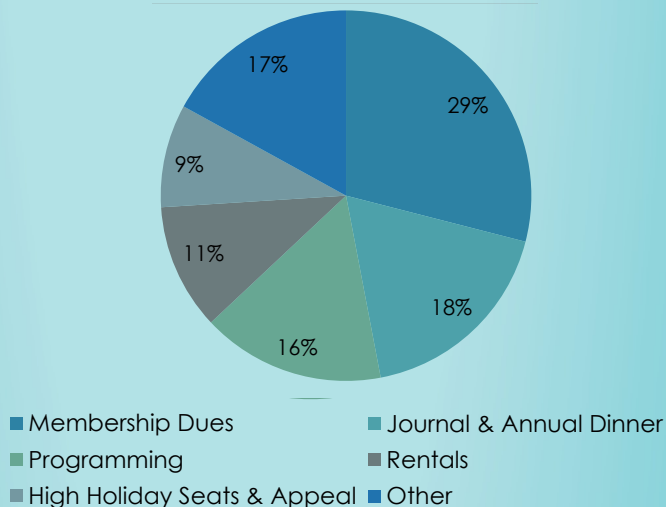
People come to Mount Sinai for meaningful and intensive prayer services, community events, educational lectures, chesed/service opportunities, and more. For some of these programs, admission fees and sponsorships cover their costs. However, even the basic costs of keeping the institution operational are extensive. The charts below show relative costs of our operations by component as well as our sources of funding for our operating budget in a typical year.

### Annual Expenditures



Total: \$410,000

### Funding Sources







## What We Offer

### Tefillah

- 3 Shacharit Minyanim Daily
- 2 Shacharit Minyanim on Shabbat
- Daily Mincha/Maariv
- Daily Late Maariv (10pm)

### Torah

- Daf Yomi Chaburah
- Monday Night Learning beit midrash program
- Weekly halacha and gemara shiurim
- Weekly interactive tefillah seminar
- Friday Night Lights—Shabbat dinner and shiur
- Shiur-By-Your-Peers
- Scholars-In-Residence
- Tikun Leil Shavuot with over 15 shiurim

### Community Eruv

- Built in 2006, checked by community members, supervised by R' Schwartz

### Chesed and Community Service

- Shabbat hospitality
- Meals for new moms
- Annual service projects with the JCC
- Hospital visits
- Visits to local seniors
- Blood drives
- Challah-baking fundraisers
- "Volunteer opportunity of the week"

### Family Programming

- Tot Shabbat
- Minyan Katan
- Yoetzet Halacha presentations
- Young couples lunches and onegs
- Children's Chanukah Party
- Children's Purim party
- Havdalah pajama party







### Social Programs

- Shabbat Mevarchim Kiddush
- Art, Wine and Cheese Night
- Saturday Night Sundaes
- Shabbat Onegs
- Singles mixers
- Comedy night
- Panoply trivia extravaganza
- Ladies Got Talent
- Hospitality potluck lunches

### "Green" Initiatives

- Solar panels on our roof produce clean energy
- Coordination of a local CSA program
- Participation in local energy curtailment program
- Paper waste reduction
- Efficient upgraded HVAC zoning and automated temperature control
- Insulated windows
- Biodegradable paper goods

### Holidays

- Soul-filled High Holiday davening for hundreds of people each year
- Two Sukkot available for communal use
- Shmini Atzeret dinner
- Shavuot BBQ
- Purim Chagigah, shpiel, digital shorts contest
- Yom Haatzmaut celebration and dinner
- Yom Hazikaron commemoration
- Simchat Torah dancing
- Yom Hashoah and Kristallnacht commemorations
- Yom Yerushalayim celebrations
- Tisha B'Av Kinot program

***Our weekly bulletin highlights upcoming events, committee programs, and members' life events including weddings, engagements, and births.***



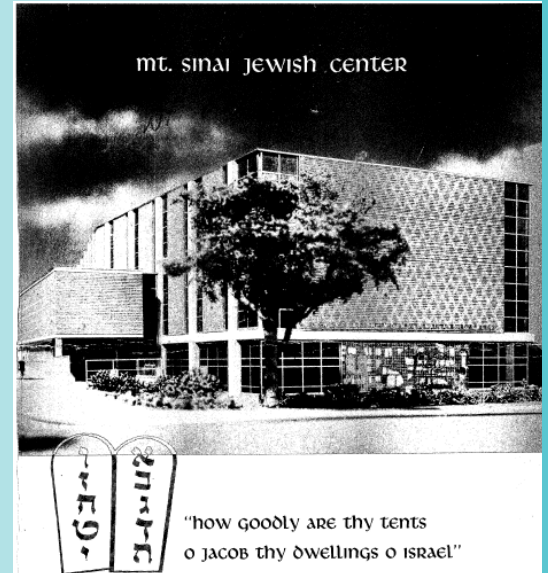


# Our History

## *Congregation Mount Sinai, Anshe Emeth, Emes Wozedek of Washington Heights, Inc., and Congregation Beth Hillel and Beth Israel*

Founded in the early 20th century and joined by survivors of the Holocaust, Mount Sinai Jewish Center stands supported by the traditions and history of several Manhattan synagogues that merged to form the current congregation. We cherish and guard the legacies of our founders, and live by their example as we form a vision for our future.

- 1906** Congregation Anshe Emeth of West Harlem founded at West 131st Street
- 1910** Congregation Mount Sinai of Washington Heights founded at West 181st Street
- 1917** Merger of Mount Sinai and Anshe Emeth (MSAE)
- 1921** Completion of a new building at Wadsworth Avenue and West 178th Street
- 1922** Vaad HaKashrus of Upper Washington Heights formed by MSAE, Temple Israel and Beth Hamedrash Hagadol
- 1939** Congregation Emes Wozedek established by R' Max Koppel z"l. Relocated in 1950 to the former Audobon Ballroom.
- 1940** Congregation Beth Hillel established
- 1946** R' Herman Glatt z"l appointed rabbi of MSAE
- 1949** Congregation Beth Israel established
- 1951** R' Murry S. Penkower appointed rabbi of MSAE
- 1955** Property on Wadsworth Ave. at West 178th street expropriated by the Port Authority
- 1959** Cornerstone dedication ceremonies for a new building at our current location at 135 Bennett Avenue
- 1971** R' Joseph Singer appointed rabbi of Mt. Sinai Jewish Center
- 1980** Congregation Beth Hillel and Congregation Beth Israel merge into West 182nd Street location
- 1981** R' Elazar Muskin appointed rabbi of Mt. Sinai Jewish Center
- 1987** Merger with Congregation Emes Wozedek - R' Schnaidman appointed rabbi
- 2001** Merger with Congregation Beth Hillel and Beth Israel
- 2006** Mount Sinai Washington Heights Eruv completed: Rav Hamachshir- R' Wosner
- 2009** R' Ezra Schwartz appointed rabbi of MSJC
- 2010** Social Hall renovation
- 2014** \$1.1 million foundation repair and lower level renovation project completed, reshaping our building for a new generation and nearly 500 members



Cover image of brochure describing features of our current building prior to its construction in 1959

*"I moved here as a single guy, made great friends, found a chavruta, and met my wife. Now our daughter loves going to Tot Shabbat at Mt Sinai."*

*"Our shul has a tremendous number of learning opportunities and chesed programs. There's always something going on."*





## Rabbi Ezra Schwartz, Senior Rabbi



Rabbi Ezra Schwartz has served as Rabbi of Mount Sinai Jewish Center since August 2009. During his tenure the Shul has greatly expanded its offerings of high-level Torah classes. Rabbi Schwartz leads weekly Halacha and Gemara shiurim and hosts periodic special events on current hot topics in Halacha and Jewish perspectives. He strives to bring personal compassion, intellectual discovery, and spiritual growth to our community, and hopes to continue to develop relationships within our community as it continues to change and grow.

Rabbi Schwartz also serves as a Rosh Yeshiva at Yeshiva University, and as the Bochen of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) / Mazer Yeshiva Program. He oversaw the restructuring of the RIETS program in Contemporary Halacha. Rabbi Schwartz holds five advanced degrees from Yeshiva University, including Yadin Yadin. Rabbi Schwartz and his wife, Dr. Rivka Press Schwartz, along with their five children, love being a part of the Mount Sinai family and welcome congregants for Shabbat meals on a regular basis. They look forward to welcoming you to the community soon!

## Rabbi Dr. Mordecai Schnaidman, Rabbi Emeritus

Rabbi Mordechai Schnaidman serves as the shul's Rabbi Emeritus. He grew up on the Lower East Side where his father was a pulpit rabbi. Rabbi Schnaidman received his rabbinic ordination from Yeshiva University as a talmid of the Rav, Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, and holds a PhD in Philosophy from Columbia University. He served for many years as a chaplain at Columbia University Medical Center at New York-Presbyterian Hospital before retiring in 2011, and also served on the staff of Yeshiva University's Office of Educational Placement for close to two decades.



During the 1980s, he served as Rabbi of Congregation Emes Wozedek and became the Rabbi of Mount Sinai upon their merger in 1987. Rabbi Schnaidman served as senior rabbi at Mount Sinai until September 2009, and remains an essential source of wisdom, Torah, and comfort to our community. Rabbi Schnaidman teaches a weekly shiur on tefillah and speaks periodically on Shabbat morning, holidays, and at Seudah Shelishit.

## Dena Block, Yoetzet Halacha



Dena Block serves as Yoetzet Halacha at Mount Sinai Jewish Center. She also teaches Talmud and U.S. History at Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School in Teaneck and is the Director of Student Programming there. Dena studied at the Stella K. Abraham Beit Midrash for Women in Migdal Oz in Israel before attending Barnard College. She earned a B.A. in History from Barnard College and an M.A. in Biblical and Talmudic Interpretation from the Graduate Program for Advanced Talmudic Studies at Yeshiva University. Dena was a member of the inaugural class of Nishmat's Miriam Glaubach Center's U.S. Yoatzot Halacha Fellowship. She lives in Washington Heights with her husband Avi and son Zvi.

## Professional Staff



Our professional staff is extremely dedicated to their work in the shul. They provide limitless support by working with lay leaders to organize hundreds of annual programs, in addition to overseeing capital improvements and daily administration of the shul.

**Oren Hiller**, Executive Director

**Atara Chouake**, Marketing and Program Development





# Where We Are Headed

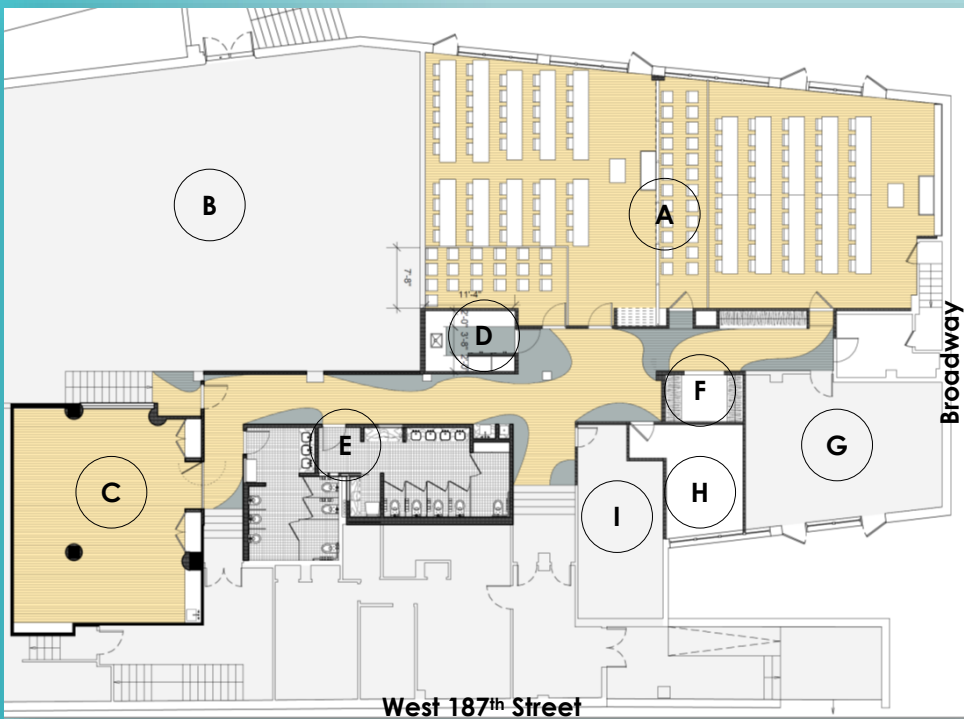
At Mount Sinai, we are bringing a **vision for the future** into reality. Our institution serves as the training ground for the next generation of Jewish leaders, a close-knit community for post-college Jewish **singles**, and a support center for new and growing Jewish **families**. To meet demand, we are developing our infrastructure to bolster the services we deliver and expanding our programming with each passing month.

Our community is growing. Young people are taking communal leadership roles at unprecedented ages. Community members are finding their soul mates and building their first homes here. And families are staying longer, raising their second and third children in neighborhood apartments.

Mount Sinai Jewish Center is an **enriching** and **empowering** place which helps **shape our identities**, even though many of us will only live in Washington Heights for a few years. The thousands of people who have passed through our synagogue over the last decade have **risen to leadership roles in communities across the globe**, and several thousand more will follow in the coming years. They are armed with a sense of responsibility and commitment to the Jewish community. They will be the leaders of our communal institutions for the next generation: our schools, our synagogues, and our professional associations.

Our community is largely comprised of graduates and young professionals early in their careers, and very few have the financial resources to invest meaningfully in the infrastructure we will need for the future. **We look to you to invest in the future of Mount Sinai.** Please support Mount Sinai's Capital Campaign so that we can continue to serve as the incubator for the next generation of Jewish leaders.

## Lower Level Renovation + New Torah & Tefillah Center



### New And Improved Features:

- Reconfigured larger space
- Replaced foundation slab
- Zoned HVAC
- New sewer line and plumbing
- Energy-efficient insulated windows
- Higher ceilings
- Low-wattage and LED lighting

### Legend

- A. Expanded Torah and Tefillah Center, divisible with movable partition
- B. Gym
- C. Children's classroom
- D. Updated pantry
- E. New restrooms with changing stations
- F. Coatroom
- G. Holocaust Library
- H. Rabbi's Study
- I. Office

Before



During



After structural renovations (furnishings coming soon!)



Members participate

