

Congregation Temple Israel Annual Report

2015

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2015 Leadership

Officers

Dee A. Mogerman, President
David Chassin, Vice President
Carol Cohen, Vice President
Harvey A. Harris, Vice President
Jeremy Shook, Vice President

Michael Weiss, Vice President Neil Marglous, Secretary Pamela Dern, Assistant Secretary Debbie Schultz, Treasurer Jeffrey Stern, Assistant Treasurer

Julie Sandler

Caryn Sandweiss

Jill Silverstein

Arnold Spirtas

Susan Stiefel

Trustees

David Aronson
Ellen Brin
Amy Fenster Brown
Ron Chatmon
Marni Deutsch
Allan Epstein
Carla Feuer
Jayme Fingerman
Pepe Finn
Julie Follman

Milton Fry Burt Garland, Jr. David Geddes Thomas Glick Dorette Goldberg Susan K. Goldberg Cathy Goldsticker Dr. Morton Green Ted Greenberg Dr. Barbra Horn

Sally King Amy Lampert Louise Levine Dr. Jerry Levy Lawrence Linkon Rob Litz

Louise Losos Jan Offenbach Nykin Andrew Olschansky Dr. Mitchell Platin

Youth Group Co-Presidents

Cody Culp

Teddy Vincent

Rabbis and Leadership Staff

Amy Feder, Rabbi
Michael Alper, Rabbi
Mark L. Shook, Rabbi Emeritus
Kim Rivera, Director,
Business Operations
Leslie Wolf, Director,
Deutsch Early Childhood Center
Jed Filler, R.J.E., Director,
Youth Education

Laura Robbins, Director, Membership and Development Rachel Closson, Events and Programming Coordinator Erin Wolfman May.

Communications Coordinator **Derrick Bryant,** Building Supervisor

Past Presidents

JoAnne Levy, 2011-13 Dr. David L. Weinstein, 2007-10 Neil J. Handelman, 2005-06 Cary J. Mogerman, 2002-04 Daniel J. Schwartz, 1999-2001 Karen L. Knopf, 1996-98 Leonard J. Adreon, 1994-95 Ellen Deutsch, 1991-93 Gary A. Follman, 1988-90 Merle L. Silverstein (z"I), 1984-87

Life Trustees

Dr. Ira Gall (z"l)

President's Message

For Congregation Temple Israel, 2015 has been a year of reorganization, rebuilding, and renewal.

Faithful to our strategic plan and our mission, the Board of Trustees adopted many changes to our organizational structure this year. Several key staff positions were redefined to better suit the current and anticipated future needs of our Congregation. This reorganization has allowed our leadership team to be better focused on our mission and to serve our membership more effectively.

We have continued to rebuild spaces in our 54-year-old facility as funds became available. On the heels of last year's complete renovation of the Gall Family Sanctuary, this year we dedicated the beautiful new Handelman Gathering Space, a generous gift from the estate of Frieda Handelman, of blessed memory. It is a stunning new addition to our Temple facility. In addition, in the north end of the building, the restrooms were gutted, completely rebuilt, and modernized, and an old, inefficient HVAC system was replaced. The Edison Bridge was also updated with new windows, carpet and paint. The physical renewal of our facility has allowed us to once again be proud of the magnificent structure in which we are housed.

Our congregational spirit has also been renewed. The pride we feel about our newly rebuilt spaces has enhanced the sacred activity that has taken place within our walls. Mishkan HaNefesh, the new High Holy Days prayerbook was used for the first time this year. This machzor provided the opportunity for deeper introspection for many congregants. The many educational offerings made available by our gifted rabbis allowed for meaningful personal growth and Judaic understanding for others. There have been many "aha moments" this year!

I am proud to serve as the 34th President of Congregation Temple Israel. As I begin my third year of service as your President, I am blessed to work with our talented rabbis, committed and outstanding lay leaders and dedicated professional staff members. I thank the Board of Trustees, Committee Chairs and my fellow Temple Israel members for your continued support. As you review this Annual Report, you will see that we have accomplished much in this past year. We can be proud of our successes and recognize what we can do when we work together to for a central purpose.

We also realize how much we have to do! I hope you will join me in 2016 as we continue on our journey as a Reform Jewish Congregation with purpose, meaning, and intention. Please be a part of fulfilling our mission at Congregation Temple Israel.

May we begin our 130th year proudly as a Congregation with strength, as we strive to be a kehillah kedoshah - a holy community.

Dee A. Mogerman President





Rabbis:

Left: Rabbi Amy Feder and Rabbi Michael Alper

Right: Rabbi Mark L. Shook, Rabbi Emeritus





Officers:

Top Row: Michael Weiss, Jeffrey Stern, Debbie Schultz, David Chassin, and Dr. David L. Weinstein

Bottom Row: Rabbi Amy Feder, Dee A. Mogerman, JoAnne Levy,

Pamela Dern, Jeremy Shook, and Rabbi Michael Alper

Not Pictured: Carol Cohen, Harvey A. Harris, and Neil Marglous

Treasurer's Report

As you know, our Congregation is not sustained by dues income alone, and much of this year's financial success is attributed to the dedicated staff and lay leaders who spent countless hours planning successful fundraising events that allowed the Congregation to thrive in 2015. Our High Holy Days campaign was the most successful in recent years, raising over \$55,000 from generous congregants and visitors. The Scrip and Gift Card program nearly doubled in size, and we now offer gift cards either as monthly subscriptions or as one time purchases from nearly 700 vendors. Smaller fundraising efforts such as Wish List donations, tributes, and other giving opportunities, coupled with the diligence of our staff in controlling expenses, have additionally contributed to a positive financial year. While year-end accounting entries are still in progress, we anticipate closing the 2015 financial year with a small surplus.

The Congregation has nearly completed the transition to QuickBooks from our old accounting software. While no transition is easy, we believe that this change will move us forward in a positive way, streamlining processes by more tightly integrating Chaverware, our membership management database, with our primary accounting software. As an added bonus, the new software is significantly less expensive to support than our current platform. We look forward to providing new, more transparent and timely reporting to our Board in the first quarter of 2016.

In late November, your Board of Trustees passed the 2016 Temple budget. After much analysis, we increased Continuing Synagogue Support at all levels in order to keep the budget in balance. We have continued aggressive fundraising and development budget targets, and we hope that you will consider each giving opportunity and participate as your family's budget allows.

As a life-long Temple member, I am proud of our commitment to ensure we offer membership to anyone who wishes to become a part of our community, regardless of their ability to pay at standard dues levels. While this is largely sustained by the Continuing Synagogue Support of our members who have opted to be members of the Shofar Society and by those who pay standard levels, we do not discount the value of those who cannot pay fully but contribute in smaller amounts or other ways. Whether you can afford \$18 per month, or can contribute at the highest levels of the Shofar Society, your membership is valuable to us, and we appreciate your commitment to our Congregation's future financial stability.

It has been a pleasure serving as your Treasurer for the past year, and I look forward to a successful 2016.

Debbie Schultz Treasurer





Investment Committee

2015 was a productive year for the Investment Committee at Temple Israel. The duties of the Investment Committee include oversight of the Congregation's investments and the Investment Advisor.

As 2015 came to a close, the Endowment account is down -1.63% through November 30, 2015. Most of the loss occurred in the third quarter of the year. US stock markets continue to outperform most of the global and emerging markets for the year, some of which were negative. Fixed Income markets continue to brace for the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates, as most indexes are flat to down for the year. Like last year, global equity performance was mixed, in part due to geopolitical concerns in Ukraine, Russia, the Middle East and the steep decline in oil prices. Adding to those concerns, 2015 saw the continued slide in oil prices, in addition to drops in precious metals, commodities and most emerging markets.

As part of our ongoing due diligence, in 2015, the Committee reviewed the performance of the current Investment Advisor and conducted a thorough investment manager search. The search also entailed evaluating an investment advisor for the Woolf Estate Funds, which were generously donated to the Temple. The Committee recommended to the Board that we retain the current Investment Advisor for the Endowment Funds, and begin management of the Woolf Estate Funds based upon the direction of the Investment Advisor.

The Woolf Estate Funds have a separate investment mandate and are invested with a more conservative profile than the Endowment. We completed the year with a review of the investment accounts and have maintained our policy allocations for the coming year.

Committee Chair: Joshua Reichman

Staff Liaison: Kim Rivera

Committee Members: David Aronson, Arthur Auer, Ellen Brin, Jack Deutsch, Allan Epstein, Rabbi Amy Feder, Doris Fishman, Milton Fry, Ted Greenberg, Cathy Goldsticker, Neil Handelman, Jerry Levy, Louis Loebner, Andrew Reiter, Diana Rothbarth, Debbie Schultz, Jeremy Shook, Jeffrey Stern, and Neil Wolfman

Finance Committee

The responsibilites of the Financial Controls Committee are to monitor Temple finances, act as a liaison with Temple auditors, and assist the Board and Executive Committee as requested. We look forward to continuing these efforts in 2016.

Committee Chair: Allan Epstein Staff Liaison: Kim Rivera

Committee Members: Ellen Brin, Cathy Goldsticker, Dee A. Mogerman,

Debbie Schultz, Jeffrey Stern, and Mike Weiss

Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee's goals and objectives include developing and implementing strategy, plans and programs to attract, motivate, develop and retain the best people to further Congregation Temple Israel's mission, as well as to reduce the risk of employment litigation and protect our reputation in the community. In 2015, we stayed in close contact with Dee Mogerman, Board President, and the leadership team, providing resources for hiring and organizational alignment.

Committee Chair: Rachel W. Andreasson

Staff Liaison: Kim Rivera

Committee Members: Susan Frager, Martha Kreipke, and Burt Garland, Jr.

Kahn Foundation Committee

The Nathan Kahn - Ernestine Kahn - Charles Kahn Foundation, an endowed fund of Temple Israel, was established through the generosity of Lina Kahn for the purpose of improving the quality of life for senior citizens. From the first grants awarded in 1992 to the present, the Foundation has distributed over \$2,573,000 to agencies and organizations for services and projects benefiting the elderly. Funding is provided from the earnings on invested funds.

Grant requests are received from many agencies in the Jewish community as well as the general community and are reviewed by the committee twice each year for funding. Proposals range from programs that are religious, social, educational and recreational to those concerned with the health and wellness of our senior citizens.

For the year 2015, the Kahn Foundation awarded grants totaling \$122,900. Grant recipients included: Temple Israel - Sanctuary Ramp for Total Accessibility, Worship Service for Seniors through Improved Hearing and Large Print Siddurim; Jewish Community Center - Kosher Meal Program; Jewish Family & Children's Service - Elderlink St. Louis; Center for Hearing & Speech - Hearing Aids; Congregations Shaare Emeth, Temple Israel and United Hebrew - Jewish Seniors on the Move; Crown Center for Senior Living - Creative Arts Project; Guardian Angel Settlement Association - Case Management and Consumer Education for Seniors.

It is very gratifying to carry out the wishes of Lina Kahn and help provide wonderful opportunities and services for our senior citizens.

Committee Chair: Linda Kraus **Staff Liaison:** Rabbi Amy Feder

Committee Members: Randy Arst, Pamela Dern, Doris Fishman, Neil Marglous,

Dee A. Mogerman, Kim Rivera, and Marcee Silverstein

Facilities Committee

We had exciting accomplishments within our more than 50-year-old building, which included a redesign of The Handelman Gathering Place, a space for our congregants to enjoy as a venue for meetings, informal gatherings, relaxing waiting area pre and post worship services, when visiting clergy, or as a library, reading, and study space. It also houses an upgraded coffee bar, a library of interesting Jewish books, WIFI access for guests, computer work stations, display showcases and a reception desk for the Kriegshaber Foyer.

As part of the construction, we were able to redo the heating and air conditioning systems for the entire north side of the building. This included the May Chapel entry lobby and the Kriegshaber Foyer, as well as the Gall Family Sanctuary and the Isserman Auditorium. This new system allows us to run the Temple offices while saving more than 60 percent of the electricity previously used on heating and cooling these spaces. The project also included modernization of the main building restrooms, providing touchless fixtures and also meeting current accessibility codes.

This year we also completed renovation of the Sanctuary and Auditorium; repaired and sealed limestone on the main building; replaced deteriorating steps; repaired concrete at the school and pool; provided new entry mats at all entrances; patched and restriped several parking lots; improved the May Chapel entry landscaping; and finished the Edison Bridge glass repairs, as well as upgraded with fresh paint, new blinds and carpet.

We completed the first take down and reconstruction of the new Bimah on budget and on schedule! Derrick Bryant, Tl's building supervisor, and staff repaired and repainted many areas of the school and main buildings. We replaced the main building hall and foyer florescent lighting with LED lights for energy savings. We replaced the Sanctuary and Isserman Auditorium lighting with energy efficient LED lights as well. This, along with new HVAC changes, continues to move us towards greater energy efficiency. We also commissioned a roof study to proactively plan ongoing maintenance and repairs of the roofs.

Committee Chair: Ted Greenberg Staff Liaison: Kim Rivera

Committee Members: Derrick Bryant, David Chassin, Ron Chatmon, Melvin Greene,

and Arnold Spirtas

Technology Committee

The previous few years have presented challenges - our infrastructure aged and a lack of funding inhibited progress. The same applied to our technology base which

included older wireless mics used at worship services and the very phone system that our staff and members depend on. 2015 began under the same constraints, but due to the generosity of some members and the hard work of our team, we have made considerable progress in bringing our facility forward. Our wireless mic system has been upgraded so we no longer run into conflicts with taxi cab radio calls, the hearing assist system has been replaced with a modern system, and several technology components have been replaced to keep systems running smoothly. Reliability of our internal network has improved along with implementing a cloud backup system for business continuity. Many of these are items that go unnoticed, but are integral to running the Temple.

However, two of our current exciting projects are enjoyed directly by congregants. We have implemented a live video streaming system for those unable to attend services, but who wish to watch the services live or at a later date. The second project is implementing a facility-wide WIFI system for staff and guests to access.

Both projects are still in the works, though the online video streaming and WIFI are available to all. We have many more projects on our priority list and look forward to the continued support of our congregants.

www.ti-stl.org/watch

Committee Chair: Art Lewis Staff Liaison: Kim Rivera

Committee Members: Rabbi Michael Alper, Mark Biernacki, Derrick Bryant, David Chassin, Ron Chatmon, Ron Falkoff, Sarah Falkoff, Dee Mogerman, Ian Schraier, Debbie Schultz, Mike Shaw, Scott Weinstein, and Neil Wolfman

New Mt. Sinai Cemetary Association

2015 has been another exciting year at New Mt. Sinai. In the spring, the cemetery hosted an exhibit and tour of the buildings that were designed by the 20th century Jewish architect, William Levy. Those events drew hundreds of visitors to the cemetery and sparked interest in New Mt. Sinai, even in the non-Jewish community. Over the course of the year, the cemetery has worked with the Jewish Archives, the History Museum and a title search company to learn more about our past.

On a sad note, New Mt. Sinai interred the following TI members during 2015: Jerry Chod, Marilyn Werner, Lynne Cole, Bernard Bloom, Sydney Jacks, Shirley Esses, Allen Lasky, Jeanne Stolar, Alan Goldberg, Audrey Shatz, Neil Bernstein, Dr. Robert Friedman, Dr. Stuart Weiss, and Irma Willick.

Association Members - Temple Israel: David Eidelman, Jim Eiseman, Robert Epstein, Neil Handelman, Louis Loebner, Norman Roth, Randall Scherk, and Sanford Silverstein

Staff Liaison: Kim Rivera

Interfaith Committee

Temple Israel participated in the Jewish and Muslim Day of Service again this year, and we are in the process of considering a Jewish and Muslim Dialogue group. More details to come in 2016.

Committee Chair: Marc Braun Staff Liaison: Rabbi Amy Feder

Israel Engagement Committee

Our goal is to help connect the congregation with Israel. We strive to help the congregation follow the portion of the Vision for Temple Israel which states: "Understanding the miracle that is the State of Israel, we shall rejoice in its existence and draw it near to our hearts through ritual, learning, celebration, and pilgrimages for youth and adults alike."

In 2015, we continued our efforts to engage the congregation with the land and people of Israel. On March 29, 2015, we sponsored our 8th Annual Israeli Film Festival where we presented "The Little Traitor" and "Hunting Elephants". A wonderful light Israeli dinner was served between both films. This event was cosponsored with the St. Louis Israeli community. Our committee also continued to submit weekly "Israel Facts" for the Friday night Shabbat service leaflets and was a co-sponsor of a film at the 2015 St. Louis Jewish Film Festival.

Members of the committee also attended various other local Jewish community Israel related activities and events.

Committee Chair: Rob Litz **Staff Liaison:** Rabbi Michael Alper

Committee Members: Patty Bloom, Jody Chassin, Amy Cohen, Fred Cohen, Vera Cohen, Jennifer Culp, Pamela Dern, Mary Friedman, Neil Handelman, Earl Kessler, Esther Kessler, Jerry Koenig, Linda Koenig, Jodi Leise, Dr. Jerome Levy, JoAnne Levy, Judy Levy, Cary Mogerman, Dee Mogerman, Donald Mogerman, Ron Scharff, Bob Schnurman, Audrey Shanfeld, and Adam Wallis





Worship Experience Committee

One of the changes this year was to have all Friday services begin at 6:30 pm. Adjustments have been made to Tot Shabbat so it is inclusive of all families with young children. There have also been some additions to the style of music for Shabbat services, along with a new director for our volunteer choir, Chavurat Shira.

The most impactful highlight of the year was using the new Mishkan HaNefesh prayerbook for our High Holy Days services. This book has been adopted by many Reform Congregations and follows the format of our Shabbat prayer book. In addition to the traditional prayers, it includes readings, poems, and commentaries to help enhance the worship experience for each individual.

Another highlight is that all services and lifecycle events held in the Gall Family Sanctuary are live video-streamed on our website. You can now experience worship at TI from anywhere in the world with an internet connection.

Committee Chair: Amy Cohen Staff Liaison: Rabbi Amy Feder

Committee Members: Julie Aronson, Rob Aronson, Fred Cohen, Ellen Deutsch, Sarah Falkoff, Ed Goldberg, Robert Hahn, Harry Knopf, Karen Knopf, Jerry Kraus, Amy Lampert, Judy Levy, Larry Linkon, Cary Mogerman, Hildegard Rochman, Barbara Sandmel, Debbie Schultz, Daniel Schwartz, Joanne Schwartz, Susan Stiefel, Lynn Wallis, and Marlita Weiss



Development Committee

2015 fundraising and development for the Temple was successful. We were able to raise the capital we needed, but equally important, we are focusing efforts on building relationships with congregants and laying some groundwork for planned giving. In May, we hired a new Membership and Development Director, Laura Robbins, who has a background in fundraising, event planning, project management and theatre. On Rosh Hashanah, we brought back the Rosh Hashanah Lunch, filling the Edison Bridge and Isserman Fover with more than 215 guests who enjoyed a buffet-style brunch with family and Temple friends. We developed a group of younger members called Nachshon to help engage and cultivate future Temple leaders with an event at Temple featuring cocktails, dinner, and desserts for the group to enjoy over Havdalah and networking with other young members and our Rabbis. We had our annual Shofar Society event, hosted by Linda and Phil Horwitz, and had various fun and engaging Women's ConnecTlon events, which brought together many amazing Temple Israel women. We also had a phenomenal 2015 High Holy Days appeal. The Board of Trustees set the appeal goal at \$55,000, and we are pleased to say that goal was not only reached, but surpassed.

The Temple Israel Wish List was broadly advertised, highlighting many opportunities for congregants to fund specific Temple needs. Many of those Wish List items were fulfilled, thanks to the generosity of our congregants.

Our Temple Israel Scrip and Gift Card program was another successful fundraising endeavor. By obtaining a free eScrip community card for Schnucks, or purchasing one of many gift cards through this program, congregants have supported the Temple by simply doing their regular shopping. The Temple also raised funds through the sale of engraved "leaves" on the Eyts Simcha Celebration Tree in honor of special occasions and family milestones such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, and B'nai Mitzvot, and through the establishment of Perpetual Memorial and Wall of Honor Memorial dedications. We are excited to continue and expand development efforts in 2016.

Committee Chair: Dr. David L. Weinstein

Staff Liaison: Laura Robbins





Membership and Dues Committee

Throughout 2015, we welcomed new members and member families every month. From new college graduates to empty nesters, and everyone in between, we've had the opportunity to expand our congregation with many who have now found their spiritual home at Temple Israel. Both new and current members have also been extremely active in Temple life, eager to attend many of our events and selflessly volunteering for service at our annual Thanksgiving Dinner for Those in Need, baking pies at Pies with a Purpose, ushering at Shabbat services, and helping out with administrative tasks.

Though membership has increased, we have also had some families who have decided that Temple was not the right place for them this year. We spent time with these families to understand the reasons behind their decisions, which ranged from moving out of town, the need to change their financial priorities, to making the decision that a Temple community was simply not the right fit for their family at this point in time.

We also spent time sorting through our membership list and ensuring that members were current with their annual dues. There were many members who also decided to give above the standard membership levels. As we all know, annual dues are the foundation to sustaining Temple life, so we are currently working on plans for 2016 that will include new member dinners and other exciting programs that make the first year or the 50th year here as a member of TI as meaningful as possible.

Our goal as a committee is to help our members stay connected to Temple Israel through events and programs that bring people together. Whether you most enjoy Shabbat services, holiday programs, meals, Jewish learning, family gatherings or time with our Rabbis, we plan to build upon these opportunities to engage our members so that they can enjoy all that TI membership has to offer in the year to come.

Committee Co-Chairs: Carol Cohen and Pamela Dern

Staff Liaison: Laura Robbins











Usher Committee

This year, the finished Handelman Gathering Place provided a fantastic location for ushers to operate from as they greeted congregants, ensuring that all TI members felt welcomed and included in their High Holy Days experience. In past years, there wasn't a space by the Sanctuary doors for ushers to have direct contact with congregants as they entered. Being so close to the entrance allowed us to watch the flow of people as they came and went, and even made it possible to provide immediate support to someone who had fallen and was in need of medical assistance. This closer connection also resulted in several people stopping and offering to join us as ushers in the future.

This year was the first time the volunteer effort was managed online, making it far easier and more efficient. We were able to assign every location at least one usher, and in some places, families were able to usher together. As in years past, we used the "Ask Me" ribbons as name tags while continuing our goal of greeting each congregant with a smile and words of welcome.

The amazing TI members who volunteer as ushers are the first and last faces that members see as we all join together in the High Holy Days experience. They continue to impress us all with their never-ending, welcoming smiles.

Committee Co-Chairs: Joelle Biernacki, Mark Biernacki, Lylas Chatmon,





Communications Committee

In 2015, the Communications Committee focused on streamlining the look and content of the Dateline monthly newsletter, the weekly eNewsletter, our website and other communications pieces in order to effectively keep the congregation up-to-date on Temple happenings, and to bring the membership experience beyond the Temple walls so that members can access and enjoy their Temple community from anywhere. The committee also created a fluid social media strategy and policies for our Temple, DECC, and Religious School Facebook pages, so that we are posting the information that our members need, while also creating a forum to communicate and stay connected to Temple friends and staff.

Mid-year, we hired a Communications Coordinator, Erin Wolfman May, who joined our team with experience in nonprofit marketing and Jewish communal services. Erin has re-ignited our marketing and communications efforts; her fresh insight, experience and enthusiasm extend the foundation that was laid by former Director of Development and Communications, Carol Wolf Solomon. Thanks to Erin for her continued efforts and to Carol Wolf Solomon for her dedication and service.

Committee Chair: Carla Feuer Staff Liaison: Erin Wolfman May

Committee Members: Kathy Ortbals and Mindy Woolf



Tikkun Olam/Social Action Committee

Congregation Temple Israel is proud of the tikkun olam we do all year round. Our biggest event of the year remains the Thanksgiving Dinner for Those in Need, which was co-chaired this year by Sarah Falkoff and Jayme Fingerman. We served more than 400 people in need at a delicious, elegant, beautiful dinner with entertainment provided by the Ladue Strolling Strings as their service to our community. For the first time, we were also able to give guests a special meal to take home with them.

We also continued our annual Pies with a Purpose program, chaired by Pamela Dern, where volunteers made pumpkin pies to be given to the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry to be distributed during the holiday season. This year was our most successful yet, with over 1,200 pies baked. While all of our staff help at these events to prep, bake, label and clean up, special thanks must be given to Debbie Jennings, Kitchen Manager, who spent countless hours making sure these projects went smoothly.

Over the High Holy Days, we were again the only Congregation in St. Louis to collect personal care items to be delivered to the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry. Nancy Solomon has been our tireless chair of this venture for several years, and also greets people at Schnucks - Ladue Crossing with caring volunteers to further encourage their giving.

Throughout the year, we engage in a number of different collections to support organizations around the St. Louis community. We are particularly proud that many of these events and collections are spearheaded by our Religious School children, and particularly, B'nai Mitzvah students. This year, Josh Fingerman and Blakely and Brittany Broder both made the local news for their amazing tikkun olam projects - Fingerman for his handmade Lego mezuzot and the Broders for their collection of stuffed animals, all of which were donated to people in need.

In the coming year, we plan to roll out a massive tikkun olam project through our partnership with Monroe Elementary, a St. Louis Public School that has reached out to us for support. A large committee of TI volunteers has already begun meeting to talk about how we can best serve this school throughout the year to come.

Committee Chairs: Pamela Dern and Neil Marglous

Staff Liaison: Rachel Closson







Crafting for Community Committee

Crafting for Community continues to meet two Sunday mornings each month while Religious School is in session. Some of our time is spent creating tikkun olam projects. This year we made hats for preemie and full-term babies that went to Nurses For Newborns, teddy bears that helped raise funds to support Tl's youth group, and Hanukah cards which were sent to Jewish soldiers abroad.

The rest of our time was spent working on our own projects, learning from each other, and building community. Our committee remains open to all who wish to join us!

Committee Chair: Jody Chassin Staff Liaison: Rachel Closson



Women's ConnecTIon

The mission of Women's ConnecTlon is simple: To unite all generations of female members at Temple Israel together through periodic events and community service. No matter where you are in your life, Women's ConnecTlon provides a welcoming and inclusive space for women to celebrate each other and grow together through Jewish programs, holiday observance, social events and opportunities to give back to our community and to those in need. Women's ConnecTlon creates opportunities for women of all ages to connect with one another and find their place within the congregation and within Judaism through social, religious, and social action events scheduled throughout the year.

This past year our events included organizing a group of TI women to attend Rabbi Feder's induction into the "Secret Society of Inspiring Women" at the Metro Theater, our annual Women's Seder, and a new event titled Soups, S'mores and Sweaters in the Sukkah. All three events, especially the Seder with over 100 attendees, were very successful thanks to the women of Temple Israel.

Committee Chair: Martina Stern

Committee Co-Chairs: Stephanie Greenberg and Jodi Kaplan

Staff Liaison: Rachel Closson



Adult Education Committee

This has been a great year for adult education at Temple Israel. We have had several successful ongoing classes that happen year round. Our Monday morning class, Judaism for Beginners, met each week and covered everything you might ever want to discuss about Judaism; no topic was off limits! The group consisted of both longtime TI members and people who were just dipping a toe in Jewish studies and practice for the first time. Rabbi Feder and Rabbi Alper both taught this class, either individually or together.

On Tuesday afternoons Rabbi Alper taught a weekly Torah class, which looked at the weekly Torah portion from different rabbinic and textual perspectives. He also added two new lunchtime classes. One was a Journey through Jewish History which took place on Thursdays through the spring and summer; the other was a class featuring the teachings of Rashi, by request of his Torah study students. Rabbi Shook has also continued to teach his weekly Bible study class on Saturday mornings.

Temple Israel hosted the Union for Reform Judaism's regional Introduction to Judaism class this year, a class that is sponsored by all area Reform congregations. Each congregation takes a turn hosting it, but this session was the largest class ever recorded. Rabbi Alper and Rabbi Feder taught two of the four four-week sessions. Temple Israel also received a grant from the Union for Reform Judaism to host A Taste of Judaism class, which is a national 'teaser' course for those who are just exploring Judaism for the first time. No one in St. Louis had yet been chosen to host one of these three-part series, so TI was thrilled to have been selected. Rabbi Alper taught these classes in December, and a number of people from various backgrounds attended.

During the second semester of the 2014-15 school year, Rabbi Feder taught a weekly Sunday morning class called TI University which was essentially Religious School for grown-ups, and appealed primarily to school parents. In December of 2015, Rabbi Feder also started a monthly class in the same time slot called Choosing Your Own Jewish Path.

For three sessions in December, Rabbi Alper hosted Whiskey and Wisdom, a class for seasoned adults age 45 and up, which combined studying texts such as Pirkei Avot and the Haggadah over a whiskey tasting and other fun treats. He also taught the Young Professionals Edition of Torah and Takeout, an evening course which brought in many young professionals for topics like interfaith relationships, vegetarianism, and other unique conversation starters over some of the best takeout food in the area.

We have been carefully noting requests from our congregants and basing classes around them. Classes have been molded not just around the Rabbis' interests, but

around particular requests for certain topics, different times of day, and invitations to certain subsets of the congregation. We have also provided babysitting at some of the classes, which helps increase attendance among parents of young children.

Chair: Jeffrey Wilson

Staff Liasion: Rabbi Michael Alper

DECC Parent Committee

The DECC Parent Committee has been hard at work this year helping to plan fun events for our families and school. In 2015, we kicked off the year with our annual Back-to-School Bash and had a blast playing with the Bubble Bus, sampling treats from food trucks, jamming with Rick Recht and meeting up with old and new friends. We raised nearly \$900 during our Book Fair at Barnes and Noble. Thank you for coming out to support us!

Our students loved bringing in a 'Special Guy' or 'Special Gal' for breakfast and we will continue those programs into 2016. We also have a wonderful teacher appreciation committee that provides treats and breakfast for our teachers and staff throughout the year.

We are so lucky to have our incredible teachers, staff and Leslie Wolf who make our not-so-little school feel like the warm and loving community that it is. We look forward to 2016 together!

Co-Presidents: Amanda Klopfenstein and Lisa Moons

Vice President: Alana Minoff Secretary: Laura Fields Treasurer: Amy Weiss

Teacher Appreciation Committee Co-Chairs: Paige Noel and Stacy Smart

Room Parent Coordinator: Heather Zajarias

Fundraiser Chair: Jennifer Soshnik
Auction Chair: Jessica Litwack

Book Fair Co-Chairs: Tracy Goldberg-Gross and MaryAnne Sabin

Lizard Representative: Jill Crane Social Media Chair: Mindy Woolf Staff Liaison: Leslie Wolf







Youth Education Committee

In 2015, our Religious School added three new initiatives, which include learning, praying and kavanah, meaning 'direction of the heart.'

Learning:

The Derech - Designed for our older students (grades 7-9), this program explored a variety of different topics and community service experiences. Students took part in study electives, community service projects, and core curriculum studies, including Holocaust studies for 8th graders and comparative religions for 9th graders.

Bagels and Blocks - Pre-K families joined us once a month on Sundays for a special day of learning and activities based around Jewish holidays. This program was marketed to both members with Pre-K age children and to DECC families to promote the connection between our DECC and Religious School.

TI ROCKS! - In partnership with Dave Simon Rock School, students in grades 3-5 had the opportunity to learn about and play rock music on Sunday mornings as part of their Jewish learning.

Praying: Sunday Morning Kehillah Tefillah

We also expanded our prayer services on Sunday mornings so that we can practice and learn service skills together in developmentally appropriate groupings: K-2, 3-4, and 5-6.

The Kavanah Program

During our weekday Hebrew program, students regularly practiced Hebrew reading skills while they studied the meaning and purpose of Jewish prayers.

We have also begun to hold a number of meetings with parents, lay leaders, and teachers to create a set of working mission and vision statements for the Religious School to guide us over the next five years.

Committee Co-Chairs: Jayme Fingerman

and Julie Sandler **Staff Liaison:** Jed Filler



Youth Activities Committee

After a number of our most active leaders graduated in 2014, we have begun a rebuilding phase. In August, we hired a new Youth Advisor, Adam Grosman, and have added regular local and regional events to our calendar.

We've worked on the crossover between TIFTY and our Religious School, with TIFTY

leadership visiting Religious School classes, helping staff at TI and Religious School events, and boosting our membership through social and religious activities.

In 2015, we began planning some of our local events with other St. Louis area Reform youth groups so that our TIFTY students can spend time and bond with their NFTY friends who attend other congregations. We've worked closely with United Hebrew, Temple Emanuel, Central Reform Congregation and others to support youth group events as a whole, while still celebrating and emphasizing our connection to our home at Temple Israel.

Committee Chair: Marti Maurer Staff Liaison: Jed Filler Committee Members: Jennifer Culp, Presley Culp, Lisa Filler, Amy Lampert, and Diane Packman



Boy Scout Troop 11

2015 was a year of growth and advancement for Troop 11. We had one Scout receive Scouting's highest award, Eagle Scout. Less than three percent of Boy Scouts achieve this. Camping at the Edison Retreat Center was at an all time high, and we spent our time camping and cooking in the woods. The Scouts have come to be at home in the outdoor environment.

The Troop also attended two outings at Beaumont Scout Reserve where they competed well against other Troops in the District. During two weeks of Summer Camp, one in Illinois and one in Missouri, they procured 43 earned merit badges towards Scout rank advancement. The Troop continued to use the outdoor classroom on the TI property, created by Eagle Scout Jess Rothberg. During our summer programs, the Troop made use of the pool at TI. How great is it to have that available to us.

Service to others, was, as always, a part of our year. We helped at the Temple's Thanksgiving Dinner for Those in Need, participated in Scouting for Food, and

helped out at the Special Olympics fundraiser, "Polar Plunge". We welcome interest of boys age 11 and up to join us and experience the goals and values of Scouting. If you think your son would be interested, contact James at jamesrothberg@att.net.

Committee Chair: James Rothberg **Staff Liaison:** Rabbi Michael Alper





MISSION:

Congregation Temple Israel is a caring, inclusive community committed to living Reform Judaism and participating in the sacred destiny of the Jewish people and Israel through education, worship, and repair of the world.

VISION:

Since its founding in 1886, Congregation Temple Israel has been a leading synagogue within Reform Judaism and the United States. Our legacy is the product of a deep love of God, Torah, and the Jewish people, and of the generosity, commitment, and vision which such love engenders. Continuing our pursuit of excellence and well-being, and building upon our Strategic Plan, the following represents our vision for Temple Israel as we look to the future.

Our caring shall know no limits.

Our inclusiveness shall be unqualified.

Our Judaism shall be living and nourishing to the soul.

Our love of the Jewish people and Israel shall be overflowing.

Our education shall prepare and inspire us to engage in living Judaism.

Our worship shall bring the Divine Presence into our midst and nourish our souls.



- A Voice for All Generations -

Congregation Temple Israel

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