

THIS IS THE TIME:  
A CAMPAIGN  
FOR TEMPLE SINAI'S FUTURE  
PHASE II

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Rabbi James A. Gibson, Senior Rabbi  
Rabbi Keren Gorban, Associate Rabbi  
Cantor Laura Berman  
Drew Barkley, Executive Director  
Barry Rudel, Development Director  
Philip Lehman, President

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### Mission Statement

We are a Reform Jewish Congregation in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh, affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism. Temple Sinai's vision is to be a place where Jews live and grow as Jews by creating and sustaining a welcoming relationship based community rooted in our deepest Jewish values. Our mission is to enhance and transform each other through spiritual connection, learning and acts of love and kindness for each other and our community.

Temple Sinai's mission is founded upon core values:

- We live as a family that embraces God, Torah and peoplehood and is committed to a progressive view of all three.
- We embrace diversity among all who enter our community. This includes embracing interfaith families, same-sex families, those who live with disabilities, as well as those from differing ethnic backgrounds. We celebrate our differences as we affirm our unity in God, Torah and with Israel.
- We help all in our midst to grow, explore and live as Jews so they can fully participate in Jewish spirituality, caring, social justice and learning both at Temple Sinai and in the larger Jewish community, including Israel.
- We care for each other through acts of mutual responsibility as well as acts of love and kindness. Our goal is that those forming a commitment to Temple Sinai
- Be comfortable in lending a hand as well as receiving help when in need.
- We commit ourselves to the ongoing vitality of Israel as a Jewish state and celebrate our relationship with Israel through visits, study and shared experiences. We pledge to work in partnership with ARZA (Association of Reform Zionists of America) and our Reform brothers and sisters in Israel to promote the values of tolerance and Jewish diversity in order that Israel live up to its promise to be a homeland for all Jews, regardless of their practice of our faith.
- We accept responsibility for "repairing the world" consistent with the Torah's call for a just society (*Tikkun Olam*). We are guided in this activism by our understanding of the demands of our faith.

## Forward and Invitation

Our past is rich in history. Our present is robust and healthy. Our future is built on, and brightened by, Temple Sinai's successful fundraising. Prudent fiscal planning suggests that an increase to the fundraising efforts is essential to insure Temple Sinai's future and allow us to continue to welcome all who wish to join our community. That is why we are now embarking on Phase II of **This is the Time – A Campaign for Temple Sinai's Future**.

We seek to leave the world a better place than we found it through our acts of *tzedakah*. Our success means that our finances are stretched as we continue to create new initiatives and ways to engage and include all of our members. The Campaign will increase the resources available for the Temple Sinai community and allow us to reach our goals in the coming decades

A solid financial foundation will ensure that Temple Sinai can continue to create meaningful and authentic Jewish experiences for each person who joins us in prayer, study, or service to the community. This fundraising campaign will give us the ability to sustain the temple's operations, respond to the shifting needs of our members, absorb unplanned expenses, and be on secure financial footing even when times are challenging.

- We are member-focused, and endeavor to engage our members in the many avenues of Jewish life that we so proudly offer.
- We are a sacred community, living in relationship to one another.
- We are dedicated to upholding our core value of inclusion at Temple Sinai, regardless of financial circumstances, age, and stage of life.
- We continue to offer innovative programs to meet the evolving needs of our members.
- We strive to live our vision of *Tikkun Olam* – healing the world.
- We must start now – in any campaign of significant length, there is no time like the present to continue our effort.

Prior gifts to our Campaign have made a real difference. Future gifts will continue to sustain the priorities Temple Sinai has in pastoral care and support, Jewish learning, and spiritual expression.

It is with that in mind that we ask you to consider your commitment to ***This is the Time – A Campaign for Temple Sinai's Future***. Your gift is a legacy that will leave an enduring impact on our shared future, just as past generations did for us. We invite every member of our *Family of Families* to be part of our shared future: for ourselves and for generations to come.

L'Shalom,

*The Leadership of Temple Sinai*

## Executive Summary

### *“Strengthening the Future of our Sacred Community”*

Our primary focus at Temple Sinai is on our members and how best to serve your spiritual, pastoral, and educational needs. Like many congregations, though, the leadership of Temple Sinai finds itself asking some difficult questions about our future expenses and revenues. It is apparent in these challenging times that we must strive towards growing our sacred community for members, while simultaneously anticipating and planning for a secure financial future.

We are therefore engaging in Phase II of ***This is the Time – A Campaign for Temple Sinai’s Future.***

*The financial goals of this phase of the campaign are many. The Board would like to designate funds raised from this campaign as follows:*

- Apportion 92% of funds raised to create reserves to defray costs of Clergy, Capital/Building, General Operating and to cover campaign costs
- Apportion 8% to ensure the financial stability of the Temple Sinai Memorial Park by contributing up to \$500,000 to the Memorial Park Care Fund
- Expand our Reserves to ensure that income from personal pledges comprises no more than 50% of the annual needs of the operating budget in order to reduce our reliance on membership income to sustain facilities and programs and assure equal access for all who wish to join.
- Ensure the inclusion of all who wish to become affiliated with Temple Sinai, regardless of the level at which they are able to contribute financially..
- Ensure that we will always have the ability to attract and retain high quality rabbinic leadership.

## This is the Time Phase II

### Introduction

We are starting Phase II because we believe that Temple Sinai is more than a place where people worship, study, volunteer, and socialize. It is the commitment to our members that drives us to provide the highest quality of synagogue programming and service to our congregants. People flock to Temple Sinai because they want to partake in this thriving community through the many avenues of involvement that are offered within our building every single day.

At the same time, we know that Temple Sinai has reached a critical juncture where we must re-imagine and reinvent ourselves. We must change with the times without abandoning our heritage and sense of continuity.

We are committed to strong Jewish foundations that engage our members and have a lasting impact on ourselves, our families, our communities, and the world. Over the last few years, we have strengthened this commitment with the following programs and services:

- **Community** – Temple Sinai’s Centers for Jewish Life engage all who wish to claim their rightful place in our sacred community.
- **Friendship and Support** – The *B’racha* Center for Jewish Connections provides the means for congregants to discover new friendships and find comfort and support.
- **Tradition** – The *Midrash* Center for Jewish Learning creates opportunities for lifelong engagement with our traditions and rituals.
- **Spiritual Connection** – The *Neshama* Center for Jewish Spirituality fosters personal connections with God.
- **Social Activism** – The *Tikkun Olam* Center for Jewish Social Justice encourages involvement in social activism and explores the role of Judaism in the world.

We need to continually evolve without losing sight of our core values. It is vital to our mission to be able to be a welcoming place for members of all ages and tenures at Temple Sinai. Further, we remain committed to being affordable and accessible to all.

Since income from annual personal pledges is inherently limited, the remaining revenue must come from other sources. Increasing funds from our Campaign, and the income they generates, is a key strategy to keep the congregation thriving for the long term.

## ***Financial Realities and Challenges***

***This is the Time – A Campaign for Temple Sinai’s Future*** raised \$3.2M for the Endowment in the first phase. The prior campaign, **“Standing at Sinai”**, was about permanence: We engaged in significant rebuilding and improvement of our physical structure.

**“Standing at Sinai”** introduced the concept of a significant endowment as a key to our future. This was a departure from the earlier history of our congregation during which we lived mostly on current cash flow. We view the Fund for the Future Endowment as another form of bedrock on which our congregation stands.

To accomplish this, we must build on our recent success in strengthening our financial foundation. A key stated financial goal for Temple Sinai is that, by 2025, our reserves will grow to \$10M and at least half of our annual revenue should be derived from sources other than personal pledges. Achieving this metric will provide a stronger financial foundation, and also help us to maintain our important core value:

***We will maintain our sacred religious community, meeting the needs of all of our congregants where no one is ever turned away from membership because of an inability to pay.***

## Opening Doors to Judaism

*“May the door of this synagogue be wide enough  
to receive all who hunger for love, all who are lonely for friendship.*

*“May it welcome all who have cares to unburden,  
thanks to express, hopes to nurture.*

*“May the door of this synagogue be narrow enough  
to shut out pettiness and pride, envy and enmity.*

*“May its threshold be no stumbling block  
to young or straying feet.*

*“May it be too high to admit complacency,  
selfishness or harshness.*

*“May this synagogue be, for all who enter,  
the doorway to a richer and more meaningful life.*

*— Mishkan T’Filah, 2007*

## **Our valued Clergy and their thoughts**

To reach 70 years is an amazing achievement in our day. Too many see relationships and community as interchangeable, or worse, disposable. But we passionately believe in each other. We care about each other's hopes, dreams and fears. We insist on being truly present for each other in our times of need and joy.

In Hebrew, 70 is represented by two letters that make up the word "*kein*", which means "YES!" We have grown and thrived as a community because we do all we can to say "yes" to serving our Temple Sinai Family whenever we possibly can. In our 70<sup>th</sup> year, we commit ourselves to saying YES to our sacred community, our spiritual vision, our inclusiveness, our amazing past and our soring hopes for our future.

What a joy and blessing it is to celebrate 70 years, to affirm this sacred community!

Rabbi James A. Gibson, Senior Rabbi

A Torah Scroll contains exactly 304,805 letters, every single one of which is vital for the Torah scroll to be whole. Likewise each and every person in the Temple Sinai community is essential for our congregation to be whole. Each of us contributes our passions and concerns, our joys and sorrows, our celebrations and struggles, and all of these strengthen the bonds that build our community. Temple Sinai offers many opportunities for each person to connect to the community, tradition and God, so that together we can discover, create and reveal the myriad ways of bringing sacred meaning and purpose to our lives.

Rabbi Keren Gorban, Associate Rabbi

An apt connection to our celebration of 70 years, our tradition speaks of "70 faces of Torah," or the many ways to appreciate Jewish Heritage. Temple Sinai offers such diverse means of Jewish connection – mutable expressions of worship, of learning, or music, of serving one another and of improving our world – and in so doing puts smiles upon the more than 2000 faces that are our synagogue community. We honor and celebrate each one!

Cantor Laura Berman