



Sinai Temple Bulletin

*Take Back Your Time:
Rediscover Shabbat*

January/February 2018
14 Teves-13 Adar 5778

From the Rabbi's Study...

Rabbi Howard Kosovske

A big topic at the recent URJ Biennial was the need for congregations to practice "Audacious Hospitality." Practicing Audacious Hospitality means creating an atmosphere in which people feel so totally welcomed that they immediately want to become part of the synagogue and everything it's about.

Now Audacious Hospitality has nothing to do with synagogue programs. It's not about services or classes or social action programs. And it's not about what a synagogue's b'nai mitzvah (or other life cycle) ceremonies look like either. And more, for a big one, it's not, if I dare say it, even about how "good" a synagogue's religious school is.

Rather, it's about the very atmosphere of the synagogue. It's about how good people instantly (and continuously) feel when they walk into the place. What that stems from is a function of the people who are already found there. Are they (and the clergy too, obviously) welcoming? Do they care about one another and about others?

Are they *really* happy when strangers/newcomers walk in? And do they go out of their way to make those strangers/newcomers feel as though they *belong* there?

Every synagogue I know of prides itself at being a welcoming place. That includes Sinai. Check out these words from our mission statement: "Sinai Temple is a welcoming...Reform Congregation..." But are we? Are we *really*?

I have to tell you something about how I view Sinai Temple. Of all the synagogues I have ever served, few have been congregations where I personally felt as much at home as I do here. And Janet, I know, feels the same way. Sinai Temple isn't only the synagogue I serve. It is the synagogue in and to which both of us *belong*!

But at the same time, I know from what a number of "outsiders" who have popped in here on a Friday night either to pray, or say Kaddish, or perhaps are "shopping" for a shul, have recently told me after their visit. That have said that beyond a cursory hello, no one made them feel welcome or made them feel that they cared that they were even here.

Hearing that pained me deeply, certainly as Sinai's rabbi, but more as someone who feels personally so totally a part of our congregation. I don't ever want to hear disparaging things said about the synagogue of which Janet and I feel so much a part.

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Friday Evenings

Services start at 6 P.M. in January

January 5; January 12, Shabbat services and dinner; **January 19; January 26**

Services in February

February 2 - 6:00 p.m.

February 9 - 7:30 p.m.

February 16 - 6:00 p.m.
with Shabbat dinner

February 23 - 7:30 p.m.

Saturday Mornings

(No B'nai Mitzvah in January or February)

Shabbat Services at 10:15 A.M.

January 6, January 13, January 20, January 27,
February 3, February 10, February 17,
February 24

HavDeli: (Movies to be announced)

6:00 PM: January 13 and February 3

Torah Study: Saturday at 9 A.M.



NOTE...SINAI IS PRINTING ONLY SIX BULLETINS THIS YEAR.

COMING BULLETINS WILL BE NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER, JANUARY/FEBRUARY, MARCH/APRIL, MAY/JUNE. THIS IS A VERY STRONG REASON FOR OUR WANTING TO STAY IN TOUCH VIA E-MAIL. PLEASE SEND US YOUR E-MAIL.

President's Message

Dear Sinai Family,

As Buff and I write to you at the beginning of December, we have so much ahead of us. The Rabbi Search Committee is in high gear, having researched twelve applicants, had on-site visits with three applicants and one more in the works. The Temple Board and SPFTY representatives have had a chance to experience a brief teaching and a meet and greet with Rabbi/applicants and to share their thoughts about the candidates with the Search Committee. The Rabbi Search Committee is still looking, considering, debating. On one hand we are eager to have in place this crucial piece in the puzzle about our future and on the other hand we need to feel confident that we have chosen wisely. The final choice is made by the Board of Directors relying both on the work done by the Rabbi Search Committee and on the Board's own deliberations and thoughts about the Committee's recommendation.

The Cantorial Specialist Search Committee, headed by Beth Chafetz, is beginning the task of creating a job description for this new position and initiating the search process. The other committee members at this point are Matt Bertuzzi, Maggie Cohn, Jack Henrie, and Sarah Shtrax. Others will be joining the committee. While we aren't entirely clear about the parameters of this position and the background of the person who will fill it, we are clear that music will remain an integral part of our worship and Temple life.

We are looking forward to some great events: a scholar in residence week-end March 9 and 10 with Rabbi Amy Scheinerman; our Great Safrai Israeli Art Show which opens with a gala reception on March 22, and our Second Night congregational Seder on March 31. Please join us!

Shalom, from Buff and Laurie

SINAI TEMPLE JUDAICA SHOP

Chanukah was a happy time. Our selections delighted so many. We must give a great big THANK YOU to Tina deMeza, Miles Stern and Laurie Weinberg who helped enormously to get ready.

Now we're looking ahead to spring B'nai Mitzvah, weddings and all happy occasions. We'll be ready to show new tallises and appropriate gifts.

Our hours are back to normal: Sunday AM 9:30 to 12:30 and Tuesday PM 2 to 4:30.

Thais Fischel 786-9577

NOTES FROM THE CANTOR

I recently attended the URJ Biennial in Boston. It was, as always, an amazing experience, featuring dynamic and passionate keynote addresses, interesting professional sessions, and Shabbat services with 5,500+ people! But for me, one of the best parts of Biennial is hearing the wide variety of Jewish musicians who attend, and being exposed to new and exciting artists creating Jewish music for this century. (During this Biennial, I had the honor of performing with both Cantor Lisa Levine and Eliana Light, both of whom have been guests here at Sinai Temple.) As a public service, I would like to recommend the following Jewish artists (who have not yet been featured here at Sinai Temple in Springfield) whom I believe are making some great new music. Please check them out on Spotify, iTunes, or YouTube videos!

Billy Jonas – An amazing musician and percussionist that is making some of the most creative Jewish music today. From his most recent album *Toot the Horn!* check out "One" and "God is In," and from *Haybayta/Homeward* listen to "V'ahavtah," Kol Han'shama," and "Let There Be Light."

Naomi Less – I first met Naomi at the 2013 Aleph Kallah, and was immediately impressed by her musicality and fiery spirit. Give a listen to "Shine" (written while at Crane Lake Camp!), "Gibor" from *Seven*, and "Meshuga'at" from *The Real Me*. Take my word for it, this woman ROCKS!

Jacob 'Spike' Kraus – I've known 'Spike' since his days as an Eisner Camp songleader, and I recognized his considerable talents many years ago. Listen to "Shir Chadash" and "What Makes You Glow" from *Shake off the Dust*, and "Pitchu Li" from *Cornerstones*.

Joe Buchanan – This Houston, TX singer-songwriter converted to Judaism and has written some powerful Jewish songs with a country music influence. Listen to "Return" from *Unbroken*, and the singles "Home" and "Shine."

Nefesh Mountain – What if (early) Mumford and Sons had been Jewish? It would probably sound like the duo of Doni Zasloff and Eric Lindberg, who bring a bluegrass sensibility to contemporary Jewish music. From their self-titled recording, start with the tracks "Esa Einai" and "Mi Chamocha."

This list of artists just scratches the surface of the talented people that are creating authentically Jewish sounds for 21st century North America. To discover even more new Jewish artists (and to hear some old favorites), please check out the **Jewish Rock Radio** website or app. And for those of you with young children, check out the recently launched **PJ Library Radio** site and app. There is an extraordinary abundance of new and exciting Jewish music being written and performed today, and I encourage you to give some of it a listen!

Ivdu et Hashem B'simcha! Serve the Holy One with JOY!

Cantor Martin Levson

Message from Dasha Baker

Director of Education

January and February will be exciting and fun-filled for the Religious School. Including:

- Sunday, January 28: we will have an all-school *Tu'B'Shevat Seder* from 11AM-noon. Traditions include agriculture, spirituality, community, and different shades of light and dark. Families and students will come together with our fabulous Religious School staff to celebrate and learn;
- January, time TBA: we will have a URJ camp presentation. If you have attended or worked with Eisner, Crane Lake, or Six Points Sci-Tech camp, you know how amazing the experience is. If you have not, I urge you to attend and learn. Details will follow in E-events and Religious School family emails;
- *Rosh Chodesh*: a young Jewish women's group will be meeting monthly. This is for seventh through twelfth graders and meets Sundays after Religious School with lunch. We will eat, chat, and learn about whatever attendees are interested in. *You do not need to be enrolled in our Religious School to attend, all seventh through twelfth grade Sinai women are welcome.* Our next meetings are January 21 and February 11 at 12:30. Please RSVP to dbaker@sinai-temple.org so I know how much food to get.

As always, I invite you to contact me, on the phone, or via email with any questions, problems, or feedback. During *Hannukah*, we celebrate the miracle of the Jews holding onto their Jewish identity in a country where pressure to assimilate and the outlawing of Jewish practice were overwhelming. The *Maccabees* prevailed and rededicated the Temple. May the journey to our Jewish identities in this time be a little easier.

L'Shalom/with peace and completeness, Dasha

THE MEN AND WOMEN OF SINAI (MWOS)

I hope that you will take some time to consider who to nominate for the Snyder Award for 2018 and to complete the form in this bulletin. Your input is needed and is greatly appreciated. Nominations are needed by February 4th for selection by the MWOS Board. The Snyder Award dinner and service will be on April 20th. We will also honor all prior Snyder Award recipients for this 25th Anniversary of the Rabbi Herman Elliot Snyder Award.

Thank you to all who have pitched in to help the Men and Women of Sinai in any way in our support of the Sinai community.

Shalom, Jack Henrie
MWOS President

Rabbi message continued from page 1

Certainly, we do have a few people in our congregation who always go out of their way to "welcome the stranger." They ask outsiders to sit with them at a service. Likewise they never, at an oneg after the service has ended for instance, let them be alone.

But what I want – and what Sinai Temple *needs* – is for all of us to be outreaching like that. Not sometimes but *all* of the time. And toward *everyone* who ever crosses our thresholds.

I don't for a moment think everyone is comfortable going up to perfect strangers and trying to engage them. But the fact is that no one who ever comes here is a perfect stranger. People who come here are always here for a reason. And most of whatever that reason is cannot be addressed or fulfilled if the people are left standing alone.

So what I am saying (*again!* because I said it on the High Holy Days), is that all of us need to become a part of making Sinai Temple a congregation that seriously and fully practices Audacious Hospitality. If that means our getting out of our comfort zones, then we need to get out of our comfort zones. In other words, for Sinai to be a place of Audacious Hospitality, we all, in a true spirit of Judaism going all the way back to the time of Abraham who welcomed strangers to his tent, need to work at making anyone who ever walks in here feel welcome. Is that easy? No, it is not. But I know we can do it. More, I know that we *will* do it because we all want to see Sinai Temple flourish and succeed.

Howard A. Kosovske



SINAI TEMPLE'S PROGRESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

On April 29 2017, Sinai's Board of Directors adopted the goal of pursuing sustainability in both our building maintenance and our lifestyle. Since this proposal is at its halfway mark, we'd like to report on the progress in these two areas. Members of the SAC's Green Team have worked during the past six months to present programs, encourage lifestyle changes, educate our community leaders, and motivate our students. Here's a list of what has been achieved:

- with SAICAN (the Springfield Area Interfaith Climate Action Network), Green Team members successfully lobbied Longmeadow's Select Board to support a resolution affirming the importance of carbon pricing legislation currently in the Massachusetts Legislature.
- On June 25, Sinai Temple sponsored a two-hour solar power forum about options for houses of worship and other non-profits. Representatives from Resonant Energy explained the alternatives available and answered questions from the audience.
- In August, at a public hearing sponsored by the Department of Energy Resources, a Green Team member testified against a proposed subsidy which would promote the deforestation of state forests.
- During the summer, Green Team members worked with consultants from Harold Grinspoon's Ener-G-Save Program to introduce the program to Longmeadow residents and Sinai members. Using home energy audits, the Ener-G-Save Program encourages home owners to increase the energy efficiency of their residences by installing free light bulbs and power strips in their homes and taking advantage of tax credits, discounted prices, and low-interest loans to enable purchase of insulation and energy efficient windows, furnaces, and hot water heaters.
- In the fall, Dasha Baker, head of Sinai's Religious School, taught a sustainability lesson connected to Sukkot.
- On October 15, the Social Action Committee/Green Team worked with Men and Women of Sinai to present a mini-kallah on climate change at a Sinai breakfast meeting. Andrea Chasen, a member of the Climate Reality Project, presented information illustrating ongoing climate destruction. Rabbi Kosovske spoke about the Jewish mandate to protect the Earth, and Michele Marantz described the area-wide progress that has been made in fighting climate degradation.
- On October 15, members of the Green Team attended a workshop sponsored by Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light, a non-profit dedicated to helping houses of worship become energy-efficient buildings.
- In November, due to the efforts of Green Team member Rich Alpert, Sinai adopted a recycling program that will sustainably dispose of the trash Sinai produces.
- Also in November, Green Team member Michele Marantz met with Sinai's SPFTY group to discuss worthy sustainability projects that they might engage in during the course of the year.

— Finally, over the spring and summer Sinai's Green Team members have worked to launch a Western Mass "arm" of JALSA, the Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action. As a result, several Green Team members now sit on JALSA's Climate Action Committee working to address climate justice.

Why Summer Camp?

I have to admit that my first thoughts about Jewish summer camp were completely wrong. After all, who would send a 7 year old away to be on their own for four or seven weeks each summer? But once camp started, as the camp doctor's husband, I was able to sit back and watch Camp in action. I soon found out why Jewish summer camp was so important. This was a safe place where children could go to not only learn about Judaism, but more importantly learn about themselves. This was the perfect place for a child.

Throughout the year, Judaism was something we would do from time to time. We would go to synagogue, light a menorah, or eat matzah. The rest of the time we would just go about our lives. At camp, Judaism was woven into everything we did. From ending each meal with *Birkat Hamazon*, to singing Jewish songs, and dancing to Israeli music. We stopped learning about Judaism in our heads and began feeling and living Judaism in our hearts.

Camp was also a place that challenged children. It challenged them with physical feats like the high ropes course or camping in the wilderness at Teva. But it also challenged them to wrestle with real world issues like, bullying. Most importantly it challenged them to be examples and leaders within their community.

From the moment our children came home from camp, all they wanted to do is go back. They would immediately start skyping and texting their camp friends. They would relive those memories from the past summer and share their hopes and dreams for the next summer. You will often hear many campers say "Live 10 for 2". They are saying, You live ten months of the year in anticipation of the two months at camp.

But now that our children are older and no longer campers, they are camp counselors and counselors in training. They also still keep in constant contact with their camp friends. Now they are planning spring breaks and vacations together. I see how they carry those values that they learned at camp in their daily lives. For them, camp has become the summer that lasts a lifetime.

If you would like your child or grandchild to experience a summer at a Jewish Camp, representatives of the URJ camps will be coming to Sinai Religious School in early 2018. Grants and scholarships are available. Sinai Temple strongly supports Jewish camping and has a dedicated fund to provide scholarship for our children. If you have any questions or would like more information contact Cantor Levson, the Temple Office, or Buff Maniscalco.

Sincerely,
Buff and Jodi Maniscalco

SINAI TEMPLE Chesed (Caring) Community Committee

The Chesed Community Committee would like you to know that we are here! Several members of Sinai Temple are here to help other congregants with the following:

- Deliver messages of Condolence
- Deliver greetings during the High Holidays to a congregant who has lost a family member throughout the year
- Birthday wishes for our mature members
- Post - surgery help
- Meal trains
- Transportation to doctor visits and Temple services
- Grocery shopping
- Coffee and conversation
- Visiting members who may be isolated or home bound
- Hospital visits

If you, or someone you know would like our help, please contact:

Alan Brown – 413-525-6254
shalom2875@yahoo.com

Ellen Rowles – 413-285-8047
ellen7352@gmail.com

ADULT OPPORTUNITIES

Educational trip!

Hayyim Mayyim:
Living Waters Community Mikveh
and Paula Brody Educational Center

1838 Washington St,
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May 6th, Sunday, 9:30-11am

Introduction to the Mikveh,
and a tour of the facility
(not an immersion experience).

"Mikveh – ritual, rooted in tradition, reinvented to serve the Jewish community of today. Mayyim Hayyim is a resource for learning, spiritual discovery and creativity where women and men of all ages can celebrate milestones like weddings and b'nai mitzvah; where conversion to Judaism is accorded the honor and dignity it deserves; where survivors of trauma, illness or loss find solace; and where women can explore the ritual of monthly immersion on their own terms."

Cost: \$30 (includes bus, course and tour only)
(Deadline to sign up – April 1st)

All welcome from the age of 13 and over.
(13yrs old must be accompanied by parent)
Limited seating on bus.

Deadline to sign up is April 1st.

To sign up and/or questions, Contact:
Carol Tivoli 413-567-1544
cbtivoli112@gmail.com
or: Sarah Shtrax 413-596-8680
sshtrax@gmail.com



Congregant Richard Seldow in full Hannukah regalia.

SINAI READING PARTNERS- BOOKS TO CONSIDER

"A Replacement Life" by Boris Fishman.

A quirky, funny novel with an undercurrent of loss and connection in which Holocaust displacement and Manhattan today somehow meet and overlap.

"The Silver Music Box" by Mina Baites and Alison Layland.

Goodreads says this is "a captivating cross-generational novel from German author Mina Baites about a Jewish family divided by World War II and an inheritance with the power to bring them back together."

Save The Date! Israeli Art Show and Sale

by Safrai Art Gallery of Jerusalem
safari.com

Thursday, March 22 – Sunday, March 25, 2018

GALA OPENING THURSDAY MARCH 22, 6-9PM

To celebrate Israel's 70th birthday, Sinai Temple will be transformed into a gallery featuring the finest in Israeli art.

A comprehensive collection of original oil paintings, watercolors, original lithographs and etchings designed by over 100 different Israeli artists will be at the show.

Over 1500 works of art will be available for exhibition and sale.

Join us for this exciting weekend celebrating Israel and Israeli artists and an opportunity to acquire original Jewish art.

Mark Your Calendars!! Don't Miss This Event!

For more information, email Beth Chafetz at 48oreo@cox.net

Jewish Joke

A group of foreign dignitaries are visiting Israel. At the end of the tour, they are taken to see the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They look at the tomb and read the following inscription:

ABRAHAM SCHWARTZ BORN 5694 DIED 5733 A GOOD MAN AND A GREAT FURRIER

The visitors are incredulous. They ask the guide, "How can this be an unknown soldier if the grave has his name?" Their host responds, "Sure, as a soldier he was unknown, but as a furrier -- he was the best!"

JALSA UPDATE

JALSA, the Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action, now has a Western Ma. branch. It is a statewide organization with members who are devoted to the defense of civil rights, the preservation of constitutional liberties, and the passionate pursuit of social economic, and environmental justice for all people. JALSA is particularly focused on domestic issues as they affect Massachusetts.

This fall, local leadership has been successful in working on the new criminal justice reform bills in the Massachusetts legislature. We have gotten hundreds of local signatures on petitions to ensure ballot initiatives to raise the minimum wage and to require financial support of parental medical leave. Climate action is also high on our priority list.

A part-time organizer has been hired to assist in our efforts.

Please join us by contacting jalsaoffice@gmail.com or calling Ronnie Leavitt, 567-0558.

SOLAR POWER AND RECYCLING

Sinai Temple has signed a contract with Co-op Power to get its electricity from solar energy. The solar power will come from a group of solar arrays in the Berkshires and will save the Temple 15% from what its cost would have been without this agreement. The Temple should be receiving solar produced electricity within the next two months.

In addition, the Temple has now begun to recycle its garbage. We have a separate garbage bin outside into which the waste to be recycled will go and also receptacles within the building for separating trash from material to be recycled.

These are two concrete steps that the Temple has taken to fulfill the Board of Directors commitment to make the Temple more environmentally sustainable.

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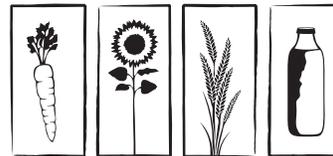
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