

## **EDUCATION**

I am sure I complain as much as the next person about technology. Technology is great when it works and is stress-inducing when it does not work. Zoom could be considered a four-letter word in 2020 and possibly well into 2021. Lately, I have a new perspective on Zoom and technology: it has become a lifeline.

On Sunday, November 8, I sat in front of my computer at 9:30am as our religious school family service was starting. I watched the number of participants on Zoom tick up, 23, 35, 56, 89, 93. We landed at 93 participants on a cold Sunday morning. These participants included students sitting at home with their siblings and parents squished on one couch so they could all be on screen, teachers, our clergy, and our madrichim. Shelly and I texted each other at the same time, 93 computers! It is incredible to see so many families on-screen every Sunday and Wednesday; the opportunity to pray together is one that I cherish, especially during this time when so many of us are isolated from each other. I am working on complaining about technology a little less these days.

I cannot move on without complimenting our faculty; almost every week, I receive an email from parents providing positive feedback on their child's religious school class. This year is unique in so many ways especially the parents' access to their child's class. Our parents are listening to classes and not just relying on updates from their child. Our teachers are making the best of the situation by utilizing online resources and coming up with creative ideas of their own. Morah Sandy Rosenberg teaches fourth grade Hebrew. If you pop in on her class at any given time, you will see a homemade memory game made from oaktag and index cards on the wall of her home. Morah Claudia Wolen, who teaches Kindergarten, has a large whiteboard on her wall that she uses in her classes. Our teachers, who also serve as b'nei mitzvah tutors, are utilizing every minute of their time and are regularly working with students from the religious school to support their Hebrew learning as needed. We are a team and could not have had as successful a first semester of religious school as we have had without every single member of this team giving 100%.

My reach at Temple Sinai extends beyond our religious school. We have welcomed congregant and ridiculously talented musical educator Natasha Fenster to our Tot Shabbat team. We are engaging children and parents monthly to learn about and celebrate Shabbat together. As a parent of a young child, this exposure to Shabbat is priceless. We are using singing, dancing, props, and relatable toys to give our youngest learners a stable platform to begin their Jewish learning journey at Temple Sinai. It is incredible for me to look forward to my daughter, Parker, eventually being a SoSTY member and being surrounded by friends she played with at Tot Shabbat.

L'Shalom,

Morah Erica Quamily, LMSW

### **Dates to Remember:**

Sunday, Jan. 24; K/1<sup>st</sup> Family Chavurah

Saturday, Jan. 30:

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Shabbat morning service

Saturday, Feb. 6:

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Shabbat morning service

Sunday, Feb. 7:

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Israel Adventure Family Chavurah

Sunday, Feb. 14:

No Religious School in observance of President's Day

Saturday, Feb. 20:

6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Shabbat morning service