



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

TEMPLE
SINAI

Temple Sinai Core Values

These Core Values further expand on the elements of our Vision and represent the fundamental reasons that people join Temple Sinai.

We believe that the values of Reform Judaism and its rituals and prayers are the essence of our Temple Sinai community and a source of comfort, support, inspiration, and strength in our lives.

We believe in engaging individuals and families without judgment, and we welcome everyone seeking connection to our inclusive and diverse Reform Jewish community.

We believe that *tikkum olam* (repairing the world) and *tzedakah* (charity) are essential elements of Judaism, and we are committed to Temple Sinai continuing to be a strong, audacious leader for social justice.

We believe in being a caring community whose members feel a sense of belonging and support from the clergy and each other in times of celebration and need.

We believe in providing Jewish education that has a meaningful impact on its participants from early childhood through adult education.

We believe in and are committed to the State of Israel as the historical homeland of the Jewish people and as a democratic, pluralistic state.

We believe in responsible and transparent stewardship of our congregation's resources.

We believe that Temple Sinai should be a vibrant, joyful, and spiritually and intellectually stimulating place.

See the full Strategic Plan at
www.templestinaidc.org/welcome/mission-vision-values

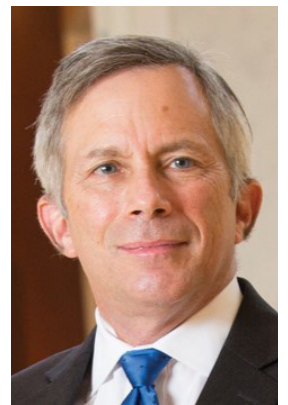
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FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Another year has tested the strength of our people and our community. Fortunately, resilience has always been an essential element of Judaism. What else can explain our stubborn insistence on surviving and, indeed, thriving over thousands of years?

Temple Sinai is part of what allows us to thrive. It fulfills the critical role of providing a place of strength and comfort for our community. This year, we have used our beautiful, expanded facility to worship together, to support one another, to celebrate, to educate our children, to learn, and to gather for a wide range of purposes and activities. We have continued to solidify our financial foundation by implementing a new community commitment structure that facilitates and encourages support from those best able to help meet the congregation's needs. This is an important step toward ensuring that Temple Sinai remains a welcoming, inclusive place that supports a thriving, diverse community for many years to come. There is more work to be done, but we are moving forward.



We have expressed our profound gratitude for the clergy and staff members who are leaving us this year. We are so fortunate that Rabbi Noah Diamondstein, Executive Director Ellen Agler, Cantorial Soloist Robyn Helzner, and Early Childhood Education Director Ali Hurewitz have enriched our congregation with their dedication and their gifts. They helped us to lay the foundation for continuing to meet our community's needs.

As this report illustrates, Temple Sinai provides numerous opportunities for engagement and participation. Our worship services are characterized by music, joy, and spirit. Our religious school and our nursery school are gateways for new families. Through our committees, groups, and affiliated organizations, congregants can pursue common interests, learn together, support the unhoused and other less fortunate members of our community, and fight for social justice, the environment, and the rights of immigrants. I hope this report leads you to participate in new activities or programs through which you can deepen and strengthen your ties to our community.

– Ken Jaffe, President



Last year, I dedicated the 2024 annual report to Kfir Bibas and Shlomo Mansour, the youngest and the oldest of the hostages held by Hamas in Gaza since October 7th. I ended with the hope, "May there be peace in Israel and across the Middle East and may 5785 see Kfir Bibas and Shlomo Mansour blessing, again, the apples and the honey." Sadly, neither peace nor the safe return of Kfir and Shlomo occurred this year. Fighting has resumed in Gaza and we learned instead that those two hostages were killed and their bodies were repatriated to Israel a few weeks ago. May their memories be a blessing and their lives a reminder of goodness and the value of all life.

This year, our Tuesday morning Rabbi's class studied the Jewish calendar and holidays using Rabbi Dr. Dalia Marx's book, *From Time to Time*. The cycle of Jewish time is marked by a tension between set times, whose occurrence on the calendar is beyond our control, and the ways we make those occasions into rituals, programs, and connections. This tension is conveyed elsewhere in Scripture. In *Ecclesiastes*, for example, we read: "There is a time for every season under heaven," birth and death, speaking and silence, laughter and wailing, etc. While in *Deuteronomy* we read, "It [Torah, truth, how we mark time] is not in the heavens... but in your mouth and in your heart."

We are in a season of great transition and change. We say farewell to many staff and friends who are moving into retirement, new positions, and new homes. We also welcome new staff and friends joining our community and moving to our neighborhood. Like the holidays, Torah, and life in general, these changes are set, in some ways, by forces beyond the control of any one of us, and yet, it is in our hands, on our lips, and in our hearts to determine how these changes unfold in our community and in our lives.

The *shehechyanu* blessing directs us to center gratitude in our season of change. The morning's *yotzer* blessing has us acknowledging that the shine of new light depends, at least in part, on the degree of our merit. We earn the beauty and the luminosity as much as we simply receive it by act of divine grace. How lucky are we?! We not only have so much for which to be grateful, but we are worthy to receive good, warm light as we end this temple year and start anew.

First, however, join me in thanking Ellen Agler, our executive director, Noah Diamondstein, our associate rabbi, Robyn Helzner, our cantorial soloist, Ali Hurewitz, our director of early childhood education, and Ken Jaffe, our temple president, along with all our staff and members who are moving to new homes, new jobs, and new chapters in their lives. Please, also, join me in welcoming and blessing the arrival of our new executive director, Lee Levitt, our new (about to be named as of press time) nursery school director, and all the new professionals and lay leaders who will guide us through Shabbatot, holidays, and life celebrations in the new year.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

– Jon Roos, Senior Rabbi

It is with gratitude that I share this annual report on our musical and worship experiences over the past year as well share some exciting developments for next year. The clergy team continues to prioritize worship, and it has been a privilege to craft services that are inspiring, comforting, enriching, and musically uplifting. More than ever, our services are a sacred time to set aside the burdens of the week, with music serving as a powerful vehicle for renewal and spiritual reflection.



Music Committee Programming

This past year has been especially fulfilling as we collaborated with the dedicated members of our Music Committee to bring exceptional musical experiences to Temple Sinai. Please see their report on page 12 for a more detailed account of our year!

Choirs, Bands, and Musical Ensembles

Shir Shalom (grades 3-6) and Shirlings (grades K-2) had a wonderful year, culminating in their participation in an area-wide youth choral festival with Elana Arian this spring. Next year Shir Shalom will include grades 2-5, allowing second graders to engage with more advanced repertoire sooner. The Shirlings choir will be open to any child younger than second grade.

The B'har Sinai teen band featured five teen vocalists, along with musicians on stand-up bass, violin, and clarinet. This talented group was co-led by Neil Weston, and it has been wonderful to see our teens stepping into leadership roles in our musical community.

The adult choir sang at our High Holiday services, Shabbat Shira, and participated in an area-wide choral showcase conducted by the esteemed Eleanor Epstein. The pop-up choir made its High Holiday debut on Rosh HaShanah morning and later performed at TSWRJ Shabbat and at Executive Director Ellen Agler's farewell service. Additionally, our Temple Sinai volunteer band, Middle Matzah Conspiracy, brought joy to our congregation with their performances at Shabbat Shira and the TSWRJ Shabbat.

Honoring and Saying Farewell to Beloved Leaders

This year, we said goodbye to Cantorial Soloist Robyn Helzner after 40 years of service to Temple Sinai. Her impact on our community has been profound, spanning generations of youth and adult engagement, Kehillat Shabbat services, adult b'nei mitzvah, and the development of lay leaders and Torah chanters. Her farewell celebration was a fitting tribute, filled with heartfelt musical expressions of gratitude and love.

We also extend our deepest appreciation to Cantorial Student Gabriel Lehrman for sharing his gifts throughout the year. Gabriel will be the new Assistant Cantor at Temple Emanuel in Denver- mazel tov!

Looking Ahead

Next year we will welcome Cantors David Mintz and Becky Mann, who will alternate each month in joining us for a weekend. Their expertise, creativity, and passion for liturgical music will infuse our services with new energy and depth. Their presence will also provide opportunities for our clergy team to expand our own musical and liturgical knowledge.

As I reflect on this past year, I am filled with gratitude for the warmth and support I continue to receive from this community. It is truly an honor to serve as your Senior Cantor, and I eagerly anticipate all the musical and spiritual growth that awaits us in the year ahead.

– *Rachel Rhodes, Senior Cantor*

OUR NEW BUILDING

We opened the doors to our beautiful South Addition in August 2024, marking a major milestone in our congregation's future. Thank you to the members who led and generously contributed to the Honor our Heritage Build our Future Campaign, as well as to the architects, the project managers, and the Renovation and Expansion Committee – all of whom made this transformational project a success! Our new space is not only light-filled and functional, but we now have expanded space for our community of all ages to gather.



And gather they have! Adult study in the Beit Midrash; coffee, books and laptops in the Community Lounge; gatherings in the Rabbi Brickner and Lipman Meeting Rooms; frolicking on the expanded playground; and schmoozing on the terrace – our community has embraced so many new ways to come together.

In the fall of 2024, we also completed the boardwalk – a beautifully landscaped ramp finally connecting Jocelyn

Street with the temple in a safe, stroller-accessible way. It has been a joy to see members and families of all ages utilizing this new connection between the temple and the neighborhood. And beneath the ramp, the large stormwater management system – replete with beautiful plants and trees – is playing an important role in our environmental stewardship.

The Art and Design Committee has filled our new spaces with a combination of re-framed pieces that honor our history, and newly commissioned works that inspire our future. This includes an installation honoring all donors who contributed to making the Honor our



Heritage Build our Future Campaign a success. For more examples of the work of the Art & Design Committee, see their report on page 9.

Outside our new front doors is inscribed the quote from Psalm 118: "Open for me Gates of Righteousness." With great joy, we have opened our new gates to welcome you to Temple Sinai.

MEMBERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

We have revitalized the Temple Sinai Membership Committee by expanding both its representation and its impact. The Membership Committee now has ten members from different demographics and a broader mandate to invite new members to our community, welcome them when they choose to join, and engage them in meaningful and impactful ways after they become members.

We invested time and money strengthening our communications (both internal and external) by redesigning the temple website from the ground up with the support of lay leaders, a communications consultant, and a professional web designer.

The Committee divided its upcoming work into several projects and has begun working on implementation. These included: (1) making it easier to learn about the congregation and join on the website, (2) revamping the first-year membership experience, (3) helping current members find their place at Sinai, and (4) facilitating additional member-to-member affinity groups.

We also delivered Shabbat welcome bags to our new members, hosted a dinner for parents of college-age students, and gathered college-age students over winter break. Monthly family Shabbats and weekly Shabbat onegs provided a great opportunity to welcome prospective and new families to our community.

YOUNG FAMILIES

Temple Sinai hired Lisa Resnikoff as the Young Families Engagement Coordinator in November 2024. She and her family are members and have two children in TSRS in 3rd grade and Kindergarten.

We offer three core young family programs each month: 1) Tot Shabbat Playdate: a joyful gathering of families to sing, play and learn about Shabbat and Jewish holidays through hands-on activities followed by time on the playground; 2) Storytime Shabbat: led by librarian Ruth Polk, children are engaged in Jewish stories and crafts followed by Kiddush and time to browse the shelves; 3) Family Shabbat: a communal Shabbat dinner for families of all ages and kids' activities to encourage learning about Jewish holidays and Shabbat before our Friday night service. Family Shabbat is an opportunity for kids and adults to socialize and deepen their connections to each other and build our community.

We hosted special community festival celebrations for Chanukah and Pesach incorporating stories, singing and dancing, crafts, and breakfast. We even did a small community service project at Pesachpalooza, and donated 40 lbs. of measured rice to a local food bank. We also had a rockin' tot Havdallah dance party with visiting musician Jason Mesches and sent families off with a kit to make Havdallah at home.

Working with Temple Sinai Nursery School, we offered two family community service programs this past year: Mini-Mitzvah Morning and a Lafayette Park Cleanup Playdate. We also offer a baby group, Wigglers, for

families with children under one.

Our programs also create opportunities for prospective members to learn more about Sinai, our Nursery School, and Religious School as a family.

We look forward to welcoming young families to all of our programs in the coming year, strengthening our connections to each other and Judaism.



Children brought their parents (and grandparents) to enjoy Pesach crafts, singing, and dancing at Pesachpalooza in April 2025.

SINAI CARES

We are fortunate to have Deborah Gordis, a part-time social worker on staff who greatly enhanced the capacity of our clergy to respond to the increasingly complex pastoral needs of congregants. Our social worker has been a critical access point for congregants to connect to mental health services and support. In recognition of the strategic goal of addressing and supporting the social, emotional, and mental health needs of our congregants, she has expanded both wellbeing programming and direct mental health care through various initiatives. As part of our pastoral team, she:

- Facilitated two bereavement groups and an ongoing drop-in caregivers' group for congregants who are the primary caregivers for spouses and other family members with severe chronic conditions. These groups provided emotional and mental health support and nurtured ongoing relationships between members whose grief or caregiving duties has left them feeling isolated.
- Ran community programs on caring for one's mental health during times of stress and provided individual counseling on request or by referral from the clergy and staff team.
- Provided numerous referrals for ongoing mental health care in the community or to the YAWS (Parents of Young Adults Who Struggle) group at Temple Sinai.
- Led staff training programs on topics that enhanced the skills of all staff in conflict management and in providing compassionate engagement for congregants and parents at the religious and nursery schools.

In addition, we continued our member-to-member support work that has been key over the years to providing members with a sense of belonging and support. Over 20 SinaiCares volunteers delivered nearly 50 challahs to members who finished the first 30 days of mourning (*shloshim*), and 25 yahrzeit candles to members on the first-year yahrzeit of their loved one's death. Volunteers also delivered over 85 *mishloach manot* bags on Purim to some of our more senior members. Several volunteers provided companionship to a few of our most senior members, and other volunteers checked in with isolated members on Shabbat. We also renewed our effort to deliver baby baskets to families with new babies in our community.

COMMITTEES & AFFILIATES

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Administration Committee continues to work closely with the Executive Director to provide oversight and advice on the temple's technology, office, security, and human relations operations and to look for opportunities to cut costs and improve efficiencies. Consistent with Temple Sinai's values, we are particularly focused on making sure that all temple employees are treated well and fairly. In the coming year, the committee will work closely with the new Executive Director.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Building on last year's work with the Library Committee to create an archival Finding Aid, much of our work this year entailed re-labeling the hundreds of physical files that comprise the Temple Sinai Archives.

The Archives Committee continues to serve as a resource for congregants, clergy, and researchers looking for information and documents about the history of Temple Sinai — which approaches the 75th anniversary of being chartered in 1951. For more, visit www.templestsinaidc.org/welcome/our-history.

ART AND DESIGN COMMITTEE

The Art Committee has had a busy year addressing our goal of making art recommendations and helping with the wise use of display space at Temple Sinai. This year has seen the completion of a large commission for Lower Lobby of the South Addition by Talia Levitt, entitled "Kehillah" (Community) (*pictured left*). Levitt's large, quilt-like painting celebrates our diverse community



while depicting important events in the congregation's history and visual elements of our synagogue.

In addition, the committee has overseen the reframing and rehanging of multiple artworks as well as of the b'nei mitzvah and confirmation photos in the hallway leading to the Beit Am. We have also welcomed donations of two substantial works of art: an original color lithograph by Marc Chagall of The Tribe of Benjamin and a long-term loan of a color silkscreen print by Andy Warhol depicting former Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis (*pictured right*).

Finally, the committee has commissioned a collaborative visual art installation for the Lower Lobby display case. This sculpture by artists Francie Hester and Lisa Hill, is called "Words of Our Hearts" and will involve the entire community. Later this year, all members will be invited to share our memories and connections to Temple Sinai. Once our words are printed on thousands of small pieces of paper, we will wrap the fragments around paper clips and send them back to the artists to be assembled in a three-dimensional hanging sculpture. We hope that this communal effort will contribute to the goal of maintaining and reflecting our strong and vibrant membership while fostering a culture of belonging where every member feels known, seen, and heard.

COMMITTEE FOR ISRAEL ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (CIESJ)

The Committee for Israel Engagement and Social Justice (CIESJ) has addressed the multiple crises facing Israel this past year by expanding its education, outreach, and donation work. This work has been made particularly urgent by the impact of the continuing post-10/7 war and the growing fragmentation of Israeli society. CIESJ has addressed these difficult issues through the lens of repairing the world (*tikkun olam*) as it applies to the trauma of the war as well as to the need to protect Israeli democracy and promote a shared society between Israeli Arabs and Jews.

This year, CIESJ facilitated both youth and adult education programs. Tovanot, which teaches the dual narratives of the histories of the Jewish and Palestinian peoples, was incorporated into the curriculum for this year's Confirmation class and was also offered for adults. In addition, the Committee sponsored the annual Shonim B'yachad student art exhibit at the temple that was organized by Congregation Beit Daniel in Tel Aviv.

The Committee produced a series of six speaker programs that illuminated issues facing Israeli society: New Story Leadership with its young Palestinian and Jewish leaders; Mickey Gitzen, the Israel Director of The New Israel Fund; Dr. Tareq Abu Hamed, Executive Director of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies; Anna Kislanski, CEO of the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism (IMPJ); Nadav Tamir, Israel Director of J Street; and Professor Ilai Saltzman, Director of the Gildenhorn Center for Israel Studies at the University of Maryland.

One of the Committee's strongest commitments has been to provide valuable current information about the post-10/7 war. This has been accomplished through its "CIESJ Recommends" reading list published in the weekly Temple Sinai News. The curated readings provide a range of thoughtful opinion and analysis pieces that supplement the basic factual reporting that people follow in the media.

CIESJ has a strong commitment to support the Reform Movement in Israel. The Committee has donated to IMPJ, which is the home of the Reform Movement in Israel, expanding the reach of Reform Judaism in Israeli society and supporting its legal arm, the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC). This past year, the Committee established a twinning relationship with the small, growing Congregation Ramot Shalom in Be'er Sheva, donating to it and participating in numerous joint activities.

CIESJ has used the funds generously provided by temple members to make donations to Reform, humanitarian, and civil society organizations in Israel that support Israeli society and defend Israel's liberal democracy. This year, the Committee donated \$30,000 to seven worthy organizations. In addition to IMPJ and Congregation Ramot Shalom, the other organizations receiving donations were: Standing Together, a grassroots Jewish-Palestinian peace movement; New Israel Fund's Civil Society Protection Hub; Mitvim Institute for its regional peace plan; Rozana, which provides cooperative healthcare training and assistance; and NAHAT, the Israeli Trauma and Resilience Center.

For a more detailed description of CIESJ's activities, visit www.templestsinaidc.org/take-action/israel-engagement-social-justice.

DAYTIMERS

During the past year, the DayTimers Committee has conducted ten programs on Zoom. The programs usually are on the second Monday of the month at 1:00 PM and open to everyone. Our excellent speakers, both congregants and others, have presented to audiences from 40 to 100 people. The audience includes Temple Sinai members, former members, and guests. We have an active committee who contribute to the recruitment of speakers and the success of our programs.

Here are a few of our speakers from the past year:

- Andrew Weiss on Vladimir Putin
- Marvin Kalb on the 2024 presidential election
- Dr. Ilai Saltzman on Israel and the war in Gaza
- Congressman Jamie Raskin on the 2024 presidential election
- David Wessel on the economic impacts of the Trump administration
- Rabbi Noah Diamondstein on antisemitism
- Susan Page on the Trump administration and the media
- Tim Heaphy on Charlottesville and January 6

Our programs help Temple Sinai maintain contact with members of the congregation who may not enter our building often and provide a venue for timely information and discussion. We have received a number of comments concerning the important role DayTimers programs have played in keeping congregants in touch with others as well as keeping them informed.



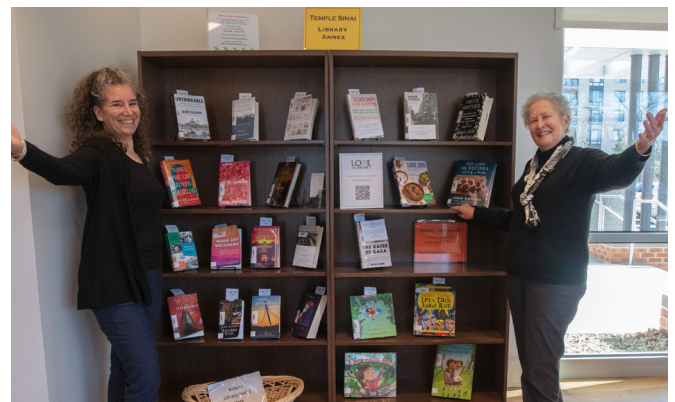
TEMPLE SINAI LIBRARY

We're excited about the new opportunities this past year has offered to bring books and resources to where people are gathering. Scan the QR code to visit us online!

Three places to find the Temple Sinai Library!

(NEW) Library Annex: In the Community Lounge you can grab a coffee and visit the Library Annex to enjoy books and periodicals, access a convenient book return, or cuddle up with your little one to share a story while you wait for school dismissal or meetings with clergy and staff.

- **(NEW) Beit Midrash:** Reference books are within easy reach on the Beit Midrash shelves in support of adult education programs and study.
- **Main Library:** We're still here, better than ever: a quiet place to read and explore over 10,000 volumes of Jewish literature, poetry, history, biography, cookbooks, picture books, parenting resources, and much more.



Creating a Community of Book Lovers

Our active and engaged Library Committee works with the librarian to maintain the library as an important resource for Jewish education, gathering, and support for programming and ritual life at Temple Sinai. A few of our activities include the following:

- maintaining the collection through monthly work days
- reviewing new books for addition to the library holdings
- providing book bundles for children and adults

- highlighting displays for holidays and new books
- refreshing signage to make it easier to navigate the library so you can find out about all of our wonderful programming from book discussions to tot story times
- partnering with the Community and Young Family Engagement Program on Chanukah and Pesach events featuring stories, music, crafts and food

Internationally Recognized for Building Volunteer Engagement

This past year the Association of Jewish Libraries featured the Temple Sinai Library's tool kit for creating a high-functioning volunteer committee. Scan the QR code on page 11 to find a link to the article on the TSL website.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Music Committee continues to partner with Cantor Rhodes to plan and produce music programs that elevate the soundscape of Temple Sinai.

The committee was pleased to fund four additional choral professionals in the High Holiday choir this year. Many congregants appreciated the role that the choir, a mix of volunteer and professional singers, played in enriching our worship and integrating our new prayer book, *Mishkan HaNefesh*.

In January we welcomed Dr. Tammy Kernodle, distinguished professor of musicology at Miami University in Ohio, as our guest for Shabbat Shira 2025. Dr. Kernodle lifted our spirits with song and words of encouragement to find strength in this moment of turmoil, and inspiration in the liberation stories and songs of our Israelite ancestors and of her own enslaved African-American forebears. At the community dinner afterwards, Dr. Kernodle shared her personal journey to musicology and academia as a Black woman from a rural community. She continued her powerful message at Saturday Kehillat Shabbat services - an exciting collaboration between Multiracial Sinai and the Music Committee.

In March, we were delighted to bring Doni Zasloff and Eric Lindberg of Nefesh Mountain back to Temple Sinai. Doni and Eric took a break from their busy tour to celebrate Shabbat with us, sharing their special bluegrass take on our ancient liturgy. All were moved by their soulful voices and Eric's incredible guitar playing.

As always, thank you to the Circle of Music Lovers for supporting our work at Temple Sinai. We could not do this without you!



Shabbat Shira 2025. Bottom photo left to right: Cantor Rachel Rhodes, Dr. Tammy Kernodle, Rabbi Hannah Goldstein, Rabbi Noah Diamondstein. Photos by Steve Snyder.

TEMPLE SINAI MEN OF REFORM JUDAISM

The Temple Sinai Men of Reform Judaism (TSMRJ or the Brotherhood) offers adult male members of Temple Sinai a sense of community and fellowship. Most of our programs are social, but we are also involved in service, charity, and the religious and cultural life of Temple Sinai. While men plan TSMRJ programs, we welcome everyone interested in our programs (although sometimes just adults). For 2024-2025, TSMRJ's programs reflected our members' diversity of interests.

- As we've done for about a decade, we had our Jewish year kickoff in the Sukkah, this year sampling products from Montgomery County's first distillery since Prohibition, Twin Valley Distillers, while again enjoying sushi from Tako Grill in Bethesda.
- Jim Jaffe and Ed Cohen arranged for a group of volunteers to help at A Wider Circle in Silver Spring every third Thursday each month. The group meets there at 10 AM and then retreats for lunch at the nearby Parkway Deli.
- The Brotherhood Book Club, begun in the spring of 2024, continued meeting every few months during the year, taking advantage of new space now available at the temple. This year, we also enjoyed an evening listening to renowned journalist and long-time Temple Sinai member Marvin Kalb talk about his latest book.
- In January, just in time for the Super Bowl, Marc Groman gave MRJ members, and others, a lesson in cocktail making. We were able to demonstrate those skills in March as MRJ played its traditional role as bartenders at the Adult Purim Hootenanny.
- In April, the Brotherhood hosted its third Comedy Club, where a group of temple members displayed their comedy skills, to benefit Sinai House. In addition to being an evening of great hilarity, the Comedy Club raised more than \$3,400 for Sinai House.
- In June, for the third year in a row, we will gather at TopGolf in Germantown to display our widely varied golf driving skills while enjoying some beers, bar food, and each other's company.
- Other programs repeated this year included a couple of casual gatherings at The Parthenon restaurant, a Poker Night at the temple, and competing (as 50 Shades of Gray Hair) in a Trivia Night contest at the World of Beer in Bethesda.
- The Brotherhood showed its support for the temple by partnering with the Sisterhood to sponsor the Yom Kippur Break Fast, kiddush cups for B'nei Mitzvot, gifts for the Confirmation class, and to honor Cantorial Soloist Robyn Helzner on her retirement. And in addition to the money raised for Sinai House via the Comedy Club, TSMRJ will again be a sponsor of the Tricia Davis 5K for Sinai House.



Top: Annual gathering in the Temple Sinai Sukkah
Bottom: Trivia Night at World of Beer in Bethesda

TEMPLE SINAI WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM

The TSWRJ continued in 2024-2025 to offer a full calendar of opportunities to get together, learn, pray, eat, give back, and even hike! Many thanks to TSWRJ Board Presidents Sally Greenberg and Cara Jablon, board and program leaders, and volunteers.

- **September 2024:** Our opening meeting offered members a way to support abortion access by writing postcards to Florida voters to encourage them to vote for a state constitutional amendment. TS member Congressman Jamie Raskin stopped by to offer words of encouragement.
- **September 2024: TSWRJ & Davis Center Maj Fun Day supporting Abortion Access.** The now-annual Maj Fundraiser supported the Meadow Reproductive Health and Wellness Clinic in Northern Virginia. Maj players ranged from novices to mavens and all enjoyed playing for a cause.

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- **Fall 2024: Capital Area Food Bank Fundraiser.** Members responded generously to TSWRJ's annual High Holiday call for donations to help the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB), which raised a total of \$34,545.
- **November 2024:** TSWRJ featured a conversation with female Holocaust memoirists, Ellen Cassedy and Esther Safran Foer.



November 2024: Chanukah Mart. Congregants enjoyed schmoozing, shopping, and noshing. Thanks to the more than 100 volunteers who made the Chanukah Mart possible.

- **March 2025: Let's Get Your Stuff Together seminar:** TSWRJ member Pamela Fields offered a free seminar on how to organize our critical information and papers.
- **March 2025: Authors' Roundtable.** Temple Sinai members and friends attended this always-popular event, bringing together congregants and friends to hear from three local authors: Joan Nathan, Deb Bruno, and Elizabeth "Barry" White.
- **April 2025: Second Seder.** TSWRJ continued its tradition of coordinating the Second Seder. Led by Rabbi Noah Diamondstein, it was a joyful occasion, with a catered dinner and merry singing for all ages. The Second Seder was attended by members, nonmembers and invited guests from Jewish group homes.



March 2025: Sisterhood Shabbat service. TSWRJ leaders joined the temple clergy in leading a special Shabbat service celebrating 50 years of women in the Cantorate.



TSWRJ managed kiddush luncheons for 11 b'nei mitzvah families, serving 1,800 guests with a dedicated rotation of TSWRJ and Green Team volunteers.

- **April 2025: Capital Area Food Bank Tour & Work Session:** We headed out for an opportunity to lend a hand and to see the breadth of support CAFB gives area residents.
- **TSWRJ's Judaica Shop** continues to draw customers and show strong sales for all types of Judaica and holiday items, both in person and through its website.
- In the meantime, many of us joined ongoing activities, such as weekly Mahjong, including new Tuesday evening Mahjong sessions with TSRS parents, and monthly hikes in Rock Creek Park.

THE DAVIS CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Amidst an uncertain and chaotic external environment, the Davis Center for Social Justice is the locus for the temple's work to practice *tikkun olam*, repairing the world through bold action, learning, and advocacy. In addition to providing support to people in need and standing up for ideals of democracy, equality, and freedom, our work in 2024-2025 also sought to strengthen the sense of community and purpose among Temple Sinai's members, its partners, and the wider community in the DMV.

Davis Center efforts span a variety of issue areas including protecting reproductive rights, fostering racial equity, promoting environmental sustainability, addressing the threat of gun violence, encouraging voter turnout, mitigating anti-semitism, and supporting refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers. Across these areas, we provide direct support, educate our community, and advocate for systemic change with opportunities for all ages to participate. To illustrate, in 2024-2025, we

Provided direct support by:

- Delivering 158 Thanksgiving baskets to families in need at Temple Sinai's partners including Sinai House, local schools, and community organizations
- Offering intensive support in the form of housing, employment coaching, and life skills development to newcomers from Afghanistan so that they can build a new life here
- Raising funds to support access to abortion and other reproductive health services
- Providing \$35,000 in Lipman grants to local organizations working on issues as varied as education, food security, gun violence prevention, and legal assistance
- Ensuring that children at Wheatley Education Campus received eye exams and glasses so that they can succeed in school
- Participating in clean-ups of local parks and waterways

Educated our community by:

- Sponsoring themed Shabbat services on reproductive rights, racial equity, LGBTQ+ rights, and refugees to connect our social justice activities to Jewish texts and teachings
- Taking 18 members to El Paso, Texas and to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico to learn about the effects of US immigration policy on those communities, leading to reinvigoration of Temple Sinai's work to support refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants locally
- Providing forums for youth and parents to discuss strategies for combating anti-semitism



Left: visiting El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez Mexico. Right: praying with our feet to support reproductive rights.

Advocated for systemic change by:

- Writing over 27,000 postcards to voters in Georgia, Florida, Wisconsin and other states to encourage them to make their voices heard in state and federal elections;
- Introducing composting at all Temple Sinai events;
- Working with interfaith partners to secure zoning and other policy changes that will increase the stock of affordable housing in Upper Northwest DC.
- Behind the scenes, clergy and lay leaders (including the Davis Center Steering Committee and chairs of issue-specific initiatives) are also looking ahead. This year, we engaged a consultant to conduct focus groups and survey the congregation about our current work and opportunities for future engagement. Findings from this work will help inform our strategy going forward, particularly as we seek new sources of funding.

GREEN TEAM

Since June 2024, the Temple Sinai Green Team (TSGT), co-chaired by Liz Feldman and Sarah Barr Engel, has met quarterly to plan and carry out activities that support Temple Sinai's strategic goal of advancing the values of environmental stewardship. Specific goals and priorities were established in the context of Temple Sinai's participation in the Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition, through which we seek to (1) achieve organizational net zero CO₂ ("greenhouse gas") emissions; and (2) engage with the broader Jewish community to achieve other sustainability goals.



To advance the environmental sustainability at Temple Sinai,

- TSGT member Robyn Miller-Tarnoff worked with Facilities Manager Diego Enriquez to bring composting to Temple Sinai. Others including temple youth volunteered to organize staff trainings, make signage, monitor compost bins at events, and donate to help cover compost-related costs.
- TSGT member Kit Gage oversaw the ongoing maintenance of the pollinator wildflower garden.
- TSGT supported a temple member in exploring the viability of an Eagle Scout project to construct raised garden beds for nursery school programming.
- TSGT collected over 500 used prayer books (*machzorim*) and donated them through the Community Jewish Book Drive.
- TSGT member Rabbi Marc Gruber and Buildings & Grounds Committee member Rick Tempchin formed a roof replacement subcommittee to plan for replacing the roof and solar panels.
- TSGT member Rabbi Melanie Aron met with Investment Committee members to discuss moving Temple Sinai investments away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy.

To support environmental stewardship beyond the Temple Sinai community,

- TSGT members engaged in advocacy efforts including meeting with members of Congress during the Jewish Earth Alliance's Lobby Days and writing get-out-the-vote postcards with Temple Micah's Climate Action Group.
- TSGT and the Committee for Israel Engagement and Social Justice co-hosted a virtual event with the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, an Israeli environmental peacebuilding institute in southern Israel.
- TSGT hosted a Tu Bi'shvat Seder led by Cantor Rhodes and featuring guest speaker Joelle Novey, Director of Interfaith Power and Light, DMV, who encouraged us to take action to protect funding of the DC Healthy Homes Act and of the MD Better Buildings Act.
- TSGT members participated in the Bedikat HaMayim™ International Pre-Passover waterfront cleanup at Aspen Hill Local Park, hosted locally by Bender JCC of Greater Washington.
- TSGT member Mark Rose attended the Environmental Justice Action Summit, held to address DC's environmental justice problems and their impacts on DC neighborhoods.

MULTIRACIAL SINAI

The past year has been one of reflection and rejuvenation for the Multiracial Sinai (MRS) Committee, as we continue to advance our congregation's Core Values of welcoming all to our inclusive and diverse Reform Jewish community, and of continuing to be a strong, audacious leader for social justice.

MRS continued to lead the temple's engagement in multi-faith, multi-racial coalitions in pursuit of racial justice and of eradicating racial and religious prejudice, as set forth in the Strategic Plan. Our support for the Undesign the Redline project culminated on "Temple Sinai Night" at this innovative exhibit at the Cleveland Park Public Library. Dozens of congregants toured the exhibit, which focuses on the history and ongoing legacy of racial segregation in housing.

To promote Jewish community participation in the Poor Peoples' Campaign Moral March on Washington and to the Polls last June, MRS organized a well-attended pre-demonstration Shabbat celebration, led by Rabbi Diamondstein.

And in the fall, MRS presented a public program on **"T'shuvah In Action: What Can Congregations Do to Advance Reparations For Slavery and Racism."** Leaders from both Jewish and Christian congregations shared their experiences in confronting this critical issue.

For Shabbat Shira, MRS co-sponsored the visit of African-American musicologist Dr. Tammy Kernodle to Kehillat Shabbat services, where she delivered a powerful d'var torah on resistance to racism.

Finally, at MRS's request, the board approved Sinai participation in the SEA Change consortium, bringing together Jewish congregations across the DMV with a shared commitment to racial equity.

Following a retreat session in December, MRS articulated its long-term vision of *a congregation where differences are celebrated, where we have conversations about race, and where all feel welcome*. At the annual MRS shabbat, held on the yahrzeit of Dr. Martin Luther King on April 4, Rabbi Roos strongly re-affirmed our commitment as a congregation to this vision, and reminded us that "the voice of conscience is not to be silent."

Planned MRS activities in the coming year include:

- Establishing regular opportunities for congregational learning about racial justice;
- Taking advantage of multiple opportunities on the religious calendar to talk about race and to reflect on the diversity of the Jewish experience; and
- Engaging temple youth, and ensuring that religious school students understand how our Jewish values call us to fight for racial justice.

Now more than ever, as we find ourselves in a moment when efforts to celebrate diversity, advance equity, and promote inclusion are under unrelenting attack in the public square, our congregation must help lead the effort to push back. For this, MRS needs your ideas, your energy and your commitment. Please join us. To join the MRS listserv or learn more about how you can support MRS activities, visit www.templestinaidc.org/community/multiracial-sinai.

SINAI HOUSE

Sinai House was founded by Temple Sinai members in 1992 with the goal of providing direct support to help families transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency. At Sinai House, our mission has always been to empower families transitioning from homelessness with the tools, resources, and support needed to build a better future. As part of our ongoing commitment to this work, we have updated the language in our mission statement—specifically, reframing our goal from moving our families towards “independence” to helping them move towards “self-sufficiency.” Our goal is not to isolate families, but to equip them with the confidence, skills, and stability to manage their lives with dignity, while recognizing that true progress often happens in connection with others.

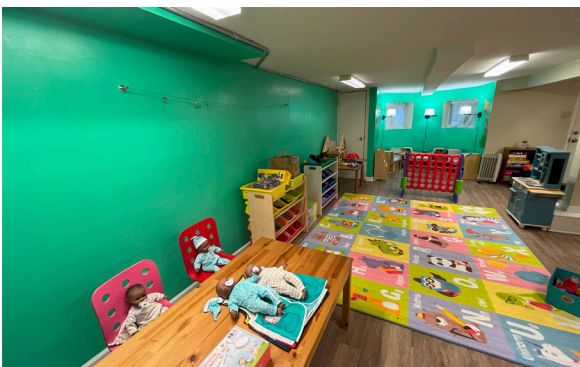


Each year Sinai House houses four families and provides housing, job training, tutoring, counseling, and much more. After the conclusion of our two-year residential program, Sinai House continues to provide post-residency support to ensure families successfully transition out of the program. We are currently providing case management, social services, financial support and a strong foundation for educational success to a total of 12 households — both in residence and out in the DC community—to assist them on their journeys towards self-sufficiency.



Come join us!

- Members of our all-volunteer Board of Directors and its committees work with our Executive Director to help plan programs, write grants, oversee building maintenance and finances and assist with social media and community outreach programs.
- Volunteer tutors and mentors work one-on-one with adults and children.
- Plan a special project, as Henry Stefanick did by transforming our playroom for his Eagle Scout project.
- Support the annual Tricia Davis 5K for Sinai House on Mother's Day by donating, volunteering, and/or registering to participate in person or virtually. Creating a personal fundraising page and social race team is a great B'nei Mitzvah project and helps grow our Sinai House community. In addition to the 5K, there is a Fun Run with no hills, so the whole family can participate. Dogs on leashes are welcome, too! Save the date for next year: Sunday, May 10, 2026.



To learn more about Sinai House and what we do, please visit our website at www.sinaihouse.org.

Top to bottom: Families taking off for the 2024 Fun Run before the 5K, transforming the Sinai House playroom.

THE TEMPLE SINAI

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL & YOUTH EDUCATION

Temple Sinai Religious School 'hit it out of the park' this year with programming for all ages that inspired a sense of significance, belonging, and fun! With the wisdom of baseball as a guiding theme for our team, we're finishing our season strong - with championship level players (students), coaches (teachers), managers (TSRS full-time staff), trainers (parents), and fans!

Inspired by Major League Baseball, we're honored to present a series of end-of-season awards to our Temple Sinai Religious School team. We could truly award every member of our TSRS family - our community's strength and joy come from each and every person on our team. But in summary of an amazing school year, allow us the opportunity to lift up a few incredible players. And, even though we know our interpretation of each award is sometimes a stretch...we're so proud to share the accomplishments of our people with you.

MVP Award

The Most Valuable Player award goes to **Michelle Cooper Neustadt**, Youth Education Committee chairperson! Together with the youth education committee, Michelle has brought meaningful parent engagement (happy hours) and social media engagement (TSRS Parent Official Facebook) into our community. She has tirelessly worked to support the largest TSRS enrollment since the pandemic, and has encouraged creativity, diversity of program, and development of excellent staff!

Rookie of the Year

The Rookie of the Year is our very own Assistant Director **Elise Margosis**! Elise began her work as Assistant Director of TSRS at the end of August 2024, and her rookie of the year status is well earned. Elise spearheads our Hebrew programming and supports all of our Hebrew teachers. She also supports our 4th-6th grade Judaics programming, including inspiring our teachers, connecting with our students, and providing healthy snacks!

Cy Young Award

Roberta Hockstein completed her 30th year of pitching Jewish education at TSRS! Whether in the 1st grade classroom, teaching middle schoolers to cook, supporting Kindergarteners and their families - Roberta is an outstanding part of our Temple Sinai team. She is an wonderful educator, thought partner, mentor, and friend. Temple Sinai Religious School is certainly what it is because of Roberta's 30 years of 'on the mound' teaching.



Manager of the Year

Rabbi Noah Diamondstein finishes out this 2025 season with incredible success across the TSRS universe! He was the obvious choice for Manager of the Year for his leadership as advisor to our Sinaites - our Temple Sinai youth group, and as educator and community coordinator of our Confirmation class. Rabbi Diamondstein's energy, creativity, belief in students, and investment in community (kehillah) have earned him this distinction.

The Clemente Award

This award is given to someone who best represents the game of baseball through extraordinary character, community involvement, philanthropy and positive contributions, both on and off the field. At TSRS, the 2025 Clemente Award easily goes to **Reco Thomas**, our Assistant Director for Operations. Reco's commitment to excellence and diligence in all aspects of TSRS is a model of meaningful engagement - and we couldn't be more proud of how she works to make sure all of our students and their families feel a sense of significance, belonging, and fun.

Hank Aaron Award

In baseball, the Hank Aaron award goes to the best offensive player in the game - but at TSRS it goes to our **Senior Madrichim: Graham Rogers, Caroline Goldstein, Miriam Hakim, Tara Roberts, and Simone Joyner**. This group of teens comes to Sinai as volunteers - preparing week after week (and year after year!) to serve as positive role models, support teachers, engage with students, and be an energetic and loving presence in our classrooms. We couldn't do it without them, and we're so grateful to them for their outstanding contributions to Temple Sinai Religious School.

Silver Slugger Awards

Temple Sinai Religious School Grown-Ups: To our parents, teachers, committee members, volunteers, clergy, facility and security staff, lay leaders, grandparents and more...we cannot do it without you. You are all truly 'batting 1,000' in our eyes. Thank you for the honor of teaching and engaging with your children, and sharing this - their Jewish journey - with them.

Gold Glove Awards

Temple Sinai Religious School Students: You earn the golden glove for the 5785 season! You are smart, funny, caring, curious, challenging, and delightful. We truly love welcoming all nearly 500 of you to TSRS each time you come in the door - and know that Sinai is the luckiest to have you as our learners.



TEMPLE SINAI TEENS 5785

Our teens have had an amazing year full of opportunities for learning, community, identity building, and a ton of fun.

We kicked things off with a bonfire out at Butler's Orchard, complete with Havdallah, s'mores and bus karaoke. We had many a "Sinaites Nite Out," where we gathered at restaurants to have dinner and hang out together. We celebrated holidays, especially Chanukah and Purim where we had a total blast. We volunteered at A Wider Circle, giving our time to help the effort to end poverty. We ice skated at Cabin John, and had a game night at Rebecca Waldman's house. With a couple events left before the end of our year, it's easy to say that this year in Sinaites was a blast!

Our Confirmation students, too, had an incredible experience this year. The learning this remarkable class of teen leaders did was diverse, spanning everything from Talmud, Bible and Liturgy, to the issues and complexities facing Israel/Palestine, to Jewish communal institutions like the egalitarian community mikveh at Adas Israel and learning about the work of the Jewish Federation. They more than earned their status as confirmands by way of great listening, deep conversations, and beautiful community building among their peers.

Sinaites Board

- **President**
Rebecca Waldman
- **Programming VP**
Justin Rosentover
- **Membership VP**
Dava Kendler
- **Religious and Cultural VP**
Aviva Tarnoff
- **Social Action VP**
Ethan Snyder
- **Communications VP**
Maya Seligman



THE TEMPLE SINAI NURSERY SCHOOL

A stroll through the hallways of TSNS or a peek out to the playground or Outdoor Classroom through the windows of the building any day of the week can't help but make you smile. The children's excited chatter and sweet giggles, songs in different languages, stories being read, questions being asked, moments of discovery being celebrated, games being played, bodies moving and grooving... it is all happening in our Nursery School spaces! As the children explore varied materials, make hypotheses, deepen friendships, and play, *play, play*, so much learning occurs! Scaffolded by the deep expertise and intentional work of our phenomenal educators, dramatic play, block building, cooking, planting, writing, storytelling, and art are just some of the ways each child develops ideas, makes connections with peers, and strengthens their confidence and positive sense of self.

This year some of our most challenging and exciting work was less visible, as we worked to develop an Extended Day program that allows children to stay as late as 5:30 pm for more TSNS fun. The Nursery School's grass roots marketing team focused on spreading the word about TSNS through varied channels, focusing especially on letting families know about the new Extended Day option. Beginning next fall, with both school year-only and year-round Extended Day options available, the Nursery School will be positioned to meet the needs of our community more inclusively, offering our exceptional program to families requiring longer school hours. Temple Sinai's new Community Commitment structure, allowing families whose oldest child is enrolled at TSNS to become members of the temple at no additional cost, has also been a meaningful change that will keep our community growing by making membership more accessible.





Engagement in activities developed for families with young children continues to flourish; this year TSNS partnered with Temple Sinai's new Young Family Engagement Coordinator to bring Mini Mitzvah Morning back for the second time. Activities including sandwich-making, potting flowers, making supply kits for people experiencing homelessness, bagging trail mix, and decorating cards and placemats supported a variety of local non-profits. We have also continued to support the Briya Public Charter School, raising over \$2100 to help fund Briya's healthy snack program.

Our Jewish values are woven throughout the children's daily experiences at TSNS and in our holiday celebrations, from weekly Shabbat Sings and monthly Family Shabbats to events like our Sukkah story times, Chanukah Party, Purim Parades, and Passover Seder Sing-Along. Our annual Special Visitors' Day and Art Show in February and our Spring Soiree and Auction provide additional joyful and fun opportunities to connect and support our school. This year's auction proceeds will be used not only to fund school operations, but also for ongoing financial aid, professional development, and parent education initiatives. None of these programs would be possible without the talents of our wonderful clergy and the energetic and ongoing collaboration of our Parents' Association Co-Chairs and many parent volunteers.

– Ali Hurewitz, Director of Early Childhood Education



ADVANCEMENT & PHILANTHROPY

This year has been our first with the completed South Addition, allowing the Sinai community to experience the fruits of our philanthropic labors. As we move on to Temple Sinai's next era, our focus has shifted from supporting the construction of the building to supporting the people and programs within it.

SHORASHIM SOCIETY: ANNUAL GIVING AT TEMPLE SINAI

Over the past several years, our congregation has developed a culture of philanthropy, with more members viewing Temple Sinai as one of their primary philanthropic priorities. To continue encouraging greater giving in a manner consistent with Temple Sinai's values and to acknowledge our community's generosity, we have launched the Shorashim Society in coordination with the 2025-2026 Community Commitment (membership) renewal drive.

The Shorashim Society recognizes members of our congregation who make significant contributions to the temple on an annual basis—through enhanced Community Commitments ("membership dues") as well as contributions to other funds. This additional financial support allows us to maintain our progressive dues structure and remain vibrant and fiscally healthy.

Why "Shorashim?" Shorashim means "Roots" in Hebrew. To the prophets and sages, roots represented strength—anchoring the community through harsh times—and sustenance—a conduit to the waters of righteousness and spirituality. Strong roots may not be the most visible part of a tree, but they are arguably the most important. Our Shorashim Society members help strengthen and sustain our community every year so we can continue to grow.

We are deeply grateful for those members who have already pledged to join the first ever Shorashim Society this upcoming year.

RIMONIM SOCIETY: LEGACY GIVING AT TEMPLE SINAI

The Rimonim Society, established in 2002, recognizes those who have included Temple Sinai in their wills or established another type of planned gift to benefit the temple.

This year we began an effort to raise awareness of the Rimonim Society and ways to include the temple in members' wills. In January we held a virtual seminar on wills and estate planning with local attorney Rebecca Geller of Geller Law Group LLC to answer questions from members of all ages. In the coming year, we are planning more Rimonim Society events and seminars to honor those who have included Temple Sinai in their estate plans and encourage others to join.

Why "Rimonim?" Rimonim means "pomegranates" in Hebrew. Pomegranates are overflowing with seeds, and just like the pomegranate, our Rimonim Society members are planting the seeds for a vibrant future and sustaining Temple Sinai for generations to come.

We are deeply grateful for those members who have already included Temple Sinai in their estate plans as Rimonim Society members (page 28).

If you have questions about the Shorashim or Rimonim Societies, or are interested in joining, please reach out to Noah Benjamin, Director of Development, at (202) 363-6394 or nbenjamin@templesinaidc.org.

NEW FUNDS AND PROGRAM FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AT TEMPLE SINAI

This year we also launched several new special fundraising efforts:

Oneg Sponsorship

For the first time we have formalized a way for members and families to celebrate their joys (simchas) by sponsoring the refreshments (oneg) on Shabbat. We have seen a great response from the community with over a dozen sponsorships this year! Whether it's a Bar/Bat/Bet Mitzvah, a wedding, anniversary, retirement, birthday, or any other happy occasion, come celebrate with us!

Rabbi Mindy Portnoy Adult Education Fund

To recognize Temple Sinai's beloved Rabbi Emerita Mindy Portnoy (z"l) and her passion for and commitment to adult Jewish education, we launched a fundraising effort to grow and sustain Temple Sinai's adult education programs. Thanks to the incredible support of the community, we raised over \$60,000 in her memory.

Kehillat Shabbat Fund

We are also seeing several staff transitions this year, including the retirement of our Cantorial Soloist Robyn Helzner. Robyn has been in our community for over 40 years and has been a leader in creating and growing our lay-led Kehillat Shabbat community. The Kehillat Shabbat Fund is designed to sustain this integral Temple Sinai Shabbat worship experience and honor Robyn's legacy.

SUPPORTING WHAT IS MEANINGFUL TO YOU AT TEMPLE SINAI

There are so many special programs and engagement opportunities that bring us together in Jewish community. These funds provide the additional support that makes these possible. Here are just a few:

- Endowment Fund: Provides investment income in perpetuity for Temple Sinai's operations.
- Library Fund: Provides for the books, subscriptions, and other materials that make our library robust.
- Music Fund: Donors to the "Circle of Music Lovers" support all aspects of our congregation's musical life.
- Nursery & Religious School Funds: Tuition does not cover all of the costs of our beloved schools. Charitable giving is integral to keeping our schools thriving for the next generation of Jews.
- The Davis Center for Social Justice: The Davis Center centers social justice (tikkun olam) at the heart Temple Sinai's identity.

For a full listing of funds, visit www.templesinaidc.org/giving/donate-now.

See our full donor listing page 28-37.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

This past year has been a very busy and productive year for the Finance Committee. As is typical, much of the committee's work focused on the temple's budget. The committee remained focused on ensuring good financial stewardship of the temple's resources particularly given the looming financial challenges we face. This involved working with staff, clergy and the Board to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the temple's financial position throughout the year and the implications for next few years. Due to the support and cooperation of the clergy and staff and generous support from members, this year the temple is projected to realize a surplus. This will be of some help as we move to a period of likely net deficits.

The loan approved by the congregation in connection with the renovation and expansion project was successfully closed this year. The ten-year loan with Eagle Bank has a 6.310% interest rate for the initial five years. Much gratitude is owed to Finance Committee members David Antonelli and Janis Schiff for their efforts in bringing the loan negotiations to a successful conclusion.

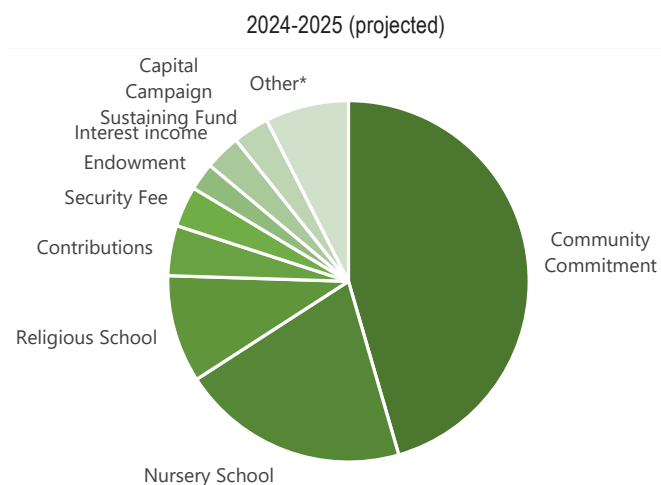
The Finance Committee also played a crucial role in developing the new community commitment structure. The proposed revisions were reviewed and modeled in order to ensure that the changes were likely to achieve the financial goals behind the effort to revise the existing structure. The Finance Committee's guidance helped to shape the final proposal approved by the Board and the congregation.

Working with the staff and clergy, the committee developed a clear and comprehensive Financial Oversight and Limits of Authority policy. The policy enshrines clear guidance for the expenditure of temple funds within and outside the annual budget. It also establishes clear review authorities and processes with respect to entering into contracts on behalf of the temple.

Operating as a subcommittee of the finance committee, the investment committee met quarterly to review the financial performance of Temple Sinai's investments and to ensure that these investments are in compliance with Temple Sinai's Investment Policy. The committee's oversight includes both long term permanent funds such as the temple's endowment funds as well as short term (less than one year) funds and cash management. The earnings from these fund investments provide a meaningful contribution to the temple's operating revenues. The investment committee's work to enhance the temple's cash management has been particularly important to generating additional returns on the temple's cash reserves.

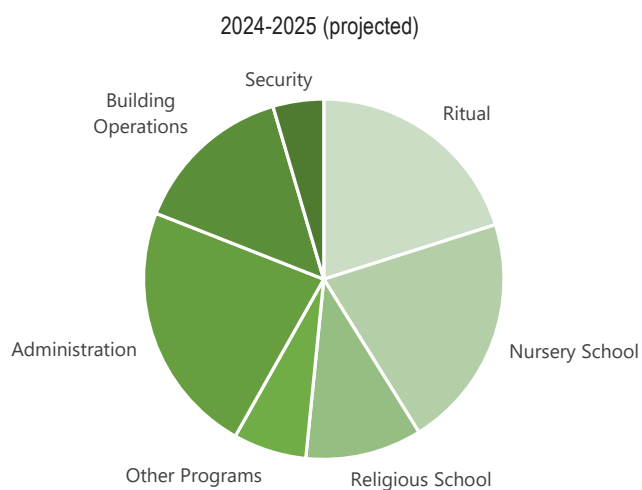
Where does money for temple programs and operations come from?

	2023-2024	2024-2025 (projected)
Community Commitment	\$3,264,092	\$3,404,000
Nursery School	\$1,410,194	\$1,523,555
Religious School	\$572,758	702,209
Contributions	\$313,710	335,704
Security Fee	\$199,435	\$271,000
Endowment	\$179,636	\$184,849
Interest Income	\$253,712	\$240,000
Capital Campaign	\$232,067	\$241,533
Sustaining Fund		
Other *	\$479,049	\$559,300
	\$6.9 million	\$7.5 Million



What does the money support?

	2023-2024	2024-2025 (projected)
Ritual	\$1,378,322	\$1,455,670
Nursery School	\$1,410,194	\$1,523,555
Religious School	\$727,565	\$757,394
Other Programs	\$341,088	\$476,141
Administration	\$1,506,354	\$1,650,077
Building Operations	\$918,053	\$1,049,352
Security	\$310,087	\$329,661
	\$6.6 million	\$7.2 Million
Transfer to Reserves	\$312,989	\$238,299



* Other income includes Rental Income, B'nei Mitzvah Fees, and funds released from designated and restricted funds

APPRECIATING OUR DONORS

Giving at Temple Sinai

Temple Sinai has a long and rich heritage of *tzedakah*, consistent with our Jewish tradition to express charity and feelings of sorrow and joy through charitable contributions. Giving often occurs at times of birthdays, B'nei Mitzvah, weddings, anniversaries, births, and deaths, or in conjunction with special charitable campaigns. This year Temple Sinai members, family, and friends contributed over \$1.25 million above and beyond membership financial commitments. These gifts supported a variety of funds, committees, and causes including the temple operating budget, the Honor our Heritage Build our Future Campaign for Temple Sinai (the Capital Campaign), Temple Sinai endowments, the Temple Sinai clergy discretionary funds, and our many specialized restricted funds. **Thank you to the many generous donors who make Temple Sinai a vibrant and thriving community!**

RIMONIM SOCIETY

The Rimonim Society recognizes those individuals who have included Temple Sinai in their will or established another type of planned gift. Rimonim Society members enhance our congregation and provide the means to carry on our work for generations to come. Their gifts create a legacy for the congregation and continuity of the Jewish people. To learn more about legacy giving or if you have included Temple Sinai in your will and are not listed below, please contact Noah Benjamin, Director of Development at nbenjamin@templesinaidc.org.

We recognize and thank all our current Rimonim Society members!

Esthy* & Jim Adler	Betty Ferber &	Rosann Wisman &	Catherine Ribnick
Anonymous	Robert Pomerance*	Michael Lilek	Chip Rosencrans
Chris Intagliata & Larry Asbell	Emil Frankel	Marsha Shaines &	Daniel & Florence Rosenblum
Ruth S. Baker-Battist &	Gary Friend &	Robert Loesche	Ted* & Linda Rosen
Lewis Battist*	Tara Sonenshine	Martin & Syma Mendelsohn	Robert* & Sandra Schwarzbart
Rabbi Stephanie Bernstein	Ann Garfinkle	Libby & Ronald Merrill	Marcie Solomon
Richard & Elaine Binder	Frank & Ann Gilbert	Herb* & Bobbe Mintz	Linda B. Popejoy &
Samuel A. Bleicher	Andrew Gilman &	Kevin Mulshine &	Seth Drew Speyer
Ravelle Brickman	Dianne Rudo	Laura Kumin	Laura N. Steel
Ed Cohen &	Niesa Brateman Halpern &	Beverly & Mark Nadel	Ruth Uhlmann &
Charlene Barshefsky	James Halpern*	Nancy L. Wolf & Jim Pavle	Craig Mathews
Isabel P. Dunst	Ellen Heiman	Tom Plotz & Cathy Klion	Barbara Kraft & Peter Winkler
David & Jane Fairweather	Ann Ingram	Lew Priven & Suzanne	Frances R. Rothstein &
Elizabeth H. (Robin) Farquhar	Deborah & Kenneth Jaffe	Eichhorn*	Stephen S. Wolk
Patrice & Barney Feinstein	Michael Levitt &	Rabbi Fred N. Reiner &	
Mike* & Doris Feinsilber	Laura Greenberg	Susan Liss	* Of Blessed Memory
		Sherry Levy-Reiner*	

These funds appear as voluntary contribution options on the Member Financial Commitment form:

ARZA (Assn. of Reform Zionists of America) Membership
440 members contributed to support Temple Sinai's membership in ARZA.

Davis Center for Social Justice Fund
536 members contributed to this fund.

Israel Engagement & Social Justice Fund
430 members contributed to this fund.

Sinai Assisted Housing Foundation
544 members contributed to support Sinai House.

Temple Sinai Men of Reform Judaism Membership
400 members contributed to be a part of the TSMRJ (the Brotherhood).

Temple Sinai Women of Reform Judaism Membership
481 members contributed to be a part of the TSWRJ (the Sisterhood).

*A special thank you to the **Temple Sinai Men and Women of Reform Judaism** for all their contributions throughout the year. Beyond planning the many wonderful programs and activities to engage the Temple Sinai community, the TSMRJ and TSMRJ consistently contribute funds to support the temple's programs—from Yom Kippur break-fast to gifts for our B'nei Mitzvah & Confirmation students and much more.*

HONOR OUR HERITAGE BUILD OUR FUTURE CAMPAIGN FOR TEMPLE SINAI (THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN)

In December 2023, we closed active fundraising for the Honor our Heritage Build our Future Campaign, but many generous members' campaign pledges are still being fulfilled. We are deeply grateful for their ongoing support.

To see the full of Honor our Heritage Build our Future Campaign donors see the QR code or visit www.templestinaidc.org/giving/capital-campaign.



ANNUAL SUPPORT FOR GENERAL PURPOSES

These donors made contributions to support Temple Sinai's general operations—from worship to education, and programming to pastoral care — making a direct impact on the temple's ability to "meet every member where they are" and maintain a balanced budget. Major categories include the Sinai Annual Fund, Memorial Gifts, High Holidays Support, and underwriting Onegs & High Holidays Bimah Flowers.

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These donors made contributions to support Temple Sinai's special programs, causes, and committees. You can learn more about what each fund supports at templesinai.org/donate.

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Throughout the year, we ask for contributions to support special initiatives and youth education programs. This includes our Family Shabbat, Mini-Mitzvah Mornings, Gifts for TSRS Teachers, & more. Thank you!

Rabbi Lauren Adesnik, Stacie Ain & David Richter, Jordan Andrew & Heather Sokolower, Elliot & Susan Anenberg, Samuel Ashworth & Shannon Ding, Benjamin Bachrach & Elizabeth Langsfeld, Matthew Bank & Elaine Kirby, Ian Bardenstein & Jennifer Romanek, Alyssa Bernstein, Daniel Bernstein & Emily Locker, Jessica & Jeremy Bernton, Dylana Blum & Jonathan Kallmer, Amanda & William Borden, Joshua Bornstein & Christopher Jones, Suzanna Brickman, Michael Britton, Scott Cantor & Catherine Sear, Emily Carrier & Andrew Miner, Brian & Stephanie Chernoff, Matthew Cohen & Rebecca Fertig Cohen, Tiffany & Matthew Cohen, Michelle Cooper & Daniel Neustadt, Sarah Coppersmith Warshaw, Evan & Rachel Croen, Michael Delman & Nadine Dubowitz, Casey Dlott & Joel Schulman, Sherman Edwards & Melinda Salzman, Daniel Eichner & Elizabeth Baer, Lynn Eisenberg, Lindsey Elman & Eric Heller, Jason Fabrikant & Joanna Lo, Anne Falk, Michelle & Jason Farkas, Debbie & Nick Fox, Joseph & Stacey Friedman, Laura

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* Of Blessed Memory

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GET INVOLVED

Member involvement shapes the direction of temple life, creates and supports vibrant educational and social programming, as well as mobilizes for social justice activities.

Next year, get involved with...

Advancement & Philanthropy

Join the Advancement Committee to help us cultivate Temple Sinai's fertile future! The Advancement Committee works to grow and strengthen our community through philanthropy and engagement.

Art

Watch for opportunities to share your memories and connections to Temple Sinai and then we'll all wrap the results around paper clips as we create the "Words of Our Hearts" art installation. We hope that this communal effort will contribute to the goal of maintaining and reflecting our strong and vibrant membership while fostering a culture of belonging where every member feels known, seen, and heard.

The Davis Center for Social Justice

- Sign up for issue-themed mailing lists for Davis Center initiatives. For example, the Green Team Google Group shares opportunities to help with local cleanups, climate advocacy, compost monitoring, and pollinator garden maintenance.
- Answer the call for volunteers to help plan social justice activities. For example, Multiracial Sinai needs your ideas, energy, and commitment as we lead the charge to push back against attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Show up at a protest or lobby day with other Temple Sinai members.

The Temple Sinai Library

- Join the Library Committee
- Come to a Shabbat Storytime at Sinai or a TS Storytime at People's Book in Takoma Park

- Join a SinaiReads Book Discussion
- Subscribe to the Circle of Book Lovers email list for the latest Jewish literary events
- Check out our book recs in the TS Weekly email and stay abreast of new literary releases through the e-newsletter Check It Out!

Music

Over the summer, Cantor Rhodes will be undertaking several projects to further engage and develop volunteer musical leadership within our congregation. If you are interested in participating — or if you are interested in joining our choir, our pop-up choir, or our temple band—reach out to her. Your involvement strengthens our community and enriches our shared musical experience.

Temple Sinai Men of Reform Judaism

Bring your ideas and energy to expand what we do. Most of our programs are social, but we are also involved in service, charity, and the religious and cultural life of Temple Sinai. Reach out to Gary Falk to help us shape another year of programming for all temple members!

Temple Sinai Women of Reform Judaism

Join TSWRJ on a hike, to play maj, to read a play, or at any of our programs. Take part in Sisterhood Shabbat! Volunteer at the Chanukah Mart! Identify an author for the 2026 Authors' Roundtable! Save the weekend of January 9-11 for our 2026 Retreat in Annapolis, Maryland. TSWRJ is an engaging organization and welcomes everyone.

Our Growing Community of Young Families

- Come to a Friday Family Shabbat or a Saturday Tot Shabbat!
- Join our baby group, Wigglers
- Join our mailing list to hear more about these programs and more
- Volunteer to help at Family Shabbat (teens welcome!)

Sinai House

- Join our all-volunteer Board of Directors
- Volunteer time to tutor or mentor the children and adults we work with
- Plan a special mitzvah or scout project with us
- Support the annual Tricia Davis 5K for Sinai House on Mother's Day by donating, volunteering, or registering as an in-person or virtual participant

Looking for something else? Contact committee and affinity group leaders to learn more about what we're doing and how you can play a role in making it all happen!

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