

Sinai Temple

BULLETIN



For Your Consideration

Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

Inside this newsletter, you'll see a program entitled, "The High 'Cost' of Being Jewish." To be honest, when we chose the title, we were being a bit provocative.

As it happens, however, there truly is a cost to being Jewish. If you live in Israel, the "cost" of being Jewish has a very specific meaning for you and your family. The cost can be terribly high - especially during a time of war.

If you live here in America, that word "cost" has another meaning. It refers to the large amount of money that seems to be the key for belonging to the Jewish community. During these difficult economic times, that "cost" is something all of us acknowledge as a tough reality and necessity for maintaining our community. We know we've got to pay, but it still pinches us.

So why bother? Why pay this "cost" of being Jewish? Let me modestly suggest a few possibilities.

First, I believe it's worth paying the "cost" because there is a "benefit" in being Jewish. For Israelis, the upside of living in the Jewish state is that they find themselves able to express their Judaism there in ways that are totally organic and natural. Israelis say it's worthwhile living in Israel because living there means living uniquely and boldly as a Jew.

For us, the benefits of belonging to the Jewish community are also real. Belonging to Sinai means you're part of a sacred enterprise. You're connected to a place where words like learning, justice, and purpose are natural. You're connected to a place where we talk about the most important issues in the world: life and death, family and relationships. Even if you're not terribly "religious," you've got a chance here to dip your toe into the world of the spiritual. We're almost for sure the only place in your life where you can sit down once or twice a week to sing and affirm that your life has purpose. The synagogue is that unique place where you can shed your role as worker, provider, in-law, parent, adult child, or taxpayer in order to just be yourself.

To coin a phrase, you can take back your "self" in the synagogue. You can, in some special way, rediscover you!

It does "cost" a lot to live as a Jew, but the rewards are potentially huge. I hope you believe this is true. I hope your sense of Sinai makes you feel very pleased that you belong!

Parent Learning

Sunday, February 1
The High "Cost" of Being Jewish
See page 3

Congregational Shabbat

Saturday, February 7
Prayer, singing, learning, and pot
luck lunch. See page 3

Theater Night

Sunday, February 8. See page 4.

Torah Study

Every Saturday at 9:00 a.m.

Meditation

At 10:00 a.m.
Saturdays, February 14, 21, & 28

Special for Kids & Parents

The Wiggle Room is available during
Family Services. Babysitting during
the Kabbalat Shabbat Service.

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES - NOTE THE TIMES - 76-88

FAMILY SERVICE at 7:00 p.m.
February 6
Songs, prayers, and a terrific story.

KABBALAT SHABBAT at 6:00 p.m.
February 13
We pray in the round in the Auditorium. Veggies and
snacks at 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE at 8:00 p.m.
February 20
Music with a special style.

FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSIC at 8:00 p.m.
February 27
Shabbat Shalom getting used to our new prayer book.

Take Back Your Time: Sinai Families Truly Rediscover Shabbat

One of our congregants recently shared a Shabbat experience with the Rabbi. Here is the message (adapted slightly to preserve privacy).

Dear Rabbi Shapiro,

You asked for examples of anything people had done differently in response to your sermons and Torah study about Shabbat. I have tried to make sure that I spend some time being reflective, whether that is at Torah study, or on the weekend I was unable to attend, in the car (I drove to New York City the Saturday before last).

I also try to make this reflection about family – have I told my partner something nice today or just been grumpy? Have I spoken to my parents yet this weekend to ask them about their trip? And so on. Which I probably should be doing every day, but hey, 1/7th of the time is a start. I also made challah for the first time three weeks ago and it turned out so well that I volunteered to repeat it for a future Temple event.

Thanks for the inspiration!

Welcome to Sinai!

We're so glad you decided to join Sinai Temple in the past month.

Robert and Caroline Schapiro
Ken and Vivian Lenchitz

Notes from the Cantor

“Shal-OM,” a Jewish Meditation experience, continues this month on Saturday 14, 21, and 28. The class is held at 10:00 in the auditorium, immediately following Rabbi Shapiro’s Torah study. If you are interested in learning some of the practices of Jewish Meditation, please join us, even if you were not able to attend any of the January sessions. No previous experience in meditation (Jewish or other) is necessary, and you do NOT have to sit cross-legged on the floor!

The Sinai Temple Adult Volunteer Choir began rehearsing in late January for an evening of Sephardic music on Friday evening, March 20. The centerpiece of this service will be selections from Charles Davidson’s Sephardic Service, Libi B’mizrach. Rehearsals will continue on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 P.M. through February and early March. If you were not able to make the January rehearsal, but would still like to participate in this exciting musical event (even if you have never sung in the Adult Volunteer Choir before), please call the Temple ASAP and let me know you would like to sing with us!

Finally, you have the month of February to do your Purim “homework.” I heartily recommend renting copies of the Pirates of the Caribbean movies, Swashbuckler, Treasure Island, Blackbeard, and any other pirate movies you can find! Make sure you have your eye patches and pirate hats ready, and be sure that all your swashes are buckled, mateys, because in March it will be time for... Pirate Purim! “Arrrrrrrrr!”

Ivdu et Hashem B’simcha! Serve the Holy One with Joy!

– Cantor Martin Levson

The Sinai Temple Bulletin is published monthly by Sinai Temple, Springfield, Massachusetts. This is Issue Number 6 for the year 2008-2009.

Mark Dov Shapiro Rabbi
Martin Levson..... Cantor
Sheila Shear Director of Education
Andy Chaet..... SPFTY Advisor

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Visit our website: www.sinai-temple.org

Mission Statement

Sinai Temple is a welcoming and inclusive Reform Congregation where our members pursue a continuing journey of Jewish growth. We are guided by the history and traditions of the Jewish people as we encounter the challenges of the modern world. We encourage participation in prayer, life-long Jewish learning, and social justice within a joyful, creative, and compassionate community.

***Trees, Earth, and Torah:
A Morning Devoted to the Environment
and our Jewish Souls
In anticipation of Tu B'Shvat, the "New
Year" of the trees.***

**Rediscover Shabbat
Saturday, February 7
For EVERYONE of EVERY Age**

At 10:30 a.m.

Everyone is invited to a joyful, participatory service.
Thirty minutes "short." In the round in the Auditorium!

At 11:00 a.m.

**For Families (with kids of all ages) –
Using the Arts to explore the Climate Crisis –**
Rabbi Shapiro will involve parents & children in an exploration of the environment.

**For Adults –
Greening our World – Jewish Thoughts on the
Climate Crisis –**

Guest teacher, Ellen Bernstein, will bring us into the world of Torah where our ancestors developed an ancient, but still contemporary, vision of ecology.

**For Pre-Schoolers & their parents –
Tu B'Shvat: Back to Nature with Judaism –**
Something for everyone! If you're 3 or 4, you start with our service at 10:30 and then bring your parents to a special session designed for you and them.

At 12:15 p.m. LUNCH

Home baked challah, pot luck lunch, music, and fruits from the Land of Israel

This program is made possible by the Buster and Shiley Stahl Family Education Fund.

The High "Cost" of Being Jewish: Making It "Worth" Our While
A program for parents to make Jewish living relevant and "worthwhile" in 2009.

**Sunday, February 1
9 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.**

Bagels, coffee.

A provocative movie.

Conversation and workshops led by Rabbi Shapiro, Cantor Levson, and Sheila Shear.

For beginners & more "advanced."

For anyone who wants to bring joyful Judaism into their home

Parents: This morning's program is designed specifically for YOU. The film we view will lead into discussion followed by workshops on involving your whole family in the calendar's next three holidays: Tu B'Shvat, Purim, and Passover.

Hands-on stuff! Easy, practical tips

**A Pirate Purim
Monday, March 9
Starting at 6 p.m.**



**You're invited to bring yourself
and all your friends to the Megillah Reading.**

Dress like a pirate. Wear a costume.

Homemade Hamantaschen.

Dinner served by the Men of Sinai.

If you miss this event, you'll be walkin' the plank!

Sinai Temple fundraising night at the

MAJESTIC THEATER

A special performance has been scheduled to benefit Sinai Temple.
Over 60% of the ticket price will be donated back to Sinai.

This performance is underwritten by the Kadis Family as a memorial to Betty F. Kadis.

Bring your friends & come & have FUN! Everyone is welcome. Last season was a HIT. Those who came Raved! Book Now! Many of your fellow congregants have already purchased their tickets. Please join them. Don't miss out!

Marsha & Rabbi Mark Shapiro, Sheri & Cantor Martin Levson, Carol & Dave Roberts, Beth & Mel Chafetz, Carlin & Howard Trietsch, Carol Daigle & Steven Weiss, Diane & Richard Friedberg and guests, Barbara Fitzgerald & Matthew Katz, Lori Jo & Jim Regan, Lynn & Joel Solomon, Joan Rosenbaum & Seymour Frankel, Liz & Bruce Leshine, Roberta Hillenberg-Gang & David Gang, Sharyn & Gregory Breslau, Linda & Robert Kay, Helen Weiner, Robyn Newhouse, Sue & Jeff Chanin, Rina Miller & Joe Hershon, Maria & Glenn Markenson, Tricia & Michael Freedman, Diane & David Frank, Suzette Damboise & Jane Lindfors, Bob Kadis and guests, Dorothy & Morton Katz, Zel Lavin & family & Laura Blake, Sharon & Robert Leff, Carol Levine & guest & Claire Cohen-Stelzer, Madelyn & Harvey Miller, Marc Newman & guest, Lynn & Phillip Perlmutter, Marilyn & Bob Peskin, Saul Finestone & Judi & Henry Aronson, Sherry & Arm & Souliere, Carol & Dave Tivoli, & Gloria & Michael Wald.

Sunday, February 8, 2009 at 7:00pm

Lumberjacks in Love

Book & Lyrics by Fred Alley • Music by James Kaplan

LUMBERJACKS IN LOVE is another hit musical by the same guys who created our last season's hit GUYS ON ICE. Set in 1912, five lumberjacks – Minnesota Slim, Muskrat, Dirty Bob, Moonlight, and the Kid – live in a state of manly bliss at the Haywire Lumber Camp, some two hundred miles from the nearest woman. The madness begins with the arrival of a plucky mail order bride, really a writer of romance novels doing research for a new book, and the revelation that one of the lumberjacks is really a cross dressing "lumberjill." LUMBERJACKS IN LOVE will be an unabashedly sparkling romp in the woods!

Shelby Leshine - Sinai Temple member - has a great part in this Musical!

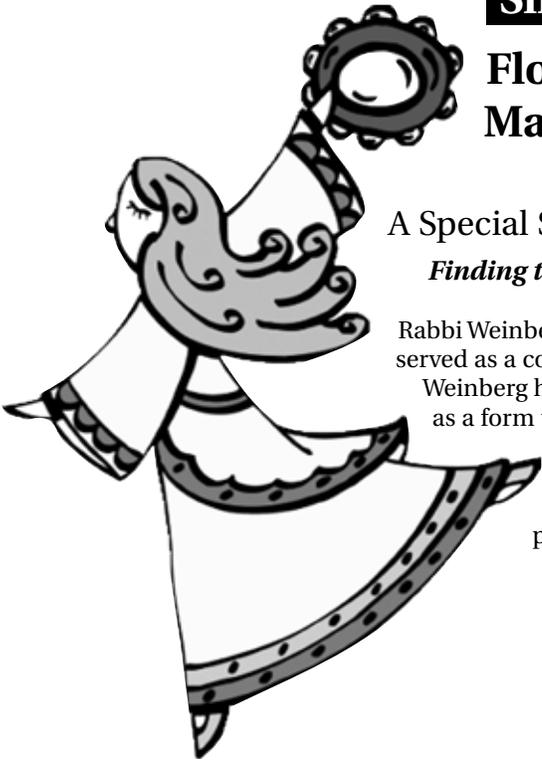
All Reserved Seat Tickets: \$22 & \$25

(Please note that these ticket prices are not inflated for this fundraiser – they are the same as for other performances. If you need transportation, please call the Temple office.)

Please call the Majestic Theater Box Office directly to purchase reserved seat tickets for this Sinai Temple performance.

**Majestic Theater Box Office (413) 747-7797
131 Elm Street • West Springfield, MA**

Sinai Temple Women's Weekend



Flourishing as Jewish Women: Making the Most of The Stages of Our Lives

A Special Shabbat Morning with Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg

Finding the Esther in Each of Us: Building a Strong Woman for Today

Rabbi Weinberg is a 1986 graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and has served as a congregational rabbi for seventeen years. For the last sixteen years Rabbi Weinberg has studied mindfulness. She has introduced meditation into the Jewish world as a form that can enliven and illuminate Jewish practice, ideas and community. She teaches mindfulness meditation in a Jewish idiom to lay persons, rabbis, cantors and other Jewish professionals and is a senior teacher and director of community outreach of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, a retreat based program for Jewish leaders.

Saturday, March 7

9:00 – 10:00 AM Weekly Torah Study
10:30 AM Women's Shabbat Service
10:45 AM – 12:00 PM Taking a Second Look at Esther (and Ourselves)

Light brunch to follow

A Special Sunday Morning with Deliah Rosel

Opening to Life Through Movement: A Jewish Approach to Healing

Enhancing our connection with the healing energy of the Divine, allows us to deepen our appreciation for exactly where we are on our life's journey. Join us as we joyfully explore aligning body, breath, mind and spirit with the Infinite Source. Suitable for all ages and physical abilities.

Dr. Rosel a certified qigong teacher, created L'Chaim Qigong to demonstrate how this practice integrates with traditional concepts in Judaism, offering a deepening spiritual connection for healing. Deliah has over twenty years experience in the healing arts — combining therapeutic massage, integrative acupressure, foot reflexology, energy balancing and spiritual direction.

Sunday, March 8

9:15 – 10:30 AM

Light refreshments to follow

The Women's Weekend has generously been made possible by Leah and Gerald Gottlieb

Please join us for this very special, multi-generational weekend for women. Female guests of Sinai women are welcome. Space is limited so respond early.

Please RSVP by February 20

Mail to:
Women's Weekend c/o Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108

Name: _____ Phone number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

____ Saturday, March 7 No. in party ____

____ Sunday, March 8 No. in party ____

You're Invited to Israel July 5 – 17, 2009

Dear Friends -

I'm writing these words as the conflict in Gaza unfolds. But that conflict will come to a close and that is why we need to keep planning for this summer's Israel journey. (If there is violence into May or June, we will reconsider. But, for now, we need to reserve those seats on the airplane.)

So....Visit our website for details. www.sinai-temple.org

Subsidies and scholarships will be available for both adults and children.

Shalom,

Rabbi Mark Shapiro

Our Tour will include:

Roundtrip airfare from New York to Tel Aviv
2 nights in Tel Aviv, 2 nights in the Galilee
6 nights at the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem
Breakfast daily & five dinners
Transfers, entrance fees, and portorage

Personal Torah

Saturday mornings at 9 a.m.

After a few months of Musar - learning about Judaism's perspective on refining character - we are continuing to keep Torah Study personal. During January, the Rabbi will be presenting texts and values from our tradition that speak to us personally. What matters to you? What keeps you up at night? What gives you joy? This will be the focus of PERSONAL TORAH on Shabbat mornings.

"Shal-OM"

**A Jewish Meditation experience with
Cantor Martin Levson
Shabbat Mornings at Sinai Temple
10:00 A.M.**

February 14, 21, and 28

No previous experience in meditation (Jewish or other) is necessary
(Don't worry - you do NOT have to sit cross-legged on the floor!)

**Sinai Temple Adult Volunteer Choir
Rehearsals on Wednesday evenings at
7:30 P.M.**

**February 4, 11, 18, 25
March 4, 11, 18**

Preparing for a performance of Charles Davidson's *Libi B'mizrach (Sephardic Service)* on Friday Mach 20.

**Friday, March 20
Take Back Your Time:
Rediscover Shabbat**

Go to www.sinai-temple.org. Find the link Take Back Your Time: Rediscover Shabbat. You'll see the blessings for Friday night plus other sources. Also an opportunity to share your own responses to the Shabbat initiative.

**Monthly Morning Service
Wednesday, February 4
at 7:30 a.m.**

A chance to start your day with a different focus. We meet on the bimah for a service of 20 minutes. Breakfast follows. The feeling of togetherness is wonderful. The spirit is unique. Those who need to leave for the rest of the day are free no later than 8:15 a.m. Future "morning minyan" services will take place on Wednesdays, March 4, April 1, May 6, and June 3.

**First Thursdays (mostly):
Lunch and Learn
Thursday, February 5
12:00 – 1:15 p.m.**

Bring your lunch to the Oneg Shabbat room for a discussion of contemporary Jewish concern with Rabbi Shapiro. Future discussions are March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4.

Judaica Gift Shop Corner

Now that spring is on the way, (we hope), we turn to B'nai Mitvah, weddings and ...
Passover! As always, we'll be well stocked to fill all your needs.

Thais Fischel	786-9577
Bobbie Cossin	565-9970

**Especially for Women:
A Woman's View of Torah
Sundays, March 22 & 29
9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Taught by Sheri Levson**

Our Reform movement published the first-ever Torah Commentary written entirely by women this past year. The text contains interpretations and perspectives by women from across the Jewish world. Next month Sinai will be offering women (and men) the opportunity to peek into this new resource.

No prior knowledge is necessary. We'll meet in one of the school classroom for an open conversation. Sheri Levson is studying towards a Master in Jewish Education at Hebrew College in Newton. She has taught secular and Judaic studies, Hebrew, and theatre for 20 years.

**The Sinai Community Caring Fund.
Created during this time of economic
distress**

Thank you to those congregants who have helped create this new resource for our Temple community. If you are unemployed or on the verge of economic meltdown, this fund is here for you and grocery money. Contact the Rabbi and funds will be made available confidentially. If you would like to make a donation to this fund, please send your check to the Temple office.

**Build a Legacy for the Future:
Sinai's "Legacy Society" is Open to All**

Planned Giving is an opportunity for you to give to Sinai Temple while protecting your own or your family's financial security. The most common form of Planned Giving is to include Sinai Temple in your will or estate trust. Other forms of Planned Giving allow you to contribute to the health and vitality of the Temple while benefiting from tax savings, asset management, and even supplemental retirement income.

Please let us know if you have included Sinai Temple in your estate or if you would like more information on options for Planned Giving to Sinai. You can call Rabbi Shapiro and begin the conversation any time! We hope to hear from you. It would be an honor to have you join Sinai Temple's "Legacy Society."

**When a Jew and a Non-Jew are
Married:
Conversations For Mixed Married
Couples
Tuesday, February 10
Wednesday, March 18
Tuesday, April 10
7:30 to 9:00 p.m.**

Have you got questions? Have you learned strategies you might want to share with others? Would you simply like to talk about the setting in which a Jew and non-Jew are married and members of Sinai Temple? Peter Zimmer, a former Vice President of Sinai and a skilled group facilitator, will lead a series of discussions for Sinai this winter and spring. You may come to only one session or all sessions. The group will meet at Sinai, and will plan together the continuing schedule and topics of discussion.

Please RSVP to the Temple office so that we know you are coming. For questions, you can contact Peter through the Temple office.

**Greening our World:
Jewish Thoughts on the Climate Crisis
Guest Teacher – Ellen Bernstein
Saturday, February 7**

Ellen Bernstein is the founder of the first Jewish environmental organization, Shomrei Adamah (Keepers of the Earth). She is also the author of *The Splendor of Creation: A Biblical Ecology*, which weaves together biology, poetry, and philosophy in a commentary on the climate crisis. A great teacher. She will be part of our Shabbat morning program on February 7. See Page 3 of this bulletin.

**Abraham Lincoln Comes to Sinai:
March 27 to March 29**

Dr. Gary Zola, Director of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, is a leading scholar on Lincoln and the Jews. Zola will be Sinai's Scholar in Residence next month. See Page 11 for more details.

3rd Grade is Not Soon Enough

Last month I wrote about the incredible expectation of appropriate Hebrew preparation for our students in what boils down to a few hours a year. One major goal that I have for our Hebrew Program is to have no, or only a select few students, require outside tutoring to prepare for their B'Nai Mitzvah. Though not quite where I wanted to be at this point, we are very close to that goal.

Though some have expressed the concern that children are not being "taught" Hebrew skills with the new materials we have adopted, I do encourage you to visit Hebrew classes to observe that the learning, while self paced, includes very hands on, individualized teaching and learning, that helps each child reach individual goals.

Here is what else we are doing to encourage our students' proficiency in Hebrew. While Hebrew has been introduced in the early grades, Kindergarten through second grade, for quite a while, it has always been that "real" Hebrew learning didn't begin until 3rd grade when students begin to attend weekday Hebrew classes. Thus many families choose to not begin Religious Education until that time. For the past three years there has been greater emphasis on Hebrew in the early grades. For the past two years, most of our students have entered 3rd grade having mastered the alef-bet and most of the vowels and are ready to begin reading in earnest. We would like all of our students to have this advantage. If your reason for waiting is because you think "real" Hebrew learning doesn't begin until 3rd grade, I encourage you to reconsider.

If you are interested in visiting one of our Hebrew classes or our 1st or 2nd grade to see what they are doing with Hebrew, please call the Religious School Office. We look forward sharing our progress with you.

Sheila Shear,
Director of Education

SPFTY Event

Saturday, February 7- Penguin Plunge at Congamond Lake in Southwick MA. This is a fund raiser for Amelia Park Children's Museum in Westfield. We go for a quick plunge into somewhat chilly water and have loads of fun. You may go to their website for more info . We will be providing more info as the date comes closer.

For High School and College students A Summer Program Making Money; The Susan M. Broh Tikkun Olam Award

This summer Sinai Temple invites students to get involved with tikkun olam - repairing the world. We would like to underwrite students who choose to spend their summer in a project that enriches the world. Interested students can get involved by thinking of a project or an area of interest related to tikkun olam/fixing the world. Applications should be in the mail. Call the office if you haven't received one. Those who are selected will be paid a salary of approximately \$7.50 an hour. (College students living outside the Pioneer Valley are welcome to find a project wherever they'll be spending the summer.)

Why is the Temple offering this program? We began this program several years ago to honor the memory of Susan M. Broh, a Temple member who died in September 2001. Susan began her career of "tikkun olam" by dedicating two years of her life to the Peace Corps. After that, Susan devoted her professional and volunteer life to making this world a better place. She believed passionately in the Jewish obligation of pursuing justice. Susan's friends and family have created this program to honor her memory and to encourage other Jews to strive for holiness as Jews must always do.

Jewish Summer Camping Can Make All the Difference in Preparing a Jewish Child for the Future

Our Reform movement runs two remarkable summer camps in the Berkshires. One is called Eisner; the other is called Crane Lake. Last year several Sinai students attended each of the camps. Your child would love either camp. Scholarships are available for sessions in July or August. Please speak to Rabbi Shapiro as soon as possible.

Sinai Temple Teens “On the Job” in New Orleans

Pictured on the Right – Rabbi Shapiro and Sheila Shear recently led a group of Sinai 11th & 12th graders on a service weekend to New Orleans. While visiting New Orleans, the group learned about Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. The group also helped with the reconstruction of a church and one woman’s home in the Lower Ninth Ward. Sinai’s young people also visited Gates of Prayer for Shabbat services. This is the Reform congregation to which Sinai send substantial tzedakah right after Katrina.

The Sinai group is pictured here getting ready for a tour of the Lower Ninth Ward. From left to right:

Top Row – Matthew Breslau, Mason Dunn-McDonagh, Sarah Chaet, Sam Leavitt, Julia Brenker, Abby Katz, Nathan Brooks, Dani Dickstein, Josh Fisher, Kyle Thomas.

Bottom Row – Sheila Shear, Jillian Bertuzzi, Rabbi Shapiro



Pictured Below - The Sinai group is pictured here in work clothes “on the job” in New Orleans.

From left to right:

Julia Brenker, Jillian Bertuzzi, Matthew Breslau, Sheila Shear, Kyle Thomas, Diane Smith (owner of the house being renovated), Nathan Brooks, Dani Dickstein, Sarah Chaet, Abby Katz, Mason Dunn-McDonagh, Sam Leavitt, Josh Fisher.



Men of Sinai

We open this month thinking of our departed Past President, Sy Weiner. He is and will be missed.

Our December Breakfast was well attended and everyone had a fun time.

Snyder Award: Thank you to those sending in nominations. You have made the selection committee's job much harder. Thank you for that.

Calendar for February 2009:

3 Board Meeting 7PM Food, 7:30 Meeting

8 Breakfast 9AM—11AM Speaker: Our own Ernie Blake will speak about his recent stay at a facility that helped him cope with his coming blindness. I am sure this will be a very interesting talk for anyone concerned about the health of their eyes as they age. Charge: \$5 per person.

14 Sweetheart Ball. Please join us for a nice evening of food, song and dance. See the insert in this Bulletin. Prime Rib or Chicken, plus a great DJ. A fine night for community, and a nice way to spend it with your sweetheart. We worked hard to keep the price low, only \$25 per person. 7:00PM for Hor's Doevres, Dinner and Dancing starting at 7:30 until 11PM. Call the temple office at 413.736.3619 or email our Secretary, David Amster at thevideoguy@cox.net. Specify if you want chicken or prim rib. Please join us.

Calendar for March 2009

1 Breakfast 9AM—11AM

3 Board Meeting 7PM Food, 7:30 Meeting

9 Purim—Serve hot dogs and hamentachen

20 Snyder Award Dinner and Shabbat Service

As always, you have an open invitation to please come join us and have fun, perhaps work a little, and get to network with other men of the congregation.

Scott M. Sherman, President

MEN OF SINAI

(formally Sinai Temple Brotherhood)

president@menofsinai.org

413.283.9696

Experience

A Summer that Lasts a Lifetime



- Celebrate Reform Judaism
- Swim, ski or splash in our lake or pool
- Fantastic sports...arts...activities
- Great campers & counselors who return summer after summer



EISNER AND CRANE LAKE
UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM CAMPS

Contact the Religious School Office
or call (201) 804-9700 for more info
eisnercranelake.urjcamps.org

Scholar in Residence Weekend, March 27 - 29

Scholar in Residence Weekend
Friday, March 27 to Sunday, March 29

Featuring

Dr. Gary Zola

**Director of the American Jewish Archives,
Associate Professor of the American Jewish Experience at Hebrew Union College
in Cincinnati**



Washington, Lincoln, and Obama: Time to Assess What America Means to the Jews

A little over 350 years ago Jews first came to America. This country has given Jews the greatest opportunities in our history. As Barak Obama begins to lead the country in his own direction, we will pause to reflect on the unique experience of Jews in America.

Great Voices, Civil Rights, and American Reform Judaism Friday, March 27 at 7:45 p.m.

How did American rabbis handle pivotal world events from the pulpit? What did they say about the rise of Hitler, World War Two itself, or the struggle for Civil Rights in the 1960s. Dr.

Zola, will introduce us to some of Reform Judaism's great orators through a series of remarkable vocal recordings (digitized with visuals added). All come from the American Jewish Archive's extraordinary historical collection.

Saturday, March 28

At 9 a.m. –

Satirizing the Torah Portion: Only in America!

More than a century ago, a remarkably talented satirist and writer named Gershon Rosenzweig (1861-1914) composed a Hebrew commentary on the Torah. Rosenzweig's commentaries shed light not only on Torah, but also on the trials and tribulations of Jewish immigrant life.

At 10:30 –

“He Was One of Us!” American Jewry’s Relationship with Abraham Lincoln

In 2009, America commemorates the bicentennial anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. Dr. Zola will discuss the special relationship that existed between Lincoln and the Jews. He will explain why many of Lincoln's characteristics led Jews to embrace the sixteenth president as a man who possessed a Jewish soul.

Sunday, March 29th

At 9 a.m. -

Breakfast and Learning

We Have a New President - How Much Good Can a President do?

When our country was young, we also had a “new” president. We will learn how George Washington set the tone for much of American Jewish history via his 1790 letter to the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island. The letter presents Washington's view on minority rights in the new nation. It has been a crucial document for over 350 years.

*Heartfelt thanks to Joel and Betsy Bertuzzi for underwriting the Scholar in Residence weekend.
For more information, please contact Laurie Weinberg, Adult Education Chair - 599-1978.*

We Were Listening

During October and November Sinai board members called congregants to wish them Happy New Year as part of a program called Panim el Panim – Face to Face. Panim el Panim is an effort to keep the lines of communication open between the congregation and the Temple leadership so that we can be as aware and responsive as possible to the needs of the congregation. It is a friendly phone call with no agenda other than wishing congregants a happy, healthy year and offering an opportunity to listen to your thoughts and feelings about Sinai. This year we made contact with roughly 225 members, and we hope to increase that number next year. We were listening, and want to share with you what we heard.

Overall, your responses were very positive. Most people greatly appreciated the phone call and expressed happiness and satisfaction with the Rabbi, Cantor, and programming at Sinai. Most people feel that Rabbi Shapiro is wonderful and talented, and that great opportunities and programs abound at Sinai. The response to Cantor Levson was overwhelmingly positive. While many members miss Cantor Mekler, most members we spoke to are thrilled with Cantor Levson's voice and style. He enhanced the beauty of the High Holiday services for most, and numerous congregants commented that Cantor Levson reminds them of their experiences growing up. While there were a few mixed feelings about the use of guitar during High Holiday services, the overwhelming majority of members we spoke to are thrilled to have Cantor Levson on board at Sinai and love his voice, guitar skills, and his interactions with children.

Some congregants also voiced concerns. A few members felt that the single session Religious school format poses some problems, and that the programmed Hebrew text is disappointing. These issues have been addressed to Sheila Shear and the Religious School committee. Some members voiced concerns about the high costs of membership in this economy as well as our current abatement process. A few members also voiced unhappiness that the congregation does not feel friendly and that they feel like outsiders, even if they have been members for years. The board heard and shares these concerns, and is actively working to make certain that Sinai Temple is accessible to everyone. Clearly, we need to be vigilant in our ongoing efforts to make Sinai a warm, inviting, and friendly congregation.

The board feels that the Panim el Panim program is a valuable tool in promoting effective communication within our congregation, and one that allows us to listen to your thoughts and concerns - both positive and negative. We greatly appreciate the feedback from those members who received phone calls, and look forward to speaking to the congregation again soon. In

“Food of the Month” Peanut Butter for February

Hunger presents an ongoing crisis in the Pioneer Valley. More people are turning to community pantries for more food every single month. Our Social Action committee is proposing that we at Sinai double or even triple our food collections this year. This year we invite every congregant to bring a “food of the month” to the Open Pantry box outside the lobby.

We are collecting the following foods:
February Peanut Butter,
March Baby formula,
April - special food drive on Sunday, April 5,
May Cereal.

They're hungry - very hungry. Please bring the “food of the month” to the Temple.

Sinai Temple Wish List: Are You Interested?

We need to replace many of our folding chairs. They are wobbling and telling us they need to go to chair “heaven.” Cost - Approximately \$3,000

Our sound system (the microphones and speakers that let you hear the Rabbi and Cantor) often lets us down. We can “sound” better with your help. Cost - Approximately \$18,000

Please contact Karen Sprenkle in our Temple office (736-3619) if you would like to know more about these projects or others that can continue to bring new life to our congregation.

the meantime, if you have any concerns, questions, or comments, please feel free to call any board member, executive committee member, or Temple professional. Please also make use of the Suggestion Box, which is located in the Temple lobby and on the opening page of the Temple website.

Marlene Gordon
Membership Committee Chair

The Memory of the Righteous is a Blessing

All of us at Sinai Temple extend condolences as we remember the following.

Their memories are precious to their relatives, their friends and to each of us who form the community of Sinai Temple.

We remember those who have passed away from December 5, 2008 to January 12, 2009:

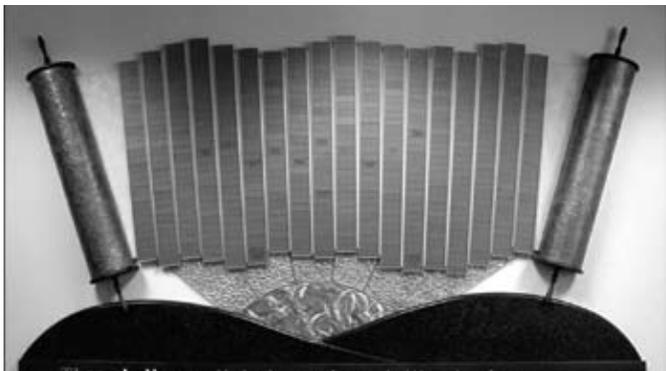
Harry Milner, father of Sally Ginsburg.

Sy Weiner, husband of Helen Weiner.

Eleanor Kaplan, mother of Stephen Kaplan.

Charles Licht, father of David Licht.

Scroll of Life



The Scroll of Life is a work of art in the Oneg Shabbat Room. It was created by Presentations Gallery of New York. The Isaiah quote at the bottom of the Scroll was taken from the Yom Kippur Haftarah as an expression of hope.

The Scroll has space on it so that Sinai members can commemorate either joyous events or memorialize loved ones. Each contribution of a plaque on the Scroll will be used to enrich the life and strength of Sinai. The cost of each plaque is \$200. The inscription may be 3-4 lines with a maximum of 27 spaces per line.

This month:

“Celebrating the life of Jacob Z. (Jack) Robinson 1922-2008.” from the Bertuzzi Family.

Mazal Tov To:

Patrick and Heather Sullivan on the birth of their daughter, Rachel Grace.

Mazal Tov to Rachel's brothers, Nathaniel, Matthew and Benjamin

Mmmmm Food!!!

A Tasty Opportunity for Purim!!!

Would you like to eat freshly baked hamantaschen?

Bake hamantaschen?

Help mail hamantaschen to members of the congregation?

If you can say yes to any of the above, here's something sweet to anticipate for Purim next month - March 9/10!!

It's called the **MITZVAH OF MISHLOACH MANOT – THE SENDING OF FOOD!**

This year we're going to fulfill the mitzvah of Mishloach Manot* by preparing food baskets for our Alumni (Sinai young adults ages 18 to 30) plus new Temple members. We'll also be baking enough hamantaschen for the entire Religious School.

So....here's your chance. You can be part of this great event in several ways....

1. Make a recipe of dough and bring it unbaked to the Temple refrigerator. (We'll give you an easy recipe. See below. OR
2. Come help bake in the Temple kitchen near Purim in mid-March.
3. Help package Mishloach Manot food baskets on a Sunday near Purim. Come to the Temple that morning and we'll give you directions for packaging.

For information, recipes, questions, and if you're free to package the goodies, please call Robin Blanchette-Gage at Sinai...736-3619, ext. 10.

P.S. No experience is needed! Just good spirits

P.P.S. Mishloach Manot means “the sending of portions (of food).” It's a Purim custom to share small gifts of food with friends and family.



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Learning at Sinai



On the left, Ilene Conklin with her sons Seth and Craig. On the right, Susanne Simon with her daughter Casey Lu.