

Sinai Temple

BULLETIN



For Your Consideration

Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

Holocaust movies have returned. To name only three among many, "Valkyrie" (with Tom Cruise) tells the story of Nazis revolting against Hitler. "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas" tells the fantasy of a German boy who can't conceive of a Holocaust. "Defiance" tells the story of Jews who strike back against Nazis as much as their limited circumstances allow.

One wonders how many times the story can be told. The answer is that the story can probably be told as many times as there are people whose lives were touched by the Holocaust.

As some of you will probably recall, I myself mention the six million Jews who died during the Holocaust before the Kaddish at every single Shabbat morning service. I've been doing that since 1982, which means that I've made a comment about sanctifying the memory of our lost ones approximately 800 times. (I'm figuring about 30 services over 26 years.)

Sometimes, I wonder if I've said it enough. After all, the Holocaust is no longer something that happened in recent memory. It's now an event that began 70 years ago in another century. It also happened to Jews who were very different from us. Their time and place was in many ways altogether different than ours.

But I can't let go. Having begun to say Kaddish for them, I can't imagine stopping. Those 13 year olds sitting at Bar/Bat Mitzvah services (born in 1995 and 1996!) need to hear the number - six million. And we do too because the ultimate moral question of the Holocaust is as contemporary as Darfur. The challenge is whether we have learned anything from the Holocaust. Have you and I learned to stand up for what is right? Have you and I learned to live responsible, morally justified lives?

As long as those questions ring true, Kaddish needs to be said and the Holocaust remains as contemporary as today's news.

Saturday Mornings

Services at 10:30 a.m.
Mazal Tov to our Bnai Mitzvah

January 31 - Andrew Cowan
Son of Janine Idelson and Scott Cowan

"Reel Fun"

Friday, January 9

Stay for dinner & movies after the early service; see page 2

Family Game Night

Saturday, January 24

5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
See page 5 and insert

Torah Study & Meditation

Saturday mornings 9 & 10 a.m.
See page 6

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES - NOTE THE TIMES - 76-888

FAMILY SERVICE at 7:00 p.m.

January 2

Songs, prayers, and a terrific story.

KABBALAT SHABBAT at 6:00 p.m.

January 9

This month's service will be followed by pizza dinner & movies! See page 2.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE at 8:00 p.m.

January 16

Music with a special style.

FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSIC at 8:00 p.m.

January 23

Shabbat Shalom getting used to our new prayer book.

FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSIC at 8:00 p.m.

January 30

Sinai hosts the Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts. Please help us welcome our guests!

Take Back Your Time: Rediscover Shabbat

Dinner and Movie at Sinai: Some "Reel" Fun

**Friday, January 9
Starting at 6 p.m.**

**The evening will begin with our
Kabbalat Shabbat service at 6 p.m.**

At 7 p.m., PIZZA & SALAD dinner

At 7:45 p.m., two movies.

One film for kids and another for adults.

The kid movie will be announced that evening. The movie for adults (and for children in Middle School and up) is entitled MECHINA. The film has been shown across the country to rave reviews. In Israel, military service is mandatory for all teenagers after high school graduation. Living with her cousin Amitai and his five friends as they prepare for their army service, film director Mital Guttman uncovers the complexity of being young and idealistic in a time of war. Mechina means preparation. This film tells the story of these young people 'preparing' for service to their country.

Welcome to Sinai!

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

Barry and Norine Queen

Miriam Pilver

The Sinai Temple Bulletin is published monthly by Sinai Temple, Springfield, Massachusetts. This is Issue Number 5 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.

Message from the President Dave Roberts

Times are tough. Who has not been affected by the recession that our country entered into in December, 2007?

Undoubtedly, the economic stress from the broader economy will impact Sinai. Although we will do our best to effect expense control, we know certain expenses will continue to increase (i.e. utilities, health insurance premiums, etc.). At the same time, some will find it more difficult to support the Temple financially.

While thinking about the challenges facing us, it occurred to me that this is not the first time Sinai has encountered tough financial times. Sinai was founded in 1931, only two years after the stock market crashed and while our country was in the throes of the Great Depression. Somehow, the newly-formed congregation managed to survive and grow.

I don't know for sure how Sinai's early members managed to survive those hard financial times, but I have to believe that their dedication to the vision of a Reform Jewish presence in the Springfield area was an important driving force—failure was not an option.

I believe that during those early hard times those individuals and families that were struggling financially were encouraged to remain members and were given special consideration and were treated with dignity and respect. We must continue this approach. We value all members regardless of the financial commitment they are able to make.

Also, I believe that those who were blessed with relatively greater financial resources stepped up and contributed more to mitigate the income lost from the necessity to give dispensation to those less fortunate. I believe that our members will again rise to the occasion to help protect Sinai's future.

Sinai is stronger now than it was in the 1930's; however, we will feel the impact of the economic stress around us. I hope that we all will renew our commitment to the vision of our founders and personally commit to do whatever each of us can to ensure a vital future for our treasured Reform synagogue.

Notes from the Cantor Martin Levson

I would like to express my thanks once again to everyone who helped make my Service of Installation such a joyful and spiritually moving evening! The energy in the room was wonderful, and I felt that I (and the entire Levson family) had truly "come home."

Back in November, we held a well attended Saturday morning Shabbat program. I taught an introductory session on Jewish Meditation that morning, and over thirty people came to learn and meditate! As it appears that there is interest in this sort of thing here at Sinai Temple, I am please to announce that beginning on Saturday morning, January 10, I will be offering "Shal-OM," a Jewish Meditation experience. The class will begin at 10:00, immediately following Rabbi Shapiro's Torah study, and sessions will be held January 10, 17, and 24, and will continue on February 14, 21, and 28. (You do not need to attend every session.) No previous experience in meditation (Jewish or other) is necessary, and you do NOT have to sit cross-legged on the floor! (If you do have a zafu or meditation bench, feel free to bring it with you.) The sessions will be held on the ground floor of the Temple, so no stair-climbing is required. Come and personally experience the enormous physical and spiritual benefits of Jewish Meditation!

Calling all singers! I am planning a special Shabbat 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*, sung by the Sinai Temple Adult Volunteer Choir! Rehearsals will begin on Wednesday evening, January 28 at 7:30. Rehearsals will continue on Wednesday evenings through February and March. If you would like to participate in this exciting musical service (even if you have never sung in the Adult Volunteer Choir before), please call the Temple and let me know you are coming, and I'll make sure there is music for you!

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

Announcing the return of the
Sinai Temple Adult Volunteer Choir
Rehearsals on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 P.M.
January 28, February 4, 11, 18, 25
March 4, 11, 18
Contact Cantor Levson
Performance of Charles Davidson's
Libi B'mizrach (Sephardic Service)
Friday, March 20

Message from Sheila Shear Director of Education

Shalom Chaverim,

I am thinking about ways for students to improve their mastery of Hebrew. The Mitkadem curriculum that we are using for teaching our students Hebrew is an efficient and engaging way for students to learn at their own pace. We are very lucky to have some wonderful volunteers and madrikhim helping out to support students in their learning. It would appear that we are working hard to help our students and we are. And we are thinking that this should work, and it has worked to improve student learning but there is a piece missing I think.

Let's think about what we are asking them to do. In kindergarten, first grade and second grade we introduce the alphabet and most of our students have mastered the alef-bet before entering third grade. That is a fantastic achievement for them. In third to sixth grade we raise the stakes a little and expect students to attend weekday Hebrew classes and master this second language. Here is what we are asking our 3rd to 6th graders to do. We are asking students to learn a second language in approximately one hour and fifteen minutes one time per week for approximately twenty seven weeks (that totals a little over 33 hours per year). If students are here consistently at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings they may have an additional 15-20 minutes per week, that would be an additional 6 hours for a total of 39 1/2 hours per year excluding times when a student may need to be absent, may need to leave early, arrive late or just not be able to focus on a particular day.

Though there is no perfect solution to how to get our children reasonably accurate, fluent and comfortable with Hebrew I would like to suggest that students in 3rd to 6th grade should spend time at home practicing their reading. If your child attends Hebrew school and does not have a reading page to practice, please have them see me and I will be certain that one is sent home. An additional resource is <http://urj.org/chai/mitkadem/ramot/audio/>. This site has all the prayers and blessings that are part of the Mitkadem program by Ramah (level). In a perfect world we would have another day, another hour, another minute, for our students to learn, but unfortunately this is not the case. Our children certainly have a great deal on their plates but the value of them learning Hebrew is real and important. Please spend a few extra minutes, a few times a week, with them and listen to them read. I think if every student and every family did this our Hebrew literacy would improve. Short of adding extra time to our school schedule I think family engagement in this activity is our best bet for improving the Hebrew literacy of our students.

News About SPFTY

Shalom SPFTYites and all Sinai Members,

My name is Kyle Thomas. Josh Fisher and I are co-presidents of SPFTY. The snow signifies the coming of winter and the end of the fall. This fall was a good fall season for SPFTY. With many new members, and many returnees, we hope to carry on the fun of this past fall into the upcoming months. Over the past few months SPFTY has had many fun and exciting events.



From the Freshmen Kidnap (pictured above) where we stayed up and played Water Pong and Poker all night, to Levi Leap, an annual NFTY regional dance. As you can see SPFTY is leaving its mark on the Jewish Teen Community. In the upcoming months, we are trying to continue to build membership and promote fun activities for all members of SPFTY. With fun events coming up such as a ski trip and rivalry whirlly ball competition with other youth groups, why not come and join SPFTYites in the fun.

We are also planning activities that are based in Tikkun Olam and performing Mitzvot. Please join us as we lead the congregation in Shabbat services and other Community building events.

Also, with great effort by Mason Dunn and his Boy Scout Troop we have a newly renovated Teen Lounge which SPFTY would like to be able to call home. If anyone has any sofas, desks, or other furniture that is in good condition, please let us know.

Thank you,
Kyle Thomas
kathomas411@
yahoo.com
Josh Fisher
spaceboyy333@aol.
com
SPFTY Co-Presidents

Family Game Night Saturday, January 24 5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Almost for free!

For families with kids up to Fifth Grade. An evening with a DJ, games, stories, plus dinner and dessert.

Our price - \$5.00 per family.

You can't beat this price and the chance for a wonderful evening.

See our flyer and call RSVP to Robin at 736-3619, Ext 10.

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.

Scholarships for Free

If your son or daughter is planning to attend any kind of Jewish program this summer, please take advantage of the Temple scholarship program. Thanks to the Joseph Emanuel, Rabbi Herman Eliot and Adele Biederman Snyder Memorial Fund, scholarships are available in small and larger amounts. We are also thankful to the family of Edna Simon and Judy and Michael Cohen who support summer scholarships as well.

Your confidential request should go to Rabbi Shapiro no later than March 1.

The Susan Broh Tikkun Olam Scholarship: An opportunity for young people to build a better world

The family and friends of the late Susan Broh are so very pleased to report on the success of this past summer's award in memory of Susan.

In the summer of 2008, Sinai Temple was able to offer THREE students generous stipends that enabled each of them to pursue a summer of volunteer work in an area that made the world a better place.

Donations to the Susan Broh Tikkun Olam Scholarship are welcome so that we can plan for 2009. Applications for summer 2009 should soon be available for Sinai Temple High School and College students.

www.sinai-temple.org

Religious School Raffle

And the winner is.....The Stone Family. Thank you all very much for participating in the Wii Raffle. A special thank you to the members of the Religious School Committee for volunteering their time and effort in making this raffle a great success.

Don't Forget Your "Food of the Month" Soup/Canned Vegetables for January!

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:

January Soup/Canned vegetables

February Peanut Butter

March Baby formula

April Watch for a special food on Sunday, April 5

May Cereal

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

Are You Interested in Joining a Committee?

Our busy Temple is looking for some busy, creative people who might want to become involved in a Temple committee. "I'm too busy for a committee," you reply. "Do not fear." Committees can take up lots of time or take up little time. Try one out and see how it feels. No commitments required. You could consider the Fundraising Committee or the Adult Education Committee. Think about Social Action, Ritual, or the Religious School Committee. Call the Temple office if you are interested or have questions..

Sofas!! We Need You for the Youth Lounge!!! Donations are Welcome.

Our Youth Lounge has been renovated through the hard work of Mason Dunn McDonagh. It's a beautiful, functional room right now. It's just EMPTY. Have you got a sofa or two or three to donate? Please call the Temple office. Leave a message for Andy Chaet, Youth Director, or the Rabbi. Thank you!!!



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

Dear Friends –

Let's go to Israel! We are going to see old sites as well as very new sites. There will be museums as well as active days of kayaking on the Jordan River and exploring the Golan Heights by jeep.

Financial details, including travel subsidy information, and a detailed itinerary, are available on our website. 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.

January 10, 17, and 24

February 14, 21, and 28

(You do not need to attend every session)

No previous experience in meditation (Jewish or other) is necessary

Don't worry - you do NOT have to sit cross-legged on the floor!

Classes will be held on the ground floor – no stair-climbing is required!

Monthly Morning Service Wednesday, January 7 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, February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6, and June 3.

First Thursdays (mostly): Lunch and Learn Thursday, January 8 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 February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4.

The MICAH Award Dinner Honoring Bobi Steingart Saturday, January 31 6 p.m. At Sinai Temple

Sinai Temple is very pleased to join forces with the Pioneer Valley Project for a community dinner honoring Springfield citizens who exemplify the words of the Prophet Micah: What does the Lord require of you: to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. For this MICAH Dinner, Sinai is also honored to be the HOST CONGREGATION. The dinner will take place in our own building.

Our 2009 honoree will be BOBI STEINGART

To attend the dinner in honor of Bobi, please send a check for \$30.00 per person to Pioneer Valley Project, 235 Eastern Avenue, Springfield, MA 01109. Make the check payable to PVP.

To make a donation in honor of Bobi, please send a check for any amount payable to Sinai Temple to 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA, 01108. We will collect all gifts and then pass them on to PVP in honor of Bobi.

Bobi Steingart was born in Queens NY and raised in Roslyn, Long Island. She graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University with a BA in Psychology and continued at Boston College to earn a MEd in Education.

Bobi married Richard in 1972 and raised their family, Lindsay, Michael and Emily, in Boston, Charlottesville, VA and Longmeadow, MA.

Bobi has been a teacher of Special Needs Children in Framingham, MA, Palmyra, VA and an Early Child Educator at the JCC Springfield. She retired in 2005 and returned to the JCC as the Educational Coordinator of the Preschool in 2008.

Bobi has been a member of Sinai Temple for over 20 years and has been on the Social-Action Committee, Board of Directors, and Executive where she served as the Financial Secretary. Bobi has been the coordinator for the Sinai cooks for Loaves and Fishes and organized the summer Food Drives.

Bobi has also been a volunteer with the Red Cross of Pioneer Valley for the past 3 years working as a DAT (Disaster Action Team) leader. She has been deployed to work at National Disasters in LA, NH, IA, CA and TX.

Bobi's family has been active in fundraisers for the Lymphoma-Leukemia Society, and the Tourette's Association. The family participates in walks, runs and bike rides.

Our Sinai community as well as the larger Springfield community is enriched by Bobi's presence and her good deeds.

Sinai Temple Legacy Society

Where We Have Been:

Over the years, many members of Sinai Temple have supported the congregation with generous gifts and contributions through the endowment and capital campaign initiatives. During the last several years, many congregants have also joined our Sustaining Membership program. Their "extra" dues have helped provide needed income for the Temple and also allowed us to continue to welcome members at all income levels.

Here's Something New:

This year our Temple wants to create another way in which congregants can help Sinai develop financial stability for the future. We are calling this new possibility - The Legacy Society. We are inviting you to consider "planned giving," which means long term giving to the Temple. Giving to the Temple in most cases through your estate. This is the kind of giving that lets you do what you believe in while also allowing you to protect your own financial needs as well as the needs of your family.

There are many ways to join The Legacy Society. The good news is that everyone, including those whose current income may be limited, can consider a "planned" gift that can be quite substantial. A "legacy" gift can be part of a wise estate plan that works well for congregants and their families.

We Can Help:

If you would like to know more, your first step is to discuss opportunities with Rabbi Shapiro or members of the planned giving committee listed below. We will work with your family members, lawyer, investment consultant, insurance planner, accountant and anyone else you wish.

What To Do Next?

Watch this space for concrete examples of what you can do. Better still, please contact Rabbi Shapiro or a member of our committee. We will be honored to discuss your interests and find an appropriate way in which the Legacy Society can work for the benefit of you, your family, and Sinai Temple.

A Final Note:

Our Sinai Legacy Society is appearing now because we are part of a larger community effort called Create a Jewish Legacy of Western Massachusetts. This program is a partnership of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. We are one of ten organizations in the Jewish community who have been asked to launch the legacy effort in 2009. We are working together to raise everyone's awareness of legacy giving as the key to a solid Jewish future.

Sinai Temple fundraising night at the

MAJESTIC THEATER

• Sunday, February 8, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. •

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 and come and have FUN! Everyone is welcome. Here are some of your fellow congregants who have already purchased their tickets. Please join them.

Last season was a HIT. Those who came Raved! Book Now!

Marsha and Rabbi Mark Shapiro

Carol and Dave Roberts

Carlin and Howard Trietsch

Diane and Richard Friedberg

Lori Jo and Jim Regan

Joan Rosenbaum and Seymour Frankel

Roberta Hillenberg-Gang and David Gang

Linda and Robert Kay

Robyn Hewhouse

Rina Miller and Joe Hershon

Tricia and Michael Freedman

Sherri and Cantor Martin Levson

Beth and Mel Chafetz

Carol Daigle and Steven Weiss

Barbara Fitzgerald and Matthew Katz

Lynn and Joel Solomon

Liz and Bruce Leshine

Sharyn and Gregory Breslau

Helen and Sy Weiner

Sue and Jeff Chanin

Maria and Glenn Markenson

Diane and David Frank

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

Hours: 10-5 Mon-Fri 10-1 Sat

Cantor Levson's Installation A Great Success



The large ensemble performing during the service...

From left to right:

Cantor Elizabeth Goldman, Cantor Josee Wolff, Cantor Martin Levson, Sheri Levson, Kathy Storfer, Paul Storfer. You can watch this ensemble singing the service's closing song at www.sinai-temple.org/Cantor/installation.php

On Friday, November 21, Cantor Levson was installed with a service attended by 450 people. The special music, kind words, and home-baked Oneg Shabbat made for a perfect welcome to Cantor and his family.



Cantor Martin Levson, Rabbi Mark Shapiro



Top row from left to right: Paul Storfer, Cantor Elizabeth Goldman, Cantor Martin Levson, Kathy Storfer

Bottom row left to right: Cantor Josee Wolff, Sheri Levson, Rabbi Mark Shapiro

Tallis: Questions and Answers for Sinai Temple

During the High Holidays, some questions arose about the history and purpose of the tallis. The following questions & answers are excerpted from the brochure on tallis which is always available in our lobby. For more information, you can always speak to members of our Ritual Committee, the Rabbi or the Cantor.

A Definition and Some History:

The “tallis” or prayer shawl is a four-cornered garment with “tzitzit” or fringes. Originally, the word tallis referred simply to a robe or cloak with four corners that would have been the regular form of dress in ancient times. According to the Torah, tzitzit or fringes were to be attached to this garment. When styles changed over the centuries, the cloak was transformed by later Jews into a shawl and the custom arose of wearing the modified cloak during prayer. In this way, the tallis of biblical times was transformed into the shawl for prayer which we know today.

When is a tallis worn?

A tallis is worn for morning services because the Torah verses (Numbers 15:37-41) that describe the tallis indicate that one should be able to “look” at the tzitzit (or fringes) when they are worn. In days before there was electricity, daytime – specifically the time of the morning service – would have been the time when a person could see the tzitzit.

There are two exceptions to this “daytime” custom. First, rabbis, cantors, and other prayer leaders wear a tallis while leading services whether it is daytime or evening. Secondly, all Jews are welcome to wear a tallis for Kol Nidre.

What about women and the tallis?

Sinai is committed to gender equality. Although traditionally men were the only ones to wear the tallis because it was a mitzvah that had to be performed at the specific time of morning prayer and women were exempt from such timebound obligations, we no longer view women as anything less than total and full equals in every aspect of Jewish life. Women are definitely welcome to wear a tallis.

Tallis or Tallit – What’s the difference?

Tallis is the same Hebrew word as tallit. The first is Ashkenazic pronunciation; the second is Sephardic. The same difference in pronunciation exists between Shabbas and Shabbat.

What is it about Sinai Temple and Reform Judaism which leads to the belief that people ought to make their own choices when it comes to wearing a tallis?

Sinai is part of a tradition in the modern world that stretches back almost 200 years to the origins of Reform Judaism. Since that time, Reform Judaism has based itself on the belief that change has always been a part of Jewish life. What we call Jewish tradition in the year 2009 is not necessarily what our ancestors in the year 1800, 1200, or 200 understood as their “tradition.” The story of Judaism is, in other words, a story of steady change and adaptation.

Because of that, Reform Jews have always stressed the importance of learning as much as possible about various facets of Jewish practice. We have said it is important to understand the rationale behind whatever we do. We have believed that it is the responsibility of every Reform Jew to make informed choices about his or her practice. Sometimes that may mean making a decision to follow the practices of the past; sometimes that may mean deciding not to follow a certain practice. Sometimes that may even mean re-examining a previous decision.

As long as the decision made is a responsible one, Sinai stands behind each of its members. The choice to wear or not wear a tallis is most appropriately the choice of each individual member.

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.

From Generation to Generation

“Living in Connecticut it was important that we had a spiritual home for our family and a place for our children to have a Jewish center for their spiritual development. Sinai Temple has become an important part of our lives. It gives us a place to renew our souls and an opportunity to participate in the Jewish world. It has given us the chance to celebrate special family events and to pray as a family. Our hope is that by being a Legacy donor we can sustain this special place for our children and future generations in the Pioneer Valley.”

-Beth and Mel Chafetz



If you would like to explore joining Beth and Mel in the Sinai Legacy Society, your first step is to discuss opportunities with Rabbi Shapiro or members of the planned giving committee. Please give the office a call at 413-736-3619. There is no obligation in this conversation, and, of course, a gift of any size is welcome.

Sinai Temple's
Legacy Society
Our Turn to Create Sinai's Future
in Partnership with-
Create a Jewish Legacy of Western Massachusetts

In these difficult times, how did Sinai manage to purchase the new Reform prayer book?

We made the purchase thanks to the generosity of Lynn and Daryl Schwartz who made a contribution for the full purchase of our new books. Thanks to Lynn and Daryl for helping us move into this new chapter of life at Sinai Temple.

Saturday Morning Services??

Sinai does not currently offer a Shabbat morning service unless there is a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Should we change? Should we offer a service for the congregation every Saturday morning? A task force will soon begin to consider this possibility. If you would like to join the group or offer suggestions, please contact the Temple office.

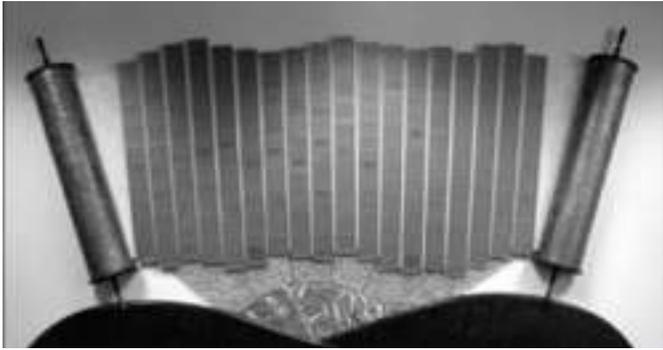
Website

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.

Men of Sinai January 11 Breakfast 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Speaker: John Sheirer, Professor of English and Communications; Chair, Department of Arts, Theater, and Communication; at Asnuntuck Community College, Enfield CT. Professor Sheirer will speak on his books: *Growing Up Mostly Normal in the Middle of Nowhere*, (about the unlikely connections between his youth growing up on a small farm and his adulthood as a writer and college professor) and *Loop Year: 365 Days on the Trail*, a memoir of his experience hiking the same two-mile nature trail every day for a year. \$5 per person.

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.

Precycling Rules

Choose the Container That Can Easily Be Recycled

In states that have bottle bills, choosing among aluminum, plastic and glass may be a secondary issue, as long as you return the container. In states without a law, aluminum and glass are generally more recyclable. Avoid products that are difficult to recycle (e.g., many “squeezeable” plastics, made of numerous layers of different plastics).

Beware of the Word “Recyclable”

Advertisers have worked overtime to translate consumers’ environmental sympathies into increased sales for their product—even if their product is not particularly good for the environment. Beware of the word “recyclable,” which is not the same as “recycled,” the word it so closely resembles. Many materials are technically recyclable, but what matters is what you can recycle in existing local programs. A “recycled” product or container is actually made from materials that have been used before.

Take Back Your Time: Sinai Families Truly Rediscover Shabbat

Two congregants recently shared their Shabbat experience with Rabbi Shapiro. Here is what they said (adapted slightly to preserve their privacy).

Dear Rabbi -

This past Friday night, we didn’t have the energy to go to family services, but we absolutely wanted to celebrate Shabbat together. We chose your book *Gates of Shabbat*, plus both our prayer books. We did the blessings and had a delicious meal. Then, we sang prayers in all the various tunes we knew (and we know a lot). We read poetry from your book, or should I say “our” book. My daughter chose all the poetry. I chose the songs. She talked about which poems were her favorites and we discussed how they related to us. Then we did what we do almost every Shabbat. We discussed “*what was your favorite thing that happened this week? What was your least? What are you most grateful for?*” Before we knew it, it was 8:15 or so and we hadn’t left the dining room table. Our Shabbats are special and “our” book is a wonderful addition. Thank you.

Dear Rabbi -

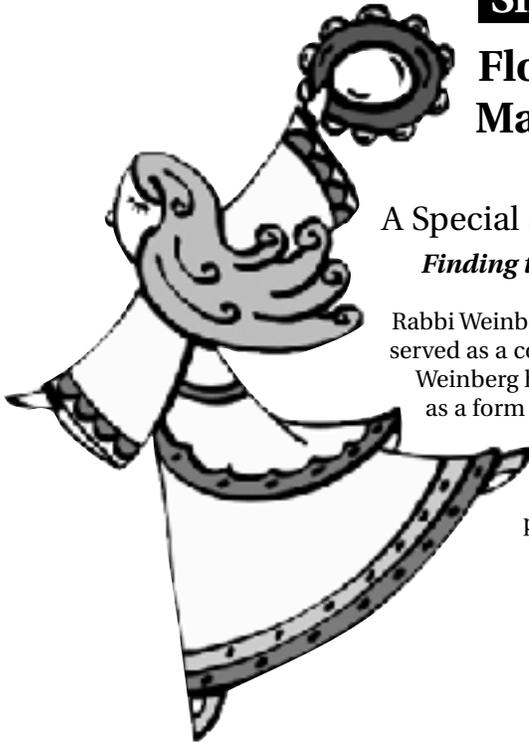
When I heard your sermon on Shabbat, I was very interested in the soda piece. Several years ago I went through a very difficult period in my life and as a result I slowly became addicted to Diet Coke. Over the last several months, I have been trying to quit by cutting down on my consumption, but have been rather unsuccessful. When I heard your sermon about saving Coke for Shabbat I thought I should try it: save my Diet Coke for Shabbat.

I spoke with my husband. I told him that I was intending to do this but it didn’t have to be a whole family thing. In the end everyone said they would try it. I love it. I find myself looking forward to Shabbat with even greater sweetness.

Last night at the dinner table I was sitting with our children when one of them asked if she could have some Diet Coke and I told him no that it wasn’t Shabbat. His response was “*I wish it was Shabbat, it is only a few days away, can we just pretend?*” I told him no, but it really made me think of how something so non-religious as a drink can change the way my entire family looks at this very special day.

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 _____

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 November 5 to December 5, 2008:

Jack Robinson, father of Betsy Bertuzzi.

Dorothy Cotton, mother of Dale Cotton.

Elaine Grant, wife of Albert Grant.

How do I Observe the Yahrzeit of Someone I Loved?

Light a 24-hour memorial candle at your home in the evening that begins the Yahrzeit (anniversary of death). Attend Shabbat services on the Friday evening closest to the Yahrzeit date. At services, you can join the congregation and recite the Kaddish.

You should receive a personalized reminder of your loved one's yahrzeit from the Temple office several weeks in advance of the date every year.

If you have any questions about yahrzeit, please speak to Rabbi Shapiro.

Mazal Tov to:

- Michael Paysnick on becoming Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center.
- Mel and Beth Chafetz on the engagement of their daughter, Jesse, to John Carleton.
- Erica and Tom Brunette on the birth of a baby girl, Emma Grace. Emma is the little sister of Madeline.
- Iris Karas on the debut of her first novel, *Organizing Elizabeth*, published by Hold That Thought Publishing. You can learn more by visiting the website. www.holdthatthoughtpublishing.com.
- Scott Coen on being the focus of a recent Tom Shea story in *The Republican*. Shea's story profiled Scott's interest in history and his idea for an abc40 television series entitled, "1968: The Year That Defined America."

Sinai Temple

BULLETIN



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