

Sinai Temple

BULLETIN



Celebrating Israel @ 60

For Your Consideration

Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

Back in January, a series of e-mails reported that Barak Obama had been educated in a fundamentalist Moslem setting and that Obama was therefore a dangerously flawed presidential candidate. Obama was not a "kosher" candidate for Jews.

Within a few days, the truth came out. The rumors about Obama's childhood connections to the roots of terrorism were false. The school he attended as a child in Indonesia was a public school - not a Wahabi madrassa. Seven Jewish Democratic senators characterized the attacks on Obama as "scurrilous." One newspaper referred to the slanders as an attempt to "swift boat" Obama.

Despite all this, one prominent pro-Israel Jewish leader maintained that, although he had no evidence confirming his suspicions about Obama, he still had reservations.

I am reminded of debates during the 1972 presidential race when some claimed Jews had to vote against George McGovern because, if nothing else, Richard Nixon was a more certain supporter of Israel. Of course, it turned out that, although Nixon believed in Israel, he also managed to do great damage to America.

I'm led to conclude that sometimes we Jews are too defensively Jewish when we look at the world around us.

This may surprise you since it is hard to imagine me ever saying that more Jewish awareness and involvement are not a good thing.

Sometimes, however, Jews do themselves a disservice by assuming too easily that the whole world is against us. It's true we have enemies. Israel certainly has ferocious foes. But sometimes our hypersensitivity is unwarranted. It narrows us and reduces us. We see the world darkly and spin our wheels in fearful, unnecessary ways.

Is Barak Obama "infected" with Moslem fundamentalism? It's an outrageous concern. When we spend our days searching for anti-Semites around every corner, we waste our time. Our pride as Jews ought to give us strength as well - strength to live positively in an open society.

Saturday Torah Study

**The Oldest Book Club In History:
Torah Study**
Saturday mornings
At 9 a.m. with bagels!

Saturday Mornings

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

March 1 - April Solon
Daughter of Tina deMeza and Michael Solon

March 8 - Jenna Friedberg
Daughter of Diane and Richard Friedberg

March 15 - Jeremy Port
Son of Betsy and Jason Port

March 29 - Jennifer Hurwitz
Daughter of Lori and Steve Hurwitz

The Whole Megillah

PURIM
Thursday, March 20
6 p.m.
For the best show in town!

Baby Sitting for Friday Night Services

Babysitting available - March 7 & 14.
See page 7 for details.

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES - NOTE THE TIMES - 76-88

FAMILY SERVICE at 7:00 p.m.

March 7

Songs, prayers, and a fabulous way to build your child's Jewish future.

KABBALAT SHABBAT at 6:00 p.m.

March 14

Veggies and snacks at 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE at 8:00 p.m.

March 21

Purim comes to a close tonight, but you never know what's in store....

FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSIC at 8:00 p.m.

March 28

It's Brotherhood Shabbat including the presentation of the Rabbi Snyder Award to Dan Schaffer.

Message from President Dave Roberts

Each year approximately one-third of our Board members are reelected or replaced (the maximum consecutive service is six years). This year, Linda Kay has agreed to chair the Nominating Committee charged with developing a slate of Directors which, after approval by the Board of Directors, will be submitted to the congregation for a vote at our Annual Meeting in June.

Becoming a Board member is an honor; however, being a Board member is not an honorary position. First and foremost, Board members are fiduciaries.

Many times when people hear the word “fiduciary,” they think only of someone managing money. But, fiduciary has a much broader meaning—Webster’s dictionary defines a fiduciary as “a person to whom property or power is entrusted for the benefit of another.”

Over the past two years, as a Power of Attorney and Health Care Representative for my elderly parents, I have come to understand and appreciate in a very personal way that broader meaning of fiduciary. Because my parents have a limited ability to care for themselves, I have had to make decisions for them regarding where they live, how to dispose of their farm, and about how they should be treated medically.

Board members are the “Powers of Attorney” and “Health Care Representatives”—the fiduciaries—for the Temple congregation. It is this group of 30 individuals who are entrusted with the ultimate responsibility for the welfare of our congregation, the synagogue’s building, its money, and the management of our staff. When you think about it, it is a big responsibility.

Many times it is also a confusing responsibility. As Board members, we must educate ourselves enough to resolve the sometimes conflicting needs and desires of our 500-plus families, our staff, and our volunteers. One important way we do this is through active involvement in synagogue life—attending services, serving on committees, and being open to talk with other members about Temple issues—how else are we to know our constituents’ needs and wishes?

If you know of a Temple member who would make a great fiduciary, let Linda Kay (linbob1117@comcast.net) or me (Droberts65@cox.net) know. There are a limited number of positions open, however, we will carefully consider your suggestions.

Shalom.

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 Cantor Mekler

Just a few more days left to sign up for the Sinai Temple Women’s Weekend. I’m sure you’ve seen the flyers, press releases and announcements about April 3rd, 5th and 6th. You’ll find the information on page 3 of this bulletin. Our Wonderful Women’s Weekend committee is planning a memorable time for you and we want to be sure you will be a part of this first-time-ever experience at Sinai Temple. You have only a few more days until March 10th to sign up, so put this article down, for just a minute, and go reserve a spot for yourself and your friends, mother, mother-in-law, daughter/s, granddaughters/s.

Next, a reminder about Friday evening MAY 9th for our celebration of Israel’s 60th anniversary. ONLY 8 WEEKS OF REHEARSALS beginning in March. Let me know what instrument you play and for how long, and/or what voice part you sing.

“Use what talents you possess. The woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best.” ~Henry Van Dyke

LET’S CELEBRATE AND EXPERIENCE TOGETHER AN ENERGIZING SPRING!!!

COME ON ALONG!!

The Sinai Temple Bulletin is published monthly by Sinai Temple, Springfield, Massachusetts. This is Issue Number 7 for the year 2007-2008.

Mark Dov Shapiro Rabbi
Emily Sleeper Mekler Cantor, Music Director
Sheila Shear Director of Education
Stacey Osowski Community Coordinator
Andy Chaet SPFTY Advisor

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Visit our website: www.sinai-temple.org



Sinai Temple Women's Weekend

April 3 – 6, 2008

Please join us for all (or part of) this very special, multi-generational weekend for women from Bat Mitzvah age and up. Female guests of Sinai women are welcome. Space is limited so respond early.

WOMEN'S SEDER Thursday, April 3, 6:30 p.m.

We're preparing a special women's Haggadah just for this occasion. This is a wonderful opportunity for all women of Sinai to join together in celebration. Potluck sign ups will include options for those who don't want to cook as well as opportunities for those who love to cook to strut their stuff!
(Suggested assignments to follow) **price: \$10.00 per person**

SPECIAL SHABBAT MORNING WITH DR. JUDITH PLASKOW: Saturday, April 5

Dr. Plaskow is a Manhattan College Professor of Religious Studies. She has lectured widely on feminist theology and is the co-founder of *The Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* and the Past President of the American Academy of Religion. Dr. Plaskow will present the new Women's Torah Commentary, recently published by the Union for Reform Judaism, for review.

9:00 to 10:00 a.m. – Torah Study open to men and women

10:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. – For Women Only

Light refreshments will be served at the women's session. This event has been generously underwritten by Leah and Gerald Gottlieb.

FIELD TRIP TO MAYYIM HAYYIM, NEWTON MA Sunday, April 6, 12:00 p.m.

Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters Community Mikveh and Education Center opened its doors on May 14, 2004 as a unique center for Jewish spirituality and learning. Mayyim Hayyim reclaims the ancient tradition of mikveh and reinvents the rituals of immersion to serve the needs of a diverse 21st century Jewish community. We'll tour this beautiful facility for an enriching afternoon of discovery and learning. We leave Sinai at 12:00 p.m. and return around 5:30 p.m.

price: \$10.00 per person (includes transportation)

This event has been generously underwritten by Robyn Newhouse.

Please RSVP by March 10.

Make checks payable to Sinai Temple and mail to:
Women's Weekend c/o Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108

Name: _____ Phone number _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

___ Women's Seder: No. in party ___ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

___ Special Shabbat Morning: (10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.) (NO CHARGE)

___ Field Trip to Mayyim Hayyim: No. in party ___ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

___ I want to come but I can't drive to Temple and need a ride.

Sinai Temple FUN RAISER 2008

This is your chance to attend spectacular events (choose one or more) and get to know other congregants, while raising funds for the programs we value at Sinai Temple

Excellent Food...Fine Wines...Family Fun...Learn New Things...Lots of Laughs!

Bon Bons and Bon Mots

Come to a ladies' tea in the Forest Park Historic district in Springfield. Bring a copy (or name and author) of a favorite book and enjoy tasty morsels of confection and conversation.

- Hostess: Ann Jacobs
 - Sunday, March 9, 3-5pm
 - 35 Spruceland Avenue, Springfield
 - \$18 per person
-

Chamber Magic Show

Enjoy an evening of adult comedy and magic in an intimate setting with Sinai Congregant, Michael Wald. Wald's show is comparable to the show running at the Waldorf Astoria in NYC. You will be 3 feet away as the magic unfolds!

- Hosts: Michael and Gloria Wald
 - Saturday, March 15 @ 7:30pm
 - 17 Rural Lane, East Longmeadow
 - \$36 per person
-

Not Your Typical Wine Tasting!

Learn from Sinai's past president, Jim Aronson, what is considered a fine wine and explore in depth the wine region. Red wines will be highlighted. Enjoy a selection of cheese and crackers that will complement the wine.

- Hosts: Jim and Barbara Sadowsky
 - Saturday, April 12 @ 7:30pm
 - 7 Pendleton Lane, Longmeadow
 - \$50 per person
-

Family Magic

Have a magical afternoon with your family. Children in kindergarten through 2nd grade are invited to share an interactive magic show with magician Joe Bongio. Drinks and snacks for everyone.

- Hostess: Stacey Osowski
 - Sunday, April 13, 3-4:30pm
 - 17 Wintergreen Lane, Westfield
 - \$18 per family
-

Cello and Piano with Boris Kogan and Sofya Shainskaya

An intimate evening with Boris Kogan on cello and his wife, Sofya Shainskaya on piano. Boris and Sofya will perform and discuss the intricacies of their music as well as their own art. (Boris is the cellist who plays Kol Nidre at Sinai)

Followed by coffee, dessert and schmoozing!

- Hosts: Gerald and Leah Gottlieb
 - Sunday, May 31 at 7:30pm
 - 80 Eunice Drive, Longmeadow
 - \$50 per person
-

Thanks to our hosts who have donated the cost of each event so that your contribution goes directly to the Temple.

Special thanks to Robyn Newhouse, Sinai Congregant, for helping underwrite this new program.

Reservations are required.

To make reservations, please call the Temple office 736-3619.

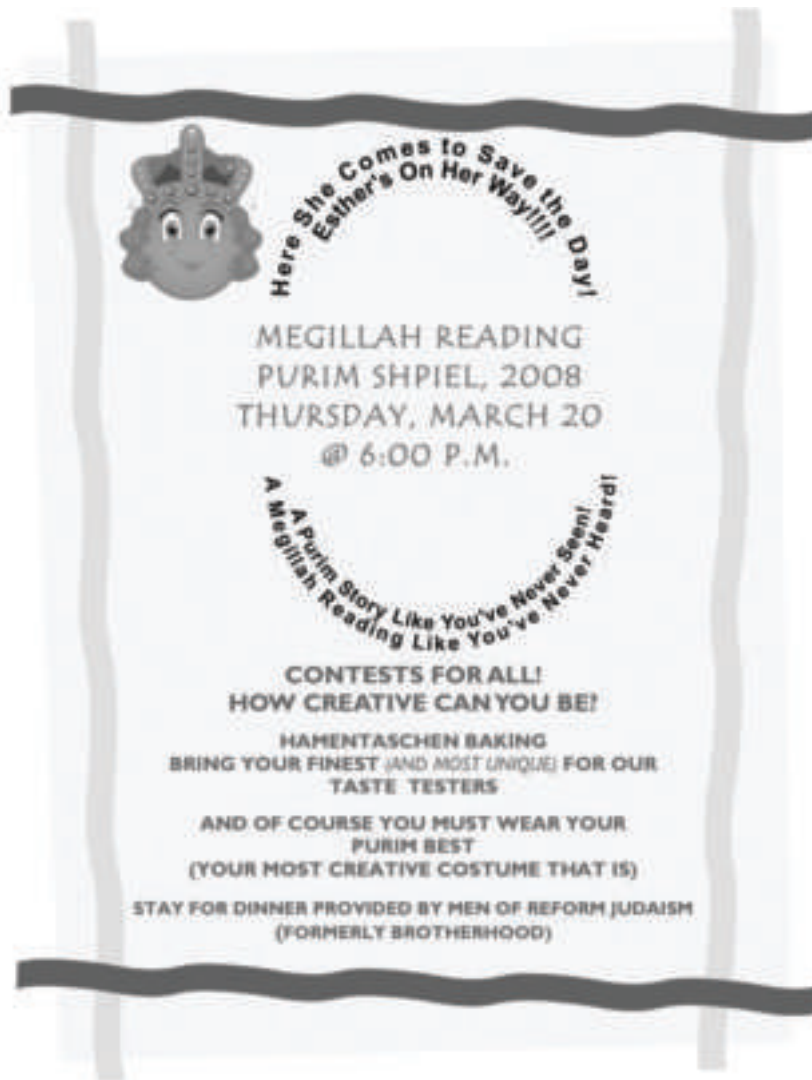
You can mail your check to Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108. Your check confirms your reservation. Space is limited. Don't delay!

Questions call:

Diane Friedberg 567-7653

Bonnie Engelman 565-9992

Linda Berger 1-860-698-6159



Purim 2008

There will be no greggers
at this year's Purim Service!
No noisemakers
at the Megillah Reading
unless you bring them!!!!

Help stamp out Haman's name
And help stamp out hunger at the same time!

Bring a box of Macaroni and Cheese
To the Megillah Reading.

We will shake the noodles as our noisemakers.
Then, we'll donate the food
To the Open Pantry.

No greggers
Unless you bring
Your box (boxes!!!) of
Mac and Cheese.

A Hamantashen Baking Contest Really!!!

A Contest for Baking Hamantaschen Part of the Megillah Reading

*Can you bake? Can you not bake?
Looking for something fun to do with your
kids?*

This is your opportunity. Hamantashen of any
size, shape, or flavor are welcome in this contest
for the best and most creative hamantashen
ever created. Don't be shy. Our jurors are kind.
Bring your creation to the Megillah Reading.

Don't forget...
Every child (and adult too)
Should come to the Megillah Reading in a costume.

DRESS UP. CELEBRATE. BE SILLY.

**PASSOVER 2008
PASSOVER BEGINS SATURDAY
EVENING, APRIL 19
PASSOVER ENDS AT SUNDOWN,
SATURDAY, APRIL 26.**

COME PRAY...COME FILL

THE SANCTUARY PASSOVER MORNING

Sunday, April 20 at 10:30 a.m.
(Luncheon to follow.)

This grand service will include special holiday music and an extra opportunity to explore the appeal of our great spring festival.

YIZKOR AND CONCLUDING SERVICE

Saturday, April 26 at 10:30 a.m.

We dedicate new plaques on our yearzeit board and bid farewell to Passover.

A luncheon follows the service.

**Hosting a Seder....
Being a Guest at a Seder...**

If you like lots of people around your Passover table, but your kids have moved away....

OR

If you are new to the area OR your relatives don't live close by

OR

If you are looking for a warm, comfortable, welcoming table to share a Passover experience on Saturday night, April 19....

You should join Seder Match and experience Sinai's caring community!!! Let us know if you are able to be a host or prefer to be a guest. Send your name to Temple or call Stacey Osowski, Community Co-ordinator at the Temple 736-3619, extension 13.

Announcing the Passover Menu Corner

For those times when you can't face another piece of MATZA!

If you're hungry or desperate or curious, Sinai's Ritual Committee has developed a resource for YOU. It's called the PASSOVER MENU CORNER and it will include a variety of easy recipes for Passover meals and snacks. Visit our website to see what's available now - www.sinai-temple.org

And if you have a specific question, call Temple member, Lee Grayboff at 746-3895. Lee loves to cook and will happily be your menu advisor!

**Be Famous!!
Get Your Name in the Sinai Temple
Engagement Calendar**

You may not get your name in lights, but you can get it in print. Just get yourself listed as a "Friend of Sinai" and you'll be famous in the engagement calendar we publish every summer. While you're at it, you can also list your family's special dates...anniversaries, birthdays, yearzeits, and anything else that you want to share. One year a good "friend" listed his dog's birthday! It was June 24.

For \$18 you can be a Friend; for \$36 you are a Super Friend; and for more, you can be a Benefactor for \$50 - and I'll come sing "Hey, Big Spender" to you! Fill out a form today or call the Temple office to get your name in print.

Shalom,

Belle Rita Novak, Calendar Committee

**Two new programs at Sinai Temple
help families with young children**

**Wiggle Room – For kids who need to wiggle
during the Family Service.**

Starting on March 7, Sinai will be offering parents the chance to accompany their little ones to the Wiggle Room during Family Services (every 1st Friday of the month at 7 p.m.). This space (in the Kindergarten classroom) will be available to bring your child should you find it necessary to take them out of the sanctuary for part of the service. Age appropriate toys will be available.

Free Babysitting - for families with young children during the Kabbalat Shabbat Service (every 2nd Friday of the month at 6 p.m.).

As of March 14th Sinai Temple will be offering babysitting at the Kabbalat Shabbat Service. Come to temple as a family and mingle with other congregants over snacks at 5:30 PM. Then enjoy Kabbalat Shabbat Services while your young children (toddler - 7 years), are cared for by members of Sinai's own teen youth program SPFTY, down the hall in the Kindergarten Room. Teens will also be performing a valuable service to these youngest congregants.

Contact Sinai members Jackie Neiman at mjam4@comcast.net or Joe Dow at jhdow@comcast.net if you have any questions.



The Snow and Giroux families are pictured here enjoying the New Members' Brunch hosted in January by the Shalom Committee.

Message from SPFTY Advisor Andy Chaet

Shalom,

Well SPFTYites, March is here and we are BUSY!!

On Sunday, March 2, we will be travelling to Amherst for a Comedy Night workshop with other local Teen groups. The Late night Players from the Boston area will be conducting a workshop and share their unique brand of entertainment with us. This promises to be a lot of fun. A mailing went out to the teens late last month.

Sunday March 9 at 4:00 will be our monthly General Business meeting. All are invited to come to help us plan our activities.

On Thursday, March 20, SPFTY will participate in this year's Purim Schpiel. Yes, the teens will defend Esther's Honor in this timeless story of our rich heritage.

Sunday March 23 at 4:00 will be our monthly Pizza and Social get together in the Teen Lounge. Please join us and bring a dessert if you'd like.

As SPFTY moves forward this year, I would like to thank some people for their untiring support, assistance and humour. Rabbi Shapiro, Cantor Mekler and Sheila Shear have been so helpful to me as SPFTY gains momentum. I also thank the office staff of Robin, Karen and Connie for help and support. Donna and Angel have been wonderful in times of need. Thank you to all.

Did you know there is a Youth Advisory Committee that is a major contributor to our teen group's success? Bonnie Thomas chairs this dedicated group of parents. This group meets 3-5 times a year and is always looking for people who want to help our teens.

Please feel free to call Bonnie or myself if you are interested.

Message from Director of Education Sheila Shear

Shalom Chaverim

Things are going well in Religious School and Hebrew School. We are well into our second year using Mitkadem and I am very pleased with the success of our students. Home practice is an integral part of success for the children. Each child from grade 3 to grade 6 should have a home reading page for each of the ramot (levels) that they study which should be practiced at home. Support for these reading pages can be found at <http://urj.org:80/chai/mitkadem/ramot/audio/>. Just a word of caution, some of the chanting is not reflective of the manner in which we chant our prayers and blessings here at Sinai. The children should know the difference. If not, please feel free to call and I will alert you to which ones are the best to utilize.

On another topic, please look for an article in the April Bulletin on the Rosh Hodesh girls program. I think we have found a winner! Each group is a two year cycle. We will be starting another group in the fall of '09. If you are, or have, a fourth or fifth grade girl, you/they will be the right age, just in time for the new group. Keep watching for new information. Time flies when you are not paying attention. I hope to see you on Purim, Thursday, March 20th, at 6:00 p.m. L'Hitraot

Coffee, Schmooze & News Religious School Parents Please Visit Sunday, March 9 at 9 a.m.

Join us for a cup of Joe after dropping off your religious school students. We will be gathering on March 9th in the main lobby near the Judaic Shop. What a great opportunity for parents to meet and chat with one another. Big Y gift cards will be available for purchase while the supplies last.

Announcing A Creative Writing Contest To Celebrate Israel's 60th Anniversary For Students of Sinai Temple Grades 4 – 12

Create an essay...a story...poetry...even the lyrics to a song (You can use a melody of your choice or write your own!

Age Categories and Prizes

Grades 4 - 5

Prizes to include \$36 gift certificates to Bertucci's as well as gift certificates to Friendly's.

Grades 6 - 8

Prizes to include \$50 iTunes Gift Cards as well as gift certificates to Friendly's.

Grades 9 - 12

Prizes to include an iPod nano with 4 GB (1000 songs), \$50 iTunes Gift Cards plus plus gift certificates to Starbucks.

Due Date Thursday, March 20

Your completed writing should be in the Temple office by March 20. Purim starts that evening and, during the Megillah Reading, every participant will receive a small gift for entering the contest.

Message from Brotherhood

Reminder: Brotherhood is looking to reinvent and revitalize our program for next year. Everyone is welcome to give us their thoughts and ideas. We are guided by our new mission statement: **Brotherhood will provide a place for the men of Sinai Temple to have joint experiences as men, and, as an organization, look to be of service to the congregational community.**

Our exciting and interesting February speaker, Mr. Rob Okun, Executive Director of the Men's Resource Center for Change in Amherst, spoke on the topic: **Beit Shalom: Peace in the Home: What Can Men Do? Scott will be writing up his notes from this excellent session. Email him if you want a copy.**

March is our **Annual Snyder Award Dinner** and Presentation. We are very happy to announce that the honoree unanimously selected from those nominated is **Daniel Schaffer**. Please join us on Friday, March 28, 2008. We will be serving dinner at 6:30PM with the Erev Shabbat Service and presentation following at 8PM. Please make your reservation for dinner! RSVP to secretary@sinaibrotherhood.org or call the temple office: (413) 736-3619 The charge is only \$5.00 for Brotherhood members and \$10.00 for everyone else. Reservations deadline is March 24th.

Scott M. Sherman, Sinai Brotherhood President
president@sinaibrotherhood.org

www.sinai-temple.org

Stamp Out Hunger in Our Community by Joe Hershon

45% of the children of our neighbors in Springfield live below the poverty level. Thousands of children go to school without breakfast, and parents often have to choose between paying the rent and feeding their families. This suffering calls for us to take action.

The food bank and other organizations help. Our Temple gathers food donations during the High Holidays. Still the problem of hunger persists on a daily basis here in our backyard. What else can we do?

1. We need to be able to provide food donations on a regular basis.
2. We need to raise consciousness about this local problem among our congregants.

RACHEL'S TABLE, THE JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL AND THE PIONEER VALLEY PROJECT ARE ORGANIZING TO "STAMP OUT HUNGER IN OUR COMMUNITY" AS AN ONGOING CAMPAIGN. WE NEED YOUR HELP.

The next time you plan a social gathering (i.e. dinner party, book club) ask your guests to bring nonperishable food items to be donated to Rachel's Table. During your gathering take a few minutes to discuss the issues (a pamphlet is available to hand out as well) and when it's over call Rachel's Table to pick up your donations.

Since Purim involves the mitzvah of matnot evyonim (giving to the needy), March is the perfect time to start this process. If everyone makes this a part of every get together, we can provide food for our community on a regular basis (vs. one or two events per year) and raise awareness among our neighbors and friends.

PLEASE CONTACT US TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP THIS CAMPAIGN.

For more information or pamphlets please call SINAI TEMPLE MEMBERS Joe Hershon at 330-8404, David Morse at 567-6632 or Laraine Shore-Suslowitz at 567-0171, or Fred Rose at the Pioneer Valley Project at 827-0781.

Let's stamp out hunger in our community.

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 since January 8, 2008 and up until February 5, 2008:

Sylvia Nuger, wife of Robert Nuger.

Joseph Bussin, brother of Stewart Bussin.

Alan Spitzer, husband of Judith Spitzer.

Evelyn Drucker, mother of Barry Drucker.

Alan Torff, father of Mitchell Torff.

Ethel Nathan, sister of Evelyn Rome.

Wilhelmina Wolf, mother of Ed Epstein.

Beatrice Berg, mother of Eric and Gerry Berg.

Sydney Chernick, brother of Ida Waldman.

Aaron Harry Karas, father of Barry Karas.

Sinai Temple

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<http://www.sinai-temple.org>

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This year's Confirmation Class recently spent a wonderful weekend exploring the history of the Civil Rights movement and Jewish connections. The class is pictured here at the Rosa Parks Museum in Montgomery, Alabama.