



May 24

2011

Sinai Temple Annual Report

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President Tony Novak

I would like to highlight several key issues which have been the focus of your Board of Trustees.

1) Retirement Agreement with Rabbi Klein:

As I wrote you in October last year, the Board of Trustees and Rabbi Klein approved the Rabbi's final contract of employment and retirement agreement. Rabbi Klein and I, on behalf of the Board, signed the formal document in November. Rabbi Klein will continue as our Rabbi until his retirement on July 31, 2013. He will receive a reduced salary over the next two years followed by a retirement supplement over the following five years. The total cost to the Temple for the seven year package is the equivalent of 2 ½ years at the Rabbi's current compensation level.

I want to thank Rabbi Klein for his service to Sinai Temple and his help in making this agreement a reality. He is the longest serving rabbi in the history of Sinai Temple. I am confident he will continue to lead us in the best possible way and help us make the best transition to his successor. I hope that Rabbi Klein (and Andrea!) will continue to be a part of the Sinai community after retirement.

2) Membership Dues:

We will be presenting the 2012 Budget for your approval at the annual meeting. When you vote on the budget you will also be voting on our new approach to membership dues. Under this process, each member will be asked to make a voluntary dues pledge at the beginning of the fiscal year..

The decision to move from a flat fee dues structure to a voluntary fair share pledge system was not made lightly.

The dues committee has worked on this plan for over one year. We conducted a member survey in the beginning of this year and also solicited input from members at small group meetings at Temple and at member's homes. Assuming the budget and dues are approved, you will again receive an explanatory letter and a pledge card no later than the beginning of July.

We ask members to set their pledge based on the guidelines of 1.5 % of household adjusted gross income. To put it another way, we need about \$500,000 annual income to fund the Temple and religious school. This amounts to an average of \$1,800 per household. We understand that some members can't afford that level, but we hope and believe that others will be generous enough to make up the difference.

Ultimately we thrive because of the good will of our members who volunteer their time, effort, and money to support our temple. We hope and believe that this voluntary fair share pledge system will encourage all of us to be as righteous and generous as possible in supporting Sinai; the center of Jewish life in our community.

3) Temple Administration:

We have strived to make the attached budget document as clear and complete as possible. This format was developed last year by our Temple Administrator, Kate Meghji. Having a professional administrator has helped us to continue to improve the way we raise, account for and spend your funds. As a result, your Board has a much clearer picture of our actual membership numbers, our income and our expenses. This information allows us to make better decisions regarding all the aspects of Temple life, including the other subjects I have touched on; fairer and more effective membership dues, cost effective programming to name a couple.

4) Music:

We have begun a process of reassessing and coordinating our music programming. It is a work in progress. We are working toward an annual calendar and budget which supports and encourages a wide variety of volunteer and professional music programming. Martha Alwes will continue to direct music at the High Holidays and most Friday night services. We have substantially reduced our High Holiday cost by switching from our cantorial soloist to a professional quintet of singers. We have budgeted for an increased number of Friday night services and other programs led by the Sinai Family Folksingers (Kate Kuper), Shabbat Singers (Allison Fromm) and a revival of the classical reform quartet led by our music director.

5) Union for Reform Judaism Dues:

As I reported to you last year, we have been in the process of attempting to negotiate reduced dues with URJ for several years. Unfortunately, I don't have any progress to report. I must leave this to my successor, Paul Weichsel. Paul has already made URJ dues a priority and has contacted our URJ representative.

We are assessed about \$42,000 per year for dues. I along with your current Board believe it would be unwise to pay this amount. We believe that a fairer figure would be \$21,000. We have budgeted that amount and hold sufficient funds to cover these reduced dues in the hope we can persuade URJ to accept this lower figure.

We continue to be affiliated with URJ during this process and this affiliation is specified in our by-laws.

This annual meeting marks the end of my two years as your president and the beginning of what promises to be a productive term under president elect Paul Weichsel.

I am having a hard time realizing that this report is one of my last acts as Temple President. Believe it or not, I have ended up being really glad to have taken on this responsibility. We have a vibrant Temple community. I feel good about our future. I look forward to the remaining two years under Rabbi Klein, the coming search for a new rabbi, the leadership of Paul Weichsel and soon to be elected, Vice President Randy Rosenbaum.

Very truly,

Tony Novak, President

Rabbi Norman Mark Klein, M.A.H.L., D.D.

This has been my sixteenth fulfilling year as your rabbi. The Temple Board and I have completed negotiations on my retirement in two years, at the end of July, 2013. It has begun to be a good time for me to begin to look at our community from the perspective of what will be by the time of my retiring “chai” (18) years as this congregation’s longest serving rabbi, and to see it anew after years of experience. However, there are two more significant years ahead for myself as religious leader of this congregation, when many changes will take place, and I hope to be able to advise the newly-to-be confirmed Temple Board from the perspective of my years of service to Sinai Temple, years of stability and transformation.

As usual my rabbinic functions have included the full range of officiation at life cycle events of our congregation from birth to death—brit milah ceremonies, namings, b’nai mitzvah, Confirmation, marriages, funerals, unveilings. One of my great satisfactions as your rabbi has been to be a part of your lives for the full range of lifecycle events. For as long as the parents of the children in religious school have been members of Sinai Temple, I have been their rabbi, and for some I have had or shortly will have the honor to officiate at their marriage as well. It is especially moving for me to realize that a significant number of active members of our congregation have chosen Judaism (converted) under my auspices. Some now lead services when I am away on vacation, and many frequently attend religious services and adult education programs that I conduct. The Jewish mandate to study Torah in the largest sense of that term (all of Jewish knowledge) has been absorbed by these, my former students, who are now our knowledgeable fellow congregants.

One of the highlights of the year 5771 was our Steinberg Scholar-In- Residence Dr. Wayne Pitard, who opened an intellectual window for us into the Canaanite pre-history of our people, by teaching us (Oct.14-17, 2010) both about the archeology and the literature of Ugarit, an ancient city and repository of cuneiform writings dating from before the ancient records of Israel. This successful weekend was chaired by Mitch Harris and supported by Esther Steinberg and Allen and Elaine Avner. Mitch Harris is also the de facto “email notifier” for our popular Shabbat morning Torah Study group which has been meeting each week, rain or shine, for the entire time of my tenure here, since 1995. Recently we completed a study of the middle section of the Tanach, Nevi’im, studying the prophetic books. Currently we are beginning a study of Ketuvim, the last third of the Tanach, focusing first on Proverbs. As in all of our adult education venues, new participants are always welcome.

With the successful end of Religious School, professionally led by Stephanie Pregent, our Temple Educator, and guided by the Religious School committee, of which I am a part, ably chaired by Natalie Frankenberg, our Sunday morning Adult Ed. Classes, both the Introduction to Judaism and the Special Topics, as well as our Monday luncheon Downtown Judaism classes, have concluded for year. At Downtown Judaism we meet for lunch and learning in a meeting room at Jim Gould’s restaurant, now under new ownership. We have completed a number of discussions built around books published in the Schocken Nextbooks series of important Jewish personalities and issues. I encourage others to join our stimulating talks. The books for these discussions are available for purchase at the Temple Gift Shop, whose many volunteers and whose chairpersons, Natalie Frankenberg and Pam Olson, are happy to help and serve a vital need for our members and the community. Profits from all purchases at the Gift Shop provide needed funds for the Temple Religious School

Attendance at my adult education classes has been excellent. Five of our many students in the Introduction to Judaism chose to convert this year, many have joined or will join the Temple, and all will pick up and continue their studies where we left off with the new students we attract next Fall after Simchat Torah and our subsequent Jewish Journey to Spain and Morocco (Note: this trip, which was postponed from the Spring, will shortly be posted on our email blasts and in future newsletters; keep your eye out for further announcements). Having completed our study of Hillel, our next Special Topic will be the Cairo Geniza, a treasure trove of historical Jewish documents that have been poured over by scholars during the last century.

During the annual meeting we will honor two members as the Rosenfield Award recipients for volunteer service to the Temple. These people are emblematic of the importance of volunteers in our community. Every person in the congregation, no matter the nature of his or her participation, provides something that is needed for the life of the whole kehillah. Volunteers, the lifeblood of our congregation, continue to energize the system. While, to minimize redundancy with other annual reports in your hands, and because Kate has asked that each of us keep our reports short, I will not mention by name most of the many volunteers who participate so graciously in helping with the various and sundry programs of Sinai Temple, yet occasionally I will make an exception to point out a successful program. In this particular instance our Rosenfield award recipients this year will be the chairpersons of our Shabbat Rocks Erev Shabbat Service for the younger families in our congregation, Jessica Kopolow and Laura Bleill. They have continued to organize a sizeable group of families to come once a month for an early Shabbat worship experience geared toward the very young. It is not unusual to have the sanctuary rocking with dancing children to Larry Adelston's guitar playing, and Jessica's singing, gathering around Jessica to light the Shabbat candles, or interacting with me when I lead the service or tell them a story. I think the participants, both parents and young children, have found a home in this service, coordinated by our Educator Stephanie Pregent.

At our regular services Art Robinson continues to serve as our Shammes, ably assisted on occasion by Rob Ore, and occasionally by Art Siegel, who in addition has allowed himself to be on call for many issues that affect the Temple building itself. I am most thankful and applaud all the efforts of all of our volunteers, heads of committees and Temple Board members who give of their time for the good of the entire community.

Tony Novak is completing his second and final year as president of our congregation, and he has continued to direct the efforts of the Board to focus largely on the fiscal health of our congregation. Tony and I communicate frequently regarding Temple issues and activities. Tony Novak has joined with immediate Past President Tony Soskin in his continued efforts to popularize our Temple Second Night Pesach Seder, led by me, with musical accompaniment by Martha Alwes, our Music Director, and Tanya Coombs, arranged by Eva Rosenfield and assisted by Karen Ray. The cost is partially subsidized by the Temple. The end result for the fourth year in a row was a significantly large group of attendees. All who came enjoyed the observance, the music, the camaraderie, and of course, the food, which was catered by Classic Events.

Tony has successfully led a Board with a diversity of opinions, consisting of Vice President and President Elect Paul Weichsel, Treasurer Bob Smith (who will continue in this position), Secretary Karen Ray, Financial Secretary Garth Gersten (who is to be replaced by Jenny France, Past President Tony Soskin (who will be replaced by Tony Novak), and Trustees

Melanie Dankowicz, Virginia France, Rudi Laufhutte, Adena Wilson, Elissa Libman, Arthur Siegel, Diane Ore, Rae Spooner and Kathryn Weisbaum, allowing various segments of the Temple to be heard. Elissa Libman as fundraising chair, organized various remarkably successful events and programs. What is obvious to all who watch our Temple finances is that these fund raisers are vital for the fiscal well-being of the Temple, and all who participate in them find them socially enjoyable as well. Several other Board members as well serve as chairpersons and/or members of various important committees.

When Paul Weichsel accedes to the presidency, Randy Rosenbaum will be Vice President, and serving on the board again as trustees or replacing those whose term of office have expired, will be Ariel Avgar, Garth Gersten and Rae Spooner. I attend all Board Meetings and am by contract a non-voting member of the Temple Board.

I focus my attention on the spiritual, communal and educational needs of our membership, which includes the welcoming of new and potential members. On a regular basis I field calls and emails, as does our Educator Stephanie Pregent, from people enquiring about the Jewish community, our Temple and its religious school, who have plans to move to Champaign or Urbana, or who have already become resident and decided, finally, to check us out. In the continued absence of a Membership Committee or a Membership Chairperson I have organized a successful and well-attended New Member Service this year. Andrea and I have continued to enjoy getting to know our newest members as we hosted them for Shabbat dinner before the service.

Of course a great deal of my attention goes into the organizing of High Holy Day, Festival, Holocaust Memorial Day, Shabbat and lifecycle (brit milah and naming, marriage, funeral) services and other observances, teaching adults and the Confirmation Class and serving as a resource for our religious school teachers and children, consulting with B'nai Mitzvah families, attendance at Education Committee meetings and co-oversight with them of the Educator and the religious school programming, visiting the sick, comforting the bereaved, communicating with the membership and representing them in the community. Our opportunities for religious observance on Shabbat continues to be broad with Erev Shabbat services, Shabbat Rocks (formerly, Toddler Shabbat) and Family Shabbat Dinners, our SNL services on Shabbat morning for those who would like to learn more about the structure of the service, and when a Bar or Bat Mizvah occurs Saturday mornings B'nai Mitzvah services in the Reform pattern or as part of the Egalitarian Traditional Minyan, and the English Language Service, organized by Peter and Judy Braunfeld and occasionally led by myself (I do the Torah service, read Torah, and do the drash), though Peter always leads the first part and often gives a talk or sermon as well, and Judy leads the singing, accompanied on the piano by our member Warner Ferratier. This latter service has a modest but devoted constituency, who enjoy having services that are mostly in their native language.

Martha Alwes, our music director, accompanies Friday night, festival and High Holy Day services in the main sanctuary (during the latter we were led in song again this past year by a professional choir and our cantoral soloist Jerold Siena). On other Friday night and festival services we have music by the Martha Alwes and Tania Coombs, or the Shabbat Singers led by Allison Fromm, or the Folk Shabbat Singers consisting of Andrea Klein, Kate Kuper and Larry Adelston with guest appearances by Michael Greenstone and Rocky Maffit. The Music Committee chaired by Linda Wiener and Cecile Lebson has been instrumental in these additions to our synagogue music makers. The Music Committee also coordinated,

with a committee including myself, the Simchat Torah observances, where Little Oy on the Prairie again joined us. It was an elaboration and refinement of last year's observance, and went even better than before. Added to the list of achievements by the Music Committee were a memorial Friday night service tribute to songwriter Debbie Friedman and a Growth and Renewal (aka "Aging Hippie") Friday Night service.

Continuing to supplement our music at services and special programs, such as at Sukkot, Chanukah and Pesach, are the Shabbat Singers, led by member Allison Fromm. The Committee has been chaired by Robin Goettel for the past four years. It is especially gratifying to see so many congregants involved in the music of Shabbat Singers, which helps to encourage the entire congregation to participate in occasions of Jewish worship.

For lack this year of a volunteer coordinator from the Temple I have organized as well as led the Jewish holiday programming for elderly Jewish residents of Clark- Lindsey and Windsor of Savoy. For instance we have had High Holy Day, Chanukah and Purim celebrations, and special Passover Seders at each residence. I would like to thank Esther Steinberg who has been my contact person at Clark-Lindsey, for these events, which have been as a result well-attended.

Our library committee, consisting of Melanie Dankowicz, Adena Wilson and Bernice Lieberman has consulted me on various issues that have come up, including the acquisition of books and materials.

There are two often unsung committees that are central to who we are: one is the Database Committee, consisting of Alex Scheeline, chair, and Allen Avner, Database Design; the other is the recently revitalized Social Action Committee, refounded and chaired by Blanche Sudman. Simply put the Database Committee is the most accurate reflection of who we are and how we can communicate with one another; the Social Action Committee is what we stand for and where we put our efforts for Tikkun Olam, to make this world, and our community a better place. Hopefully the efforts of those involved in these vital committees will be aided and encouraged by the rest of our community.

Seven students (plus one who will be absent for an unavoidable family event) will be Confirmed at the end of their tenth year of religious school on Erev Shavuot, Tues. May 7, at 7 PM. We hope many Temple members will attend that service to celebrate with these fine young people and their families on their Confirmation. Terri Gitler has helped coordinate the Confirmation Parents committee, and Garth Gersten has co-taught the Confirmation Class with me. On our Confirmation trip we went to Jewish Chicago, which included a visit to three congregations of three different movements during Shabbat, a mikveh (ritual bath), a visit to the Holocaust Museum in Chicago, and visit to a sofer (ritual scribe). Stephanie Pregent arranged the trip schedule at my direction. One of the special aspects of this latest trip was a luncheon with a young couple who are members of the Chassidic congregation B'nai Reuven, during which we discussed some of the differences between liberal and orthodox (Hasidic) Judaism in a frank but cordial manner. Next year our Confirmation Class teaching staff will be joined by Sara T. Harkins, who has volunteered to join myself and Garth this next year because of her closeness with the class whom she taught as their B'nai Mitavah instructor.

One of our members who has long wanted to take a similar adult oriented trip, Tony Soskin, instead joined us on this Confirmation trip and helped drive the students. If other adults as well in our congregation are interested in this or any other Jewishly-oriented congregational journey, please contact me with your ideas. We are currently in the planning

stages of a trip next Fall to Jewish Spain and Morocco, and a Turkish students organization has offered to sponsor a partially gratis eleven day Jewish oriented trip to Turkey for our members next Spring, to which we might add an extension to Israel. Keep abreast of the notices as they appear on email and in the bulletin about these trips.

Our Administrator Kate Meghji has now been with us over two years. She should be congratulated for her work in our Temple office, assisting the Temple Board, and for having received her MBA from the University of Illinois, and her marriage and now, for her forthcoming child. Congratulations Kate, on a job well done. Her assistant continues to be our fellow congregant Eva Rosenfield, and she is assisted as well by Susan Sheahan, an excellently capable office worker who also assists our Educator Stephanie Pregent. Each has helped to create an active, engaged and socially warm and welcoming Temple office.

I am happy to report that we have a viable senior youth group, CUTY, who will have a new advisor in the coming year, one of our members, Vicki Jones Christy, who also taught the Aleph Hebrew Class, and kudos to Stephanie Pregent, for keeping the youth group progressing and growing. In our religious school, once again, I am glad to see the increased number of member teachers in the religious school, in order to establish both a longer term and a closer relationship between our teachers, the religious school, and the general Temple membership, and to provide for a more mature teaching staff on average. Stephanie will continue to expand and modify the curriculum to keep it both up to date and as helpful as possible to incoming teachers and parents who would like to know in depth what they their children are learning.

Eva Rosenfield chaired the Rosh Hashanah Reception and the Yom Kippur Break-the Fast earlier in the year, allowing congregants some social schmoozing and snack time at Temple after the High Holy Day services.

One of the highlight of the ritual year was our extraordinary Yom HaShoah observance, during which we listened to a performance by several local musicians coordinated by Tamra Gingold of pieces written by musician/composers who were victims of the Holocaust. The program was organized and led by me assisted by the Committee Chair Brian Kahn, and committee members Jewel Kurland and Terri Gitler, who also chaired the reception. The service was attended by approximately two hundred people who found the service moving and decorous. Before and after the instrumental music there was a service that included the lighting of memorial candles by seven Holocaust survivors and their descendants, the introduction of the music by myself and Brian Kahn, the recitation of the El Malei Rachamim by Dick Kaplan, the recitation of the Kaddish by Rabbi Isaac Neuman, and additional instrumental accompaniment by Martha Alwes, our Music Director, on piano, and our regular Choir Soloist, Tania Coombs.

Special mention needs to be made of the continued work on the spectacularly beautiful Torah covers designed, embroidered and assembled by Rosalind Weinberg under the direction of the Arts and Acquisitions Committee chaired so ably by Aaron Averbuch. Rosalind will hopefully complete her work this year with two sets of Torah coves, one for the High Holy Day as well as regular Torah covers for the rest of the year with her specially designed art work that is coordinated with the Ark Door designs which she also designed. The Chair of our Arts and Acquisitions Committee, Aaron Averbuch, is also in charge of our sound system, and has installed a much needed improvement in the recording equipment in the sanctuary.

I am active in two other rabbinic associations besides the CCAR (the Central Conference of American Rabbis) and MWARR (the Midwest Association of Reform Rabbis), the Chicago Association of Reform Rabbis (CARR), and the Chicago Board of Rabbis, the latter of which includes rabbis of all movements within Judaism, and I belong to the Rabbinic Cabinet of the United Jewish Communities (UJC). I continue to keep in close touch with clerical colleagues of other faiths in our community through the Religious Workers Association of the University of Illinois (of which I am a past president), and am a participating member of Provena (Covenant) Hospital's Ethics Committee.

This year's crop of Confirmands as well as the current B'nai Mitzvah class, as I mentioned earlier, have all been born and/or grown up at Sinai Temple while I have been your rabbi. I take immense satisfaction in sharing and helping to shape the Jewish lives of our young people, as well as those who have chosen Judaism, and anyone else in our congregation who consults with me or comes under my tutelage. As we celebrate throughout the year our holiday calendar, as we continue to emphasize the regularity and importance of Shabbat observance, as we renew our efforts each year to craft High Holy Day Services that are profoundly beautiful and meaningful and yet moderate in length and more participatory in practice, we shall also join in communal simchas-- one another's births, B'nai Mitzvot, Confirmation, and weddings, and mourn with one another over our losses, and visit with one another when we are ill, and urge each other on towards greater spiritual growth and communal solidarity. May we continue to study and incorporate Jewish learning into the fabric of our lives, so that our Temple community continues to grow and prosper.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Norman Mark Klein

Stephanie Pregent, Director of Religious Education

During the 2010-2011 Religious School and Hebrew School year there were 59 families and 101 students enrolled from Hand-in-Hand (2-3 year olds) through Confirmation (10th Grade). During the spring, we added three new families with the loss of one family ending the year with 61 families and 104 students. Hand-in-Hand classes followed the Religious School calendar, continuing to meet weekly. Class sizes varied from six to thirteen. Madrichim (student assistants) were utilized to promote individualized attention and engage our post b'nai mitzvah students in Jewish life. Over the summer, teachers met with the Education Director for a teacher training day. During this training, teachers were exposed to Reform Jewish thought, historical perspectives of Jewish traditions, and review of personal Jewish beliefs. The school has maintained its spiral curriculum which builds upon the lessons learned in Bible and History, Prayers and God, Holidays, and Hebrew language.

Our Religious School employed twelve classroom teachers, two music teachers, and an art teacher. Our students were divided up this year into different groups based on age, interest and personality. Some classes had students from two separate grades. For instance, our kindergarten and first grade students were combined as a whole and then divided into two balanced groups. Each group had both kindergarten and first grade students. There were many opportunities for

these two classes to interact, such as during music, holiday celebrations, or special event days. The Religious School groupings were divided as such: Hand-in-Hand (parent & child class); Primary (pre-Hebrew school age); Intermediate (Hebrew school age); Hebrew High (post-b'nai Mitzvah or 8th grade); and Confirmation (10th grade). Each group created several projects, which explored their respective curricula and reflected their learning from reading various materials, engaging in discussions, and participating in dramatic play. Many of the projects have been on display outside the Religious School office.

Holidays were celebrated throughout the year in small groups. The year began with an apple and honey tasting at Curtis Orchard. At this event, families were given an opportunity to make New Year's cards and taste a variety of local apple and honey varieties / flavors. Next, the students assisted in leading the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Family services. Our youth group students led a youth service during the main services for our Intermediate and high school students. Students and families celebrated Sukkot with a Sukkot dinner, service, and sleepover. The Religious school, worked in conjunction with the Rabbi in planning a Consecration service for our Pre-K students in our Sukkah. At the service, our Pre-K students were given their first Torah and formally welcomed into the Religious school.

The second semester began with students participating in a Tu B'Shevat seder, sampling fruits of different classifications. In February, the Rabbi led the Confirmation students on a weekend tour of Jewish Chicago. Highlights included attendance at a Reconstructionist and Orthodox service, touring a mikvah, meeting a sofer, an outing with a NFTY group, and a tour of the Holocaust museum. The Religious school held a Purim Carnival open to the greater Jewish community with food, bounce houses, costume contests, carnival games, and carnival prizes. Members not affiliated with the Religious school were asked to participate as costume contest judges, ticket sellers, game hosts, and more. This allowed interaction of our membership with the school families in a more relaxed, and social environment. The CUTY members (youth group) were also active in running several of the carnival games. Elizabeth Hess once again served as chair of the Purim carnival, organizing and running it flawlessly. Grade level groups participated in Passover model seders, tasting matzah, charoset, and maror.

Our eighth and ninth grade students as part of "Hebrew High," choose three electives during the year and participated in a year-long core class which focused on history, theology, and identity. We had several community members who taught the electives. Classes included an orchestra class (performed during the Hanukkah social), Jewish journaling (creating a newspaper), painting with (using Jewish symbols), choral class (sang with several family Shabbats), photography as a documentary tool (projects are currently on display), and Jewish cooking.

Our Hebrew School employed four teachers and five madrichim. The Alef students began with learning their Alef Bet and learning to write in cursive. Students, beginning in Bet, advanced through the prayer book curriculum, preparing to participate in the Shabbat services. During the second semester, the B'not Mitzvah class led the Hebrew school in weekly Ma'ariv services. The students worked in their Alef through Bar/Bat Mitzvah classes, along with their Religious School classes to prepare for participation in the Temple's Friday night service. The grade level Family Shabbat services were accompanied by the Sinai Family Folk Singers, made up of Larry Adelston-guitar, Andrea Klein-vocal, and Kate Kuper-vocal. The group was joined by Rocky Maffit-percussion and Michael Greenstone-vocal/guitar on occasion. Students wrote about the prayers, their Hebrew school experiences, and what they have learned which they read during the service

along with leading the service. The students in the PreK through second grade together led a Shabbat Rock's service held at 6:30 pm. This earlier service allowed younger students to learn and lead some traditional prayers such as the Barechu and Avot v'Imahot while singing other much loved songs as "The Tree of Life," "Not by Might," and new favorite, "Miriam's Song." All services were preceded with family dinners.

This year eight students will graduate from the Confirmation program on June 7, 6 Sivan. These students attended a weekend trip to Jewish Chicago, participated in the Yom HaShoah ceremony, had weekly discussions and explored their Jewish identity. Our Bat Mitzvah class had fifteen students. Ten Pre-K students participated in Consecration, a ceremony in which our youngsters commence their formal Jewish education. Three students graduated from our Hand-in-Hand parent/student program and will begin attending preschool full time this coming fall.

Other programs of the Religious School also had much success this year. Sinai Café, organized by Hagit Iztowitz along with the help of Kirstin Wilcox, utilized volunteers to staff our Sunday morning café. Food was purchased by the Religious school and sold to students at or just above cost. Religious school and Temple families were encouraged to "sponsor" a weekend café with a donation of \$36. These donations were tax deductible and could be made in honor, memory, or recognition of someone if desired. These were publicized in the monthly bulletin and weekly e-mail announcements. This year, the Religious school collected donations from the congregation to be included in the High Holiday greetings. The Religious School held its second Purim basket (M'Shloach Manot) fundraiser for the congregation with great success. 250 families received M'Shloach Manot baskets with at least one greeting. The fundraiser brought in over \$2800 this year. The baskets were assembled and delivered by volunteers from the congregation promoting both the holiday and community kindness. The Religious school sponsored one blood drive this year, meeting our goal of 10 units collected.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Pregent, Education Director

Committee Reports

Cemetery

The purpose of the Cemetery Committee is to manage the sale and use of burial rights (plots) in the Jewish Section of Mt. Hope Cemetery, to serve as interface between owners of burial rights and Mt. Hope, and to provide practical information and support in arranging funerals. We also communicate with funeral home personnel about appropriate procedures at our section of Mt. Hope cemetery. Alice Berkson and Fran Baker served as co-chairs in the past year, and committee members and advisors include Allen and Elaine Avner, Leanna Cossman, Rudi Lauffhutte, and Tauby Shimkin. Anyone desiring help or information is welcome to contact any committee member, and we certainly would welcome new members.

Allen Avner has compiled, and continues to maintain, a complete record of the cemetery spaces in the Jewish section at Mt. Hope in a database. Burials in our section are listed on the international JewishGen web site that allows for searching for individual burials, at www.jewishgen.org/databases/cemetery/. The JewishGen web site and the Illinois Ancestors web site (www.illinoisancestors.org/cemphotos/v/champaign/mt+hope/) include photos of monuments.

There is also a recently updated report on the history of the Jewish sections and burials at Mt. Hope at the Sinai Temple web site www.sinaitemplecu.org/cemeteryrprt.pdf. The western block has 26 spaces available for sale. We have just initiated use of the Block 24 South Extension, which has 88 spaces available for sale. In addition to the web sites noted above, the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Champaign County web site <http://tinyurl.com/2x8fzt> has information on local funeral and burial planning and some information on local costs.

Cemetery Committee members and members of the Chevra Kadisha, part of the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation, will work on revising the *Survivor Guidelines* booklet prepared by members of the Cemetery Committee, and the *Guide to Death and Mourning Traditions* printed by the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation. We extend a hearty thanks to all of the committee members for their thoughtful work.

Chair: Alice Berkson

Database

The Database Committee maintains a custom-made relational database used in support of activities of the Temple office, Temple officers, the Board of Trustees, and the general membership. The database currently provides secure storage of records on 653 current and past members; 763 active and 753 inactive yahrzeits; 413 memorial plaques; at least 5,612 financial transactions; 414 donor financial summaries; and burial rights status for 887 plots and records of 398 interments in the Jewish sections of Mount Hope Cemetery. The data base program allows the automated generation of:

- * mailing labels and USPS reports for regular and special Temple postal mass mailings,
- * special e-mail lists that respect member preferences for types of e-mail from the Temple,
- * individualized letters for dues notices and letters or e-mails of upcoming Yahrzeits,
- * letters to members and donors documenting tax-deductible payments to Sinai Temple,
- * the weekly and monthly Yahrzeit lists for the *Shabbat Order of Service* and *Temple Bulletin*,
- * dues reports for use of the Financial Secretary, Vice-President, and Board,
- * annual reports to the **URJ** List Maintenance Department giving the Sinai Temple official membership list and member mailing addresses for copies of the URJ magazine,
- * the annual *Membership Directory*,
- * the annual *Roll of Remembrance*, and
- * lists of "Members in Good Standing," as needed for Board actions.

The design of the database is constantly being adapted to changes in the needs and preferences of members and Temple staff. A recent example is the modification of the portion of the database that deals with memorials to meet conflicting member requests. Members can now specify that memorial notification letters sent to them use either the Traditional Reform spelling of the Yiddish (“yahrzeit”) or the approved YIVO transliteration (“yortsayt”) and may specify that they wish to follow either the Ashkenazic or the Sephardic tradition in observing an Adar yahrzeit/yortsayt during leap years.

Alex Scheeline, Chair; Allen Avner, Database Design

Fundraising

The Fundraising Committee raised more than \$15,000 for Sinai Temple this year. These much needed funds were raised by the generous support of many Temple members, and the countless hours and dedication of Committee members. In the Fall, our Cash Bash Raffle and Drawing was an afternoon event filled with friends, families, and lots and lots of dollar bills. When the holiday season rolled around, so did our traditional See's Candy fundraiser, generating many happy sweet smiles for Temple businesses and members. In the Spring, the Fundraising Committee hosted the "Something For Everyone" Auction, that had record high attendance and earnings. The evening was enjoyed by all, and the energy in the room was contagious. The Fundraising Committee would like to deeply thank all those who gave their time, support, and donations this year.

Chair: Lisa Wittenberg Libman

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop has had an excellent year and easily made our budget expectations for the Religious School thanks to everyone who shopped there during the year. It is only through the patronage from the congregation and community that we continue to earn money to support the activities of the Religious School.

Our online store has been up and running for about a year and is slowly gaining customers. Of course, we still want our customers to come into the Gift Shop, but when you can't, you can still shop with us and help support the Religious School. If you are unable to come into the Gift Shop; if you are out of town and want to send a gift to someone; if one of your relatives wants to send a gift to you, just access the Sinai Temple website and click on the Gift Shop link or go to - <http://sinaitemplecu.judaicabeautiful.com> and you will see our online store.

The annual Chanukah and Passover Showcases and our Book Fairs have taken place. In addition to B'nai Mitzvot, weddings, and new babies, these events continued to bring customers into the Gift Shop.

We maintain a Gift Registry for B'nai Mitzvot, Weddings, New Babies, etc. Our policy of contacting each upcoming Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah and their parents about three months prior to the occasion, inviting them to register in the Gift Shop, helps our customers select the perfect gift. Temple members are encouraged to patronize the Gift Shop for all gift

giving occasions (weddings, new babies, new homes, hostess gifts, etc.). In addition, customers may always purchase a Gift Certificate, and may special order merchandise at any time. Our Gift Certificates never expire.

We are especially gratified when customers comment on the variety of merchandise and the beautiful displays. Thanks to Pam Olson, Laura Bleill, Jessica Kopolow, and Joyce Francisco for their expertise in arranging the displays.

Each month there is an article from the Gift Shop in the Temple Bulletin in which we list the sale of the month, our hours of operation, and any other pertinent information. We also have our information in the weekly Temple e-bulletin. It is important to remember that when you order something over the internet or from a catalog, you are often paying a much higher price. We are usually able to get anything you see on the internet or in a catalog, and we often already have it in stock. If you find it necessary to order from the internet, we hope you will go to our online store (see second paragraph). We are always willing to special order anything you need, and we encourage everyone to shop at the Gift Shop first.

During August, Pam and Natalie attend the Gift Show in New York. An ongoing priority is finding new vendors so that we may continue to stock the Gift Shop with different merchandise as well as the usual favorites. We are constantly receiving new merchandise. In addition, all during the year, we reevaluate our current stock and put out-dated merchandise on an Inventory Clearance sale table.

Our continued successful collaboration with Barnes and Noble Bookstore allows us to rotate our selection of books more frequently and to have our Book Fairs for Chanukah, Purim and Passover. In addition to books, we sell DVD's and CD's. We are also able to special order most books, DVD's and CD's. All you have to do is call or stop by the Gift Shop to let us know what you want.

During the school year, the Gift Shop is open on Sundays from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM (during Hebrew School and Sunday School), Wednesdays from 4:00 PM-6:00 PM (during Hebrew School), and Thursdays from 10:00 AM-1:00 PM. We were open additional hours during the Chanukah and Passover Showcases, and **we are always available by appointment**. The summer is generally a slow time for us; however, since there are B'nai Mitzvot through the end of June, we will be open on Sundays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM-1:00 PM through June 30th. We will be **AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT DURING JULY AND MOST OF AUGUST**. Check the August bulletin for when we resume our regular hours of operation

The opportunity for customers to charge their purchases (amounting to \$25 or more) to Visa or MasterCard continues to be extremely successful.

We have a wonderful core of volunteers who help at our specials sales and at other busy times. Special thanks to Reva Egherman who is always available to substitute when necessary; to our newest volunteer, Joyce Francisco, who helps on Sundays; and to our special events volunteers who helped at our Chanukah and/or Passover Showcases: Carol Belber, Susan Donohue, Joan Kozoll, Susan McQuaid, Barb Nelson, Susan Schomer, and Bette van Es. (We apologize for any omissions). We are always looking for additional volunteers, especially for weekdays. If you are interested, please contact Natalie Frankenberg.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Gift Shop this year. We encourage you to think of Sinai Temple Gift Shop first before shopping elsewhere, and we look forward to continue serving the needs of our congregation and the Jewish community.

Chairpersons: Natalie Frankenberg and Pam Olson

Members: Laura Bleill and Jessica Kopolow

Library

Sinai Temple Library exists to provide resources that serve the Jewish informational needs of the Sinai Temple Community. Our intention is to maintain a collection of materials that includes a variety of Jewish periodicals, fiction and nonfiction books for children and adults, and reference materials – a body of works for all tastes and needs.

We endeavor to create a comfortable space to study, relax, or gather, where all segments of the community can feel welcome. Materials are intended to support the overarching educational goals of the synagogue, such as those supported by the Religious School, Hebrew School, and adult education programs. We strive to promote Jewish exploration.

The library committee is committed to updating our wonderful collection of books. We are purchasing books recommended by recognized Jewish review journals and award lists, and we are shopping for the best discounts available.

Our library assistant, along with the help of volunteers, continues to be involved in the processing of new books; creation of our digital catalog, which allows all Temple members online access to a listing of over half of our book collection thus far; processing of new materials; as well as general library maintenance.

We encourage use of the Sinai Temple Library, and we would appreciate recommendations for new materials to purchase. In addition, the Library Committee would like to invite new members to join the committee.

Members: Melanie Dankowicz, Bernice Lieberman, Adena Messinger Wilson

Music

The Music Committee has evolved in some new and exciting directions this year. We started off planning in May for Simchat Torah. May?! you might ask, but, yes, to orchestrate a wonderful service that appeals to all of Sinai's disparate elements takes an enormous amount of planning. Little Oy again joined us. This year the Music Committee worked closely with a few members of the Traditional Minyan to develop the service further. Pews were moved! Hakafot were bellowed! Dancing went throughout the sanctuary, the North pod, out onto the lawn where we danced under the stars!! What a night to remember! We hope to capitalize on everything that worked well to have another memorable service next year.

Moving from strength to strength, Kate Kuper and Larry Adelston brought back wonderful music, ruach, and service orchestration ideas from their summer workshop, Hava Nashira, at Osru. This year they worked more closely with the children to prepare them for their class service so that the kids not only knew the music better but were so into it!! The Sinai Family Folk Singers include Kate Kuper, Larry Adelston, and Andrea Klein with guest appearances of Michael Greenstone and Rocky Maffit. With two voices, two guitars, and drum beats, the services are really rockin' out and are enjoyed by young and old. SFFS worked with 4 classes: Aleph & Bet, Gimmel, Dalet, and the B'nei Mitzvah Graduation class. Looking at the children's faces as the songs move them into a spiritual place is truly rewarding.

SFFS helped out with the Federation Shabbat Family service and a service was also planned commemorating Debbie Friedman in which Martha Alwes, Michael Greenstone, Tanya Coombs, and Rocky Maffit performed. Both were well received.

The Music Committee worked together to plan a new service which we dubbed a Growth and Renewal Service. The SFFS included Warner Ferratier on recorder, Rabbi Klein as an additional singer, and Rocky Maffit on drums to develop a meditative, healing, and inspirational service. It was extremely well received and requests are coming in for this to be repeated next year.

Not to let any grass grow under our feet, the Music Committee also worked with Rabbi, Martha, and Paul Weichsel to fashion the following vision statement that provides us with direction for the future and expands our role somewhat in the life of the synagogue:

Music plays a central role in the life of our synagogue. Organizational and aesthetic/philosophical aspects need to be addressed. Organizationally, we have five different musical arms that work with limited coordination with one another and need to be centralized into a logical flow with one umbrella budget. The Music Committee will assume oversight and provide recommendations on the musical activities of the Temple. In its redefined state, it will serve as the coordinating committee that looks at proposals to determine a variety of different services, including the High Holidays. Philosophically and aesthetically, we will look at the range of music that both reflects the participatory, accessible and innovating nature of spirituality and meets the needs/desires of our diverse membership. We will include "regular" and "folk" services and special musical events coordinated with holidays. Such a committee will work very closely with the Rabbi, the calendar committee and the Board. The committee welcomes suggestions from the membership about musical programming."

The Music Committee consists of our chairwomen, Linda Weiner and Cecile Levenson, and members Kate Kuper, Stephanie Pregent, Warner Ferratier, Joan Kozoll, Andrea Klein, Martha Alwes and Paul Weichsel ex-officio. We are proud of our hard work, innovations, and contributions to the music and spirituality of Sinai Temple.

Chairs: Cecile Levenson & Linda Weiner

Annual Report compiled by: Andrea Klein

Naomi Siegel Social Action

The social action committee has been reactivated this past year and has accomplished several new activities. We began the year with sweeping away the Temple's fallen leaves, an "at home" Mitzvah.

In addition to that mitzvah we have begun a continuing drive for food and money for the Eastern Illinois Foodbank this year. The food bank has received from Sinai Temple members over \$1000 in cash and over 300 pounds of food. (Not from the High Holidays) With all the local poverty, including over 500 homeless children in the Champaign/Urbana school district, feeding our local poor is vitally important. This must be on a continuing basis not only at the High Holidays. Please continue to drop off food in the baskets at the Temple entrances and send checks.

We have arranged to pick up clothes for Goodwill at your home and deliver it to Goodwill. However, when the clothes are dropped off at Temple we do not know that has happened. It is a good idea to let Eleanor Finkin know if you have done this instead of picking it up at your home. Call Eleanor (355-0313) if you need pickup at home or at the Temple.

We will be promoting "The Idea Store" located at 28 E. Springfield, 2nd Fl. in Champaign. That store uses its profits for Emergency Funds for school children. All sorts of things are donated to the store and to name a few: markers, pens, maps, silk flowers, keys, wood dowels, paper clips, ribbon, games (even incomplete games) beads, buttons, string, photos, etc. and etc. The hours at the store are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 2pm-7pm and Saturday: 8:30-12:30. For more information about "The Idea Store" call 352-7878.

Committee Chair: Blanche Sudman

Committee: Eleanor Finkin, Terri Gitler, Dan Lichtblau, & Rosina Neginsky

Shabbat Singers

During this year's Shabbat Singers sessions, led by Allison Fromm, members of Sinai Temple have been learning Israeli songs & dances, new Pesach melodies, and traditional *Z'miroth* in the spirit of enhancing kavanah in congregational singing. The Shabbat Singers have continued to enjoy leading the congregation in Shabbat prayers. This year our choir was pleased to welcome those new to our congregation at the New Member Shabbat Service in January. Our singers wanted to continue the Debbie Friedman tribute so we chose her setting of "Ahavat Olam" and "Sing Unto G-d." Most recently, the Shabbat Singers represented Sinai Temple at the Jewish community celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut at Hillel, filled with wonderful ruach. We were pleased to learn new songs that are favorites within our Israeli community, sent to us by Jerusalem Cantor Evan Cohen. We'd like to thank Benny Lapid, Nati Niv and Robert Silverman for joining ten of our core members in song, as well as our accompanists, Michael Greenstone and Harry Dankowicz. We began our season in September with a dozen singers leading the congregation in lullabies in the Sukkah. Temple members enjoyed an intimate—by candlelight—musical experience featuring string playing by Tamra Gingold and Tatiana Kotova, and solos sung by Harry Dankowicz, Liz Kent, Robin Sahrer, Anat Snir, and Paul Weichsel. During Sinai Temple's celebration of Sukkot, members experienced an intimate--by candlelight--musical experience. Congregants enjoyed a scrumptious harvest dinner in the Sukkah and then joined us as we sang several melodious lullabies under the stars. It was a real joy to sing once

again at the 3rd Annual Chanukah Cabaret and have fellow congregants, both young and old, celebrate this high-energy holiday by joining us in the wonderful Chanukah melodies. Our celebration brought together 18 singers and 12 instrumentalists – among 150 members of our congregation altogether – in the enjoyment of this festive holiday. Hearing Tamra Gingold’s youth orchestra play two Chanukah songs was a special treat, and many enjoyed dancing to Maria Merkelo’s accordion playing. As always, we thank Diane Ore and her Social Events Committee for the very festive meal that accompanied the Cabaret event.

A significant highlight for the Shabbat Singers in 2011 was the Z'mirot evening during Passover. We were delighted to have over 80 people join us in the 20 Shabbat and Passover songs. Everyone brought Passover food to enjoy, and we are grateful to Phyllis Gingold and Judi Laufhutte for organizing the food and set up for this festive meal event. We also appreciate Diane Ore for her Mediterranean tilapia and Allison Fromm for her salmon as the main entrees. We had fun with new, Sephardic versions of “Adir Hu” and “Chad Gadya,” transcribed by Robin Sahner. Toddlers to octogenarians enjoyed the festive dancing led by Kate Kuper and Melanie Dankowicz.

Our CD, titled “The Joy of Shabbat: Friday Night Melodies sung by Sinai Temple's Shabbat Singers” is in production. Its completion has been delayed due to the sudden and untimely passing of our wonderful recording engineer, Jon Schoenoff. Every congregant family will receive a CD this Fall.

Robin Goettel, who has chaired the Shabbat Singers Committee for the past four years, is stepping down to become more involved in other activities, including CUJF’s Holocaust Education Committee. She has enjoyed working with her committee members and looks forward to the continued good work of this group. Although leaving the committee, Robin is pleased to continue to lend her voice to the Shabbat Singers and is most grateful to Allison for providing so many excellent opportunities to celebrate our Judaism by learning new songs in Hebrew, Yiddish, and Ladino.

It is our hope that Sinai Temple’s lay choir will continue to provide a path for people to find their way to Jewish spirituality through music and fellowship. The Shabbat Singers always welcome new members by providing a comfortable setting to develop vocal skills and build confidence in singing. Please contact Betty Weiss if you are interested in giving us a try. (Email: eweiss@illinois.edu or Phone: 217-367-0445).

As always, we would like to thank our instrumentalists who give of their time and truly enhance the musical experience— Tamra Gingold, Tatiana Kotova, Michael Greenstone, and Harry Dankowicz. We appreciate the time and effort of this year’s Shabbat Singers, whose members included: Larry Adelston, Sergio Bartov, Judy Braunfeld, Chana Bursztyn, Harry Dankowicz, Natalie Frankenberg, Darian Gingold, Tamra Gingold, Robin Goettel, Michael Greenstone, Jennifer Hodges, Hagit Itzkowitz, Charles Kahn, Richard Kaplan, Liz Kent, Andrea Klein, Tatiana Kotova, Kate Kuper, Benny Lapid, Martin Laufhutte, Emily Levin, Corina Mira, Sandra Molasky, Eva Neuman, Nati Niv, Susie Rahn, Robin Sahner, Matti Shalev, Rob Silverman, Anat Snir, Paul Weichsel, Elizabeth Weiss, and Amy Wolff.

All who love to sing are welcome!

Chair: Robin Goettel

Social Events

The Social Events Committee sponsored six events this year. We sponsored the Barn Party at Loretta Dessen's Farmlake, a Sukkot Dinner, Hanukkah Dinner, and Purim Dinner. SEC also hosted a second Israeli Folk Dancing Evening with Melanie and Harry Dankowicz and replaced the Soup Dinner with a Chili Cook-Off.

The Board no longer provides a stipend of \$300 to this committee. The donation recommendation of \$3/person or \$10/family has been enough to generate the funds to buy the groceries needed for each event. For 2009-2010, the committee broke even financially. For 2010-2011, there was a profit of \$199.58 which will be used to purchase supplies and groceries for next year's events.

The Committee needs more members and volunteers. The Music Committee has taken responsibility for the Hanukkah dinner of 2011. A small team has agreed to work on the Barn Party 2011. We have one volunteer so far for Sukkot Dinner. This leaves three events with no volunteers and four events with no leaders. I encourage all interested congregants to contact Diane Ore at dianeore@att.net.

Chair: Diane Ore