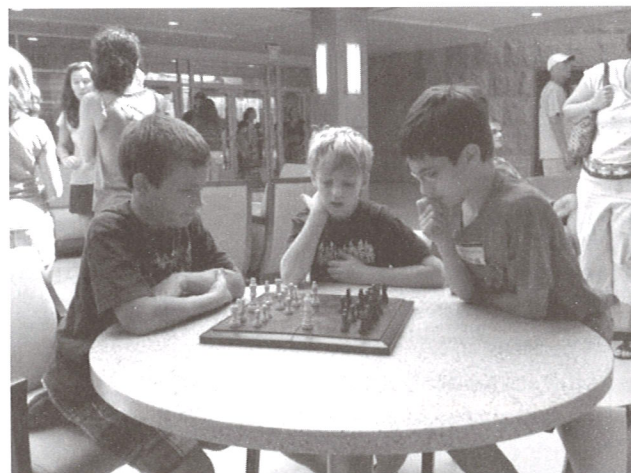


13111 Sterling Ridge Drive
Omaha, NE 68144
402-556-6536
templeisrael@templeisraelomaha.com
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SENIOR RABBI Aryeh Azriel
RABBI Josh Brown
CANTOR Wendy Shermet
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Dennis DePorte
DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING Debbie Massarano
PROGRAM DIRECTOR Wendy Goldberg
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT Nikki Flatowicz
STAFF WRITER David Golbitz
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL COORDINATOR Jen Goodman



LEFT: Micah Gilbert and Sam Gitelman playing chess after the first day of Religious School, with Max Zweiback looking on. **BOTTOM:** Temple Israel celebrated Sukkot with an outdoor BBQ and bonfire.



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**UNION FOR
REFORM JUDAISM**
האיחוד ליהדות רפורמית
SERVING REFORM CONGREGATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

Upcoming Events

Tot Shabbat
Saturday, September 28, 9-10:15 a.m.

Grade 3 Family Education Day
Sunday, September 29

Temple TED Talk
Sundays, September 29, October 27
10 - 11 a.m., Media Center

Lauter Tun Series
Sundays, September 29 & October 27
7 - 8 p.m., Lauter Tun Bar

Thursday Mornings @ Temple
Dilemmas of Faith: God and
Spirituality in the Modern World
Thursdays, October 3 - November 21

IYG Glow-in-the-Dark
Scavenger Hunt
Saturday, October 5, 7 p.m.

Meet the Teacher
Sunday, October 6

New Building Dedication
Friday, October 11, 6 p.m.

Torah Study with Rabbi Eric Yoffie
Saturday, October 12, 9 a.m.

OTYG Hayrack Ride, Bonfire,
Haunted Havdalah
Saturday, October 12, Shady Lane
Ranch, 17744 Shady Lane, Council
Bluffs, Iowa 51503

Interplay II
Tuesday, October 15, 6 p.m.

Tot Shabbat
Saturday, October 26, 9-10:15 a.m.

Grade 1 Family Education Day
Sunday, October 27

OTYG Movie Night and Lock In
Saturday, November 16 - Sunday,
November 17, Temple Israel

An Evening of Celebration and Song

All are welcome to join us for an evening of celebration and song on Friday, October 11, as Temple Israel dedicates its new home at 13111 Sterling Ridge Drive.

"It will be wonderful, a few weeks after the High Holidays, to have the members of the community help us to dedicate and celebrate what we have accomplished here," Rabbi Aryeh Azriel said. "All of the work, the hard work and the generosity that went into creating a synagogue like ours, it's something that needs to be celebrated. I hope everyone will be there, not only members of our congregation but people from the whole community."

The Shabbat service will feature special guests Maurice Finegold, of Finegold Alexander + Associates, the architect of the new Temple Israel, and Jonathan Comisar, a Hebrew Union College School of Sacred Music graduate and cantor at Community Synagogue of Rye, NY, who was commissioned to create a new choral version of *Hashkiveinu*. The evening's sermon will be delivered by Rabbi Eric Yoffie, Past President of the Union for Reform Judaism. Rabbi Yoffie has been a pioneer in interfaith relations and launched Reform Movement-wide dialogue programs with both Christians and Muslims, and he has also been deeply involved in issues of social justice and community concern.

In addition to Cantor Comisar's contribution, we will also hear new music from Kurt Knecht, who received his Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and is music director at St. Mark's on the UNL campus and artistic director and conductor of the Lincoln Lutheran Choir, and Karen Sokolof Javitch, a Temple Israel member, songwriter and playwright.

"Jonathan Comisar has written a beautiful *Hashkiveinu* that will involve instruments and our choir and children," Cantor Wendy Shermet said. "And we're doing a beautiful piece by Kurt Knecht and we'll have other music that the congregation already knows and they can sing along with. I hope that it will be a very joyful evening."

Temple Israel's young Religious School students and teenagers will also perform selected pieces of music.

A very special hors d'oeuvre oneg in the Community Court, organized by Paula Albert, Beth Brodkey, Katherine Finnegan, Tom Friedman, Lois Milder, Nancy Noddle, Sandy Nogg and Louri Sullivan, will follow the service.

"We hope it will be an exciting beginning for our new temple," Nancy Noddle said. "We hope everybody will come."

The oneg menu will feature an appetizer buffet, homemade challahs baked by women of the congregation, along with homemade desserts.

Valet parking will be available.

Clergy Report

Rededicating Ourselves

German Philosopher Franz Rosenzweig was certain from an early age that he wanted to abandon his Jewish roots. Once he reached adulthood and was prepared to convert to Christianity he decided he would attend the synagogue one last time in order to properly and ritually say goodbye to the Jewish tradition his family observed. Walking out of the small Berlin synagogue, his legs were weak and his mind was shaken. Not only did he want to remain a Jew, but years later he authored one of the most cherished philosophical works of modern Jewish thought in "The Star of Redemption."

In the months of October and November our community will experience two unique moments. On October 11, we will dedicate our new synagogue and Sterling Ridge and, for the only time in all of our lifetimes, Hannukah, our holiday of rededication, will arrive so early this year that it will overlap with Thanksgiving. For all their uniqueness, these two events are reminders that there are countless moments that our tradition calls us to rededicate ourselves. But here I want to make a distinction between the act of rededication in our tradition and the goals, often far too lofty, that we set for ourselves.

In his book "The Parents We Mean to Be," Richard Weissbroud shares this comment from a teenager, "At my school you can't just bring flowers to the elderly or sick ... you have to wipe out AIDS in Africa." I worry that too often we allow our ego to overshadow the needs of our soul. We allow our ambition to do more than others, better than others, even our desire to save the world to overshadow our personal need to care for ourselves.

I don't know what happened in the synagogue that day that brought Franz Rosenzweig to drastically change his feelings toward Judaism, but I wonder if perhaps it was not anything the rabbi said or that the cantor sung. I wonder if it was simply that for the first time he stopped debating

whether Judaism was right or wrong, good or bad, too idealistic or too antiquated and he sat with himself for a moment and decided what would be meaningful for him. Perhaps, in that context, our tradition gave him what he needed. But the miracle of Rosenzweig's story, just as was the case in the story of Hannukah, is not only that rededication changed him, but it allowed him to change Judaism.

When we rededicate ourselves, we are saying that we are willing to be a part of the future. The dedication of our new synagogue is not only a moment to celebrate the completion of this stage in our history. It is also a moment when we ask "who has an idea for the future?" It is a moment, like the many we have had in the past, when we will take dreams, little and big, and begin to decide which ones will become reality for us.

If I would have been able to speak with Rosenzweig when he questioned our faith, I would have told him what I often share when people question Judaism today. That Judaism has endless options for spirituality, that our tradition has infinite ways for us to find meaning and that this diversity within our dynamic tradition is what has preserved us for so long. And had Rosenzweig actually listened, perhaps he never would have found the brand new path that he opened for Jewish thought that has changed once again how Judaism relates to the world.

We are a curious and even stubbornly exploratory people. As we dedicate our building and rededicate ourselves in this season, I look forward to the many questions we will raise about ourselves, our neighbors and our city. I look forward to the ways our world will change us, but even moreso to the many ways you will change our world.



Rabbi Brown

Committee Report

Long Range Planning Report

By Mike Halsted

It has been a wonderful start to the New Year. The vision of a new building for Temple Israel developed several years ago has been realized in our beautiful new synagogue in Sterling Ridge, and the clergy and staff have worked countless hours these past few weeks getting us moved and settled. The building gives us an outstanding facility of which we are all proud and excited to call our new home.

Rabbi Brown, in his sermon for Rosh Hashanah spoke to the need to focus on the work that we must all pursue to make the life of our synagogue worthy of the fantastic architectural structure with which we are blessed. The Long Range Planning Committee has been working toward that goal over the past 18 months. Initially the committee drafted and the Board of Trustees approved the list of strategic initiatives. Many of you participated in the Congregational survey and subsequently attended the Congregational Conversation, both of which were facilitated with the expertise of Todd Simon, working in conjunction with LRP committee members, the staff and clergy. From these, we gained important insight into the aspects of congregational life that were most important to our congregants. A new Mission, Vision and Value statement was crafted and approved by the Board of Trustees, again with the help of Jeff Gordman and work of members of the congregation, staff and clergy.

At long last, lay leaders, congregants, staff and clergy are working to develop and implement specific "programs" to accomplish the strategic initiatives. It is our hope that as we start this new year in our new synagogue, congregants will find the opportunity to take advantage of the work and dedication of all involved in the Long Range Planning process and implementation, and make a commitment to help build the vibrant synagogue life worthy of our new home.

I want to express my gratitude to the members of the Long Range Planning Committee, Rabbi Azriel, Rabbi Brown, Alan Fredricks, Sally Kaplan, Cat King, Stan Krieger, Wendy Goldberg, Scott Goodman, Andie Gordman, and Andee Scioli who have spent many hours over the past year and a half working on this project. I also want to express my thanks to Sharon Comisar-Langdon, Dominique O'Connor, Lise Sasson and Louri Sullivan, who, working with Rabbi Azriel, Rabbi Brown and Wendy Goldberg, will spearhead developing the specific "programming" going forward.

Temple Israel Long Range Planning

Objective: Create a strategic plan/focus statement to ensure that we are addressing the needs and desires of Temple Israel's Congregation as we move into our new building.

Goal: To ensure a vibrant congregational life that matches the caliber of the new building that we are so fortunate to be making a reality.

- Temple Israel will engage our youth, 14-26 year olds, in congregational life.
- Temple Israel will enhance the Shabbat experience to increase participation.
- Temple Israel will foster community through the development and strengthening of relationships among its members.
- Temple Israel will develop strategies to ensure its financial stability.



The congregation celebrated Moving Day with prayer, song and dance on August 25.

Calendar of Events

Pray תפילות

Tot Shabbat Morning Service

Saturday, September 28, 9-10:15 a.m.

This Shabbat experience is geared to families with young children up to age 6 and open to the entire Omaha Jewish community. Come join Rabbi Brown and Debbie Massarano with her guitar for a little bit of singing, praying, eating, and playing!



First Fridays

Friday, October 4 & Friday, November 1

Candle lighting in the Community Court, 5:30 p.m.

Service, 6 p.m., Dinner immediately following

Come for a Shabbat service with the First Friday band, stay for a traditional Shabbat meal and company.

Please RSVP, RSVP@templeisraelomaha.com or 402-556-6536

Temple Israel First Fridays are sponsored by Bob and Elly Gordman, Andie Gordman and Dan Fitzgerald, and Lindsey Thomas, in memory of Brandon Thomas.

Dedication Ceremony

Friday, October 11, 6 p.m.

Torah study with Rabbi Eric Yoffie

Saturday, October 12, 9 a.m.

Tot Shabbat

Saturday, October 26, 9-10:15 a.m.

Learn למודים

Religious School Grades K-12

Contact Director of Lifelong Learning Debbie Massarano for more information.

Grades K - Grade 6, Sundays, 10 a.m. to Noon

Grades 3 - 6, Wednesdays, Snack, 4 p.m. & Class, 4:30 p.m.

Grades 7 - 8, Wednesdays, Dinner, 6 p.m. & Class, 6:30 p.m.

No Religious School on Sunday October 20

Join us for Second Sundays!

Each Second Sunday of the month when we have Religious School, we invite the entire family to come and spend the morning at Temple. Breakfast will be served (at a minimal charge). While our children engage in learning in their classrooms, there will be several options for our adults:

- Join us at Prayer Assembly
- Hang out in the café drinking coffee, reading the paper, schmoozing with friends
- Engage in learning opportunities
- Volunteer in our classrooms
- Get to know our Rabbis, Cantor and staff

Second Sundays at Temple Israel is the place to be!

Grade 3 Family Education Day

Sunday, September 29

This is an opportunity for families to come together to learn, meet other families in the group, and learn with our clergy and staff.

Meet the Teacher

Sunday, October 6

10 a.m. Grade K - 2 Parents in Classrooms

11 a.m. Grade 3 - 6 Parents in Classrooms

Parents will have an opportunity to get to know your children's Religious School teacher and learn about the curriculum for the year.

Interplay II

Tuesday, October 15, 6 p.m.

Interplay II is a program for children in Kindergarten through Grade 3 and their parents. Together they learn about the Abrahamic faiths and undertake community service projects. Registration is free and the location of the meeting will be given to those who register. If you are interested in enrolling or if you have any questions about the program, contact Natasha Kraft, kraftyer@gmail.com, or call the Tri-Faith Initiative office, 402-934-2955.

Grade 9 Trip to New York City

October 18 - 20

Grade 1 Family Education Day

Sunday, October 27

This is an opportunity for families to come together to learn, meet other families in the group, and learn with our clergy and staff.

Religious School Report

The Education Team

We are working hard to create a seamless, intentional and creative educational experience for all of our Temple members. We want to introduce to you the Temple Israel educational team and hope that you will utilize our areas of expertise and join us in creating meaningful education opportunities.

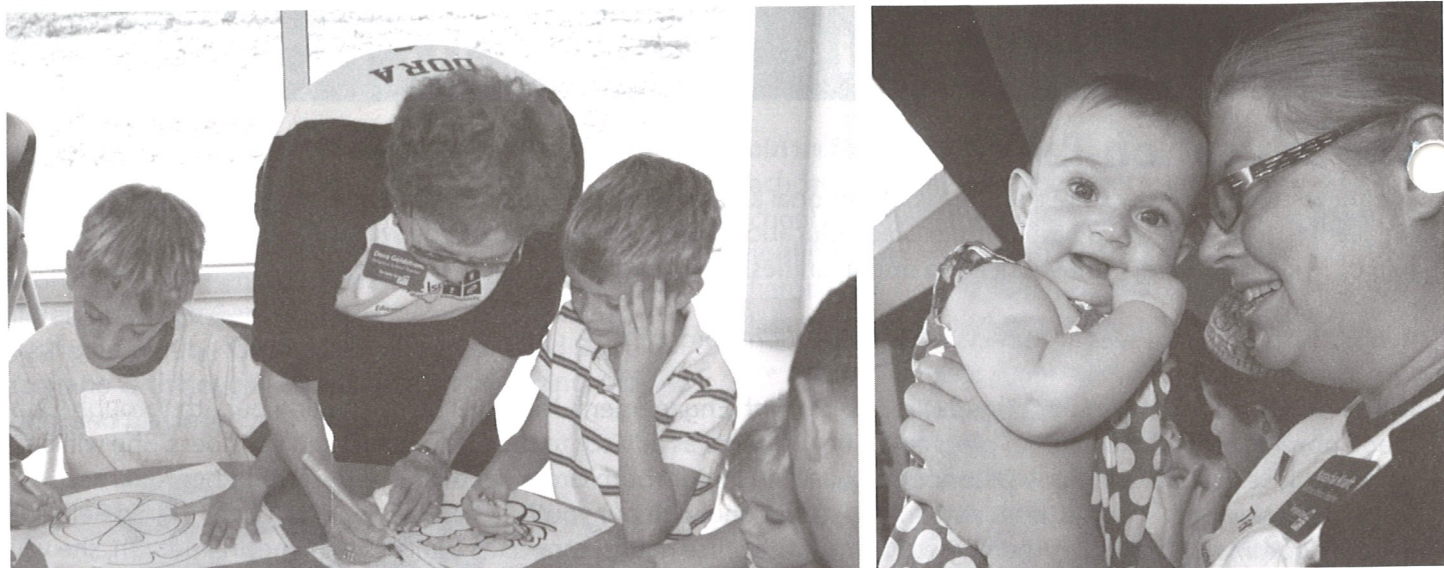
Rabbi Josh Brown oversees all aspects of the educational program.

Nikki Flatowicz is our newly appointed Director of Youth Engagement. Nikki will be overseeing our 5th through 12th grade non-Religious School youth programs. She will serve as advisor to the OTYG Board and members. She will be working closely with Dominique O'Connor on our JYG (Junior Youth Group) activities as well. Together Nikki and Dominique bring great enthusiasm and energy to working with our youth. Jen Goodman is our newly hired Religious School Coordinator. She will be managing many of the office needs, especially during class time. In addition, she will be working to collect data to help us assess our program and work with families to create meaningful education plans for their family. Wendy Goldberg is administratively supporting our adult learning opportunities.

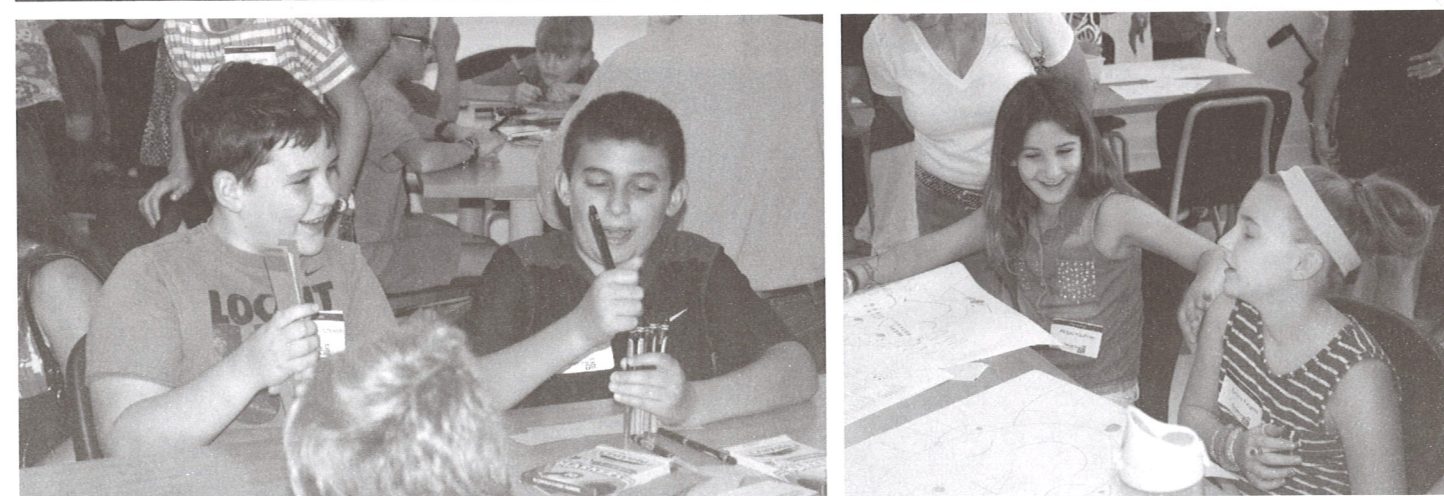
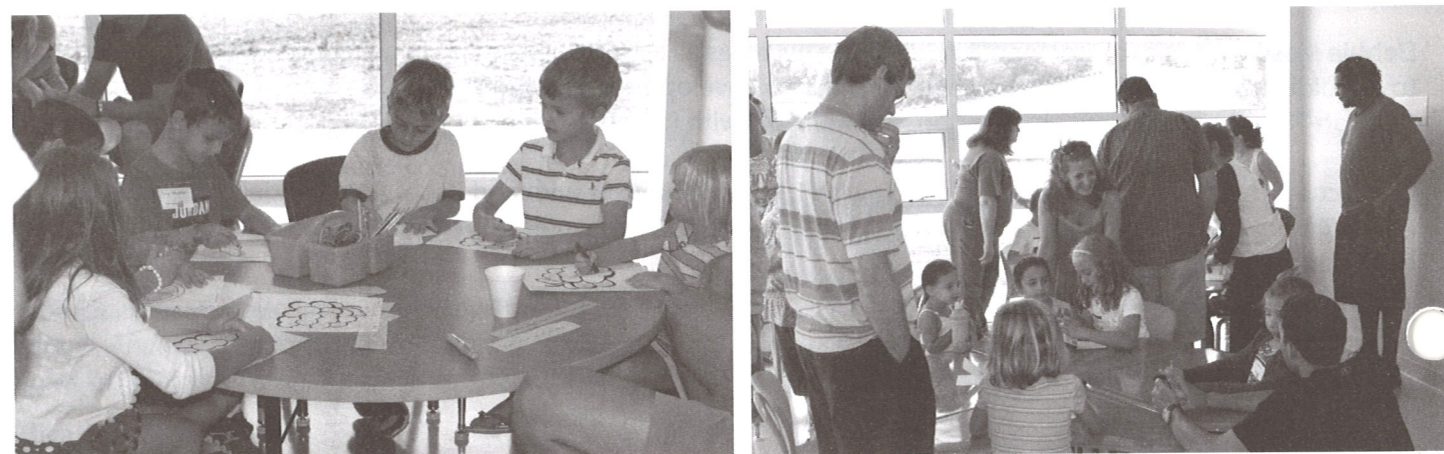
Debbie Massarano is our Director of Lifelong. She oversees all aspects of learning in our congregation from our youngest to our oldest. She will additionally oversee curriculum development and professional training of our Kindergarten through 12th Grade program. In addition, she will work with Rabbi Brown on our Early Childhood Education program.

Our faculty - teachers and Madrichim - along with Cantor Wendy Shermet and Rabbi Aryeh Azriel complete the education team working passionately and diligently to provide a meaningful, relevant and vibrant education experience to all our congregants.





First Day of Religious School



Calendar of Events

Hermene Zweiback Center Lifelong Jewish Learning

Contact Director of Lifelong Learning Debbie Massarano with questions.

Torah Study

Saturdays, 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

Shabbat Worship follows, 10:30 a.m.

Discuss the Torah portion of the week over fresh bagels, juice and coffee. Sessions led by our clergy.

Lauter Tun Series

Sundays, September 29, October 27, 7 - 8 p.m.

Lauter Tun Bar, 3309 Oak View Drive #102

Cantor Wendy Shermet and Music Minister Jerry Brabec will be engaging in lively conversation over the next six months at the Lauter Tun Bar in West Omaha. They will discuss a variety of topics on the last Sunday of each month through December.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class

Tuesdays, September 24 - May 30, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

The Adult B'nai Mitzvah class, taught by Na'ama Artzi.

Each class is an hour long, except on those dates when clergy teach, when class will be 90 minutes. Students will be working toward the Adult B'nai Mitzvah Ceremony during services on Friday, May 30. The fee is \$250. If you are interested in joining the class, please contact Program Director Wendy Goldberg.

Temple TED Talks

Sundays, September 29 & October 27, 10 - 11 a.m.

Join us in the media center as members share their favorite TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Talk and lead a conversation about the topic. This is a great opportunity to meet and get to know your fellow Temple Israel members in a casual, comfortable environment. Coffee and food will be available. Future Talks will be held on the last Sunday with Religious School of each month.

Thursday Mornings @ Temple

Fee: \$45 for members, \$55 for non-members

Dilemmas of Faith:

God and Spirituality in the Modern World

Thursday, October 3 - November 21, 10 a.m.

Rabbi Azriel will lead a discussion about faith and what it means to be Jewish in today's modern society. He questions whether faith is an essential component of Jewish life, and asks what role faith and spirituality have in the modern world.

Wednesdays @ Temple

Tools to Engage in a Conversation about Israel as an American Jew

September 11 - November 20, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Open to all adults including the Family School parents. This nine week course will be taught by our new Director of Lifelong Learning, Debbie Massarano. We will be delving into Enduring Understanding (big idea to be uncovered) - A fundamental aspect of Jewish identity is a personal understanding of Israel as a spiritual homeland and historical inheritance of the Jewish people. We will explore our personal understanding of Israel, Reform Judaism's understanding of Israel, as well as other perspectives on the role Israel plays in our lives as Americans and in the lives of Israelis.

Leadership Development Brunch with Rabbi Eric Yoffie

Sunday, October 13, 10:30 a.m.

Leadership Development Class

Thursday, October 24, 7-9 p.m.

Engage פעילות

Dinner with Local Jewish College Students

Sunday, September 29, 6:30 p.m.

Dundee Dell, 5007 Underwood Ave

RSVP to Dominique O'Connor, dtzoconnor@gmail.com.

Social Justice

Contact SJ Chair Paul Rabinovitz for more information.

Habitat for Humanity

Sunday, October 20, 8 a.m. - noon

Contact Dan Gilbert, dmgilbert@gmail.com, to volunteer.

OTYG

Contact Director of Youth Engagement Nikki Flatowicz for more information.

Hayrack Ride, Bonfire, Haunted Havdalah

Saturday, October 12, Shady Lane Ranch, 17744 Shady Lane, Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

Movie Night and Lock In

Saturday, November 16 - Sunday, November 17, Temple Israel

JYG

Contact Youth Advisor Dominique O'Connor for more information.

Glow-in-the-Dark Scavenger Hunt

Saturday, October 5, 7 p.m.

Congregation

New Members



Stephanie and Matthew Beneda have lived in Omaha for about nine years. They moved from Orange County, CA for Matt's job. He works as an insurance agent for AAA, while

Stephanie runs her own skin care studio. They wanted to live in "a family friendly area with great schools, less traffic and a more affordable lifestyle for a young couple," according to Stephanie, and aside from the winter weather they really love Omaha. Both Matt and Stephanie are Jews by Choice, having completed their conversion with Rabbi Azriel in March.

Matt and Stephanie have three children: **Shalom**, who turns six in October; **Yehudah**, who will be four in December; and baby **Eliyana**, who was just born in March. The Beneda family looks forward to many more happy experiences in Omaha and are very happy to officially become members of Temple Israel. They are also looking forward to becoming more active members of the community.



Beth and Mitchell Slovut moved to Omaha from Minnesota about five years ago for Mitch's job. He is a telecommunication engineer for West Corporation, and Beth is a computer programmer. Both Beth and Mitch have degrees in mathematics; Beth from the University of Minnesota and Mitch from the University of Michigan and Wright State University.

They decided to join Temple Israel for the congregation's dedication to liberal Judaism. Beth and Mitch have three children: **Josephine**, 14; **Heather**, 12; and **Simon**, seven. All of the children play the fiddle, and the family enjoys running races in the summer and skiing in the winter.

Carmen Soltis returned to Council Bluffs after spending the previous eight years in Mobile, AL, and this time she's here to stay. Her daughter recently gave birth to a son, Marco, and Carmen is looking forward to spending her retirement with her family.

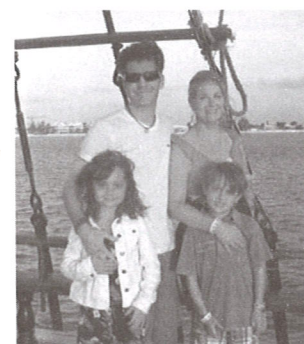


A Jew by Choice, Carmen attended Ahavas Chesed in Mobile, a conservative congregation, and she decided to join Temple Israel because she "was moved by the Rabbis' passion." She looks forward to attending Saturday morning services, including Torah Study.

Before retiring, Carmen worked in hospitals, most recently at Singing River Hospital in Pascagoula, MI, and lately she has been doing some gardening at her daughter's house. Carmen also enjoys reading and has been taking advantage of the Jewish fiction at the JCC library.

Jennifer Wright moved to Omaha from Lincoln about a year ago. She works as a service manager at Flemings Prime Steakhouse. She has two kids, **Asher**, nine, and **Adilene**, four.

In addition to Lincoln, Jennifer has lived "all over," from New York City to South Dakota to San Francisco. She was raised in western Nebraska.



Brenda and Richard Rosenblatt met in law school at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and were married shortly after graduation in 1993. They moved to Omaha to work as attorneys. Richard works for Kutak Rock, while Brenda is currently a stay-at-home mom with the couple's nine-year-old twins, **Josh and Elena**. They decided to

join Temple Israel because Richard wanted their children to "share the common experience of B'nai Mitzvah" with him, and to make some lifelong Jewish friends.

The family likes to spend time together whenever possible. Richard and his son play tennis together, while Brenda and Elena enjoy shopping and reality TV. Brenda, Josh and Elena also volunteer often at the Open Door Mission, mostly preparing and serving meals. Josh and Elena also support both the Open Door Mission and the Humane Society.

Congregation

B'nai Mitzvah בני מצוה



Madeleine Rauhauser, daughter of Nancy Nogg, will celebrate her Bat Mitzvah on October 5. Madeleine is in 8th grade at Westside Middle School. For her mitzvah project she worked with Nebraska Wildlife Refuge, helping to rehabilitate animals for release. She also baked cakes for Boys Town.

In her free time, Madeleine enjoys reading and playing the cello. She is also a Madrich for Temple Israel's Religious School and is involved with JYG and BBYO. She is a leader in National Junior Honor Society and last year she competed in the National Quiz Bowl Championship in New Orleans.

Births לידה

Mazel tov on the birth of...

Addison Frances Blumkin, daughter of Amanda and Ryan Blumkin, granddaughter of Brenda Guenther, Eric Guenther, and Susie and Irv Blumkin, and great-granddaughter of Doris and Henry Ericson and Frances Blumkin.

Sophie Brynn Kazor, daughter of Michelle and Stuart Kazor, sister of Emily, Elizabeth and Zachary Kazor, granddaughter of Peggy and Bill Kolm and Renee and Louie Kazor, and great-granddaughter of Alice Kwapiszeski, Panama, IA.

In Sympathy נחמה

The Congregation records with sorrow the deaths of our members' relatives...

Debra Chasen, Survived by daughter, Danielle Tornkvist, son and daughter-in-law, Jeremy and Nicole Chasen and son Matthew Chasen. Brother and sister-in-law, Jeff and Leslie Slutsky;

Betty Fisher, preceded in death by husband Charles Fisher;

Gail Levin, survived by brother David Levin, Karen Levin, and Cousin Jerrold Neugarten;

Caleb Horner, son of Angela and Paul Horner, will become a Bar Mitzvah on November 2. For his mitzvah project, Caleb, a 7th grader at McMillan Magnet Center Middle School, volunteered at the Town and Country Humane Society, a rescue shelter. He enjoys working with animals. Caleb also enjoys playing baseball and ping pong, and spending time with his friends.

Give to our Endowed Funds

Your contributions to our endowed funds, as well as donations for various projects, are absolutely vital to the financial health of the congregation. In order to provide the high level of services, to maintain the quality education, and to keep the building open, we rely on your generosity. We greatly appreciate your tax-deductible contribution.

Engagement אירוסין

Naomi Fox and Andrew Boehm. Parents are Shelly and Richard Fox, Claudia Boehm, and Joel Boehm, San Diego.

Silvert Mawrence, friend of Temple Israel;

Billie Pepper Trachtenbarg, survived by her daughter Cheryl Gebhart of Stillwater and her son Charles Trachtenbarg of Mission Viejo, CA and her niece Linda Priesman Smith of Sun City, AZ;

Alice Litzie Trustin, survived by husband Yale Trustin; ...and extends sympathy to their bereaved families.