

Temple Israel Staff and Officers

Aryeh Azriel..... Rabbi
Eric Linder..... Rabbi
Wendy Shermet..... Cantor
Dennis DePorte..... Executive Director
Elyce Azriel..... Director of Religious Education
Rosie Zweiback..... Program Director
Claudia Sherman..... Communications Coordinator
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Wendy Goldberg..... Past President
Danielle Gordman..... WRJ-O President
Adam Kirshenbaum..... Men's Club President
Sarah Bleicher..... OTYG President

Reach Out...and Email Us!

Rabbi Aryeh Azriel

aazriel@templeisraelomaha.com

Rabbi Eric Linder

elinder@templeisraelomaha.com

Cantor Wendy Shermet

wshermet@templeisraelomaha.com

Dennis DePorte

Executive Director

ddeporte@templeisraelomaha.com

Elyce Azriel

Director of Religious Education

eazriel@templeisraelomaha.com

Lori Bennett

Religious School Administrative Assistant

lbennett@templeisraelomaha.com

Vicki Ducharme

Bookkeeper

vducharme@templeisraelomaha.com

Maureen Kube

Receptionist/Donations

mkube@templeisraelomaha.com

Claudia Sherman

Communications Coordinator

csherman@templeisraelomaha.com

Bonnie Sullivan

Clergy Secretary

bsullivan@templeisraelomaha.com

Misty Weidner

Administrative Assistant

mweidner@templeisraelomaha.com

PJ Wiesner

Director of Youth and Informal Education

pwiesner@templeisraelomaha.com

Rosie Zweiback

Program Director

rzweiback@templeisraelomaha.com

General Inquiries

tisrael@templeisraelomaha.com

Religious School Inquiries

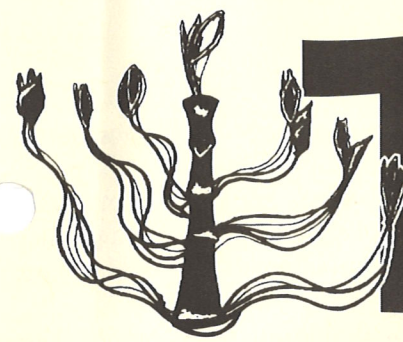
school@templeisraelomaha.com



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Fax 402/556-6189
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Turning the Torah...

Our High Holy Days *Machzor* repeats the words, "Let us learn in order to teach. Let us learn in order to do."

Chazak, Chazak V'NitChazek: Strength, strength, and we shall be strengthened.

It is, however, not enough to have strength; we must use it as well, enabling others (and ourselves) to be strengthened through our acts of Torah.

When Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel marched with Martin Luther King, someone asked him why he was out on the streets instead of in his shul, praying. He responded, "My feet were praying." It is time for ours to do the same. We are creating a "menu" of sorts for social justice opportunities so that we can provide you with ways to do *mitzvot* that are meaningful, thought-provoking and inspiring. Here are some of the things that are on our agenda. If you have any ideas that can motivate our feet to pray, please contact me!

Violence/Race Relations in Omaha

About two months ago, several of us saw the movie, "A Time for Burning" at Filmstreams. This movie is a documentary about an Omaha Lutheran church in 1967. The minister there wanted 10 of his Lutheran congregants to dialogue with 10 African-American Lutheran congregants. He tried to use faith as a healing agent to bridge the gap between white and black. He wanted

his congregation to hear personal stories of people, so that their hearts and minds would be changed. (The movie is available on Netflix—please watch it!) There is a group of community leaders who are working to use this movie as a springboard to continue the work that this minister tried to start.

Violence is violence, whether in North Omaha or at the Westroads mall. Together, we can be strengthened not just despite these events, but also because of them. Let us use our faith as a springboard to this holy work.

Malaria in Africa

Last month, during Chanukah, while we celebrated the daily miracles of our lives, close to **24,000 people** in Africa died from malaria. A protective malaria net can be bought for just \$10. This net alone can stop the spread of this disease considerably. A motto states, "One net, one life." (Please go to www.nothingbutnets.net to find out more.) Over the weekend of the Chanukah dinner, we raised \$1,023 to buy these protective nets. Our own Reform movement has made it a priority to raise \$500,000. Our contribution helped give others the gift of life.

Christmas Dinner

On Christmas, Temple Israel donated food, drink and warm hearts to the community at Stephens Center. Over 40 people cooked and/or served food to

those in need so that they could have a delicious Christmas dinner. Even more important than the food, however, was the human touch that we helped to provide. We served hope and friendship alongside the (delicious!) food and dessert.

What can we do right now?

Castelar

There is a large Hispanic population in Castelar. In order to afford housing, many of them crowd small apartments. Moving from the warm climate of Mexico, many do not own winter clothes.

We have been asked to donate sweatshirts and sweatpants to the students at Castelar. The children **do not need coats**. In the spirit of *tzedakah* (righteousness), we are asking you to donate **new sweats only**. We will have boxes in the office for you to place these clothing articles, or to give a donation that will be used to buy them. The sizes should be for school children in grades preK–6. We suggest making this into a moment of dialogue with your children/grandchildren/family—go shopping with them and talk about the fact that some people can not afford things that we may take for granted: snow boots, mittens, gloves and sweats. This can be a powerful conversation for your family, helping to raise awareness

Continued on page 2...

KNOW THYSELF; KNOW THY NEIGHBOR

Turning the Torah continued...

in our children. You can cut this article out as a reminder to buy sweats the next time you go shopping!

Long Range Planning

Every month, we are going to “feature” one thing that you can do in order to make a difference. Some might be *mitzvah* based, as this month’s collection for warm clothing. Others might ask you to lobby your congressmen. Some will involve doing something ‘green.’ Regardless of what it might be, we challenge you (and ourselves!) to commit to taking part in this monthly act of *tikkun olam*.

We are in the process of developing a survey that will go out to every member of our congregation. We want to engage you in *tzedakah* projects that are meaningful **to you**, while also engaging the visions of this congregation. We want to know what you’re willing to share with others, whether it be baked goods, a specific skill, or a warm meal. We want to know how you think social justice work fits into your sense of Jewish identity.

Years ago, I heard a quote that said: “If you have come to help me, go away. But if you have come to talk with me, so that we can hear each other, please come in.” Social justice work is not about “us” giving to “them.” It is about our becoming more unified with members of our community. It is about our praying with our feet, and becoming transformed in the process. It is not only the right thing to do - it is not only the holy thing to do; it is the necessary thing to do. We look forward to praying with you soon.

Eric Lindel



Spiritual, But Not Religious

Jon Meyers, President

I have spent many hours during the past few years introspectively considering my religion. Questions swirled in my mind; was I religious enough to be the president of a synagogue? Would I be able to intelligently represent the Reform Jewish perspective on issues? Could I truly understand the religious aspects of Temple life? Most people I confided in, especially Rabbi Azriel, assured me that I would be fine. I still was not convinced.

Fortunately, I have had the opportunity to deal with this on a few occasions. Last spring at a conference for incoming presidents of Reform Synagogues it became apparent that I am not alone. Easily, half of the 110 in attendance harbored similar concerns. More recently, in San Diego at the URJ Biennial, I had the good fortune to attend a session entitled, “Spiritual, but not religious.” For years it seems that our Reform Movement has been focusing on important issues: elements of social consciousness, political issues, human rights, and of course, religious autonomy. Religious conformity was not essential to being a good Reform Jew. If our congregation is representative of the URJ as a whole, many of us share these feelings.

We consider ourselves very spiritual. This spirituality is very private. We may or may not openly exhibit our spirituality. It’s what makes us do what is right...to participate in activities and programs that make the world a better place, helping others in need with our human and financial resources, to reach out to the sick and elderly. Our spirituality is very important. For many of us, it can define who we are or the kind of person we strive to be. We would rank it in our top three, if not the most important self-identifying characteristic. We instinctively know that it is important to live and act “Jewishly,” but how do we know what that means?

The study of Torah along with the perspective of our Rabbis and scholars helps us to understand what it is to be Jewish. Belief in God or the concept of a higher power is essential. Our Reform Movement is actually stressing the religion of being Jewish...as it should be. Shabbat observance is one of the primary focal points addressed by Rabbi Eric Yoffie. Hebrew is more prevalent in our Shabbat and holiday services, congregants are participating in more offerings of adult learning, our youth are confirming in the 12th grade, and our B’nai Mitzvah students are doing so much more than previous years and they comprehend the solemnity of their achievement. This religious resurgence is a good thing. It does not threaten those of us who struggle with religion. If we choose to attend, learn and practice religiously, we find a meaningful compliment to our spiritual side.

Temple Israel provides the venue and opportunities for each of us to get in touch with our spirituality AND our religion. Our Rabbis and Cantor are there for us. Study with them. Cultivate your spirituality. Nurture your religious self. Find meaning for how we lead our lives.

Did You Know?

- There are 11 Union for Reform Judaism Camps in the United States and one in Canada.
- Omaha Temple Youth Group was reconstituted in 1952 after intermittent periods of inactivity.
- The Congregation of Israel (Temple Israel’s original name) conducted the congregation’s first confirmation service in 1871 for a class of seven.

Learners Shabbat Worship Service

Friday, February 22
7:30 p.m.

Members of the “Know Thy Service: A Guided Tour” class will practice what they’ve been learning. Let’s show our support by attending services!

Reminder!

Halil BaGalilee

(Flutes in the Galilee)

Friday, January 25, 6 p.m.

Shabbat Worship Services

Israeli musicians Hagit Rosmarin, flutist, and Gil Bohadana, who plays wind instruments, will share their remarkable and unpredictable approach to music at Shabbat worship services with the Temple Israel congregation. Hagit and Gil are known for traditional ethnic music as well as their own original melodies, inspired by their travels around the world and by the sounds of the Galilee where they live.

On Saturday evening, January 26, Hagit and Gil will present “Flutes Around the World” at 7:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center as part of the Western Galilee Performing Arts Series.



Informational Meeting for Family Chanukah Trip to Israel

Sunday, January 27,
10 a.m.

Rabbi Azriel and Program Director Rosie Zweiback will present the itinerary, answer questions and launch the sign-up for this very special trip to Israel scheduled for December 21-31, 2008.

Weather Advisory Alert for Sunday, January 27

Forecasters say...“It’s Raining Meatballs!”

Put on your galoshes and join us under the umbrellas for a DELICIOUS spaghetti dinner at **5 p.m.** prepared by Temple’s resident chefs Len Burrell, Justin Cooper and Barry Grossman.

The silent auction begins at 10 a.m. and a rousing live auction with funny man Steve Danon follows dinner.

Auction items include:

- * UNO Mavs tickets and parking pass
- * Restaurant certificates
- * Creighton Blue Jays basketball tickets
- * Omaha Steaks
- * A fabulous gas outdoor grill fit for master chef
- * Nebraska Nature Conservancy membership and a guided tour by our own Mace Hack, state director of the Nebraska Chapter
- * Husker tickets

Reservations due NOW! Please contact the Temple office, 556-6536 or pwiesner@templeisraelomaha.com.

Tickets are \$7 for ages 13-99, \$4 for ages 3-12, and free for children under three.

Reserve a table for ten for \$80.

Auction proceeds support OTYG, Junior Youth Group, and Club 56. Donations are also made to Camp Rainbow and Camp Coholo for seriously ill children.



Shop...Eat...Help Temple Israel, Too!

Gift certificates in denominations of \$10 to \$25 for Whole Foods, Baker’s, Kwik Shop, Bag ‘N Save and The Bookworm are available in the Temple office. Buy them and keep them handy for shopping at these stores which are gracious enough to return a percentage to Temple.

The reimbursements are used for camp scholarships. If you have children attending Religious School classes on Wednesday afternoons or Sunday mornings, stop in the Religious School office to purchase.

Adult Education

Four B's: Behaving, Belonging, Believing and Bagels!

"Romantic Love in Judaism"

Sunday, February 10, 10:30 a.m.

While the words "romantic love" and "Judaism" don't often appear in the same sentence, our tradition does offer insights into matters of the heart. Rabbi Eric Linder will take us down a Jewish "lover's lane" of text, tradition and stories to see what Judaism has to teach us about love.

The Four B's, a once-a-month class taught by our clergy and special guests, covers everything from parenting to the Patriarchs. Learn, share and nosh, with a variety of interesting people in the congregation! No reservation and no fee; just come.



Torah Therapy: Jewish Ethics at Work

Thursday, February 7, Noon

Grace Mayer Insurance
10050 Regency Drive

Meet with Rabbi Eric Linder for lunch and a stimulating discussion on Jewish ethics. This month's session is hosted by John Lehr. Lunch is provided for \$6. Please make a reservation by calling Temple, 556-6536.



Welcome Back Rabbi Gary Zola!

"Who Are We?"

Wednesday, February 13, 6:30 - 8 p.m., Thursday, February 14, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

A leading expert on the history of Reform Judaism in America, Rabbi Gary Zola will present: "Who Are We?" on Wednesday night and "Great Voices, Civil Rights and American Reform Judaism" on Thursday morning. Designed to raise congregants' Jewish "I.Q." Rabbi Zola's presentations will make use of documents, photos and artifacts from the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) as he brings history to life.

Rabbi Zola is the executive director of the Marcus Center, the world's largest archival source of North American Jewish history. He is also associate professor of the American Jewish Experience at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, OH.

At the first session, Dr. Zola will question what we have to do in order to call ourselves Reform Jews. Some people say that Reform Jews can believe anything and do anything as long as they still call themselves Jews. Others disagree. He will examine the impact of social challenges that some say are complicating the nature of Reform Jewish life, and in the opinion of some, threatening Reform Judaism's very existence.

On Thursday morning, Rabbi Zola will describe what American rabbis told their congregants about the rise of Hitler, the outbreak of World War II, the Civil Rights struggle in the 1950s and 1960s among other topics. He'll dramatize his discussion with a series of remarkable vocal recordings of several towering rabbinic voices whose reputations are well known but whose voices have not been heard in years.

As the second director of AJA, Rabbi Zola edits *The American Jewish Archives Journal*, one of only two academic periodicals focusing on the total historical experience of American Jewry. Rabbi Zola served as the chair of the Commission for Commemorating the 350th Anniversary of American Jewish History and his articles have appeared in many scholarly publications. He also served as production consultant for the movie, *Rabbi*. The chief admissions officer at Hebrew Union College for 15 years, he also worked at Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute as assistant director.

Rabbi Zola's stay in Omaha is co-sponsored by the Hermene Zweiback Center for Lifelong Jewish Learning and the Howard and Judy Vann Temple Israel Family School Educational Grant.

Know Thy Service:

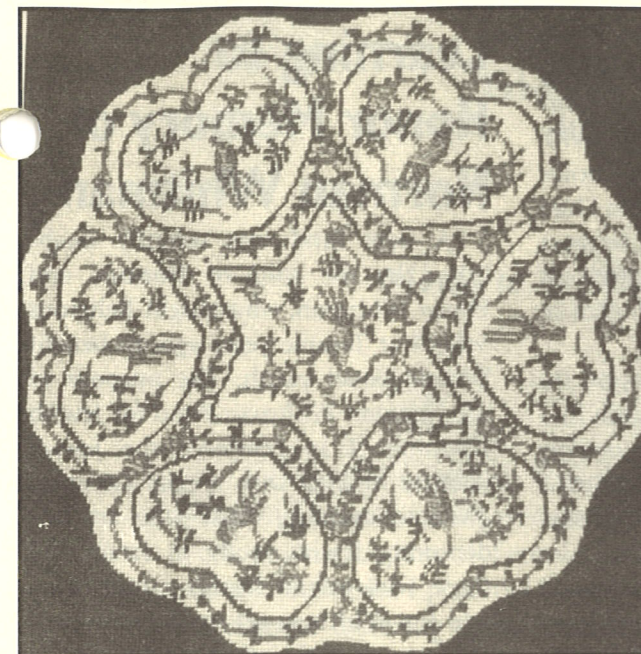
A Guided Tour Continues

**Sundays, January 27 and February 3
10:30 a.m. - Noon**

Rabbi Eric Linder and Cantor Wendy Shermet will resume their exploration of the new *Mishkan T'filah* prayerbook in this class offered by the Hermene Zweiback Center for Lifelong Jewish Learning. If you missed the first session on January 13, you're still welcome to climb aboard for one or both of the remaining classes.

On Friday, February 22, the class will celebrate their journey by helping to lead the Shabbat worship service.

And The Temple Tapestry Continues To Grow...



Come Learn More About Temple Israel's Tapestry Project

Every family can help create a lasting treasure to beautify our congregation! Project leader Marge Bresel will be on hand to get you started.

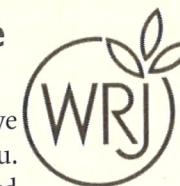
Sunday, February 10, 10 a.m. - Noon

This Seder Plate was adapted from one in the Precious Legacy exhibition made by Joseph Vater in Vienna around 1900. The original plate came from the State Jewish Museum in Prague. A copy of this plate is used by Joanie and Marty Lehr and their family for Passover. Joanie needlepointed the intricate pattern for the Tapestry Project.

Women of Reform Judaism-Omaha

Attention Cradle Roll Lovers

Please know we haven't forgotten you. We are working hard to revamp the program to meet the ever-changing needs of our youngest congregants! Stay tuned for a new and improved program!



Men's Club

Temple Israel is hosting the Third Annual

Texas Hold 'Em Tournament

Thursday, February 21

Doors open 6 p.m. for registration

Table assignments at 6:30 p.m.

First Hand at 7:15 p.m.

The event will feature No Limit Hold 'Em until the winner prevails.

All players will be welcome, including players that are not Temple Israel members.

Food and drinks will be available during the event.

1st prize is expected to be a \$1,000 gift card depending on the total players.

Top 10 winners will win prizes!!

\$50 Tickets may be purchased in advance.

Please contact Adam Kirshenbaum at 651-9756 or akirshenbaum@blackwellsanders.com to purchase tickets.

Proceeds to support Temple Israel

Save the Date!

Passover Mini-University

**Wednesday, February 27
6:30-8 p.m.**

Join Rabbi Eric Linder, Cantor Wendy Shermet and Temple member Stephanie Grossman to learn some new ways to tell the ancient story of escape from Egyptian slavery. Please contact Program Director Rosie Zweiback, 556-6536, or rzweiback@templeisraelomaha.com to register.



More Reflections on the URJ Biennial

Jennifer Miller, Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ)-Omaha Board member, attended the Union for Reform Judaism Biennial in San Diego in December on behalf of WRJ. "I think the Biennial was an unbelievable experience," she commented. "The one thing that was the best for me was to experience Shabbat with nearly 6,000 other Jews. Some were Jews-by-birth and some were Jews-by-choice like me. It was an amazing feeling to say 'Shabbat Shalom' to someone whom I had never met before, to say it more than once in a day! And I had the chance to meet some wonderful people from our congregation whom I did not know very well. To have shared this amazing experience with them was something that I am glad to have brought home with me."

Magda Peck, a member of the Temple Board and the URJ Commission on Social Action, recounted that she spent the very first afternoon "in a church in a low income neighborhood of San Diego. About 50 of us participated in a double workshop on faith based community organizing. As we came off the busses, a double line of local congregants of all faiths greeted each of us with heartfelt embrace."

Magda also recalled "late at night on the opening day, after 10 p.m., and most folks were fatigued from travel. Yet there we were, more than 5,000 Reform Jews, on our feet in loud affirmation, responding fully to the fiery words of Religious Action Center leader Rabbi David Saperstein. His intensity and passion ignited our own renewed dedication to fairness, equity, and justice."

She also felt "alive, engaged, committed," at the sunrise service overlooking the harbor, praying with the new *Mishkan T'filah* (prayerbook).

Mark your calendar now!

The next Biennial Convention is
November 4-8, 2009
in Toronto, Canada.

1st Annual Temple Israel Challah and Chicken Soup Cook-off

Sunday, March 9, Noon-1:30 p.m.

Don't let a chicken die in vain!

Taste many soups, vote for your
favorite and help raise money
for the Omaha Food Bank and
the 2008 Family Israel Trip Fund.

More than 15 professional chefs and talented amateurs will compete for prizes and bragging rights in all varieties of chicken soup—matzah ball, noodle, krepplach, and even curry. Expert challah bakers will also

put their loaves to the test.

A panel of celebrity judges with discriminating taste will select the winners, but everyone can weigh-in to bestow the "People's Choice" award. Kids get to pick a favorite soup and challah, too.

\$5 entry fee includes plenty of soup, challah and drink. Raffles tickets and pizza slices will also be available. All are welcome to attend.

Questions? Contact Program Director Rosie Zweiback at 556-6536 or rzweiback@templeisraelomaha.com.



Fund for Jewish Learning to Honor Memory of Norman Whitman

A new fund was recently established by the sons of Norman and Elinor Whitman, who taught Religious School at Temple years ago, to benefit Temple Israel youth. The purpose of the Norman Whitman Fund for Jewish Learning is to reinforce the Jewish identity of kids with special attention given to assisting those who are undertaking Jewish study in Israel and those who attend Jewish camps. Alan and Jon Whitman set up the new fund in memory of their father, who died in 2007, and asked for particular consideration to be given to anyone who needs financial aid.

"Dad felt part of the entire Jewish community," said Alan. "He wanted us to do something at all three synagogues (Temple Israel, Beth El and Beth Israel Synagogues) and for Hadassah in Israel. He loved Israel very much, and Jewish identity was very important to him." Alan recalled his father's love for "all the synagogues. He was a good guy. A very kind man."

To support the Tri-Faith initiative,
OTYG presents:

KNOW THY NEIGHBOR: - OTYG style!



On Saturday, January 19
from 3-5pm,

OTYG is teaming up with the Omaha Muslim Youth Group (OMYO) for a great program! We'll be getting to know OMYO as they learn about us, Judaism and what we can do to bridge the gap between our religions and cultures.

This fun program is FREE
so bring your friends and join us at
Abraham's Branch Library
located near 90th and Fort Streets.

To RSVP call PJ at 556.6665
Need a ride? NO PROBLEM!
Just ask PJ or Sarah!

Tri-Faith Initiative of Omaha, Nebraska
409 South 17th Street, Suite 500
Omaha, NE 68102

Memo to Tri-Faith Initiative Partner Congregations

January, 2008

It started as just an idea for Temple Israel to self-plan some of its neighbors around the West Omaha site of its new temple. Now, as an outgrowth of productive early dialogue and work among leaders of Temple Israel and the American Institute for Islamic Studies & Culture and the Nebraska Episcopal Diocese, an independent 501(c)(3) organization has been established to continue fostering these relationships. The Board is comprised of representatives from the 3 initially participating institutions.

Two years ago, this effort was viewed by everyone as way ahead of the curve, but now that proverbial 'Curve' is catching up. Few can remember a time when there was a greater need for religions to work together. In the past 90 days, Omaha has had at least four internationally recognized experts on Muslim and/or Jewish and/or Christian interrelations; each one spoke before an overflow crowd. In August, at the annual conference of the Islamic Society of North America, a conciliatory hand was extended to Jews and Christians across North America; and on December 15th at the Biennial meeting of the Union for Reform Judaism, Rabbi Eric Yoffie announced that improving Jewish/Muslim relations is one of Judaism's highest priorities.

Internationally, Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders around the world are beginning to issue joint statements and launch collaborative initiatives. Here in Omaha we have a 2 year head start on such efforts. Omaha's innate collegiality and long history of successful partnering suggests that such collaborations have as much chance of succeeding here as anywhere.

The independent Board of the Tri-Faith Initiative has received its own funding from community based organizations (including the Peter Kiewit Foundation), religious organizations (including the Episcopal Church Foundation) and individual leaders in the Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities who support and believe in such collaborative efforts. If Temple Israel, the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska and the AIISC collectively identify a site upon which all want to build, each will be responsible for raising its own money and designing and building its own place of worship and study. *And, each would own its own land and building.* The Tri-Faith Initiative Board would undertake its own fund raising for a separate center for interfaith study and collaboration. Early indications are that extensive support exists both from Omaha area as well as national institutions who look for opportunities to support collaborative efforts of this sort.

Bob Freeman,
Board Chairman

January/February • Shevat/Adar 5768

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					18 Parent/Toddler Class 9:30 a.m. Shabbat Comes to You @ Remington Heights 4 p.m. Shabbat Shira Israeli Music Shabbat Service 6 p.m.	19 Sparks Beneath the Surface 9:15-10:15 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:30 a.m.
20 NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	21	22 Hebrew Lunch 'n Learn 12:15 p.m. AA, Alanon & Gamblers' 12-step 7:30 p.m.	23 Religious School Grades 3-6 4-6 p.m. All School Dinner 6 p.m. Family School TuB'shevat Seder 6-8 p.m. Grades 7-12 6-8 p.m.	24 Adult Study with the Clergy 10 a.m. RSSC Meeting Noon	25 Shabbat Service Halil BaGalilee (Flutes in the Galilee) 6 p.m.	26 Sparks Beneath the Surface 9:15-10:15 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:30 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Dru Beach
27 Teacher Meeting 9:30 a.m. Religious School Grades K-6 10 a.m. - Noon Israel Trip Meeting 10 a.m. Know Thy Service: A Guided Tour 10:30 a.m. OTYG Spaghetti Dinner 5 p.m.	28	29 Hebrew Lunch 'n Learn 12:15 p.m. AA, Alanon & Gamblers' 12-step 7:30 p.m.	30 Religious School Grades 3-6 4-6 p.m. All School Dinner 6 p.m. Family School 6-8 p.m. Grades 7-12 6-8 p.m.	31 Adult Study with the Clergy 10 a.m. Know Thyself...Know Thy Sister...Know Thy Nest Egg 7 p.m.	1 Parent/Toddler Class 9:30 a.m. Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m. FEBRUARY	2 Sparks Beneath the Surface 9:15-10:15 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:30 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Rylee Zimmerman
3 Teacher Meeting 8:30 a.m. Parent/Teacher Conferences 10 a.m. Know Thy Service: A Guided Tour 10:30 a.m. Teacher Appreciation Noon	4	5 Hebrew Lunch 'n Learn 12:15 p.m. AA, Alanon & Gamblers' 12-step 7:30 p.m.	6 Religious School Grades 3-6 4-6 p.m. All School Dinner 6 p.m. Family School 6-8 p.m. Grades 7-12 Informal Ed 6-8 p.m. B/M Panel 6 p.m.	7 Adult Study with the Clergy 10 a.m. Torah Therapy: Jewish Ethics at Work Noon	8 OTYG CoCo Key Swim Party 6 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner following 6 p.m. Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	9 Sparks Beneath the Surface 9:15-10:15 a.m. Grade 6 Shabbat Service 10:30 a.m.
10 Teacher Meeting 9 a.m. Religious School Grades K-6 10 a.m. - Noon Prayer Assembly 10 a.m. Four B's 10:30 a.m.	11	12 Hebrew Lunch 'n Learn 12:15 p.m. AA, Alanon & Gamblers' 12-step 7:30 p.m.	13 Religious School Grades 3-6 4-6 p.m. All School Dinner 6 p.m. Family School 6-8 p.m. Grades 7-12 6-8 p.m. Gary Zola 6:30 pm.	14 Adult Study with the Clergy 10 a.m. Gary Zola 10 a.m.	15 Parent/Toddler Class 9:30 a.m. Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	16 Sparks Beneath the Surface 9:15-10:15 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:30 a.m.
17 NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	18	19 Hebrew Lunch 'n Learn 12:15 p.m. Executive Board 6 p.m. Board of Trustees 7 p.m. Book Club 7 p.m. AA, Alanon & Gamblers' 12-step 7:30 p.m.	20 Religious School Grades 3-6 4-6 p.m. All School Dinner 6 p.m. Family School 6-8 p.m. Grades 7-12 6-8 p.m.	21 Adult Study with the Clergy 10 a.m. Texas Hold 'Em Tournament 6 p.m.	22 Shabbat Comes to You @Remington Heights 4 p.m. Dinner 6 p.m. Learners Shabbat Service 7:30 p.m.	23 Sparks Beneath the Surface 9:15-10:15 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:30 a.m.

Worship Services

Friday~January 18

4 p.m.
Shabbat Comes to You
 at Remington Heights
 6 p.m.
Shabbat Shira
Israeli Music Shabbat Service
 with Cantor Wendy Shermet,
 Tamara Field and Jonathan Rathsam

Saturday~January 19

9:15-10:15 a.m.
Sparks Beneath the Surface
 10:30 a.m.
Shabbat Service
 Torah Portion: Beshalach
 Exodus 13:17-17:16
 Haftarah: Judges 4:4-5:31

Friday~January 25

6 p.m.
Shabbat Service
 Halil BaGalilee (Flutes in the Galilee)

Saturday~January 26

9:15-10:15 a.m.
Sparks Beneath the Surface
 10:30 a.m.
Shabbat Service
Bat Mitzvah of Dru Beach
Daughter of Ron Beach and
Mona Jones
 Torah Portion: Yitro
 Exodus 18:1-20:23
 Haftarah: Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:5-6

Friday~February 1

7:30 p.m.
Shabbat Service

Saturday~February 2

9:15-10:15 a.m.
Sparks Beneath the Surface
 10:30 a.m.
Shabbat Service
Bat Mitzvah of Rylee Zimmerman
Daughter of Linda and
Todd Zimmerman

Torah Portion: Mishpatim
 Exodus 21:1-24:18
 Haftarah: Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26

Friday~February 8

6 p.m.
Tot Shabbat
 Dinner immediately following
 7:30 p.m.
Shabbat Service

Saturday~February 9

9:15-10:15 a.m.
Sparks Beneath the Surface
 10:30 a.m.
Grade 6 Shabbat Service
 Torah Portion: Terumah
 Exodus 25:1-27:19
 Haftarah: I Kings 5:26-6:13

Friday~February 15

7:30 p.m.
Shabbat Service

Saturday~February 16

9:15-10:15 a.m.
Sparks Beneath the Surface
 10:30 a.m.
Shabbat Service
 Torah Portion: Tetzaveh
 Exodus 27:20-30:10
 Haftarah: Ezekiel 43:10-27

Friday~February 22

4 p.m.
Shabbat Comes to You
 at Remington Heights
 7:30 p.m.
Learners Shabbat Service

Saturday~February 23

9:15-10:15 a.m.
Sparks Beneath the Surface
 10:30 a.m.
Shabbat Service
 Torah Portion: Ki Tissa
 Exodus 30:11-34:35

Scout Shabbat Saturday, February 9

The Jewish Committee on Scouting invites all Scouts and Scouters to attend the annual Scout Shabbat at Beth El Synagogue. Rick Emas, Marvin Goldberg and Mark Wiesman will be honored for their service in the promotion of Scouting among Jewish youth. Any Scout who has recently completed requirements for a religious award will also be honored. Questions regarding this program or to volunteer to help coordinate the event may be directed to Sandy or Jeff Passer at 330-4289.

Birthday Blessings Friday, February 22 6 p.m.

Children and adults who celebrate their birthdays during the month of February will be called to the bimah and receive a special blessing from the rabbi.

Sitter Service

is available...

- Wednesday evenings during Family School hours so that parents can take advantage of adult education opportunities;
- each Friday evening except when there is a Tot Shabbat;
- Saturday mornings when there is a bar or bat mitzvah;
- Sunday mornings when there is Religious School.

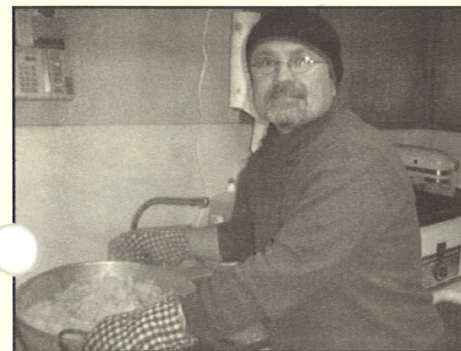
Advance reservations and a \$5 donation are appreciated. Please email Maureen at mkube@templeisraelomaha.com for reservations. Young children, including infants, are welcome.

Social Justice in Action

Sharing their day off on December 25, George Quittner (at left), Larry Gendler, John Dacey, and Ellen Long prepare Christmas Day meals to be served at The



Stephen Center. Todd Hutton (below) was among the others who donated food, baked desserts and/or helped serve food including Doris Alloy, Harry Alloy, Beth Brodkey, Jamie Burgess, Brenna Dacey, Don'L Dacey, Erin Dacey, Judy Fegin,

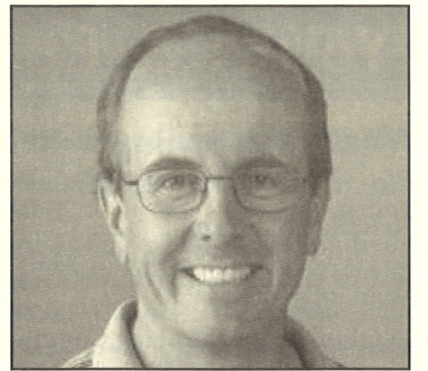


Jamie Friedland, Sandee Friedman, Patty Gilinsky, Jordana Glazer, Jayne Hutton, Jordan Jensen, Patrick Jensen, Debbi Josephson, Renee Kazor, Rabbi Eric Linder, Vincent Long, Kathy McGauvran, Ducky Milder, Jennifer Miller, Sharon Quittner, Iris Ricks, Marty Ricks, Sivi Roffman, and Annette Van de Kamp.

Especially for Our Senior Congregants

You asked for it! There are now three new senior congregant parking spaces directly across from the south entrance of Temple Israel. Look for the signs next to the far curb by the grass. These spaces are specifically reserved for senior members of Temple to facilitate their safety and ease when attending worship services, meetings, classes and other activities at Temple.

Panel to Discuss Death Penalty in Nebraska Sunday, February 24 following the Pancake Man at 9 a.m.



According to Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty (NADP), most states with the death penalty have higher murder rates than neighboring ones without it. Countries like Canada that have ended the death penalty have experienced a drop in violent crime. NADP also claims that the death penalty is used arbitrarily. Most likely to be sentenced to death are the poor, African Americans, and Latinos. The organization also argues that it costs two to six times as much to execute a person than to imprison someone for life.

To discuss Nebraska's death penalty, Mark Weddleton, state field organizer for NADP; State Senator Brad Ashford; and Rabbi Aryeh Azriel invite your participation in a conversation at Temple Israel.

A Head Start teacher in Lincoln, Mark has facilitated open discussions on the death penalty among civic groups, faith community gatherings, and on college campuses across Nebraska. "Working with young children living in poverty, I see everyday, the toll the cycle of crime and violence takes on our community," he said. "Over 16,000 people are murdered in this country every year. We need to find effective solutions to this tragic situation, setting aside political agendas to find out what really works."

Senator Ashford, elected three times by District 20 voters in Omaha to the Unicameral, is the chairperson of the Judiciary Committee and a member of the Education and Committee on Committees. An attorney and businessman, Senator Ashford is a member of the Nebraska Bar Association.

According to NADP, the American Bar Association has stated that problems in state death penalty procedures justify a nationwide execution freeze. A Myers Research poll in the spring of 2007 showed that life without parole is steadily replacing the death penalty as the preferred punishment for murder in Nebraska. Fifty one percent of Nebraskans supported life in prison without parole as an alternative to the death penalty while 42 percent opposed it in the poll results. The Unicameral came within one vote of advancing a bill that would have ended capital punishment in the last session.

Currently, 37 of the 50 states have a death penalty. However, death sentences in the United States have dropped by 60 percent since 1999.

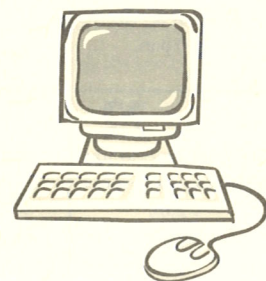
Since 1959, the Reform Movement has opposed the death penalty, reported the *Jerusalem Post* on December 13, 2007.

Keep Us Informed

Changes in privacy laws now restrict hospital chaplain offices from notifying Temple about congregants who are patients. We want to visit our members. You can help us keep in contact by:

1. Calling Temple prior to a scheduled hospital stay.
2. During admissions, inform the hospital staff of your Temple affiliation and give permission for your name to be released to the Temple office.
3. If you are unexpectedly admitted to the hospital, ask a family member or friend to call Temple.
4. Call and tell us if someone you know is ill or in the hospital and might be helped by a visit or telephone call.

Help us keep in contact with our Temple family!



Visit Temple's website
www.templeisrael-ne.org

Youth & Education

What's Happening in Religious School

Elyce Azriel, Director of Religious Education

No Religious School.....Sunday, January 20
No classes as we observe the Martin Luther King Day weekend. Classes resume on Wednesday, January 23.

Religious School Steering Committee.....Thursdays, January 24 & February 28
Join us at Noon in the library in our continuing effort to strengthen our school and the partnership between school and home. Please contact Katherine Finnegan, kfinnegan@cox.net, to let her know if you are planning to attend this meeting.

Family Israel Trip Meeting.....Sunday, January 27
If you are interested in seeing Israel with other families, join us at 10:30 a.m. for all the details!

Parent/Teacher Conferences for Grades K-6.....Sunday, February 3
Parents and teachers will meet to discuss student progress this Sunday morning! Families with last names beginning with A-L will meet from 10-11 a.m. Families with last names beginning with M-Z will meet from 11 a.m.-Noon. Parents should go directly to their child's classrooms to meet the teachers.

Grade 6 Shabbat Service and Luncheon.....Saturday, February 9
The sixth graders will lead the morning service which begins promptly at 10:30 a.m. The luncheon follows immediately after the service.

Prayer Assembly Sunday, February 10
Join us with your child at 10 a.m. for an enjoyable worship experience and then stay for another wonderful 4Bs session (see page 4 for more details).

No Religious School.....Sunday, February 17
No classes as we observe the President's Day weekend. Classes resume on Wednesday, February 20.

Pancake Man Breakfast Sunday, February 24
Mark your calendar and come for lots of pancakes and fun at 9 a.m.!

Grade 3 Shabbat Service and Dinner Friday, February 29
The third graders will lead the service which begins promptly at 6 p.m. The dinner immediately follows the service.

Temple Teens Build a Strong Identity in Middle/High School

I see it everyday...teens constantly trying on different styles of clothes, changing their hairstyles, using makeup and piercings to make statements. I heard it from educators and youth workers at the URJ Biennial..."We need to set guidelines and standards for our teens to follow." I hear it from parents..."I want my kid to have their own strong Jewish identity, but Judaism isn't exactly on the best seller list."

Here at Temple Israel, the Middle/High School curriculum begins to give teens a how-to guide to create the beginning of a personal, strong Jewish identity through community building and Jewish informal education.

Thank you to all our teachers working with our youth: Leora Azriel, Toby Fellman, Deb Finnicum and Rosie Zweiback teaching "Why Be Good?" to 7th and 8th graders; Justin Cooper and Jeff Gates leading 9th grade in "What's God Got To Do With It?"; Grades 10th, 11th and 12th studying L'Taken: A Social Justice program with Rabbis Azriel and Linder, and Barry Grossman. This group's studies culminate with a trip to the Religious Action Center in Washington, D.C. and a visit with lobbyists, national leaders and special interest groups.

B'Shalom,
Elyce Azriel

Candle Making and Tot Shabbat!

Friday, February 8, 6 p.m.

Bring your family's candlesticks to Tot Shabbat and the children will make candles to bless for Shabbat that evening. Tot Shabbat is a carefully orchestrated, interactive and informal Shabbat worship service that brings a Shabbat experience to our youngest congregants and their families. This service is designed for birth through Grade 2, but older siblings are always invited to join in the celebration!

Tot Shabbat is open to all families in the community. Parents, grandparents and children sing, play instruments, recite the blessings and share juice and *challah*. It's a great experience!

Stay and share a delicious home cooked Shabbat meal. To make a dinner reservation, please contact the Temple office at mkube@templeisraelomaha.com or 556-6536. The cost is \$5.00 for adults and free for children.



January's Tot Shabbat was a musical extravaganza with instruments from maracas to a ukelele. Below, children and parents learn different tune and hand movements to "Hinei Mah Tov." A joyful *hakafot* with the Torah followed.



Family School Tu B'Shevat Seder

Wednesday, January 23, 6:30 p.m.

It's still winter here and the ground is too cold and hard to plant trees. But in Israel, it's already spring. Trees are planted especially on Tu B'Shevat, the New Year for Trees. Temple's Family School will celebrate by reading from a special haggadah, enjoying some appropriate activities such as making a family tree, composing some personal writings, and participating in a little science experiment.

Cantor Wendy Shermet will lead a Seder as families learn and celebrate Tu B'Shevat and its significance and connection to Israel.



College Students Say L'hitraot Until Next Break



Sean Bernstein, Becky Smedlund, Joel Passer and Aaron Passer joined Rabbi Aryeh Azriel, Rabbi Eric Linder, Elyce Azriel and PJ Wiesner and other college students for the annual nosh and schmooze over winter break. This year, everyone enjoyed a delicious dinner at the Upstream Brewing Company.

Youth Group NEWSFLASH

PJ Wiesner, Director of Youth and Informal Education

Club 56 News

Our fifth and sixth graders bowled with fierce determination on December 2 when Club 56 went to West Lane Bowl. In between strikes, spares, and, yes, some gutter balls, the group laughed and goofed around. This was Club 56's Chanukah event, and everybody left a winner with a bag of gelt.

Below: Jacob Arnold lines up his shot in hopes of a strike.



OTYG News

OTYG proved that there's no such thing as too many cooks in the kitchen! Wearing colorful aprons, OTYGers took over Temple's kitchen to make the traditional Chanukah delight—latkes. Fourteen members took turns washing, peeling, grating and frying up the ingredients under the guidance of latke maven Rosie Zweiback. When they were finished, the group lit Chanukah candles and sat together to enjoy their handiwork.

Above right: Sam Burrell, Susan Freeman and Emily Katz know that chopping onions is worth the effort for a great latke.

Upcoming News

Get your swimsuits out of storage because OTYG is going to CoCo Key Water Resort (Holiday Inn on 72nd & Grover Streets) on Friday, February 9. And we're taking our 8th grade JYGers with us! After celebrating Shabbat together at Temple, we'll head to Nebraska's largest waterpark for an evening of wet and wild fun. Our reduced admission price will include pizza, pop and snacks. Please contact PJ for more information.

JYG News

To celebrate Chanukah, JYG had its first "Chanukah Dreidel Hunt" on December 5. It was the girls against the boys as they searched for hundreds of fluorescent dreidels hidden in the Livingston Chapel. The catch? The room was pitch black and they only had miniature flashlights to guide them! Thanks to Haley Burns, Sam Burrell and Rachel Saferstein for leading a great event.

Below: Grace Hack tallies up the scores for the JYG teams.



A Message From the OTYG President Sarah Bleicher

OTYG had a great first half of the year, but the rest of it will be even better! We have a lot of fun and exciting stuff planned, and we'd love to see even more participation!

We're working on a Tri-faith event on January 20 with the Omaha Muslim Youth Organization. We're also inviting the 8th graders to join us for an OTYG party at CoCo Key on February 9. Also, don't forget that we will need A LOT of help at the Spaghetti Dinner on January 27! Check the Youth Group bulletin board for all the information.

I hope everyone had a Happy New Year!

Looking Back...

Barbara Frohman moved to Omaha in 1950 as a newlywed with her husband Warner. She had grown up at a Reform congregation, Temple Israel in St. Joseph, MO. "I was confirmed there and my parents were active there," she said.

Soon after arriving in Omaha, Barbara began teaching Sunday School at the Park Avenue Temple. Rabbi Lou Silberman led the congregation at that time.

If you think getting to know your neighbor is a *new* concept, you'll be surprised to learn that Barbara was on the Panel of American Women telling her story as a Jewish woman as she traveled the state with Christian and African-American women. "Outstate Nebraskans had never seen a Jew or an African-American," she pointed out. Her participation on the panel wasn't that "popular" with her friends. "They kidded me about it." But she remained with the panel talking before many church groups, organizations, and schools in Omaha and elsewhere in Nebraska.

In the 1980s, Barbara was the assistant director at the local Anti-Defamation League where her daughter, Margo Parsow now serves as the education director.

Services at the Park Avenue Synagogue "were far more classical Reform" than they are today. All boys and girls were confirmed, but kids did not have a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. There was very little Hebrew in the worship service. When the changes were made, "some of them weren't so popular," Barbara recalled. However, she doesn't include herself in that group.

Temple is my "home," Barbara said. "I am a Jew, and if someone asked me what I'd like to be if I could choose, I'd still be a Jew, because the Jewish people have everything -- literature, religion, education, social justice. We take care of each other," she added.

Nowadays, Barbara enjoys playing bridge, participating in a book club and knitting. She's been knitting scarves for a shelter that her daughter Margo and grandson Charles visit. "Social action is what I'm interested in," Barbara emphasized. She believes in trying to make someone else's life better.

She's also creating a needlepoint block for the Temple Israel tapestry to represent the three generations of her family, *l'dor v'dor*.

Healing

Mi Shebeirach, the prayer for physical and emotional healing, is recited at the Friday evening Shabbat service. If you are ill and would like a *mi shebeirach* recited on your behalf, please call the Temple office (556-6536) before Noon on Fridays, so the congregation may offer its prayers for you.

If you know another person who needs the same, please ask the individual for permission to read his/her name before calling the office.

Matan Chaim: The Gift of Life

Jewish tradition teaches that we are partners with God in continuing and sustaining the daily miracles of creation. Organ and tissue donation are an extension of this partnership. Through donation you have the unique and holy opportunity to give the gift of life and wellness from one of God's creations-*you*-to another. With your gift, you respond *hineini* to God.

What does Reform Judaism say about organ and tissue donation?

Reform Judaism has long been an advocate of Organ Donation. A 1968 Reform Responsum commented that the use of such body parts in order to heal or save a life is in keeping with the mood of Jewish tradition and a positive act of holiness.

From the URJ Department of Jewish Family Concerns

Congratulations

On the Engagement of:
Claire Fredricks and Rob Osborne.
Parents are Sally Fredricks and the late Terry Fredricks, and Roger Osborn. Winthrop, MN, and the late Wanda Osborne. Grandparents are Arelene and David Fredricks.

Our Sympathy

The Congregation records with sorrow the deaths of...

Norman Anon, father of Debbie Friedman;

Robert Cohen, brother of Joie Simon;

June "Peggy" Krasne, wife of Leonard Krasne, mother of Penny Endelman and James Krasne, grandmother of Jamie Meyerson and Tony Endelman and sister-in-law of Rhoda and Carl Milder;

Isabel Young, grandmother of Linda Saltzman;

...and extends sympathy to their bereaved families.

Temple Funds

Your contributions to the following funds ensure the continuation and support of many vital activities of the Temple. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.

If you wish to contribute to any of these funds at a different level, please advise the Temple staff.

Tree of Life leaves are \$300. Tree of Life Boulders are \$3,000. If you would like information on these donations, please call Dennis DePorte, Executive Director, 556-6536.

\$6.00 fund contributions:

Rabbi Azriel's Fund for Jewish Professionals
David E. Beber Fund
David and Rachel Bleicher Camp Scholarship
Mel and Genevieve Bornstein Social Justice
Rabbi Sidney H. and Jane Brooks Institute on Judaism for Clergy Caring
Cemetery Improvement
Lorene R. Cohn Trust
Loyal B. Cohn Trust for the Advancement of Jewish Studies Education
Erwin Eisenberg Campership Fund Endowment
Harvey D. Ferer Scholarship Fund
Samuel and Ida Kaiman Endowment
Sol and Jeanette Krizelman Social Justice
Landscape Library
Jon Meyers Leadership Development Music
Outreach
Ruth and Bernard Raskin Youth Activities
Lewis and Flora Rubin Memorial Fund
Margaret and Arnold Robinson Family Jewish Education
Milton and Rosalie Saylan Jewish Education
Jennifer Soshnik Scholarship
Brad Sperling Memorial Fund for Education of Young Children
Temple Youth Group
Elinor Whitman Religious Education
Norman Whitman Fund for Jewish Learning
Janis L. Yale Enrichment
Hermene Zweiback Fund for Lifelong Jewish Learning
Rabbi Azriel's Discretionary
Rabbi Linder's Discretionary
Cantor Shermet's Discretionary
Executive Director's Discretionary
Prayer Book (\$30 donation)

Thank You For Supporting Our Congregation Through Donations That Remember and Honor Family and Friends

IN MEMORY OF: Norman Anon: Dora Goldstrom and George, Debbi and Larry Josephson, Sandy and Jeff Passer, Jeanne and Maximo Shechet; **Juni Bloch:** Judy and Buddy Roffman; **Bob and Selma Cohen:** Joanne and Jerry Freeman, Phyllis and Dick Glazer, Jill and Joe Goldstein, The Families of David, Richard and Stanley Slosburg; **Richard Graham:** Gayle and Jim Spooner; **Frances Klein and Helen Stern:** Lesly and I.I. Ozar; **Mollie and Sam Kohn:** Joanne and Bill Sgourakis; **Fran Milder:** Phyllis and Bob Newman, Kimberly and Matthew Placzek, The Families of David, Richard and Stanley Slosburg; **Frances Singer:** Doris Parker; **Isabel Young:** Fritz Luefschuetz; **Von Maur Victims:** Lourdes Secola

IN HONOR OF RECOVERY OF: Marty Lehr: Janey and Jerry Dann; **Patricia Mogil:** Sheila and Ray Tomps; **Dr. Larry Roffman:** Frances and Sam Fried, Barbara and Marshall Kushner, Lee and Howard Needelman

IN HONOR OF THE BIRTHDAY OF: Doris Abramson, Myrna Kirshenbaum: Harriett and Sherm Sperling; **Toby Fellman:** Sandy, Jeff, Joel and Aaron Passer; **Leonard Krasne:** Rosaline and Sam Epstein, Babe Nogg; **Denny Lewis:** Sally and Maynard Telpner; **Jerry Marburg:** Sue Schreiber; **Speedy Zweiback:** Sandy and Alan Nogg

IN HONOR OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF: Mr. and Mrs. Phil Cohn: Ruth Luttbeg; **Lois and Joel Finkel:** Shirley Weinstein

IN HONOR OF THE ENGAGEMENT OF: Marty Finkel and George: Shirley Weinstein; **Rachel Slosburg:** Margo, Aaron and Charles Parsow

IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH OF: Zachary Maddox Kazor: Doris Parker; **Calvin James Puckett Newman:** Lisa and Denny Lewis

IN HONOR OF THE B'NAI MITZVAH OF: Lauren Cooper, Grant Glazer, Alex Pachman: Ariel Kohll

IN HONOR OF A UNO HONORARY DEGREE: Sam Fried: Janey and Jerry Dann

IN APPRECIATION OF: Lyra Ann Monasee, Doris Newman, Barbara Rips, Kathy Simon: Helen Muskin

HAPPY CHANUKAH TO: Leora Azriel, Brenna Robinson, Kimberly Robinson, Sarah Schondelmeyer, David Swensen, Maya Wertheimer: The Zetzman Family

IN APPRECIATION OF: Rabbi Aryeh Azriel, Rabbi Eric Linder, Cantor Wendy Shermet, Dennis DePorte, Elyce Azriel, Lori Bennett, Willie Clark, Vicki Ducharme, Edith Gamble, Maureen Kube, Claudia Sherman, Bonnie Sullivan, Misty Weidner, PJ Wiesner, Lonnie Williams, Rosie Zweiback

Women of Reform Judaism Tribute Fund

IN HONOR OF BIRTH OF: Isabelle Sarah Eshel: Debbie and Scott Friedman

IN MEMORY OF: Norman Anon: Lois and Mel Epstein, Marilyn and Marty Warren

IN MEMORY OF: Robert Cohen: Marilyn and Marty Warren

Our most sacred prayers are recited when the congregation is standing. Therefore, we ask that you not enter or leave the sanctuary or chapel until worshippers are seated.