

TEMPLE

SINAI

סיני

OF BERGEN COUNTY

Annual Report
Fiscal Year Ending
June 30, 2018

In Appreciation and Recognition

Service as a Member of the Board of Trustees

David Klein
Matt Libien
Ilana Matteson
Karen Miller
Jane Parish
Lauren Rosenberg
Debbi Wolf
Peter Zlotnick

Mazal Tov to:

The 2017-2018 Officers and Board of Trustees for their commitment and dedication to our community, and the 2018-2019 Officers and Board of Trustees on working towards an exciting future.

Many Thanks

With warmest thanks to the volunteers who made everything work this year – to those who planned the budget and those who planted the seedlings, to those who brought speakers to our lectures and those who brought food to our homes, to those who raised ideas and to those who raised funds. Those of you who gave your time and talents to Temple Sinai have made a significant contribution to our community, and we thank you!

Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

What a year it has been here at Temple Sinai! And what better way to put a cap on it, during this graduation season, than to issue this, our first annual report for Temple Sinai of Bergen County. The forthcoming summer is an ideal time for us to look both ahead of us, to the exciting year about to begin at our congregation, as well as to reflect upon the momentous year we have just completed. Let me pause for a moment to tell you about some of the highlights from *my* year.

Of course, every year is special in the life of a synagogue but this year was extra-special, beginning with the High Holy Days when we opened the new Kaplen Sanctuary and Taub Family Social Hall. The renovation of these sacred spaces was a dream come true for the congregation, and the result of the hard-work and contributions of many committed staff and lay members, led by Peter Zlotnick, Ilana Matteson, Janene Edlin and Rob Goldstein. There are so many others who spent countless hours on this project that I cannot possibly mention them all here. Thank you all!

The celebration of these new sacred spaces continued throughout the year with special events such as Rabbi Dr. Norman Cohen's lecture about the biblical stories behind the stained-glass windows in the Kaplen Sanctuary, the celebration of *Shabbat Chanukah* and our March Rock *Shabbat* with Noah Aronson, which highlighted how special worship can be in our new sanctuary.

For me, the greatest highlight of the year was the dedication ceremony for the Kaplen Sanctuary and Taub Family Social Hall, held on April 28. It was a beautiful, sacred moment, one that few rabbis are privileged to experience. That the congregation chose to honor me at

the gala that followed, celebrating the end of my tenth year as your rabbi and my twenty-fifth year in the rabbinate, was icing on the cake. I cannot begin to express how grateful I am for your expressions of love and support for me, my family, and our wonderful congregation.

Another highlight of the year was welcoming Lynda Gutcheon, our Interim Director of Education and transition consultant, whom we will miss greatly as she departs to assist another congregation. But I'm even more excited to welcome Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer as the congregation's first Rabbi-Educator to her new role as Director of Lifelong Learning at Temple Sinai, which she will begin on July 1. Please join us on Friday night, July 6, as we informally welcome Rabbi Kramer-Mazer to our Sinai family, and again on Friday, October 5, for her formal installation into her new position.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the work that I am involved in year-in and year-out: our youth programming, featuring our 8th grade Teen Foundation and 9th grade *Netivot/Pathways* program, was once again very successful; the *b'nei mitzvah* program, which became stronger under the leadership of Cantor Nitza Shamah; *Shabbat Torah* study, Lunch and Learn, *Kulanu* and other adult education programs, which continued apace; *Shabbat* and festival worship, etc.

For all of this and more I owe a debt of gratitude to our very able senior staff: Cantor Nitza Shamah, Executive Director Joe Slade, ECC Director Risa Tannenbaum and Interim Director of Education Lynda Gutcheon. They are all terrific at what they do as well as a wonderful team with whom to collaborate. I also owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sally Collins, my executive assistant, as well as the other support staff: Hillary Hans, Jaki Raider and Barbara Waldman. And let us not forget the best custodial staff of any congregation with which I have been affiliated, led by Carlos Arizaga!

I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to our lay leadership, who dedicated countless extra hours to Temple Sinai in this remarkable year: Our President, Peter Zlotnick; vice-presidents: Ann-Marie Bennoun, Marci Ginzburg, Steve Gold, Andrew Hollender, David Klein and Karen Miller; secretary, Lauren Rosenberg; comptroller, Paul Seitelman; Brotherhood President, Jack Reich; Sisterhood President, Lauren Kluger; as well as the rest of our Board of Trustees, committee chairs and volunteers.

Let us take great pride in what we have accomplished together this year, but I meant what I said at the dedication ceremony on April 28—we're just getting started! Let's make the next year even better.


Rabbi Jordan Millstein

President's Message

"Good is the enemy of great." -- Jim Collins, Good to Great.

As your President for the past two years, that phrase has been my motto. And, with these sage words in mind, I have had the privilege to stand at the forefront of a movement that has led to the physical, spiritual, and kinetic transformation of our synagogue. While all around us and across our nation, religious institutions of all shapes, sizes and denominations are foundering, merging, or just ceasing to exist, ours has thrived and become rejuvenated. We are not done yet with the task at hand, but as my presidency draws to a close, I can't help but take stock of how far we've come.

There is a vibrancy here, a positive energy that you cannot help but feel from the moment you enter one of our portals. It's there whether you enter through the front door or by live-streaming our content on-line; it's there in our brand-new logo and in our new website (visit templesinaibc.org). It was evident during our inaugural High Holy Day services in our new Sanctuary and Social Hall when, sitting on the *bima*, I looked out on people beaming as far as the eye could see. It was just as evident on the evening of April 28th when we welcomed 250 people to celebrate the dedication of those same sacred spaces, formally naming them the Kaplen Sanctuary and Taub Family Social Hall, while also commemorating Rabbi Millstein's 25 years in the rabbinate and tenth anniversary at Temple Sinai. No matter how you have engaged with our community during the last several years, the renaissance of Temple Sinai and the vitality and energy here is palpable.

This phenomenon has not occurred by accident. Through the tireless work of our clergy, senior staff, and lay leadership, we have worked arduously to implement a concerted and deliberate strategy of creating an environment of inclusion, diversity, and warmth at our Temple, one that is steeped in the Reform Jewish values and traditions of the past while looking forward to the needs of our people in the 21st century. In creating this strategy and vision, we recognize that Temple Sinai is more than the physical space in which we gather; it is a community that exists wherever we gather. Temple Sinai is us, the people that comprise it.

In this age of multi-media connectivity, we also recognize that we must not take for granted that people will automatically want to be part of this living, breathing place. We must make Temple Sinai relevant to each group and individual. To accomplish this vision, we must focus on creating spheres of excellence in every facet of our congregation. From the physical renovation of our facilities to the restructuring of our life-long learning programs; from the coordination of the symbols and colors of our new brand and logo with the themes and colors of our new Sanctuary, to the various means by which we communicate within our community and with the community-at-large, we have not spared attention to any detail. Every action and initiative that we have undertaken together during my presidency has been done with great thought, care, and love.

These projects could never have begun without great sacrifices of time and generous contributions by many individuals and families throughout our community. I deeply appreciate how active and engaged our entire community has been over the past two years. That engagement is the essence of our community's biblical catchphrase, *hineini*, which loosely means, "I am actively and fully here." This community has been actively and fully here throughout our journey together, and your engagement has made my tenure truly uplifting and gratifying. It has been clear from the start that all of us want to be part of Temple Sinai. It's clear to everyone else, as well, as the recent feature on Temple Sinai in the *Jewish Standard* makes clear.

The reason for that clarity is obvious: our entire congregation has played a role in the success of these projects and initiatives. And there are two individuals whom I especially want to thank. Rabbi Millstein and Joe Slade, our Executive Director, have worked tirelessly in front of and behind the scenes as my partners, friends, and motivators to keep each of our numerous projects and initiatives on task and moving our community forward towards our ultimate goals. Transition is never easy, but without their kinship and perseverance, I do not know whether I would have had the energy or drive to undertake this great responsibility. For their

camaraderie, inspiration, good cheer, and occasional late-night bourbon tastings, I am eternally grateful.

I also want to thank Cantor Nitza Shamah for her soulfulness, leadership and beautiful voice. She has been a beacon to our entire community for many years and we are fortunate to have you at the helm of our musical programming year in and year out. Thank you, too, to the senior staff and administrative staff for their support and hard work.

I would be remiss if I did not collectively thank our Board of Trustees, who, as a body, rose to the occasion time and again to tackle big ideas and big projects. The Board and other leaders, who served on various *ad hoc* committees or working groups, willingly and wholeheartedly sacrificed their time and contributed their knowledge, expertise, and love of our congregation to these efforts. I cannot thank them enough for enduring the frequent and long –long – meetings that occurred on what seemed like a weekly basis throughout my term. Yet despite the time these meetings required, the Board remained engaged and focused and took each item on our vast agenda seriously, thoughtfully, and with great care. Their dedication to this congregation, and their willingness to make it great, has truly been an inspiration to me. Thank you.

Indeed, for everyone who toiled in the trenches, who opened their hearts - and wallets - to enable us to achieve something special at Temple Sinai during my presidency, I am eternally grateful. Big changes require great sacrifice, and everything we have been doing has been focused on one vital mission: *L'dor V'dor*, from generation to generation. Our goal has been to create a legacy for future generations at Temple Sinai, a legacy that is embedded in and tied to our traditions, culture, and Reform Jewish values. I'm proud that each day we have moved the dial a little closer towards achieving this objective.

But, as Rabbi Millstein has reminded us, friends, our mission is not yet complete. Much remains to be done, and we need your continued contributions and support.

On the night of our Gala, our photographer noticed that I had on a name tag and we struck up a conversation (check our Facebook page for photos – facebook.com/TempleSinaiBC). He has been coming to Temple Sinai for 15 years to cover various *b'nei mitzvah* and other events. He noted that when he first started working here, our facility was not really inviting. The physical layout was fine, but the space and the people seemed to be missing a certain energy. He then said something that genuinely moved me, that there was a real “vibe” here now that isn't just coming from the newly renovated space, but was emanating from the people who were in attendance that evening. I felt that same energy at the Gala and other events during this past year. I was really taken by the fact that he noticed it too, because he was a casual observer with no other connection to our community. I took his words to mean that we are doing something right.

This energy that we have created must be nurtured and cultivated, and we must maintain it if we want this community to continue to thrive. We are building something very special here that each of us owns and shares. We need your continued support and I hope that you will continue to support our incoming President, Jon Pasternak, the way you have supported me. I also hope that by the end of his presidency he feels as fulfilled as I do now.

During Jon's first year we will continue with our Capital Campaign to raise money for the completion of our renovation project and to create an endowment that will ensure the continued vitality and sustenance of our sacred home. We will also welcome to the ranks of

our clergy, Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer, who will continue the vital work that Interim Religious School Director Lynda Gutcheon began this past year. Lynda has been a true godsend for us and, in the short time that she has been with us, she has left an indelible mark that we will benefit from for years to come. On behalf of the entire Board and Temple Sinai community, we thank her for her professionalism, friendliness, and wisdom.

Last, but not least, I would be remiss if I did not mention something that is surely a mark of excellence. It is no small feat that in the life of a not-for-profit religious organization, for the past two years, with so many extraordinary initiatives underway, we have also financially operated at or close to break-even. In fact, this year, if all goes well, we could end the year with a small surplus. This truly is the sign of a vital and vibrant organization, because we are taking care of our own business responsibly and prudently. But the hard work does not end and the need for your engagement and support does not cease either. We need you to continue to cultivate and nurture the spiritual – and financial – well-being of Temple Sinai.

When I was first invited to serve as the President of Temple Sinai, many people told me I was crazy. I knew they were probably right and that this “volunteer” job would be challenging to say the least, but I also knew that I would jump into the breach whole-heartedly. What I did not realize then, though, was that, while I may have been crazy to accept, this has been one of the most enriching experiences of my life. I am so privileged to have been invited to assume this role. And for that, I offer a final and heartfelt thank you to the entire Temple Sinai community for bestowing upon me one of the most wondrous gifts I have ever received, and for making Temple Sinai a center of excellence and the flagship Reform Synagogue in Bergen County.



Peter Zlotnick, President 2016-2018

Cantor's Message

Dear Friends,

Thank you for an inspiring year of music and friendship.

Thank you Peter for your wonderful leadership and guidance and *Mazal tov*, Jon, for stepping in. I am looking forward to continuing our work together.

Thank you, Ilana Matteson and Janene Edlin, and the numerous committee members for leading us through the renovation project.

Sorry for missing this meeting due to a short trip to Israel that was planned a while ago. I am sending all of you love and big hugs from Tel Aviv.

Here are the musical highlights of this past year:

- Rock *Shabbat* with our Temple Sinai Rock *Shabbat* Band was very well attended and received. Heartfelt thanks to the band members for their time, talent and dedication. Thank you, Rabbi Millstein, for your wonderful vision, support, guidance and love of music. Thank you, Anne-Marie Bennoun, David Klein, Debbi Wolf, our generous sponsors and our devoted dinner volunteers for organizing and preparing delicious homemade congregational dinners.
- Our March Rock *Shabbat* hosted singer/songwriter Noah Aronson who brought to us his inspiring music and teaching. The program was made possible by the generosity of our members.

- Melodia Women's Choir of NYC participated in a memorable service with breath taking instrumentalists that marked the completion of the new sanctuary. Heartfelt thanks to Sisterhood for sponsoring the program. My deepest thanks to our accompanist and choral director Cynthia Powell, the musical director of Melodia.
- Musical services with flutists Lois & Elliot Roman, our members, enriched our various *Shabbat* experiences when we commemorated the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., celebrated *Shabbat Shirah* and enjoyed several Friday night musical services throughout the year.
- The new Family Service on the 1st day of *Rosh Hashanah* was again accompanied by pianist Cynthia Powell, accordionist Ronn Yedidia and guest percussionist Paolo Cantarella. It created a wonderful opportunity for parents and children to worship together on the High Holy Days.
- Our High Holy Day choir was part of the musical Second Day of *Rosh Hashanah* service along with Cynthia Powell and harpist Elaine Christy. Special thanks to our devoted volunteer singers, Sandy Gabe, Suzy Rosenberg and Paul Seitelman and to the Rhodes family for their inspiring music on *Yom Kippur*.
- The Interfaith Couples Group enjoyed its 8th year together. We studied, shared experiences and cherished time spent with one another. The group welcomes new members. To join our group please email me.
- Our *B'nei Mitzvah* brought their enthusiasm, skills, confidence and commitment to us. Thank you Lynda Gutcheon, for a wonderful year of collaboration and support. Thank you Barbara Waldman and our teachers for your help and dedication to Judaism and to our children. It was a pleasure working side by side with Rabbi Millstein and Rabbinic Intern Sarah Berman preparing our Confirmation class for their Confirmation service.
- Music making in the ECC has been a special joy. Thank you Risa for making Jewish music an important part of our ECC curriculum. Thank you, Jaki, for all your help and support. I am looking forward to the special Shabbat with the ECC this coming Friday.

Going ahead, here are some of the upcoming programs:

- A special musical service hosting the Stonewall Chorale with organ, harp and percussion led by our own Cynthia Powell on October 12. The Stonewall Chorale will present the Chichester Psalms by Leonard Bernstein.
- A monthly Rock *Shabbat* dinner and musical service with our Rock Band and special guests.
- An upbeat and joyful Rock *Shabbat* on February with our band hosting rock star, composer and song leader Billy Jonas.
- March 29, 2019 Rock *Shabbat* with our band and guest rock star, composer and singer Peri Smilow and her music.
- A lively and upbeat family service on the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* and a musical service on the second day will continue in the fall.
- *Simchat Torah* celebration with the Hester Street Klezmer Troupe will make our *Hakafot* observance fun and exciting.

I hope you can all join us!

To my wonderful Rock *Shabbat* Band: Ethel Abrams, Annice Benamy, Sandy Gabe, Stacy Esser, Jonah Gold, Joe Hecht, Andrew Hollender, Rabbi Jordan Millstein, Jonathan Pasternak,

Jack Reich, Suzy Rosenberg, Barbara Rosenfeld and Roger Schnur, thank you so much for making our Rock *Shabbat* experience the highlight of the year. Thank you, Annice Benamy, Sandy Gabe and Paul Seitelman for helping with the music at services.

Heartfelt thanks to our donors who have continued to support our special musical programs with their generous contributions.

It has been a joy and a privilege to work with our President Peter Zlotnick. Thank you, Peter, for your devoted, thoughtful and inspiring leadership, for your support and for your deep love of Jewish music. Thank you, Jon Pasternak, for taking over. I am so excited to continue working together with both of you.

My deepest thanks to our Executive Committee, our Board of Trustees, our Temple committees, and especially our Ritual Committee chairs, Debbi Wolf and Paul Seitelman and the committee members.

Heartfelt thanks to our lay leaders at the various *Shabbat* and holiday services, our *Torah* and *Haftarah* chanters, our High Holy Days musicians; *shofar* players, my volunteer singers, our wonderful students and their families, the Rhodes Family, Sisterhood and Brotherhood.

It was a wonderful experience working with our Interim Director of Education Lynda Gutcheon. Her amazing energy, creativity and strength made this transition year exciting and joyful. I am looking forward to working with Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer. We are all excited to have you on board, Beth!

I feel blessed to be working with a wonderful senior and supporting staff. Thank you, Rabbi Jordan Millstein, for your support and encouragement, great vision and creative leadership. Thank you, Joe Slade, for skillfully directing and supporting us with patience and confidence. Thank you, Lynda Gutcheon and Risa Tannenbaum, for a great year with our Religious School and ECC students. To our Religious School, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and ECC teachers and to our outstanding support staff: Sally Collins, Hillary Hans, Andrea Kopido, Barbara Waldman, Jaki Raider and our amazing maintenance crew under Carlos Arizaga's leadership: Cesar, Yndhira, Jorge, Angel and Pedro – thank you for making Temple Sinai a wonderful place.

This is an exciting time in the life of the Temple Sinai family. I am grateful to all our members who have been making the renovation project possible and looking forward to being in our new Sanctuary and social hall together in joy, health and gratitude. Have a good and relaxing summer.

Cantor Nitza Shamah

2017-2018 Committee Reports

Brotherhood

It was another successful year for the Brotherhood of Temple Sinai.

We started the year by once again co-sponsoring Break the Fast with Sisterhood.

That was followed shortly thereafter by ending a long-standing tradition of harvesting reeds from the side of Teaneck roads, by purchasing for Temple Sinai permanent bamboo *schach*

(covering for our *Sukkah*). Thank you to all those who helped us decorate the *Sukkah*, especially Joe Slade, who fearlessly climbed on top to install our new covering.

October began the first of several speakers to our (almost) monthly Brotherhood breakfasts series. We heard from *Zahal Shalom*, who bring disabled Israeli war veterans to the US. Rabbi/Dr. Norman Cohen brought our *Hineini* stained glass windows to life. We learned from Ron Kaplan what it was like to be a Jew and play baseball in the major leagues with anti-semitism coming from the stands. And we heard the moving story and plight of today's immigrants coming to the US who wind up in detention centers, and the valiant advocacy work of the First Friends of NJ and NY.

In November, Brotherhood co-sponsored Sinai Sessions V. Bravo to all who worked on and off the stage to make it once again the hallmark annual event it has become at Temple Sinai. And speaking of hallmark events, kudos to David Klein and all who volunteered their time making our ninth annual Trivia night such a wonderful event. Over 140 attendees, \$1,400 raised by raffle donated to the Youth Group Scholarship fund.

Guys Night Out in March, held at The Peddler in Cresskill, was once again a big success. There is no substitute for the comradery and bonding that takes place when you put a bunch of guys together with wings in one hand and a cold beer in the other! And thanks to the combined generosity of those in attendance, and Brotherhood's match, Temple Sinai donated \$2,000 to the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey's March Mega Food Drive. Bravo again to our *Tikkun Olam* chair, David Klein, for representing Temple Sinai so honorably!

Without naming each of them (they know who they are), I would like to thank the gentleman whose efforts and guidance take place behind the scenes of Brotherhood.

On behalf of Brotherhood, I would like to send out a profound thank you and wishes for only wonderful things in the future to our departing interim Religious School director, Lynda Gutcheon. You have done a spectacular job paving the way for the transformation our school is undergoing. And in that vein, Brotherhood welcomes with open arms, and looks forward to supporting in any way we are needed, our incoming Rabbi-Educator Beth Kramer-Mazer.

Wishing all the best to our departing Rabbinic Intern Sarah Berman. The world will be a better place because of future spiritual leaders like you!

And lastly, *mazel tov* and thank you to my dear friend Peter Zlotnick for all that you have done over these past two years to indelibly imprint who you are into the legacy and tapestry that is Temple Sinai! A tough act to follow, for sure. But if there is one person up to that task, he is about to step into your shoes July 1. Brotherhood will have his back, 110%!

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and safe summer!

Branding

We are very excited about our new Temple Sinai visual brand because it brings the reality of the Temple Sinai experience to life in a very compelling way, which will help us achieve our next level of growth in exactly the way the new sanctuary and future renovation will.

The logo and visual identity is one of the key ambassadors of our image and will help us tremendously not only with our existing congregation but in attracting new members.

As you know, we had many conversations with our Temple Community and found we have many wonderful traits and provide a compelling experience that our visual identity was not communicating. Working with Masters Group Design, a firm we selected with Board approval after many months of searching, we have created a new logo and visual identity that is the ambassador our true image:

- Warm
- Approachable
- Vibrant
- Contemporary
- Jewish

We also based the color palette on the interior design palette, so it creates a terrific synergy for all of our new and exciting changes.

In addition to the logo, we have created sub-brands for our Early Childhood Center, Religious School, Sisterhood and Brotherhood. Previously, all of these important parts of the Temple Sinai experience didn't look like they were related to each other or even to Temple Sinai. Now, anyone can look at any of these logos and know that we are all part of the same family, same wonderful experience.

The website has also been revised to project the same positive image, so that any time you interact with Temple Sinai, you feel the warm, welcoming and vibrant experience that makes our Temple such a special place.

A special thank you to the committee: chaired by Lynne Stewart and Sabra Waxman, the committee was comprised of Anne-Marie Bennoun, Jay Cohen, and Executive Director Joe Slade.

ECC

This year we had 104 children in the ECC. 55 children were enrolled in our summer camp and most children returned to the ECC in the fall. We opened up our 8th classroom, the Silver Room, to accommodate more, younger children. Toddler/Parent classes continued to attract new families who are committed to Temple Sinai. We had an abundance of 2 year olds this year. Including our new Springtime 2s children, we had a total 44 two year olds. This is a record for us.

Our greatest school challenge this year was the incredible amount of work to attain reaccreditation from the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC). Every five years we go through the grueling process to receive "the torch," the symbol which denotes a school of excellence. We are proud of this accomplishment which separates us from all other Jewish Early Childhood programs in the county.

Some other ECC highlights of the year... We added tennis, cup cooking and Tumble and Cheer to our afterschool enrichment offerings. Attendance in our extended hours programs have grown considerably. In addition to Mocha our bunny, we have 2 ducklings running around school. Fluffy and Quackie were hatched 2 weeks ago and will be going back to the farm shortly. The Yellow Room has 2 new guests as well. Shabbat and Shalom are gold fish who delight the 2 year olds each day.

We have begun the process of automating the registration and attendance for the school. It should be up and running by September.

One of the elements that makes our ECC so special are our parents. This year's Parent Association had multiple fundraisers and community building events like Couples Night Out. The proceeds from this evening will allow our school to bring in a nature program for all of our classes next fall that specializes in Jewish values. We began with our outdoor Fall Festival in October and will end with our Spring Carnival this week. We continuously reap the benefits through the generosity and hard work of our wonderful parents.

Thank you to Jaki for all her assistance in assuring that our school runs smoothly.

Thank you to our 30 teachers for putting their hearts and souls into their work.

Thank you to Rabbi Millstein and Cantor Nitza for the songs and stories we enjoy together.

A special thanks goes to Joe for our daily consultation sessions and to Carlos and his crew for keeping our school in great shape.

Wishing all our families a safe and happy summer.

Risa

ECC Parent Association

It's been another very successful year for the Early Childhood Parent Association. Our year kicked off this fall with our third annual Fall Festival, our outdoor welcome event for all families. We had a record number of vendors at our annual Holiday Boutique, and as is custom, our proceeds were used to purchase classroom materials. The PA also ran several other wonderful programs for our children, including duckling hatching, butterflies, the petting zoo, the CAP program, Health and Safety Weeks, a trip to the Nature Center, and more. We recently completed our second Parents' Night Out event, which raised money for a new science and nature curriculum. We were pleased with how many families attended, and everyone had a great time listening to dueling pianos! The PA will finish out the year strong with our End of Year Carnival for families and our Potluck dinner for parents.

Financial Report

This was a successful year, financially, for Temple Sinai. Although our fiscal year does not close until June 30, 2018, we can now project that the Temple will likely break even at the end of the year. Since the Congregation approved a budget with a nearly \$70,000 projected deficit at the 2017 annual meeting, this is terrific news!

Fiscal Year 18 revenues and expenses are projected to be about \$2.65 million, using the reported actuals through April of 2018. A key driver of this happy news was the very successful Dedication and Gala event on April 28th—many thanks to Gala co-Chairs Anne-Marie Bennoun and Janene Edlin. This year's Gala broke many records—for attendance, as well as for income, netting the Temple \$70,000!

The Early Childhood Center also had another banner year, with over 100 students enrolled during the academic year and an all-time high of 55 children attending summer camp during summer 2017. In total, the ECC is projected to gross just over \$1,000,000 this year.

Many people deserve thanks for this, beginning with the Finance Committee, chaired by Treasurer and President-Elect Jon Pasternak and Executive Director Joe Slade. The Committee is comprised of Hilary Eth, Rob Goldstein, Matt Libien, Comptroller Paul

Seitelman, and Adam Steinberg. Of course, tremendous kudos go to the entire Temple staff for their efforts at controlling expenses, and Fundraising Chair Heidi Reichert for several successful events this year, including the first annual golf outing.

Marketing

This was the inaugural year for the Temple Sinai Marketing Committee, but certainly not the last. Led by Scott Sonkin, the committee was comprised of a diverse group of Temple members, including Anne-Marie Bennoun, Jay Cohen, Stacy Esser, Jon Pasternak, Lynne Stewart, Sabra Waxman, and Peter Zlotnick. The staff liaison was Executive Director Joe Slade.

The committee was formed to capitalize on the energy surrounding Temple Sinai this year; driven by the renovation process and changes in our educational offerings, it was clear that we needed to do more to convey the excitement happening at Temple Sinai to the broader community. A variety of projects were undertaken, both small and large.

Perhaps the largest accomplishment by the Committee this year was the development of a new Temple website (visit templesinaibc.org). Our previous website was several years old, and, prompted by many members, the Committee made a revitalized site a major priority. This was a multi-month undertaking, and we are very pleased to have incorporated the Branding Committee's efforts into the design.

In addition to the website, the Committee launched a three-part marketing initiative, focused on the Early Childhood Center, the Religious School, and promoting Temple Sinai more generally. You may have seen the ads in the *Jewish Standard*, *Northern Valley Suburbanite*, and *Northern Valley Press*, as well as on Facebook (don't forget to 'like' Temple Sinai on Facebook—facebook.com/TempleSinaiBC). The final group of ads will run over the summer as part of our annual High Holy Days membership drive.

Finally, the Committee focused on ways to get Temple Sinai featured in the news, and we are pleased to report success in that area as well. We issued a number of press releases beginning in the late winter and going through the early spring, which resulted in several articles being published about the Temple. The most prominent was a multi-page cover article by the *Jewish Standard* about the renovations to the Kaplen Sanctuary and Taub Family Social Hall.

In all, it was a successful year for the Marketing Committee. We are excited to continue working over the summer and next year to ensure that everyone knows about what a wonderful community we are building here!

Paul Winter

Paul Winter Helping Hands is a group of temple members who are available to help other members on an occasional and as needed basis. People may need an occasional ride to a doctor or other appointment or to services. PWHH also brings cake or fruit to *shiva* homes, on behalf of the group and by extension, Temple Sinai. The group is able to do more, if more of us are involved. It is a great way to make our temple "beautiful" on a more personal level and to improve our interpersonal "capital." This has been a quiet year for PWHH, mostly because we need more member involvement. PWHH makes annual donations, on behalf of Temple Sinai to the Community Chest and the Center for Food Action.

If you think that PWHH sounds like a good idea, do you have a little spare time to help someone else? You decide when you are available and you are always able to turn down a

request. Please let Hilary Eth (hilaryeth@hotmail.com or 201-621-1097) know when you are available, i.e. which day or days of the week, morning, afternoons or evening.

Contact Hilary if you need assistance or let Rabbi Millstein or Cantor Nitza know.

Religious School

This was an exciting and energizing year for our Religious School. We faced the transition head on with new curricula in grades 3, 5, 6, & 7, newly designed bulletin boards throughout the school, a new project based learning model for all grades, and a new content based Hebrew program. Our students responded in a positive way, demonstrating much growth and learning over the course of the year.

Each grade performed a *mitzvah* project in addition to their regular curriculum. With the mission set out on the first day of school, each grade deliberated what they would do to make a difference in our community and beyond. They all did an amazing job with their respective projects, from sending specially created cards to the elderly at the Jewish Home, to collecting clothing and bringing it to the Women's Right Center. In addition, we made efforts to focus on *zedakah* collections and each grade decided where to donate the money they had collected.

Our family programs were also inspiring. Our 6th grade families focused on upcoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and parents wrote messages to their children about the meaning of their Hebrew names, sharing details about the relatives for whom they were named. Each family made a sterling silver *yad* with the student's Hebrew name in it to be used as the student reads from the *Torah* when they become *B'nei Mitzvah*. A special Israeli artist joined us for that program. Our 3rd grade families wrote a recipe book to capture the message of how traditions are created in a family. As a school, we celebrated Israeli Independence day by building Jerusalem, one Lego at a time, with architect Stephen Schwartz.

This is just a snapshot of the exciting and meaningful things that happened this year.

We are grateful to the Education Committee and especially the chairs, Jane Parish and Sabrina Kanofsky. This committee is hard working and dedicated. With Jane and Sabrina stepping down as the chairs of the Education Committee, we appreciate their efforts and long-standing commitment to our school and Temple Sinai.

As we continue our transition, it is exciting to welcome Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer as the new Director of Lifelong Learning. Rabbi Kramer-Mazer brings her own energy and experience to Temple Sinai and I am confident the Religious School will continue to move forward and flourish.

Lynda Gutcheon

Dear Friends,

It is with great anticipation and joy that I look forward to joining the Temple Sinai family in just a few short weeks as your Rabbi-Educator. I am deeply grateful for the warm welcome that so many of you have already extended to me, and I look forward to meeting many more of you in the near future. Please stop by my office and say hello this summer!

Building upon the excellent work of our talented and dedicated Interim Educator Lynda Gutcheon, together we will continue to nurture an educational system that is vibrant, engaging and relevant to our Reform Jewish community today. I am honored and thrilled to be partnering with our passionate Religious School faculty and staff members, as well as the amazing Rabbi Millstein, Cantor Shamah, Risa Tannenbaum, Joe Slade and all of you, our members, as we build upon the many strengths of our educational programs and allow them to soar even higher.

We read in the *siddur*, the prayer book, these beautiful words: "Instill in our hearts to understand and comprehend, to listen, learn, teach, observe, perform and fulfill all the words of Your Torah's teaching with love." May these words of our tradition inspire us all as we joyously and devotedly share our holy work together in the years ahead!

With warmest blessings,

Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer

Renaissance

Renaissance welcomes all Temple Sinai members 55 and up. This includes many who are still working full time and may have fairly grown children living at home as well as those who are retired and are now "empty nesters." For the former, programs are offered in the evenings or on weekends in which they can participate. Other activities take place weekdays during the day.

This year featured our annual post-High Holy Days luncheon and the festive *Chanukah* dinner in December where attendees help light the beautiful Temple Sinai outdoor Menorah. These two events were quite popular this past year. Another highlight of 2018 was the entertaining presentation in March on the subject of the Catskills covering the time when many Jews vacationed there in the summer. This program evinced many nostalgic nods and much laughter.

Past experiences that members have enjoyed were trips to the Brooklyn Museum and Botanic Gardens, the Jewish Museum in Manhattan, the Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, NJ, the Eldridge Street Synagogue, Green Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn and, closer to home, the African Exhibit at the SMA Fathers on Bliss Avenue in Tenafly. Renaissance groups have also gone to local theatre productions. Often, these excursions have ended with dinner at a local restaurant. At Temple Sinai, there have been book discussion, movies and lectures of interest to Renaissance members.

Renaissance is always open to suggestions about new programs. Please join and perhaps volunteer to be part of the leadership. Dues are just \$18 per person. Just call Debby at 201 461-7960, dwolfgsgg@aol.com or Ilene at 201 871-4885, ilene5656@gmail.com or call the temple office.

Ritual

Ritual Committee

Debra Wolf, Paul Seitelman Co-Chairs

Committee Members:

Annice Benamy, Leny Davidson, Charlotte Eth, Hilary Eth, Florence Friedman, Sandy Gabe, Peggy Kabakow, Stuart Meistrich, Lois Roman, Suzy Rosenberg, David Schneiderman, Dan Sherman, Richard Simon, Jesse Wassner, Sabra Waxman, Ilene Wechter, Shelly Winner

The Committee seeks a balance in retaining traditional observances while introducing new texts and practices promoted by the URJ. The Committee works with Rabbi Jordan Millstein and Cantor Nitza Shamah.

During the renovation, the Committee provided guidance to the Renovation Steering Committee on both the re-location of memorial board installation, and design consideration of the sanctuary stain glass that it should not contain full human imagery.

With appreciation to new member Lois Roman and her volunteering connections, Temple Sinai participated in a *Yom Hashoah* ceremony on April 12, 2018 where Temple Sinai was one of over 25 congregations that brought each of their Czech memorial *Torahs* rescued from the Holocaust.

Over the past two years, the Committee has supported changes to enrich our community observances over the High Holy Days with the introduction of new prayer book, *Mishkan HaNefesh* and a Family service on the afternoon of the first day of *Rosh Hashanah*. For those in our community who cannot attend services due to health or their location, we continue to support video streaming of High Holy Day services and select musical Friday *Shabbat* services with the agreement of guest musicians.

The Committee liaises with other dedicated groups of individuals in temple that enhance our community worship: High Holy Day Honors Committee, High Holy Day Ushers. Additional assistance is always welcomed. Ritual would like to acknowledge Brotherhood and Sisterhood for assuming responsibility organizing among other activities; Break the Fast, *Sukkah* decorating, *Simchat Torah hakafot* processions, outdoor *Chanukah* menorah lighting and the *Tu Bi'Shvat seder*.

Members of the Committee take responsibility for organizing the community meal before or after a Festival holiday service (*Sukkot, Passover, Shavuot*), recruiting greeters for Friday night services and encouraging participation for more informal Saturday *Shabbat* service when no *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is scheduled.

The Ritual Committee welcomes new members. If you are interested in joining the committee, or wish to be involved in a specific capacity, please reach out to either co-chair.

Sisterhood

Sisterhood had a wonderful year of programming, connecting our diverse group of women together in social action, *tikkun olam* and friendship.

We kicked our year off with a delicious summer dinner for our leadership.

At our membership brunch this year, we made beautiful flower arrangements.

We led a diverse group of congregants to the Women's March in NYC.

We hosted a panel discussion with the Bergen County chapter of Moms Demand Action Against Gun Violence.

We prepared, served and mobilized a dinner for 150 families at the shelter in Hackensack.

We attended and helped support Sinai Sessions.

We sent *Chanukah* gifts to our college students.

We organized and presented gifts to our *b'nei mitzvahs*, confirmands and ECC students.

We held fundraisers selling flowers, homemade baked goods, and wrapping books at Barnes & Noble.

We led *shalach manot*, a huge effort mobilizing and delivering *Purim* bags to our members, staff and ECC families.

We led *Shabbat* services for the congregation.

We held our book club throughout the year, culminating in an author's visit from Israel and a delicious brunch.

We contributed to the ongoing Capital Campaign at a level to sponsor Temple Sinai's *Shabbat* table!

Our end-of-year cocktail party is June 12th and promises to be a fun night of games! Hope to see you there!

All this would not be possible without our amazing member volunteers and our Sisterhood Board and Advisory Board.

THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING

Sisterhood Board:

Anne-Marie Bennoun - Immediate Past President

Hilary Eth - Vice Pres. Fundraising

Franci Steinberg – Treasurer

Sari Hollender – Secretary

Jessica Hirsh - Vice Pres. Programming

Sabra Waxman - Vice Pres. Social Media

Ruth Seitelman - Vice Pres. Ritual

Ronni Zlotnick - Vice Pres. Membership

Advisory Board:

Liz Friedland

Heather Glassman

Ilene Wechter

Lauren Rosenberg

Karen Miller

As this is my last message as Sisterhood President, I would like to state that it has been my privilege to lead the incredible women of Temple Sinai. Thank you for the opportunity to give back to our sacred community in so many ways. I will always cherish my time as Sisterhood President, a position that I found to be incredibly rewarding and meaningful.

Sincerely,

Lauren Kluger, Sisterhood President

Incoming 2018-2019 Sisterhood Board

President

Treasurer

Vice Pres. Membership

Vice Pres. Fundraising

Vice Pres. Programming

Vice Pres. Tikkun Olam and Ritual

Vice Pres. Communication & Social Media

Secretary

Immediate Past President

Franci Steinberg

Hilary Eth

Noah Smalley

Hilary Baris

Jessica Hirsh

Sari Hollender

Annice Benamy

Ruth Seitelman

Anne Fleisher

Lauren Kluger

Officers & Trustees for 2018-2019

Executive Committee:

President:	Jon Pasternak
First Vice President:	Remains Open 2018-19; To Be Filled 2019-20
Vice Presidents:	Anne-Marie Bennoun Marci Ginzburg Steven Gold Robert Goldstein Andrew Hollender Lauren Kluger
Recording Secretary:	Sabra Waxman
Treasurer:	Paul Seitelman
Comptroller:	Hillary Eth
Immediate Past President:	Peter Zlotnick
Sisterhood President:	Franci Steinberg
Brotherhood President:	Jack Reich

Members of the Board of Trustees:

Trustees:	Jay Cohen Norman Dorf Stacey Esser Shari Goldman Joe Hecht Jill Horbacewicz Peggy Kabakow Erik Maschler Ava Rattigan Heidi Reichert Carissa Sachs Scott Sonkin Adam Steinberg Lynne Stewart Peter Weiss Keith Woda
Youth Group President:	Open