Reaching Toward the Sun

Temple works to heed Deuteronomy’s urgent call: Justice, justice, shall you pursue.

Rabbi David Stern on Exodus and what we can’t see

Upbeat grandma finds her voice

Five projects to make the world a better place
How do you capture the beauty of a place or the power of a moment? How do you preserve an experience so you can remember it once it has passed?

Now that some of our best camera equipment is in our pockets, the answer seems easy: take a picture. Create a visual record so that weeks or years later, you can scroll through the pictures on your phone, and return to that beautiful place, that powerful or joyous encounter. The experience of moving through those pictures is a return ticket we hold close.

Contemporary essayist Alain de Botton teaches that the noted 19th century English philosopher and art critic John Ruskin posed a similar question, but without a smart phone: how do we capture beauty? Ruskin thought taking pictures was an acceptable answer, but worried that photography, instead of deepening our engagement with nature, would displace it; instead of reflecting on the beautiful waterfall, we snap the shutter (or make the daguerreotype) and move on to the next sight or site we wish to capture.

Instead, Ruskin urged, we should draw what we see. Drawing slows us down and compels our attention, creating a unique level of engagement. Drawing, he wrote, allows us “to stay the cloud in its fading, the leaf in its trembling, and the shadows in their changing.” He advocated for drawing regardless of skill; he cared more about how we see than how we sketch. And for those who really didn’t want to pick up a sketchpad, he promoted our capacity to “word-paint” — to use language to probe and express an experience or vista with the sketch artist’s level of detail and slowed concentration.

This month, as we reach the climax of the Exodus story in our weekly Torah portions, Judaism poses an even harder question: How do we capture a place we have not been, preserve the power of a moment we have not experienced? That, after all, is what our tradition asks of us: bechol dor vador chayav adam lirot et azmo k’ilu hu yata mimitzrayim — in every generation we are required to see ourselves as if we went forth from Egypt.

We weren’t there, and yet are summoned to imagine ourselves into the scene. But how? Our most familiar answer is the Pesach seder: through storytelling and song and the taste of the food on our tongues, we re-enact the journey. And while ancient myths don’t provide surviving sketches, our tradition does give us word pictures. The Mi Chamocha we sing each time we pray is an attempt to represent — via the words of Exodus 15 and the melodies of centuries of composers — the shades of mood and meaning that recreate the passage to freedom: exhilaration, anxiety, exaltation, hope. Those words and those musical settings seek to inscribe the power of liberation and redemption on our hearts.

But the greatest hope for preservation is manifest in ethical imperative: We preserve the promise of liberation, the defeat of slavery, the surge towards redemption, by extending them into our own day. The best way to remember the Exodus, to capture its power and its beauty, is to insist on its constant possibility: to recognize the seas yet to be crossed, the oppressions that abound, the Pharaohs in their palaces. To see the reality of human trafficking, the deprivations of basic opportunity, the callous and murderous disregard for immigrant journeys, the violent hatred shared and spread by antisemitism and racism. We capture the first crossing, stay and preserve it, by recognizing that it is never over.

This year we observed Shabbat Beshallach, the Exodus account of harrowing sea crossing and songs of joy, on the 92nd anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.’s birth. A coincidence of the calendar, or a sacred reminder: of slaveries past and present, of crossings shared and spread by antisemitism and racism. We capture the first crossing, stay and preserve it, by recognizing that it is never over.

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In the Torah

We are at Exodus, the story of sea crossings and mountain climbing, of plagues and Passover, wilderness and wonder, heroes and villains, the Ten Commandments and the Tabernacle. Though filled with drama and wild adventures, the arc is simple. The Israelites, then and now, are constantly in motion from narrow to wide spaces, from enslavement to freedom, from Pharoah of “let my people go” to the pharaohs we won’t let go of.

We have experienced Shabbat Shirah and a healing service for the Book of Exodus on Friday, January 21. We’ll also add our voices to the urgency surrounding reproductive rights, on January 28. (see story on page 16.)

We approach this new year with our community and our country still in the throes of a modern plague. Like our ancestors before us, we will find our way. We wish you health, equilibrium and peace in all your journeys.

Weekly Torah Readings January/February 2022
All services are archived at live.tedallas.org.

Dec. 31-Jan. 1: Va-eira, Exodus 6:2-9:35
Jan. 7-8: Bo, Exodus 10:1-13:16
Feb. 4-5: T’rumah, Exodus 25:1-27:19
Feb. 11-12: T’tzaveh, Exodus 27:20-30:10
Feb. 18-19: Ki Tisah, Exodus 30:11-34:35
Feb. 25-26: Vayak’heil, Exodus 35:1-38:21
She’s written the book and is working on another. She’s been teaching a weekly class for much of the past two years. Rabbi Debra Robbins, who has shared psalms with us in the depths of sorrow, the height of Shabbat joy and at many private moments in between, believes in their enduring power.

Why psalms, why now?

There are a lot of psalms that are really familiar to us, many associated with death. People know the 23rd psalm because we use it at funerals. There’s “Hinei Ma Tov” which we sing, but people don’t always know it’s a psalm [133]. And more and more our congregation knows the psalms of Kabbalat Shabbat [95-99, 29, 92, 93].

What I’ve learned from my students, and we’ve been doing this now consistently almost every week since Psalms for a Pandemic, is that the psalms really speak to people’s hearts when we can slow down and look at a little bit of one of them.

So we’re giving ourselves permission to linger in the text?

Yes, it’s about being empowered to hold a few words at a time, to not have to take on all the verses. Just a little bit and then the rest of it opens up and explodes for people. People find their lives are written in the ancient texts, that the texts speak to them and help us make sense of their life’s experiences.

How do we move beyond the familiar psalms to savor the rest?

We don’t like poetry too much as Americans. They tend to get written off as 150 long poems, or as part of ritual moments. What we’ve found in our practice together is that our lives are really resonant with these ancient words. Once you know how to read them, you can do it by yourself.

This work has allowed our members to own the text because they feel comfortable. It’s a life skill they will have forever. That’s inspiring to me.”
‘They Ruled the Earth’

Discover the famous cantorial giants with Cantor Jack “Jackie” Mendelson when he performs at Temple on February 27

They were as beloved as the Beatles, as eagerly anticipated as an orchestra seat to “Hamilton.” They were the greats of Jewish music, and their story needs to be told, their legacy preserved. That’s where Cantor Jack “Jackie” Mendelson comes in. His “Cantor’s Quest” musical one-man show, which will be performed at Temple on Feb. 27 at 4pm, takes us deep into the world of the famous Eastern European chazzanim while weaving his own family story into a hilarious, unforgettable, poignant tale.

We can’t wait! Tell us about your musical show.

It’s an emotional story and in some cases riotously funny, about a boy who had great difficulties growing up — depression, inability to study. All his mother wanted was for her son to become a cantor. It all starts with the story of my bar mitzvah, a bittersweet story.

In the second act, it’s also a ticket into a world within the Jewish world that’s not well known. A world in which cantors were like superheroes. They ruled the earth. They waltzed around with an entourage, and clothes to match — top hat, cape and a cane. People worshipped them like rock stars today.

With today’s more informal worship style, that’s hard to imagine!

When people came over from Europe in the late 1800s through the turn of the century, they were struggling. They didn’t have the money to go to the theater, or to see an opera, so that type of satisfaction came in the form of this prayer art. Sometimes it was done in a very relaxed way, even a humorous way. Some of the arrangements they did were made to please from young to old, anyone could sing those tunes, easy tunes to listen to and go home and sing. There was an element of entertainment in the synagogue experience. They had rabid fans and there were tremendous arguments about who was the best cantor in the neighborhood.

It was a tremendous era, a love story between the cantors and the Jews who loved their music.

It’s so interesting that what we think of today as ‘traditional’ Jewish music was modern in its day, and infused with the music of the world it occupied.

There were real stars like Joseph/Yossele Rosenblatt. With the advent of the phonographs, people would play his music on 78 rpm disks. When the Titanic sank, he sang the memorial prayer for the victims. …There’s also Moishe Oysher. He started to bring an American jazz element into the music. He was a crossover artist, equally at home in jazz and cantorial prayer. He sold records galore and made movies, many in Yiddish.

How do you feel you have embraced this extraordinary legacy?

What I do as a cantor is that I serve the text. My job is to bring the text to the people, in such a way that they understand it and are moved by it. That’s what they all did.

Describe the quest in ‘The Cantor’s Quest.’

In far too many Reform congregations, you might not hear any sounds in a given service of the pure chazzanut art form as it was handed down from Eastern Europe. That’s one of the big points of this show. It’s about my quest to keep this music vital, to save it for now and for generations to come.

Yet we don’t hear it too much in synagogue today…

It’s interesting that students at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC), have a very rigorous program in Ashkenazi Eastern European cantorial music. They all have to learn it, but when it comes to the actual synagogue, they’re afraid if they don’t do something au courant, then they might not be successful.

Should Reform synagogues return to a more chazzanut-centered musical service?

I’m not saying chazzanut should be the lion’s share, I’m just saying I’d like for it to have a share, a seat at the table. Even if there are 12 seats, I’m happy with one, although two would be unbelievable. I’ll take what I can get. This is an art form that has come out of the Jewish experience. I don’t think it’s wise to just throw that out.

Help us understand the experience of this musical tradition.

There’s a concept of hiddur mitzvah. You don’t just do a mitzvah. You do it in a beautiful way. You don’t just cover challah with a napkin, but with a beautiful covering. That’s what chazzanut is, that filigree, those curlicues, a deep respect for the text. It’s beautiful.
How can today’s beautiful music exist with yesterday’s?

Synagogue music has always reflected the time and place the Jews were in. Here we are in America and have an American sound. Take “l’dor vador nagid godlecha” by Josh Nelson. That’s beautiful. It’s Americana, maybe a little Disney. You can’t tell me that doesn’t belong in a service. People will listen to that and get goosebumps.

Is there a chazzanut bridge between today and yesterday?

I co-teach a class at HUC with Elana Arian. It’s an elective where I take a Debbie Friedman tune and in the middle of it, I will do a modulation with some chazzanut. Then I find my way back to Friedman. It’s a way of fusing two art forms and we’ve been very successful.

On with the show! Introduce us to your collaborators.

The show is written by Mark Bieler, my dearest friend and the smartest guy in the room. His father had a radio show with the great cantors back in the ’40s. We would meet on a Sunday and I would tell him my stories and on the following Sunday, he’d bring me lyrics to review.

The songs are written by the great Cantor Jonathan Comisar, a brilliant man and composer. He’s also the accompanist. I’ve never done this show without him.

We’ve performed this show since 2014 in many, many cities. We haven’t missed with the audience yet!

Register to attend at tedallas.org/music
Together Time is an opportunity for parents and caregivers of young children to connect, play and create close friendships at Temple.

For Daniella Denn, family engagement coordinator, seeing children together at play three times per week is the first step in what she hopes is a lifetime of Temple connections.

“While it may appear I’m facilitating play, I’m doing much more. It’s all about connecting families with one another,” she says. “Seeing parents making their first parent friends is so special. I’d love to run into them dropping off their children together for their summers at Greene Family Camp, planning their bar and bat mitzvahs, or thirty years later, gathering for their children’s weddings at Temple.”

The hour on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings includes free play and activities guided by specialists in the Early Childhood Education Center, such as yoga, music, farm-to-table sensory play and more. It is geared to children up to age 3 and is open to the community. You do not have to be a Temple member or ECEC family to participate.

For Lisa Yanofsky, a mom of a toddler son, Temple songleader and co-facilitator with Daniella in the program, the program has been a lifeline.

“I became a mom on March 7, 2020. I was living in a different state and everything shut down,” she says. When she moved to Dallas last year, she joined Together Time.

“Doing this group has been very healing for me as a parent,” she says. “It’s a great way to find community. I’ve always valued my friends and colleagues who had older children for passing down the advice and support. It’s really rewarding to pay it forward.”

During the pandemic, when many parents are working from home, Lisa says they have been able to attend more frequently and to keep up with their work schedules. She and Daniella are also working on more opportunities for parent education and building community.

“One of the beautiful things about Together Time is that in all the nooks and crannies, we can make deep connections and give people space to talk. I hope it helps them as parents and caregivers feel more self-compassion,” Lisa says.
About 13 years ago, when my husband, Sam, and I sat with Rabbi Stern for our premarital counseling sessions, I remember discussing the idea that marriage and starting a family is an opportunity to create. It’s a unique opportunity to establish our own traditions and make our family what we want it to be. As the mother of three young boys (ages 10, 8, and 5), I embrace this idea and want to make memories with my kids to last a lifetime. I’ve recently learned of the Jewish value called *hiddur mitzvah*, or “the beautification of the mitzvah.” In our family, it means bringing creativity to the holidays to make them more fun and memorable.

Purim is most certainly an opportunity for people of all ages to be creative! Wear a costume, make a grogger, write and perform your own family Purim spiel, attend a carnival, the list goes on! Here are a few ways we make Purim even more fun:

### Everything Hamentashen Dinner
Create a menu where appetizers, main courses, and desserts are all sweet or savory hamantashen. Think hamantashen with sushi or pizza ingredients. My son once created peanut butter and jelly hamantashen when we were out of flour on a snow day during his preschool years. Take this theme even further by serving your meal on triangular plates! Or make it simple by Googling “triangular food” and it’s game on for your festive dinner.

### Mishloach Manot with a Twist
The traditional Purim goodie baskets can be created with any theme or creative presentation. Try a “Very Hungry Caterpillar” themed basket with all the foods from this children’s book. Or perhaps a “stick” basket with carrot sticks, breadsticks, pretzel sticks, Pixy Stix and cheese sticks. For the movie enthusiast, assemble candy, popcorn and foods that represent various films (“Space Jam,” “Chocolat,” “American Pie,” “A Clockwork Orange,” “Honey, I Shrunk the Kids,” “Fried Green Tomatoes...”).

### Mitzvah Mission
*Mатанот л’эй hônim* is the mitzvah of giving to the needy. Create opportunities for your family to shop for items your favorite organization needs. Another idea is to create toiletry bags for people who are unhoused by gathering toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, socks, a comb, soap, gum, and small snacks like peanut butter crackers and raisins into gallon-size bags. For a list of service projects you can do with Temple’s social justice partners, see [tedallas.org/repairing-the-world/service-projects](http://tedallas.org/repairing-the-world/service-projects).
Jessica Saul and her three children, ages 3, 6 and 8, completed their conversions to Judaism in March of 2021, and her husband, Gerald, is in the process of conversion. They learned about Temple Emanu-El when they came as guests of the Vinton family, another family in which all members have converted.

Not only has Jessica never looked back, but she has made the Temple community her own.

“Once we were officially Jewish, I wanted to jump in and do everything I could,” she says.

She volunteered at the 2021 parking lot Purim carnival, is teaching third grade Judaica in YL+E, and has joined Women of Reform Judaism. She’s part of the Rosh Chodesh group organized by Debbi K. Levy. She and her family, who lives in Sulphur Springs, drive into town every chance they get for in-person events. They have also participated in online services and led the congregation in Shabbat blessings.

“Every opportunity that came up where I could connect with people, whether it was online or in person, I’ve been jumping on it,” she says. “Even in just a couple of years, Judaism has become so central in my life. Every opportunity I can find to nurture and grow Jewishly has become a priority for us. It’s such a warm community, so authentic and so real. We really love being a part of it.”

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Benjamin, Jessica, Katherine, Eli and Gerald Saul
**Celebration and Remembrance**

**BECOMING B’NAI MITZVAH**

Katelyn Herlitz, Jan. 15  
Daughter of Karlyn and Grant Herlitz  
Greenhill  
Tikkun Olam: The Family Place

Jonah Riley Simkin, Jan. 15  
Son of Phaelance and Jason Simkin  
Richardson West Arts and Technology Magnet  
Tikkun Olam: HairWeShare.org, an organization that creates wigs from donated hair to those affected by medical hair loss

Dylan Kahn, Jan. 22  
Son of Charlotte and Josh Kahn  
Westwood Junior High  
Tikkun Olam: High Adventure Treks

Rabekah Cooper, Jan. 29  
Daughter of Nicole and Kevin Cooper  
Brentfield Elementary  
Tikkun Olam: CHAI Dallas

Leila Reese Davis, Feb. 12  
Daughter of Kristen and Eric Davis  
Hockaday  
Tikkun Olam: Family Gateway

Adole Rose Berenson, Jan. 29  
Daughter of Bobbie and Mitchell Berenson  
J.W. Williams Middle School  
Tikkun Olam: Volunteers are Heroes!

Peleope Stone, Feb. 26  
Daughter of Stephanie and Peter Stone  
Greenhill  
Tikkun Olam: Leveling the Playing Field, an organization to address equity in sports

Reese Danielson, Feb. 26  
Daughter of Marnie and Zack Danielson  
William B. Travis Academy  
Tikkun Olam: Jewish Family Service

**BABY NAMING**

River Jordan Aini  
Daughter of Andrea and Moteen Aini  
Sister of Shiya Dean Aini

**CONVERSION**

Tina Orlowski, shown with husband Murray and sons Henry and Gayman

**BARUCH HABAYIM: WELCOME!**

Soy hello to our newest members, and welcome back to those returning!

Victor and Elena Borodyansky  
Meredith and Todd Deitelbaum  
Joshua, Kathryn and Arthur Ernst  
Melissa, Joshua, Katherine and Eliah Essler  
Scott, Abbey and Julian Frantz  
Ondria, Graham, Eryn, Rachael and Micah Gadd  
Judith, James, Violet and Samuel Pagnam  
Jamie Pink  
Valerie Potash  
Rich, Anya, Shyan, Arielle and Elan Reister  
Jordan, David and Joey Samson  
Stephanie, Nicholas, Emma Rae and Henry Sandler

**IN MEMORIAM**

Dr. Judith Berliner  
Sister of Andy Block  
Gerald Barnes  
Husband of Debbie Barnes  
Father of Sophie Barnes and Lily Barnes  
Chick-Sung Chook  
Father of Yuh Min Chook  
Shih-wen “Steven” Chou  
Father of Jennifer Nocerini  
Marcia Fitzmaurice  
Wife of Ed Fitzmaurice  
Mother of Evan Fitzmaurice  
Sister of Philip Kirstein  
Shelly Frankel  
Husband of Natalie Frankel  
Father of Cindy Hirsch and Jeff Frankel  
Will S. Friedman  
Husband of Barbara Friedman  
Father of Lorraine Friedman, Louis Friedman and Patrice Friedman  
Linda “Gail” Goldstein  
Former wife of Robert Goldstein  
Kevin Gould  
Brother of Kari Gould Isaly  
Annette Rae Robinson  
Lackman  
Mother of Samara Lackman  
Kline  
Rose “Lee” Liberman  
Irving Leon Plaksen  
Father of Mitchel Plaksen  
Jolyn Rudelson  
Mother of Justin Rudelson  
Dorothy Carl Schlang  
Mother of Gail Lawrence  
Carol Shamian  
Sister of Ralph Zatzkis  
Dr. Elliot Stendig  
Husband of Martha Stendig  
Father of Melissa Johnson and Stacey Wood  
Brother of Shelley Glazier and Faye Steinberg  
Sandra Stein Wall  
Sister of Myra Fischel  
Rosaline Weiner  
Mother of Lisa Englander  
Michael Werbner  
Brother of Debbie Postel
DOUBLE THE JOY: RENEWAL OF VOWS AND BABY NAMING

Nancy and Ron Pope renewed their vows with Rabbi Kimberly Herzog Cohen officiating. The family also celebrated the naming of their grandson, Grayson Pope McElyea, son of Cameron McElyea and Jessica Maxa.

ENGAGEMENT

Adam Genecov and Breanna Lee Stein
Adam is the son of Lisa and Dr. Jeff Genecov

WEDDING

Jake Blatt and Jenna Blechman, Boca Raton
Jake is the son of Mary Spector and Julius Blatt

SHINE THE LIGHT: SUPPORT AND RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

Grief Support on Zoom
Feb. 8 and March 8 from 11:30 AM-1 PM
Jewish Family Service Support Groups: jfsdallas.org/services/adults/support-groups/

Substance Abuse Support for Friends and Families
Thursdays every week from 6-7 PM on Zoom
Contact for info and Zoom: Freda Heald, fredsheald@yahoo.com

HERE FOR YOU

Temple clergy and staff are available to support our community members navigating mental and physical health issues. Please reach out to us for help if you, a friend or a family member is experiencing a crisis or an ongoing issue.

NO BARRIERS

Finances should never be a barrier to participation in Temple life. Confidential financial assistance is available for most Temple events, tuition and dues.

For information and grief support Zoom link, contact: Meredith Pryzant, Director of Member Support, mpryzant@tedallas.org or 214.706.000, ext. 122.
New Life Helps Heal Old Wounds

After 29 years, Lori Gerard let the tears flow. Nearly three decades had passed since she lost her husband, Bart Levy, after eight years of marriage. Through it all, she remained stoic, upbeat, determined to make the best life for her two young sons.

“I didn’t share the challenges that I faced and I didn’t voice much of what I was feeling; I just moved on with my life,” she says. “Back then, Temple Emanu-El didn’t have the support system that it now has for our members. As a parent, you wind up doing what you must do in order to get through the moment,” she says.

Then, when her son Justin and daughter-in-law Emily named their baby son after his grandfather of blessed memory, she cried.

“Finally Lori had a voice,” she says. “When Justin announced that he and Emily had chosen to name their second son Bart, nobody had ever seen Lori break down and cry. There was this huge release of energy that I guess was stored up, and I hadn’t allowed myself to go there.”

Lori is the co-chair, with Phyllis Stoup and Laurie Miller, of The Conversation Project, a national initiative that Temple participates in to help members of all ages open up discussion with loved ones about the end of life.

“End of life conversations are very, very difficult,” she says. “I think people shouldn’t have to wear emotions by themselves. If we can open up and share those emotions, the blow is easier to handle.”

As a young widow, Lori found that many members of grief support groups were usually older than she was, and it was difficult to connect about her own experiences. “If I ever did let my emotions run ragged, it clearly wasn’t publicly. I had this shield around me, a barrier that I put up in order to get through life. I don’t want people to suffer silently like I did.”

But even as much as she embraces the concept of having conversations, she realizes there is no slam-dunk path toward dialogue. In her own family, she says, one son is an attorney and the other is a doctor. Each is trained to make decisions that could affect her at the end of her life.

“Here’s where the challenge starts developing. Who will allow their parents to have their voice heard? Covid has opened all of our eyes. To see Covid and how we’re trying to support the isolation of family members — that struck a nerve with me. How do we handle this going forward?”

For Lori, it starts with the openness about her own story. “Sharing stories creates support. You support others as well as yourself by sharing personal stories about challenges, lessons learned, wisdom gained. If I talk about it, maybe a door will open for somebody else.”
Overall, the Purim spiel is a great way to connect with members of Temple, celebrate Purim, and most importantly, have fun! — Jake Kerstine (Mordechai in The Greatest Showman and Elton John)

I love singing and music, so to be able to combine that with Judaism in a fun Purim spiel was a great experience for me! Plus, of course I needed to be able to make my Vashti puns! — Lindsay Feinstein (Vashti in: Hamilton, The Greatest Showman and Elton John)

Overall, the Purim spiel was an amazing experience. While I have been able to see both of my girls perform in shows, this was the first time that they have been able to see me performing. We were all so proud of one another! — Rhoni Golden (Esther in Purim 2020)

REALITY BITES THE MEGILLAH
SUNDAY, MARCH 6 • 10 AM

A 90S PURIM SPIEL

Spiel and Carnival
Sunday, March 6 • 10am
Watch Temple Communications for the latest details!

Adult Celebration
Wednesday, March 16 • 7-9pm
Come celebrate Purim with us over a fun and festive 90s themed dinner and hear the ritual reading of the Megillah. Costumes encouraged!
Register: participate.tedallas.org/purim
The words ring as true today as they did when Moses uttered them: Tzedek, tzedek, tirdof (Deuteronomy 16:20).

Temple Emanu-El practices justice in initiatives that range from keeping a spreadsheet of available bicycles for Afghan refugee families to lobbying elected officials on the sanctity of a woman’s right to control her body. Temple members are harvesting fresh vegetables by the tons, and watching films that further conversations about race, gender equity and what it means to belong.

We are investing time, money, brainpower and legwork to social justice, advocacy and inclusion. But mostly, we are bringing outstretched arms to the task of creating a holy community.

The ever-current words of Pirkei Avot continue to inspire us: It is not our duty to complete the work, nor can we walk away from it.

“How we pursue justice is by planting seeds today with the hope that our efforts will flower over time,” says Rabbi Kimberly Herzog Cohen.

“At Temple, we’re trying to accomplish a lot in our justice work, but we can only do it one step at a time. We are thoughtfully trying to cultivate a garden which has grown and developed in ways we couldn’t have imagined. Our Jewish path is what we can do each day, and that will set us on the direction toward hope and light.”
Advocacy: A ‘Spiritually Uplifting’ Fight

Changing minds is one of the ways to change the world. That’s the way Alice Barnett approaches her work as co-chair, with Mike Sims, of Temple’s Advocacy Committee.

Alice has been involved in advocacy work for many years outside of Temple, and was recruited a few years ago to get involved in Temple advocacy, including voting rights, education reform, Medicaid expansion, early childhood education and more.

She recently oversaw the committee’s efforts toward Board of Trustees approval to advocate on the issue of reproductive rights, particularly SB8, Texas’ “heartbeat bill,” that took effect Sept. 1. The bill bans an abortion after detection of a heartbeat, approximately six weeks after conception. “It is such an outrageous law and under current law is patently unconstitutional. From 1973 going forward, the Supreme Court has recognized the fundamental right of a woman to get an abortion prior to fetal viability.”

Temple’s advocacy is focused around a woman’s right to decide. “We think we can help change minds on why this is a bad law,” she says. “We’re not trying to say ‘have an abortion,’ but that it’s better to let the woman, with guidance from her doctor and from a faith leader if she so chooses, to decide for herself what is in her best interest.”

Barnett and her partners in the advocacy efforts are guided by Jewish law, which places the health of the mother above the fetus.

“It has found it extremely rewarding to be able to represent the guidance of the Jewish tradition in these situations we work on,” she explains. “It’s spiritually lifting. I would do this whether I was involved at Temple or not, but doing this for Temple adds a richness I didn’t have before.”

Barnett, who grew up in the New York suburbs, describes Temple’s social justice work as “incredible.”

“When I grew up, my synagogue was a place of worship. We didn’t have the focus that Temple Emanu-El Dallas has. As a result, I had never thought about a synagogue being in that pivotal role of social justice.”
Exercize those social justice muscles! It’s never too early to get your children involved in the value of **tikkun olam**, making the world a better place. Here are five all-ages projects that are Covid-safe and much appreciated by our Dallas neighbors.

### Bag Snacks
Make “bye bye bags” snack bags to provide extra nutrition for children at Vogel Alcove.

**Instructions:** vogelalcove.org/ways-to-give/in-kind/

### Dig for Good
Dirty hands welcome! Participate in Temple’s Jill Stone Community Garden, which grows and distributes food for the Vickery Meadow Food Pantry.

**Contact:** Kay McInnis, kaellan.mcinnis@gmail.com

### Deliver a Meal
Help deliver meals to the elderly or food for pets by volunteering for a route from VNA Meals on Wheels.

**Contact:** Inga Wilson, wilsoni@vnatexas.org

### Prepare Lunch
Make sandwiches for men and women without homes and arrange for delivery to Austin Street Center.

**Sign up:** austinstreet.galaxydigital.com

### Help Someone Feel at Home
Create a welcome basket for guests of The Bridge Homeless Recovery Center.

**Instructions:** bridgehrc.org/donate-in-kind
The Angel of Vickery Meadow

“I’m flooded with coats,” explained Nancy Lubar as we caught up with her in late December. The longtime Temple leader was organizing the donations of warm clothing for newly arrived Afghan refugees. Nancy and Sheila Stieglitz, her partner in the effort, had put out the call for donations, and were pleased and grateful at the response.

“When we get a new family, the agencies don’t have enough staff to take care of them,” she says. Nancy and her group organize furniture, gift cards, cold weather gear, kitchen items, refurbished computers, bicycles, even a used car.

Nancy, a co chair of the Vickery Meadow committee with Cheryl Pollman and a member of the Vickery Meadow Brain Trust, estimates she’s been at this work for nearly 25 years, since the beginning of Temple’s relationship with Vickery Meadow. She’s the go-to person of a network of volunteers, faith organizations and agency representatives who help refugees get settled in Dallas.

Do they need furniture? Call Dallas Furniture Bank (also started by Temple members). Can they speak English? Here’s a bicycle to ride to a job at Walmart until they can save up for a car. Do they need clothing? Here are gift cards for families to buy what they need.

Temple Emanu-El has provided a way for Nancy to put her organizing skills — and her bottomless heart — into repairing the world.

“The first thing I do when I meet a family is tell them that I’m Jewish and I’m a member of Temple Emanu-El,” she says.

To get involved, see Nancy’s list of supplies and furnishings needed for refugee families at helpfamiliesinneed.com.

To make a donation to Vickery Meadow efforts, visit tedallas.org/donate and direct your donation to the Jill Stone Tikkun Olam fund. To donate to Afghan refugee resettlement, specify that the funds are to be distributed toward Afghan resettlement, or contact Nancy at nlubar1@gmail.com.

Tikkun Olam Partner: Vickery Meadow

About: Vickery Meadow is a neighborhood near Temple Emanu-El that is considered the most densely populated area of Dallas, and is home to many immigrants and refugees. It became a focus of Temple Emanu-El’s social justice efforts in the early 2000s after a charge from Rabbi David Stern.

Involvement: Temple is one of many faith and service organizations, informally known as the Vickery Meadow Brain Trust, that work in the area, including Healing Hands, Heart House, Literacy Achieves, Northwest Bible Church, Park Cities Baptist Church, Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, North Park Presbyterian Church, Texas Health Resources, Vickery Meadow Youth Foundation, Wilshire Baptist Church and United Way.

Projects:
- Fresh produce delivery from the Jill Stone Community Garden to the Vickery Meadow Food Pantry
- Teachers and fundraisers for Literacy Achieves
- Financial help at Jill Stone Elementary School
- Volunteers at Summer Reading Academy and McShan Reading Program
- Contributors to the new Vickery Meadow Library Summer Reading Academy
- Resettling of refugee families
- Community Disasters

How to help: Vickery Meadow needs YOU. To help find a match among the many projects, contact Erica Strauss, estrauss@tedallas.org or Cheryl Pollman, pollmanc@gmail.com, Temple’s Vickery Meadow representative.

Nasheem Sh’mo Group helps sort supplies for new refugee children.
Cynthia Huang and her family moved to Dallas right before the pandemic to severely limited in-person activities at Temple and throughout Dallas. Yet she knew the power of a synagogue and had a heart for social justice. Volunteering at Vickery Meadow became her entry to Temple life.

“That’s my channel,” she says. “Back in Durham, North Carolina, where we moved from, we were deeply involved with the congregation. I was involved with social justice, so once I got here, I reached out to Temple and said that I’d love to help in any way I can,” says Cynthia, who is married to David Jacobson, and has two children, Mia and Frank.

She immediately was paired with Nancy Lubar in the effort to resettle Afghan families to Dallas. Nancy asked if she could arrange for collection of school supplies. “I filled up two giant SUV’s and we had to make arrangements to store them at different congregants’ houses!”

The next project she hopes to embark on is organizing a book drive for the new Jill Stone Elementary School library. “I went on a tour of the school and saw lots of empty shelves. I’ve also personally reached out to the school for volunteer work, and hope to be more involved this spring.”

And finally, during Hanukkah, she and her family got to come to Temple for their first in-person event. Because she had already found her own path to Temple life, it had already begun to feel familiar. Yet she was pleased to meet people she had only interacted with on screen or by phone. “It was our first person-to-person real interaction, and a very beautiful concert that we enjoyed,” she says.
Time to Walk the Walk

‘Belonging’ film series helps Temple live value of inclusion

For Sara Albert, a longtime leader at Temple Emanu-El, taking on the portfolio of engagement and inclusion when she returned to the Executive Committee last year provided exciting new challenges.

Her area of oversight includes a number of diverse constituencies, all of whom might at some point in their Temple lives experience a lack of access.

“What I came to see it as was a range of physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and cultural challenges,” Sara says. “These are all different ways in which people may not be able to fully explore and appreciate the benefits of being in Temple’s community. I began to think about what does access mean for us and what does it look like?”

At the same time, she was intrigued by a film she had seen on transgender youth, and an idea began to form. “We had done advocacy on transgender issues, so I brainstormed with Erica Strauss (director of social justice and special projects) and we thought that showing this would be a great way to educate our community about our Jewish values around the issue. Out of that, we looked at a film series that explored several different issues related to what in my mind is access, doing more at Temple around diversity, equity and inclusion.”

The film series, which will be held in person this spring, brought together several different groups as partners in planning and sponsorship, including Cinema Emanu-El, Temple’s LGBTQ group, the Within Our Walls and Beyond Task Force and the Inclusion Working Group.

“This film series is a significant step in our ongoing efforts to truly be an inclusive community that seeks to understand and improve the world by sharing in dialogue and working to lift stigma,” said Rabbi Amy Rossel, Senior Director of Education and Engagement. “I’m so grateful that a dedicated group of lay leaders and staff came together to offer this important program for the Temple community.”

The film series is an example of “the strong commitment and real work that Temple is doing to put our money where our mouth is,” Sara says. “We can espouse these values that we have, and no one will disagree, but there’s so much education and cultural shift that comes to achieving our inclusion goals.”

She pointed to the practice of using pronouns to describe themselves as an example of moving toward understanding about gender equity. “How can I incorporate that as a value into my behavior if I don’t understand it? Temple is helping us become the best humans we can be. I see this film series as a part of that.”
BELONGING
A DEI FILM SERIES
Diversity Equity Inclusion

Coming this spring!

Little White Lie
A young Jewish woman navigates her family’s hidden story of race and identity.

Changing the Game
Follow the journey of three transgender teen athletes.

Life Animated
A young autistic man and his parents find common ground through Disney movies.

All movies are available to watch on streaming channels, and each showing will be followed by a conversation with our clergy, lay leaders and experts in the field.

Watch Temple communications for more information.

Contact: Erica Strauss, estrauss@tedallas.org
In the famous words of Spanish poet Yehuda HaLevi, for Temple clergy who have led trips to Israel, their hearts are truly in the east.

No matter how often they’ve been, or how long between their journeys, the view is eternally new. As Rabbi David Stern shares: “Going with first-timers and seeing Israel through their eyes always feels like the first time.”

For Cantor Leslie Niren, a.k.a. Cantor in the Kitch, food is an essential part of the experience. “The epic Israeli breakfasts never cease to amaze me! My favorite are the crunchy, fresh *melaphphonim* (cucumbers)! You can’t eat cucumbers anywhere after eating them in Israel.”

Rabbi Stern and Cantor Niren joined Rabbi Amy Rossel to share fond memories of their Israel travels. Now’s your chance to build your own memories by signing up for two sure-to-be amazing trips this summer with them.

“It has been two years since I last went, and I can’t wait to be there with my Temple family,” says Rabbi Stern.

Contact Rabbi Rossel at arossel@tedallas.org for information and registration.

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**SHARE THE LOVE OF ISRAEL**

Here are three recorded opportunities to learn about Israel with our Youth Learning + Engagement students and faculty. Tune into these episodes on TE Live.

**YL+E Goes to Israel**
Dec. 13, 2020 | live.tedallas.org/player/996
Featuring the madrichim, who shared fun facts about Israel.

**Yom HaZikaron and Yom HaAtzmaut**
April 18, 2021 | live.tedallas.org/player/1095
A deep dive into the two holidays and how they are celebrated in different parts of Israel.

**From Snow to Sunshine in Eretz Yisrael**
June 13, 2021 | live.tedallas.org/player/1129
Featuring Rabbi Daniel Utle, this episode focuses on the regions and geographic diversity in Israel, along with great places to visit.
What is the most memorable thing you ever learned from a tour guide?

**RDS:** Learning about Arab-Jewish cooperation in Jaffa during the early 20th century.

**RAR:** The location of Jachnun Bar in Machane Yeduh market in Jerusalem, which has the most delicious food I’ve ever eaten!

**CLN:** My first ever Israeli tour guide, Benny, made every single history lesson come to life and I still savor his stories to this day.

I feel most Jewish when I...

**RDS:** ...converse in Hebrew

**RAR:** ...am told “Shabbat Shalom” while checking out at the grocery store or eating at a café by a random stranger on Thursday afternoon or Friday morning. There’s nothing quite like living in (or visiting!) the cycle of Jewish time!

**CLN:** ...am praying with unique Israeli prayer communities like Nava Tehila or Beit Tfilah Israeli.

People don’t know I did this when I was a student in Israel:

**RDS:** Was a basketball counselor for Israeli Arab kids in Beit Safafa.

**RAR:** Did a lot of dancing at night clubs with my classmates.

**CLN:** Did a five-day on-and-off-road bike ride in the north. Israel is where I fell in love with biking.

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**SPICES OF HEAVEN**

Want to travel to Israel in your own kitchen? Cantor Leslie Niren offers these easy ideas for shuk-inspired delights.

- Sprinkle some sumac (made from dried, ground berries of wild sumac flower) on your roasted potatoes or chicken before baking for a zesty punch.

- Zaatar, a blend of sumac, thyme, marjoram, oregano and sesame seeds, goes great on everything from eggs to salmon to sprucing up some store-bought pita. Here’s an easy recipe for zaatar pie: Mix olive oil and zaatar in a bowl to make a paste. Spread on pita and heat at 375 degrees for 6-8 minutes. Top with salt and your favorite feta.
Tributes for Sustaining Temple

**Gifts of Memory, Honor and Gratitude**

**OUR CONGREGATION**

**Dora Aronson Helping Hands Fund**
Distributions by Rabbi David Stern to individuals in need of financial assistance, particularly in dire situations.

**Memory of Dora Aronson** by Atyce Cohen and Irma Grossman

**Memory of Louis Baum** by Haimie E. Silverman

**Birthday of Selma Bookatz** by Cheryl & Randy Cohen

**Memory of Lawrence Burk** by Marianne Morris

**Memory of Riva Burstein** by Susan & Joel Steinberg

**Memory of Pola Fincher** by Nancy & Richard Fincher

**Memory of Sadie Greenberg** by Kitzi Ball

**Memory of Roz Weiner** by Cheryl & Randy Cohen

**Memory of Mike Werber** by Bonnie & Michael Grossfeld

**Susan Salom Clergy Good Works Fund**
Distributions to charitable organizations, individuals in need or community causes by Temple's clergy.

**Memory of Jacob Brodsky** by Marcie & Michael Brown

**Memory of Lawrence Burk** by Joyce & Salvin Belofsky

**Memory of Marcia Kirstein Fitzmaurice** by Bette Behrens

**Birthday of Larry Steinberg** by Trish Goodman

**Bris of Eli Lipnick** by Kathy & David Lipnick

**Bris of Arlyeh Zusman** by Natasha & Andrew Zusman

**Conversion of Tina Orlovski** by Maria R. Grossfeld

**Naming of Estelle Lipnick** by Kathy & David Lipnick

**Unveiling of Beverly Epstein** by Brooke Epstein

**Anne & Sam Keesner Caring Congregation Fund**
Assistance for Temple members through all phases of life including hospitalization, elder care, military service, mental health challenges and grief.

**Memory of Judith Frank** by Irene & Bernard Raden

**Memory of Jennifer Friedman-Ackerman** by Susan & Ken Shulman

**Memory of Charles Gardt** by Gigi Gardt

**Memory of Tillie Labovitz** by Joan & Jerry Sibbell

**Memory of Alec William Cohen** by Lisa & Jim Albert

**Memory of Pearl Solomon** by Debbie & David Sheinfeld

**Birthday of Larry Steinberg** by Betty & Samuel Albin

**Memory of Mary Crohn** by Ilana Trojan-Steinberg

**Memory of Marcia Kirstein Fitzmaurice** by Christine Miller

**Memory of Barton Lee** by Julie & Bob Herman

**Memory of Abraham Blatt** by Betty & Hank Pearsson

**Memory of Danny Sikora** by Julie & Bob Herman

**Memory of Lois Toub** by Beverly & Joe Goldman

**Temple Emanu-El Cemetery Endowment Fund**
Distribution from the Temple’s foundation supporting the maintenance and improvement of the cemetery grounds.

**Memory of Wauessel Barshop** by Jerry Barshop

**Memory of Lily Borovoy** by Ethel Zale

**Memory of Sam Louis Hyman** by Linda & Stephen Levine

**Memory of Yatta Meyer** by Linda & Stephen Levine

**Memory of Danny Sikora** by Carol & Lawrence Tobias

**Appreciation of Rabbi David Stern**

**As a Contribution** by Jay Goltz

**OUR TEMPLE AND CEMETERY**

**Rose Marion and Lee H. Berg Building Fund**

**Upkeep and maintenance of our historic building**

**Memory of Gerald Barnes** by Susan & David Fink & Family

**Memory of Adam Steinberg** by Susan & David Fink & Family

**Memory of Samuel Sayah** by Jean & Bob Weinfield

**Memory of Pearl Solomon Steinberg** by Sister & Joel Steinberg

**Temple Emanu-El Endowment Fund**
Distribution from the Temple’s foundation supporting Temple’s programs.

**Memory of Gerald Barnes** by Hilo & Nothaniel Eshelman

**Memory of Marcia Kirstein Fitzmaurice** by Beth & Alan Weiner

**Memory of Judith Frank** by Lindsay & Jeffrey Steinberg

**Memory of Holocaust Friedman** by Natella Friedman

**As a Contribution** by Benjamin Greenberg

**MUSIC AND PRAYER**

**Music Fund**
Enhancement of Temple music programs.

**Memory of Rosalie Alexander** by Cantor Shoshana Lash

**Memory of Shirley Eichenwald** by Haimie E. Silverman

**Bat Mitzvah of Eres Stone** by Barbara & Philip Einsohn

**ADULT PROGRAMS**

**Katherine F. Baum Adult Education Fund**
Support for adult education programs.

**Appreciation of Jan Timmons** by Gail Abetter

**Henry D. Schlinger Ethics Symposium Endowment Fund**
Support for the ethics symposium.

**Memory of Sheldon Frankel** by Karen & Chris Chenine

**SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**Hunger Relief Projects**
Collection of funds for hunger relief throughout the year, especially during High Holy Days and Passover.

**Memory of Randy Beck** by Susan & Daryl Beck
The Annual Fund makes it possible for us to continue Temple’s legacy of reaching out to those in need.
The Future Builders

The four co-chairs of the Ensuring Our Future Endowment Campaign have deep connections to Temple Emanu-El and proven commitments in a variety of roles. Perhaps most importantly, though, these two couples see the faces of their grandchildren when they contemplate Temple’s future. Like the little loves of their lives, they see boundless optimism and possibility.

Our community is deeply grateful to Julie and David Fields (left) and Betsy and Mark Kleinman (right) for their leadership and passion to build and strengthen Temple’s endowment.
**Julie and David Fields**

**Temple connection:** Julie and David both come from multigenerational Temple families and have been lifelong Temple members.

**Julie:** My father Gerald Ray has ushered for more High Holy Days than I can count. He had his bar mitzvah at Temple. My mother, Helaine Ray, was confirmed at Temple. My grandmother Elizabeth Ray used to cater at Temple.

**David:** My family’s connections are equally deep. My parents Bobbie and Leo Fields were proud members.

**Julie:** The connections really go back to our grandparents. So, from our perspective, we really arrived at Temple at birth. It wasn’t initially a choice, but it became one later in life.

**How do you keep busy when you’re not at Temple?**

Julie is a community volunteer. Most of all, however, she is a first-time, doting grandmother. David is a real estate lawyer and is also a community volunteer. We are both avid bike riders.

**Why did you say “yes” to co-chairing Ensuring the Future, the TE150 Endowment Campaign?**

We immediately understood that for Temple to thrive, it needs to be financially secure. If you believe, as we do, that an investment in Temple is an investment in the future of social justice, that it is an investment in the future of Jewish learning, that it is an investment in the future of prayer, music and spirituality, then saying yes becomes pretty easy. Also, we were excited to be working with the other members of the team, many of whom we knew and respected.

**Betsy and Mark Kleinman**

**Temple connection:** Betsy moved to Dallas in 1968 and her family became members of Temple Emanu-El, where she attended religious school from consecration to confirmation. Mark has been a lifelong member of Temple and attended religious school and became bar mitzvah here.

**Professional and community involvement:** Betsy is involved in many community and civic activities and enjoys being a grandmother. Mark is general counsel for an oil and gas company.

**What do you hope our congregation understands in the coming months about the Endowment Campaign?**

The Temple endowment has been a difference maker. It has enabled Temple to attract and engage a vibrant membership with a wide variety of interests, from worship to study, from community engagement to social justice, and to create a sense of home for young and old. The endowment campaign will give donors the opportunity to make an investment that would ensure that future generations enjoy the same opportunities and experiences that we have today.
It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it.

-Pirkei Avot 2:16