



A Place of Sacred Encounter:
Essays on Temple Emanu-El's First 150 Years

November 5, 2023

The essays in this booklet were written and researched by members of Temple Emanu-El to commemorate its 150th anniversary, under the direction of Ann Zimmerman Gallant.

We also extend our deepest appreciation for former Temple archivist Gerry Cristol, whose earlier book, "A Light in the Prairie," was a source of inspiration and guidance for this work.

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Prayer, Temple's Heartbeat, Echoes Across Generations of Our History

*By Robin Kosberg and Nina Cortell,
with contributions from the Prayers of the Generations Service Booklet*

When the Hebrew Benevolent Association was founded in Dallas in 1872, before its members even constituted themselves as a congregation called Emanu-El, they gathered to pray. And so we have gathered ever since — in celebration, in solace, in commitment and in hope. For us, as for all the Jewish generations that came before us, that act of communal prayer has been at the core of our congregational life.



While the fundamental tenets of our prayer have remained constant, the ways in which we worship have changed over time, as reflected by new prayer books and evolving forms of participation.

The common thread is core Jewish beliefs: on creation, revelation and redemption; God's unity and love; human responsibility; and the human hope for bringing peace to a shattered world.



Temple's prayer books show our evolution in expression and experience. Over time, we have moved from the Union Prayer Book to Gates of Prayer to Mishkan T'filah (to name a few). In the late 1990s, we created our own siddur, Sabbath Prayer, Sabbath Peace. New prayer

books reflect and respond to changed perceptions and new environments — and permit different ways to pray.



As Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman teaches, prayer books are social as well as theological documents. The latest books reflect a post-Holocaust Jewish world in which Israel is a reality; embrace gender-sensitive phrasing; and include thought-provoking meditations. And Temple, once reluctant to embrace change in worship, has become a leader in the Reform movement's adoption of new *siddurim*.

Significant change also marks the way we worship. Temple once exemplified Classical Reform practices, which were typically less participatory. Beautiful music from a choir and organist wafted overhead. It was wonderful and spiritual, but, over time, Temple shifted to a more participatory format, providing enhanced opportunities for engaging, interactive and communal experience, as well as opportunities for personal meditation and exploration.



Cantor Annie Bornstein was hired as the congregation's first cantor in 2003. While a source of contention at the time, the cantorate soon became a staple of Temple prayer and learning. Cantor Richard Cohn cemented Temple's cantorial tradition, and, today, Cantors Vicky Glikin and Leslie Niren are treasured and respected clergy. Musical offerings also include guest artists specializing in Jewish music of many kinds, and new prayer melodies are introduced regularly.

Other changes have included more Hebrew and more widespread use of *tallitot* (prayer shawls) and *kippot* (head coverings) — emblematic of an embrace of tradition in a thoroughly modern context. Today, our congregation reflects a wide range of forms of observance, both within and outside Temple walls, with ongoing exploration of opportunities for increased spirituality.

As Rabbi David Stern has said, "A vibrant congregation combines different spiritual portals." Whatever our portal, we continuously commit ourselves to bringing our world one step closer to shalom — the vision of peace toward which our prayer strives.



Our Extraordinary Current Clergy

By Nina Cortell

Rabbi David Stern

“Temple Emanu-El is a vibrant Reform Jewish community that strives to be a place of sacred encounter. It is a place where learning, prayer and deeds change people’s understanding of themselves, of their world and their responsibilities in it.”



The son of an accomplished poet and a revered rabbi, Rabbi David Stern is, as his father, Rabbi Jack Stern of blessed memory, put it: “blessed both with the power of lucid thought and a commanding artistry of language” — talents that he

uses to “communicate the convictions and commitments, which dominate his life and make him a rabbi of words and action.”

Rabbi Stern has used his gifted voice to uplift, inspire, and lead, at Temple Emanu-El and beyond. As President of Central Conference of American Rabbis, Rabbi Stern led an international rabbinic organization of 2,000 members, and he currently serves on the Board of Governors and the President’s Rabbinic Council of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

A fervent social justice advocate on local, national and international issues, Rabbi Stern participated in a study mission to the Darfuri refugee camps on the Chad-Sudan border and served as rabbi-in-residence for an American Jewish World Service Study Mission to Nicaragua. Locally, Rabbi Stern serves on the Board of Forest Forward, a non-profit organization that partners with the community to drive equitable development, economic mobility, and improve outcomes for children, residents, and families of the South Dallas community. As Rabbi Stern has observed and as his life illustrates, “The world is not finished yet — we have a responsibility to join in its ongoing creation.”

Rabbi Debra J. Robbins

“The Psalmist expresses universal experiences that evoke familiar emotions, but we may stumble over an archaic translation or anxiety over our competence to grasp poetry. Reading as a spiritual practice requires intention, as well as a desire to absorb and ultimately live the meaning of the words.”



In her profound book, “*Opening Your Heart With Psalm 27*,” Rabbi Robbins provides meaningful, meditative guidance that “opens new possibilities and ways of seeing yourself, your Judaism, our world and God.” Rabbi Robbins provides that same impactful

guidance to our congregation on a daily basis, as she leads us in a variety of initiatives and projects that involve all parts of Temple’s extensive community. And she does it all in a deeply compassionate way, with care and love, balancing, as her colleagues note, “purposeful seriousness with gleeful delight.”

Rabbi Robbins also generously shares those qualities beyond Temple’s walls, having played significant roles throughout her career, including in the Rabbinic Association of Greater Dallas (as chair of the Vaad HaMikvah), in the Central Conference of American Rabbis (as chair of the Task Force on Convening and as Vice President for Leadership), as President of Reading Village (a non-profit organization working in Guatemala to help teens become leaders through literacy) and as a co-founder of Common Table at the Fox and Crow (providing 20,000 meals to those in need in the town of Wellfleet, Massachusetts).

To all these activities, Rabbi Robbins brings the intentionality she urges in her book on Psalm 27, to the betterment of the many communities she serves.

Cantor Vicky Glikin

“One of my personal goals as a Cantor is to help every person that I encounter find the relevance in Judaism — to figure out the “Why.” I always ask my congregants, “Why be Jewish?” It is important to me that my congregants realize there is so much depth, relevance and richness in Judaism.”



Born in Ukraine and raised in Kiev and Skokie, Illinois, Senior Cantor Vicky Glikin sought a career change from an equity analyst to a cantor after realizing that service to the Jewish people was the best way for her to make a difference in the world.

While pursuing her cantorial training and ordination at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cantor Glikin was honored to be chosen for the highly-selective Wexner Graduate Fellowship and received numerous academic and musical awards. Cantor Glikin brings an array of talents and professional development to her work of deepening congregational involvement through learning, spiritual engagement, musical participation and social action.

Cantor Glikin has also had an important impact beyond Temple, leading services and providing pastoral care in Poland to Jews displaced by the war in Ukraine, serving as the President of the Reform Cantors of Chicago and a trustee on the American Conference of Cantors' Retirement Fund Board, mentoring younger cantorial and rabbinic colleagues, and working to bring a Level I Trauma Center to Chicago's violence-ridden South Side.

Cantor Glikin's life demonstrates the relevance and richness of Judaism, and, through her life's example and her musical inspiration and leadership, she helps us answer the “Why” question she poses.

Rabbi Amy Rossel

“Temple Emanu-El is a place where we teach and inspire the next generation, who will teach and inspire the next, l'dor va'dor, from generation to generation. We teach the value of a spiritual life — one that includes gratitude and humility, love and transcendence. Judaism is about family and extended family, both given and chosen.”



Rabbi Amy Rossel — our Senior Director of Education and Engagement — has had a lifelong passion for education which began right here at Temple Emanu-El, where she grew up and was involved in synagogue life from a young age.

As a teenager, Rabbi Rossel taught in the Temple Emanu-El Religious School and was involved in DAFTY. Rabbi Rossel also spent 15 summers as camper and staff at the Union for Reform Judaism's Greene Family Camp in Bruceville, Texas. After college, in addition to her ordination as a rabbi, Rabbi Rossel earned a Master of Education and her RJE (Reform Jewish Educator) credential, the highest professional standard a Reform Jewish educator can achieve.

As a clergy-educator, Rabbi Rossel plays a leading role nationally. She chaired a joint task force of ARJE (Association of Reform Jewish Educators) of which she is a board member, CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis) and ACC (American Conference of Cantors) — that works to support clergy educators across the country as well as the synagogues that employ them. And at Temple, Rabbi Rossel has been at the forefront in two significant areas, serving the special needs community by enhancing programming and increasing accessibility for that community, and through her advocacy on an array of mental health and well-being issues — the goal being to remove stigma and enhance Temple's role to the betterment of congregants' lives. Temple is fortunate to have Rabbi Rossel back home!

Rabbi Kimberly Herzog Cohen

"In our fast-paced and fragmented world, we often overlook the beauty, potential, courage and strength that lies before and among us. Our Torah reminds us to remember the lessons of our past, so we can recommit ourselves to making the world a better place."



Rabbi Herzog Cohen is committed to the sacred work of building relational communities, where Jewish meaning, spiritual vibrancy and *tikkun olam* are core values.

A California native, Rabbi Herzog Cohen first formed

Jewish questions amidst the natural wonder of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and since then, she has been seeking ways for people to connect with each other and God in sacred spaces, whether in formal sanctuaries or in nature. No surprise, her favorite childhood book, which remains on her bookshelf to this day, is *Miss Rumphius* because of its message to do good deeds and leave the world a better place. That lesson was reinforced by her family as she was growing up and at her synagogue. Along the way, it has sounded louder, not only as a response to communal realities, but deep within as she has journeyed on her spiritual path with the guidance of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality (IJS).

While pursuing her rabbinic ordination, Rabbi Herzog Cohen was a recipient of the Bonnie and Daniel Tisch Fellowship, a prestigious fellowship meant to foster future transformational rabbinical leaders under the direction of Dr. Lawrence Hoffman. For 20 years, Rabbi Herzog Cohen has worked with broad-based interfaith organizations, from Boston to New York to Dallas, on a range of issues including affordable housing, health care and immigration rights. She is also a founding clergy leader of RAC-TX and served on the Commission on Social Action (CSA) of Reform Judaism. At Temple, Rabbi Herzog Cohen is the rabbinic liaison to our small group initiative, *Sh'ma Emanu-El* and our social justice efforts, including community organizing, advocacy, our anti-racism work, and service projects. She helped create *Goin' to the Chuppah*, *Goin' to the Delivery Room*, *Facing our Truths*, and most recently, a *HIAS Welcome Circle* which sponsored a Ukrainian family to seek a new home in DFW.

Cantor Leslie Niren

"I believe deeply in the power of music to both uplift the spirit and create quiet places for connection with God."



Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Cantor Niren received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Vocal Performance and a certificate in music education from Carnegie Mellon University. Upon graduation, Cantor Niren worked as a cantorial soloist at Temple Beth

El in Boca Raton, Florida, which inspired her to pursue ordination as a cantor at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. She also holds a master's degree from the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music and completed a unit of clinical pastoral education, working as a chaplain intern at New York-Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Cantor Niren believes that relationship building is at the heart of a thriving Jewish community. She brings this commitment to her work at Temple, overseeing the B'nai Mitzvah Program and our youth choir, *Kol Shir*. Cantor Niren has combined two of her greatest passions, Israel education and cooking, into a dynamic program called "*Cantor in the Kitch*," which explores Jewish holidays through the lens of Israeli food, history and culture. Cantor Niren works closely with Cantor Glikin each year to plan a robust and diverse MAC (Music, Arts and Culture) season, which immerses our community in the most innovative Jewish music from around the globe. Each season includes an array of musical styles, ranging from pop to folk, jazz to Broadway, Ashkenazi to Sephardic, classical to Israeli.

In addition to pastoral, education and life cycle responsibilities, Cantor Niren plays an integral role in Temple's worship experiences, infusing our services with melodies that evoke a strong sense of spiritual expression. Cantor Niren is passionate about the use of innovative repertoire and fusing Israeli culture with American Reform Judaism — furthering our connection to Israel and enhancing our spiritual experience. As a prayer leader, she opens hearts, minds and souls through the transformative power of music.

Rabbi Michael Lewis

"I feel a lot of excitement about the Jewish future, and I look forward to the work we'll do together to add our voice to this 3,000 year-old conversation we call the Jewish journey."



After beginning his professional life in politics, Rabbi Lewis turned to the rabbinate: "I loved what I was doing, but I realized after a certain point I was missing community building and connecting with people. I saw the rabbinate as a path to allow

me to learn, teach, be a community leader, to help the Jewish people grow." Rabbi Lewis is doing just that at Temple Emanu-El, where his focus is youth and teen engagement, young adults, conversion, interfaith families, and LGBTQ+ outreach — in addition to his rabbinic roles of teaching, worship, preaching and pastoral care.

In all of his roles, Rabbi Lewis hopes to contribute to "the enduring Jewish conversation. Judaism is deeply rooted in the questions that our tradition has been asking for the past 3,000 years: How do you adapt and assimilate to the modern world and its cultural mores while maintaining the roots and traditions that got you there? Part of what I want to do is continue to frame the conversation to say our Judaism is authentic and real and necessary."



From Kombucha to Kamala: Fun Facts About Our Past Clergy

By Karen Cortell Reisman

Temple has been privileged to be led by many notable clergy over the years, who are now serving in leadership roles all around the country and the world. Keep reading to find out what they're up to now.



Rabbi Adam Allenberg

Current Title/Position:
Senior Director, Office of
Recruitment and Admissions
Hebrew Union College-Jewish
Institute of Religion,
Los Angeles

Tenure: 2009-13

Fun Fact: Rabbi Allenberg is the only Adam Allenberg on earth. He shares his name with no one that he has been able to find.

Also, Rabbi Allenberg makes his own kombucha, pickles and beer.



Cantor Roslyn Barak

Current Title/Position:
Emerita Cantor, Congregation
Emanu-El San Francisco

Tenure: Interim Cantor
2015-16

Fun Fact: First, the farewell blessing conferred on Cantor Barak by Rabbi David Stern during Shabbat Services took her breath away. "He is a true gem and I was so privileged to work with him and the rest of the clergy team," she said.

Second, the completion of Stern Chapel, which, she says, was long anticipated and worth the wait. She felt that she caught a lucky break to be there at such a momentous occasion in congregational life. "We had a lot of fun and fine music-making!"



Rabbi Jack Bemporad

Current Title/Position:
Director of the Center for
Interreligious Understanding;
professor of Theology at St.
Thomas Aquinas University
in Rome; and rabbi at
Congregation Micah of
New Jersey

Tenure: 1972-83

Fun Fact: Rabbi Bemporad blessed St. Pope John Paul II in person a month before he died.



Rabbi Peter Berg

Current Title/Position: Senior
Rabbi at The Temple, Atlanta

Tenure: 1998-2003

Fun Fact: Rabbi Berg officiated a private Chanukat Habayit, the ceremony during which a mezuzah is placed on a front entrance, for Vice President Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff at their official residence at the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C. This was the first time a mezuzah was placed on the residence of a nationally elected leader in the US.

The Second Family told Rabbi Berg they narrowed their search to The Temple based on its unique and historic involvement with civil rights and social justice, including, of course, the fight against antisemitism.



Cantor Annie Bornstein

Current Title/Position: Rabbi/Cantor at JewishHeartAndSoul.com, doing life cycle events

Tenure: 2003-06

Fun Fact: Cantor Bornstein speaks Italian and Hebrew. She is also a former member of the Board of Trustees at American Conference of Cantors.



Cantor Richard Cohn

Current Title/Position: Senior Advisor, Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Tenure: 2006-15

Fun Fact: Cantor Cohn's first experience as a conductor of music was in kindergarten, when he led students on percussion instruments for their graduation ceremony.



Rabbi Barry Diamond

Current Title/Position: Rabbi, Temple Adat Elohim, Thousand Oaks, California

Tenure: 1993-2007

Fun Fact: Rabbi Diamond is re-creating the Celebration Circle program that was developed at Temple Emanu-El around 1995, and he is still using some of the readings that he helped to create for the Sabbath Prayer Sabbath Peace service in 1997. "Temple Emanu-El's influence has and will continue to reach far into the future," he said.



Rabbi Irwin Goldenberg

Current Title/Position: Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Beth Israel (after 35 years of service), York, Pennsylvania

Tenure: 1969-72

Fun Fact: Rabbi Goldenberg gave the invocation for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2008.

The Catholic priest then serving as chaplain had to vet Rabbi Goldenberg's remarks. Rabbi Goldenberg planned to speak about an incident in which people fled Catholic France to England. The chaplain told Rabbi Goldenberg not to criticize France because the president of France would be there next!



Rabbi Rachel Goldenberg

Current Title/Position: Rabbi/Founder, Malkhut: progressive Jewish spirituality in Queens, New York

Tenure: 2003-07

Fun Fact: Rabbi Rachel Goldenberg and her dad, Rabbi Irwin Goldenberg, each served as rabbis at Temple, 35 years apart, and they never lived in Dallas at the same time.



Rabbi Rick Harkavy

Current Title/Position: Rabbi Emeritus of Bet Chaverim, Seattle

Tenure: 1984-86

Fun Fact: Rabbi Harkavy began Temple's Chavurah movement, then called "Fellowship Groups." He was thrilled that four of these groups were formed at the time. His last service at Temple, he said, was among the most special events of his life, and he felt honored by the turnout.



Rabbi Oren Hayon

Current Title/Position: Senior Rabbi at Congregation Emanu El, Houston

Tenure: 2004-11

Fun Fact: Rabbi Hayon started the Temple tradition of a Young Adults' Rosh Hashanah service and reception when he was a young adult himself.



Rabbi Mark Kaiserman

Current Title/Position: Rabbi at the Reform Temple of Forest Hills, Queens, New York

Tenure: 1997-2004

Fun Fact: Rabbi Kaiserman has written a dozen Purim Spiels. He has also visited all 50 states and all 30 major league baseball stadiums.



Rabbi Asher Knight

Current Title/Position: Senior Rabbi, Temple Beth El, Charlotte, North Carolina

Tenure: 2007-16

Fun Fact: By partnering with Dallas Area Interfaith Rabbi Knight, helped enroll over 100,000 people for the Affordable Care Act, which resulted in President Barack Obama's visit to Temple in 2013.

On a personal note, Rabbi Knight was introduced by Temple member Judi Ratner to the love of his life, Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, at the URJ Greene Family Camp.



Rabbi Ellen Lewis

Current Title/Position: Psychoanalyst in private practice

Tenure: 1980-85

Fun Fact: When Rabbi Lewis and her family moved to Dallas for her to take her job position, the Columbian Club gave a free membership to every arriving rabbi. But women could not be members. It was given to Rabbi Lewis, Temple's first female rabbi, in her husband's name.



Rabbi Liza Stern

Current Title/Position: Rabbi, Congregation Eitz Chayim in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Jewish Denominational Counselor, Harvard Divinity School

Tenure: 1986-91

Fun Fact: Rabbi Liza Stern worked with Rabbi David Stern, and her husband is Rabbi Keith Stern. They were all rabbis in the Dallas area at the same time. Congregants told Rabbi Liza Stern how much they loved her husband and how young he looked. And then she knew: they thought she was married to the other Rabbi Stern!

On a personal note, she was proud to join an ice hockey team when she moved to Boston called "The MOES" (Mothers On Edge).



Rabbi Daniel Utley

Current Title/Position: Director of Mandel JCC Camp Wise in Ohio

Tenure: 2016-22

Fun Fact: In high school he was a private pilot. He can play most musical instruments — guitar, banjo, trombone and most brass instruments.



Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman

Current Title/Position: Retired rabbi

Tenure: 1985-96; 2017-21

Fun Fact: He was at a Temple board meeting recommending the start of a Chaver Torah study program on Saturday mornings. A board member said: "They will never come out on Saturday mornings to study. Saturday is a big shopping day." The board member came to the first Saturday session with his wife, and was shocked that there were so many people there.

Rabbi William Greenburg Left Stamp on Temple and Dallas in Their Early Years

By Risa Gross

Rabbi William Greenburg's first impression of Dallas was not favorable. "It was distinctly...a small town in atmosphere with no particularly progressive ideas." And yet for 18 years, from 1901 to 1919, Greenburg invested himself not only in Temple, but in the city of Dallas.

A native of London, Greenburg arrived at Temple at a time when congregants were wrestling with what role Judaism played in their lives, and what role they, as Jews, played in broader society. Temple funds were low, and the pews during services were nearly empty. The board at one point proposed that worship be moved to Sunday evening to boost participation — a suggestion that was ultimately rejected by the broader congregation. When the Columbian Club, Dallas's Jewish social club, announced that a New Year's ball would be held on a Friday night, Greenburg beseeched the organization, successfully, to cancel the festivities. "As a minority," he wrote, "we have always been solicitously careful of preserving our dignity, and maintaining a high reputation for ourselves, not only as citizens but as Jews . . . We must, as a body be prepared to make some sacrifice for the sake of principle."

Even as Rabbi Greenburg witnessed the tension between religious and secular life in his congregation, he dedicated himself to many causes outside Temple's walls. He helped found numerous Dallas organizations, including the Parks and Playgrounds Association; the Dallas Critic Club; the Free Kindergarten Association; the Dallas Anti-Tuberculosis Society; the Dallas Art Association; and the Dallas Symphony Society. He also served as vice president of the Infants' Welfare Association, an organization founded by his wife and fellow tireless volunteer, Blanche Cahn Greenburg.

The contribution to Dallas for which Rabbi Greenburg is best known, however, is the interfaith Thanksgiving service. Motivated by the idea that Dallasites of all religions should gather "as the children of God at least on one occasion during the year," he asked his fellow clergy, "Since we only have one common religious holiday, why



don't we celebrate it, together?" From this query came the first People's Thanksgiving Service in 1907. That first year drew an overflow crowd, and the service continued annually for half a century. The idea inspired city leaders to found the Thanks-Giving Foundation (1964) and build Thanks-Giving Square (1976).

Rabbi Greenburg's embrace of egalitarianism and inclusion extended far beyond a once-a-year gathering. In the broader Dallas community, he advocated for more government services, including a municipal lodging house, a free employment bureau and a municipal bathhouse. He also supported the provision of free health care to those in need.

At Temple, he abolished the practice of paying for pews. (Prior to this change, Temple members had been awarded preferential seating based on their financial contributions.) He also introduced the idea of celebrating confirmation.

In addressing the 1902 confirmation class of six boys, Rabbi Greenburg explained, "Judaism to us is not a religion that teems with impracticable rites and ceremonies. It is not a religion that weighs like tons of lead upon man's freedom of action, restricting his every step, his every word, his every thought. Neither is it far to seek. It is not in the clouds nor is it in the depths of the ocean, but here on this very earth appealing to you every day and every moment of your life."

Though many of Rabbi Greenburg's proposals were foresighted — such as having the entire congregation stand for the Mourner's Kaddish, holding a reception after services and forming a volunteer choir — they proved at odds with Temple members' sensibilities at that time, and his tenure ended in intra-congregational disagreement. After an initial board vote to renew his contract, and then a second vote not to, Rabbi Greenburg resigned in frustration and changed careers.

Notwithstanding the circumstances of his departure, Rabbi Greenburg played a critical role in Temple's beginnings, and he left a lasting and important mark on both Temple and the City of Dallas.

re. Year for all purposes, \$77,314.

People's Service For Thanksgiving

1908

Under the direction of Dr. William H. Greenburg, preparations for the people's thanksgiving service on Thanksgiving Day are going ahead rapidly. So marked was the success of this service last year that much enthusiasm is shown in the cause this year. A program of speeches for the occasion has been prepared, including some of the best speakers of the city. The democratic nature of the meeting is shown by the fact that the speakers are selected from all walks of life, high and low alike. Among those who will make addresses are the following: Mayor Hay, representing the city; Judge M. M. Fisley, representing the law; Dr. John O. McReynolds, medicine; J. Howard Ardrey, commerce; J. W. Parks, labor; George B. Dealay, press, and Dr. W. H. Greenburg, religion. An invocation will be pronounced by Rev. Marion F. Ham of the Unitarian church.

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Rev. Edward J. Dunne, bishop

Rabbi David Lefkowitz: Rabbi with a Common Touch and Uncommon Courage

By Ann Zimmerman Gallant

Rabbi David Lefkowitz was a rare breed of religious leader — equal parts people's pastor, community leader and pragmatic activist, who took on the controversial issues of the day.

He served as Temple's senior rabbi from 1920 to his retirement in 1949. But well before he stepped down, a grateful Temple board, which had seen membership triple amid a renaissance of activity during his almost 30-year tenure, voted unanimously to make him "Rabbi for Life."

His accolades and accomplishments belied a rocky start in life. Born in 1875, David Lefkowitz was one of five children of a widowed mother who emigrated to New York City from Austria-Hungary after her husband's death. Struggling financially, she sent 7-year-old David and his younger brother to live in the Hebrew Orphans Asylum, where Lefkowitz spent his grade school and college years.

Rabbi Lefkowitz first forged a path of community involvement in Dayton, Ohio, where he served as rabbi at Temple Israel for 20 years, growing the membership, raising a family of four with his wife, Sadie, and becoming an integral part of the city. He served as president of the Humane Society, founder of the Dayton Chapter of the American Red Cross and a founding member of the Dayton Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Though Dayton civic leaders and the temple tried hard to keep Rabbi Lefkowitz, Dallas beckoned with its growing Jewish community and civic boosterism championed by Temple leaders who played prominent business and cultural roles in the city.

The Lefkowitz family settled on Forest Avenue in South Dallas, where a majority of the city's Jewish residents lived within walking distance of Temple. Rabbi Lefkowitz wasted no time invigorating and enhancing a community that had been listing after the tumultuous last year of his predecessor's tenure.



Cognizant of the important role women played in sustaining Judaism in the home and the synagogue, he encouraged Temple's female volunteers, known then as The Guild, to join the Reform Movement's national organization of Temple Sisterhoods. He would later help form Temple Brotherhood, as well.

He exhorted all Jewish business owners to close on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, as "an eloquent pronouncement of our faith to the City at Large." All Temple business owners complied.

To foster congregational spirit, he launched a monthly newsletter, reporting on Temple activities, including Sisterhood meetings, his popular Bible study class, and a new music club begun by Sadie Lefkowitz, who would go on to become president of Sisterhood. His newsletter also noted the meetings of the National Council of Jewish Women, which met at Temple.



He and Sadie David Lefkowitz's embrace of arts and culture charmed Dallas's gentle community. Photo: Temple Emanuel Archives, Dallas

Rabbi Lefkowitz was tireless. In addition to leading services every Friday night and Saturday morning and running the religious school, he was a member of numerous social and cultural groups. He became the first Jewish member of the Rotary Club, but had to decline the chairmanship due to a packed schedule.

He made it his mission to personally visit every Temple family, which numbered several hundred at the time. But eventually, as his workload grew heavier, he confined those visits to the sick and bereaved. While a typical week might include multiple addresses to colleges and civic and religious groups across the city and region, he made ample time for his family, lunching at home most days with Sadie and hosting lively onegs where her Goo Cake was the highlight.

“Rabbi Lefkowitz possessed a rare combination of mystical goodness, the willingness to speak up for his convictions and the acumen to accomplish his objectives,” Gerry Cristol, Temple’s former archivist, wrote in “A Light in the Prairie,” a 1998 history of the congregation.

He approached the controversies of the day with what you might call the rabbinic equivalent of the Hippocratic Oath: first do no harm.

Rabbi Lefkowitz wasn’t in Dallas long when he encountered the racist, nativist, antisemitic Ku Klux Klan. By the early 1920s, the Klan had infiltrated city government — the police commissioner at the time was a Klan member — and the social hierarchy, including the Masons, to which Rabbi Lefkowitz belonged.

At first, he talked privately to congregants about the Klan’s deleterious impact on the city’s progress; wrote private letters to Dallas Morning News publisher George Dealey, applauding his anti-Klan editorials; and joined a large group of prominent Dallas leaders who denounced the group. At the same time, he cautioned some people to remain quiet rather than attack the Klan, saying that the publicity could make matters worse. But when, in 1923, Klan leadership verbally attacked Jews publicly, Rabbi Lefkowitz responded fiercely and publicly.

That fall, during Ku Klux Klan Day at the State Fair of Texas, 7,000 Klan members and more than 20,000 spectators listened as the Grand Wizard told the crowd that Negroes, Jews and Catholics would never assimilate into American society, and questioned American Jews’ patriotism. Rabbi Lefkowitz countered the accusations in his Friday night sermon, which was published in the Dallas Morning News the following Sunday.

“He has wrongly flouted my people and I will not be silent,” Rabbi Lefkowitz said. “How could the patriotism of the Jew be questioned, since they fought and died so bravely side by side with their fellow Americans in the recent Great War?”

The rabbi’s stature as a spiritual leader and intellectual grew both regionally and nationally. He wrote a scholarly paper on the separation of Church and State for the Central Council of Reform Rabbis (CCAR) and launched a Sunday radio show that broadcast religious services to three states.



The Seventy-fifth Anniversary Celebration Diamond Jubilee Banquet at the Crystal Ballroom, Baker Hotel, March 8, 1947. Listening to Dr. David Lefkowitz are Winfield S. Myers, immediate past president, Blossom Myers, Dr. Maurice N. Eisenblatt, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Eugene M. Solow, president of Temple Emanuel-El, Mrs. Solow, Arthur Star, Helen Star, Dr. Julian Morgenstern, president of Hebrew Union College, Helen Florence, Fred Florence, vice-president and perennial treasurer of Temple Emanuel-El.

In 1927, Southern Methodist University awarded Rabbi Lefkowitz an honorary Doctor of Law degree. The *Dallas Morning News* lauded the move: “In addition to his personal qualifications of heart and mind, the Rabbi Doctor has been a citizen interested and helpful in all matters for the spiritual and intellectual advancement of Dallas.”

In the ensuing decades, Rabbi Lefkowitz — now referred to as “Doctor” by Temple members — and Sadie continued to make their mark on Dallas, as well as on the wider Jewish community. Concerned about inadequate health care for women, particularly those giving birth at home, Sadie founded the Dallas chapter of the Visiting Nurses Association, which continues to this day. And Rabbi Lefkowitz helped start one of the first Hillel chapters in the country, at Texas A&M University, and became president of the CCAR.

In leading the professional organization of Reform rabbis, Rabbi Lefkowitz also countered the criticisms of Orthodox Jews who belittled Temple as little more than a church and the Reform movement as lacking in Jewish consciousness — more concerned with saving the world than nourishing the Jewish soul.

“Reform Judaism,” he wrote during his CCAR presidency, “has been knocked by its critics for talking so much about the Jewish mission to the world, but how could it have conceived or professed such a program if it did not believe in the reality of the Jewish people.”

The rabbi was not a Zionist, but he publicly protested Great Britain’s efforts to halt emigration to Palestine in the 1920s.

In honor of Rabbi Lefkowitz’s 20th year at its helm, Temple held a banquet at the fashionable Baker Hotel. The roster of religious and civic leaders included Mayor Woodall Rogers and George Dealey. Dr. Julian Morgenstern, president of Hebrew Union College, was the principal speaker.

“Of all the rabbis that have gone forth from Hebrew Union College,” Dr. Morgenstern said, “I may say, Dave, that you are the best beloved.”



Rabbi Levi Olan: ‘Disturber of the Peace’ Who Lived the Values He Preached

By Ann Zimmerman Gallant

When Rabbi Levi Olan died in 1984, an editorial in the Dallas Morning News called him a “Dallas prophet” and “a born disturber of the peace.”

And disturb he did. From 1949 to 1970, when he served as Temple’s senior rabbi, he used his powerful intellect, sonorous voice and moral authority from the pulpit and the airwaves to challenge congregants and the city at large to combat society’s most pressing ills: antisemitism, McCarthyism, segregation and all manner of injustice and intolerance.

He repeatedly railed against racism in sermons broadcast to an audience of 200,000 citywide on his Sunday morning radio show. After delivering these sermons, Rabbi Olan and the Temple frequently received threatening phone calls.

Rabbi Olan was not satisfied to simply shed light on problems. He took action in profound and meaningful ways. As Rabbi David Stern once put it: “He did not just preach about poverty, he worked to eradicate it. He did not just speak about fair housing, he made the expansion of federal funding for low-income housing in Dallas a fundamental priority.”

Temple members followed Rabbi Olan’s example. Congregant Louis Tobian chaired the Dallas Housing Authority and helped oversee construction of low-income housing developments. Another led the Chamber of Commerce Inter-Racial Housing committee. And when Rabbi Olan preached about the need for quality education for underprivileged children, Sisterhood members built and staffed a top-quality preschool at a South Dallas housing project (Rhoads Terrace) that eventually led Dallas to open public kindergartens — the last large city in the country to do so.



Rabbi Olan gained national attention in the aftermath of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Dallas became known as a city seething with right-wing intolerance and was labeled “The City of Hate.” The slaying was not, Rabbi Olan said from the pulpit a few days later, “the act of one misguided assassin... This was the final act of all our hates in one insane moment... We reap what we sow.”

He went on to beseech the city to care more about solving its social problems than repairing its image. *Fortune Magazine*, which had written critically of the city at the time, called Rabbi Olan “the most powerful religious voice in Dallas.”



Born in Ukraine in 1903, Levi Olan grew up in the Jewish ghetto of Rochester, N.Y., where he and his parents fled to escape the pogroms of their homeland. His father owned a small store. After growing up in the Orthodox tradition and later embracing Reform Judaism, he tried throughout his career to be a bridge between traditional and modern observance — an effort to spark a deeper spirituality.

At Temple, Rabbi Olan was also unafraid to be a disturber of the peace. He arrived with a mission to introduce weightier programs and more Jewish content and practice to a congregation that prized assimilation. Rabbi Olan added more Hebrew into services and started a formal bar mitzvah program.

The injection of more tradition riled many congregants. When children started wrapping Hanukkah presents in the blue and white colors of the Israeli flag and some members insisted that the flag be placed in the sanctuary, it was the last straw. Several hundred Temple members met with Rabbi Olan and accused him of leading the congregation toward Orthodoxy and Zionism. The group eventually apologized.

Rabbi Olan went on to leave an indelible legacy at his spiritual home, hiring the Temple's first music director — who built a renowned choir — and inspiring the construction of a building so beautiful that Life Magazine devoted a two-page pictorial spread to it when it opened. Longtime Temple member Rhea Wolfram perhaps captured Rabbi Levi Olan best in an interview for a project honoring Temple's 150th anniversary in 2022 (when she was 103): "He held us together, gave us integrity, a moral compass and hope for the future."

A fun story:

Olan was short, cerebral and known for his sharp sense of humor that he often used to puncture hubris. When a Baptist pastor once boasted his congregation was the biggest in the nation and a Methodist minister bragged his was the largest in his denomination, Olan retorted: "We have the largest mortgage."

Selected Levi Olan Accomplishments:

- Charter member of the Friends of the Dallas Public Library. He encouraged the city council to allocate unspent bond money on the languishing, turn-of-the-century downtown library building.
- He took on John O. Beaty, head of the SMU English department, for writing a popular book alleging that communists were mainly Jewish and had infiltrated America. In a Sunday sermon entitled, "What shall we do with our prejudices," Rabbi Olan said: "It is not uncommon for a college professor to be a man of extreme prejudice. Nazi universities were full of professional bigots."
- Elected president of the Central Conference of Rabbis.
- In 1954, after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down school desegregation, he joined Dallas Citizens for Peaceful Integration.
- In the mid-1950s, after the Dallas Museum of Art bowed to public protest and banned artists accused of having communist leanings, including Ben Shahn, Olan repeatedly preached against the reactionary move on his radio program: "Anything we disagree with we call communism. ...The angry passions can only weaken the nation."
- Gov. John Connally appointed him to a six-year term on the University of Texas Board of Regents in 1961 and to head the Dallas Housing Authority.
- After the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Olan preached about "an evil brooding for some time," and "the shame of the city."
- Appointed to the John F. Kennedy Citizens Memorial Committee, a step seen as a turning point for the city's self-reflection after the assassination.
- In 1963, 2,000 people attended a poll tax rally at Fair Park Auditorium to hear Martin Luther King Jr. Rabbi Olan sat on the stage as one of the few white members of the Dallas County United Poll Tax Committee. The States Rights Party picketed out front.

- As a member of the Goals for Dallas Education Committee, Rabbi Olan promoted the building of an experimental preschool for impoverished children in South Dallas in 1965. Rhoads Terrace Preschool was a catalyst for public kindergarten in Dallas.
- In 1970, he became rabbi emeritus and went on to write three books: a scholarly work on the Jewish view of death; "Maturity in an Immature World," a compilation of his radio sermons; and "Faith and the Secular Age," philosophical research blended with the theological journey of the Jewish people. He was considered a theologian who belonged to postmodernism, a synthesis of science, ethics, aesthetics and religion, according to "Jewish Stars of Texas," by Hollace Weiner.

Rabbi Gerald Klein: A Lifetime of Service and a Galaxy of Friends

By Joyce Goldberg

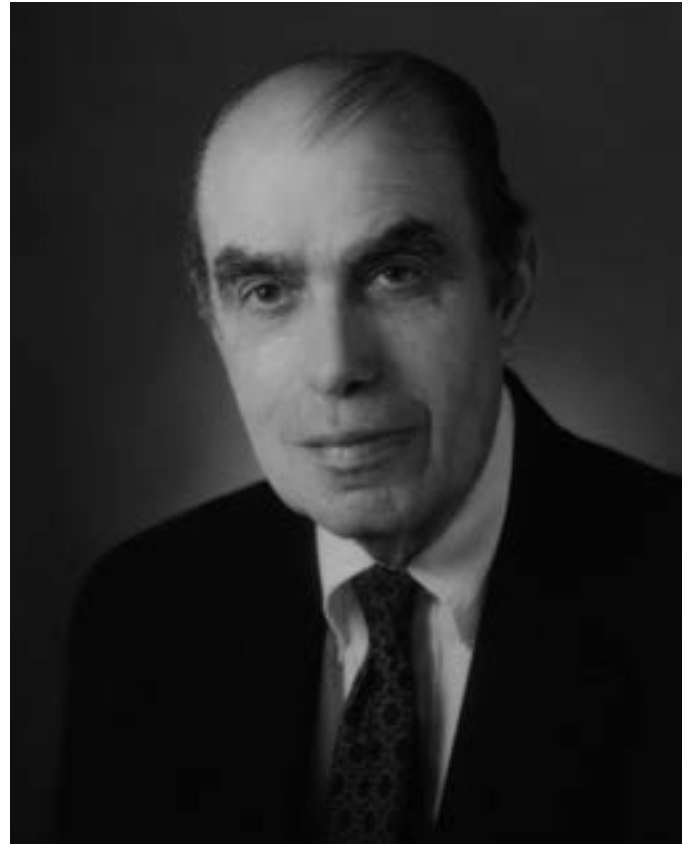
Temple came calling for Rabbi Gerald Joseph Klein in 1952. He was living with his wife, Dorothy, and son, Alan, in Schenectady, New York, as a rabbi at Congregation Gates of Heaven since 1948. He never dreamed that the rest of his life would be spent in Dallas. The move from Schenectady proved to be a wise decision.

Temple was still located on South Boulevard at the time; the move to Hillcrest Road was still almost five years in the future. Rabbi Klein adjusted to the Texas way of life — and the summer heat — while getting to know his beloved congregants.

He was active in local and national organizations and received many honors. But his greatest love was his pastoral connections. Rabbi Klein performed multiple generational life cycle ceremonies for numerous Temple families.

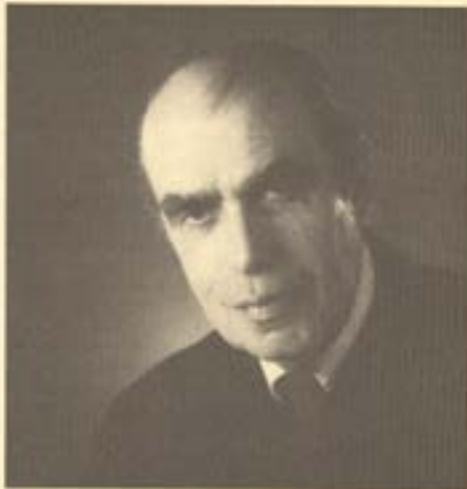
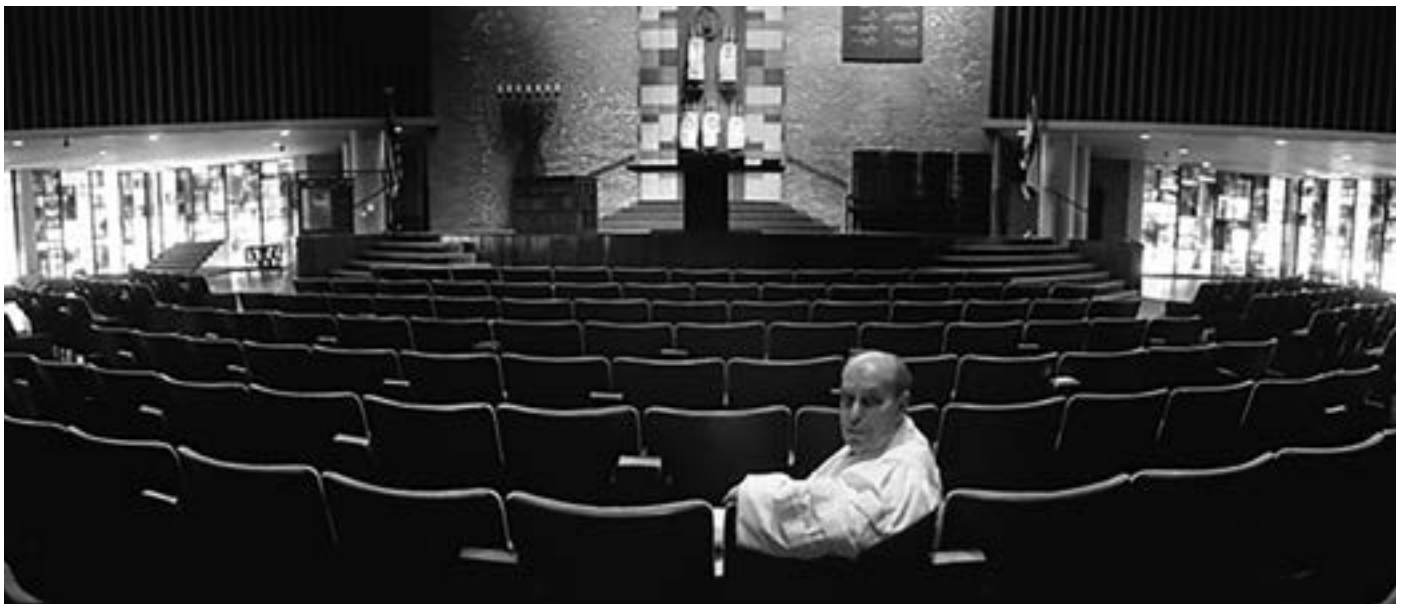
“Of this I am certain,” he wrote in a letter to the congregation marking 40 years of service. “For me, Temple Emanu-El is made up not so much of members but good, warm, strong friends with whom I have laughed and cried, triumphed and stumbled.”

Rabbi Klein’s road to Dallas began in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, the small town where he was born in 1921 and where he, like his childhood sweetheart Dorothy Penner, grew up. They married in 1947. Rabbi Klein attended Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, Pennsylvania, and Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Dallas became the Kleins’ true home. Their daughter, Joyce, was born in 1954. They spent every summer vacation on Cape Cod. And Temple was their unquestioned place in life. Dorothy died in 1995. Rabbi Klein died in 2007, after serving Temple for 55 years.



Rabbi David Stern’s eulogy captured Rabbi Klein’s devotion to Temple members. He was, Rabbi Stern said, a man who favored presence over pretense, individuals over institutions, the human touch over technology. He was a person of fierce integrity. Rabbi Klein’s rabbinate conveyed an indelible daily message. Rabbi Stern reminded us: A rabbi is first and foremost a pastor, and that people — their sorrows, their needs, their struggles — always come first in our service to God.

Days before his own death, Rabbi Klein hit those notes in a Friday night sermon that captured how he lived his life: “Let’s go forward — as long as God gives us the power to think, to pray, to believe, to advocate, to act, to respond, to rededicate, to celebrate.”



*A Service In Celebration Of
Rabbi Gerald J. Klein's
40th Anniversary
At Temple Emanu-El
Dallas, Texas
Friday, November 20, 1992*



Choir Inspires Present and Future with Roots Deep in Temple's Past

By Lori Ordiway



Music has been interwoven with Temple life and worship from its earliest days. Temple hired a professional choir and organist for services in 1876, the year it acquired its first building. A children's choir sang at Shabbat services as early as 1916. Then, in 1920, Sadie Lefkowitz, wife of Rabbi David Lefkowitz, organized the first volunteer choir for Shabbat morning services.

Temple's golden age of music arguably began in 1953 with the arrival of Sam Adler as music director. The son of a German cantor, his family fled after the Kristallnacht pogrom of 1938. He had been offered Leonard Bernstein's job as music director at Brandeis University. But his relationship with Rabbi Levi Olan persuaded him to come to a growing Reform congregation on the Dallas prairie instead.

At Temple, Adler built upon the work begun by Sadie Lefkowitz and organized a volunteer adult choir that grew to about 50 members. It began singing regularly at Friday night services, and its reputation for excellence and a wide-ranging repertoire grew worldwide. For years, the choir traveled the country and the globe, including throughout Europe and Israel and even the

Soviet Union. "More than any other temple, [Temple Emanu-El] contributed to the growth of Jewish music in America by performing every new piece that came out," Adler said in a 2011 documentary on the choir. During the 1960s, "we were the only large Jewish choir in this country."

Award-winning composer Simon Sargon succeeded Adler. Born in Bombay and educated at Brandeis and the Julliard School, Sargon continued in the music tradition of Adler.



“I couldn’t be a cantor, because I didn’t have a voice,” Sargon once said. “But I could fulfill the cantor’s role of being the representative of the congregation to God. I could make the choir speak for me.”

Under Adler and Sargon, the choir became a close-knit group whose members grew to view one another as a family, as longtime choir member Sarah Yarrin put it. Sung from the choir loft above the congregation, their music enriched every service and festival at Temple.

To this day, under the leadership of the music director Chris Crook, the singing of our choir continues to awaken souls and deepen prayer at Temple, and delights audiences at other venues including the annual NorthPark Hanukkah concert.



A New Note: How Temple Embraced the Tradition of Cantorial Music

By Lori Ordiway

Temple was 130 years old by the time the first cantor was hired in 2003. Getting there did not come easy.

Initial discussions began in the early 1990s. But the effort didn't crystallize until almost a decade later, and was capped by a year of often-contentious meetings headed by a young Rabbi David Stern.

Pushback came, in part, from choir members and their fans. They were afraid the choir would be sidelined. More senior congregants resisted changes to the worship service to which they were accustomed.

Nevertheless, the rabbis believed that there was an important place for both the choir and a cantor, who would lead the congregation from the pulpit, instead of singing from on high at the back of the sanctuary as the choir did.

Rabbi Stern explained at the time that as he saw it, there were three types of synagogue music: the music of majesty; the music of meditation; and the music of community participation.

Temple provided the first two exceptionally well during the High Holy Days and services. The rabbis thought that a cantor would ignite the third.

Many of the younger congregants in the era had attended Union for Reform Judaism camps, and were clamoring for the kind of lively, participatory music that animated their cherished summer experiences, Rabbi Stern would explain years later in the Temple magazine, *The Window*.

Temple song leaders like Rabbi Barry Diamond, the director of education, and Judi Ratner, who led youth programming, already had begun this shift. They brought contemporary Jewish compositions to Temple during the High Holy Days and other services, incorporating a guitar rather than just an organ. Congregant Randy Pearlman was often asked to sing at Shabbat services and at b'nai mitzvah.



A cantor would speed this change. Finally, in 2003, Temple hired its first cantor, Annie Bornstein, who was followed in 2006 by Richard Cohn. Warm and talented, Cantor Cohn saw as his mission “to integrate contemporary and traditional aspects of

congregational life, while sustaining a diverse and vibrant musical culture.”



Cantor Cohn helped expose the congregation to an array of musical influences while integrating experiences such as the Jazz Shabbat that began in the 1990s.

After setting Temple on a new musical course for nine years, Cantor Cohn

left in 2015 to helm the prestigious Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, where he would shape the Reform movement musically nationwide.



Leslie Niren, hired in 2013, continued in her role as assistant cantor. Vicky Glikin joined Temple as senior cantor in 2016 and together they built on Cantor Cohn's legacy of creating an engaging, empowering spiritual environment through song. "Music helps us to feel more and deeper, to find greater meaning in our lives, to access with more clarity the full expression of our human experience, and to come into a closer relationship with the Divine," Cantor Glikin said shortly after she arrived.

The vibrant duo of Cantors Niren and Glikin has elevated worship at Temple and cultivated the music of participation, just as the rabbis had hoped. Rabbi Robbins said it best: "The music [at Temple] is revolutionary. Now, congregants are not being sung to; instead, we're all part of it, singing together."

Architecture: Our House of Worship is a Sacred Work of Art

By Lynda Newman



Temple's award-winning, nationally recognized building embodies its religious values and its stature in the community. It is our congregation's fourth home since the first building was dedicated in 1876. Each move was necessitated by the growth of the congregation and the relocation of its members, who numbered more than 1,000 by 1955 when the current building was erected.

The initial 17.7 acres of land for Temple's current site were purchased from William Caruth, who stipulated that it only be used for religious or educational purposes, that the buildings be built of brick or stone, and that \$500,000 be spent on new construction before January 1956.

Following a national search, two architects, each with a connection to Temple and with local projects in their portfolios, were selected. Howard Meyer, a native New Yorker and a graduate of Columbia University, was an admirer of modern architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright. Max Sandfield, originally from San Antonio, had graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a degree in architecture. Together they engaged William W. Wurster, dean of the School of Architecture at the University of California at Berkeley, as a consultant. They also collaborated with talented artists and artisans who helped complete their vision.

The midcentury building was dedicated in 1957 and cost \$2 million. The Olan Sanctuary — majestic and cylindrical — provided the spiritual center and was designed to express religious tenets through art and symbols. The sanctuary's 90-foot dome is supported by a

curved wall of acoustical fins, and light is provided by 47 tubular fixtures that hang from the dome. Congregants face a wall inlaid with flecks of gold that reflect the shape of a menorah. On the wall hangs an expression of the Ten Commandments, and a metallic cloth covers the ark.

Reflecting the fact that Zionism and the State of Israel were not yet central to the Reform movement in the 1950s, the congregation in the Olan Sanctuary faces south in prayer, rather than facing east toward Jerusalem, as is the practice in more traditional settings.



The Olan Sanctuary was built to hold 750 permanent seats and has space for 250 additional chairs. As many as 1,000 chairs can be arranged in the adjacent Tobian Auditorium, for a capacity of 2,000 for a High Holy Days service. When it was constructed, the balance of the building housed offices, meeting rooms, an auditorium, the Lefkowitz Chapel, a library and 47 classrooms.

Life Magazine marked the building's dedication with a full-page color spread. In 1957, 1959 and 1966 the American Institute of Architects celebrated the design with its Award of Merit, and in 1991 the Dallas chapter of the AIA granted its Twenty-Five Year Award. Years later, the building was still being heralded. David Dillon, the late architecture critic for the *Dallas Morning News*, praised it in 1984 as the "best architect/artist collaboration in the Southwest."

In 2014, Temple began a major expansion guided by two governing principles: to create spaces that foster a greater sense of community and to honor and incorporate nature into the worship experience.

Designed by local architect Gary Cunningham and completed in 2016, the modernist expansion blends seamlessly with the original Temple building. It is also architecturally significant in its own right. The expansion and renovation won an Honor Award from AIA Dallas in 2018, and the newly landscaped grounds that incorporate native, drought-resistant plants were honored in 2019 by the Texas chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

The centerpiece of the \$37 million project is the Stern Chapel, named for Rabbi David Stern, who by this time had served Temple for more than 25 years. The prayer spaces provide a respite from the everyday world and encourage a spiritual experience of the holy.

On one side, the white oak-paneled room has a wall of windows overlooking four grand live oaks in the Temple courtyard. Curved rows of seats allow worshippers to see one another — enhancing a participatory worship experience and a sense of a sacred community.

The low bimah facilitates connection among prayer leaders and worshippers. Reflecting the Reform Movement's evolution into a strong supporter of Israel, worshippers in the chapel face east.

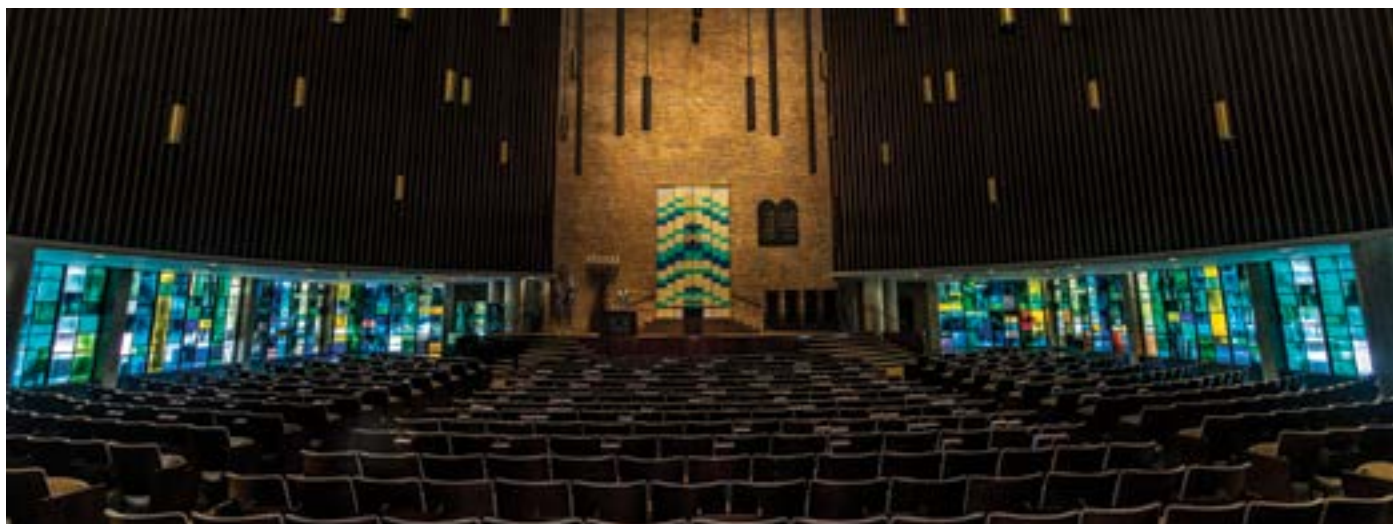
Another hallmark of the renovation, and a welcome addition to the extra classrooms and offices, is the Tycher Gathering Space, a large room off the main entrance. It includes inviting couches, low tables and a coffee bar — all of which provide meaningful opportunities for enhanced community and connection.

“The idea here is to find the sweet spot between finding the individual pursuit of meaning, and saying we can go on that individual path together,” Rabbi Stern told the Dallas Morning News after the expansion's opening in 2016.



Temple Works of Art, Part 1 — Olan Sanctuary, Medellín Sculpture and Shahn Tapestry

By Nancy Cohen Israel



OLAN SANCTUARY

Olan Sanctuary is the crown jewel of Temple's original, historic building. In the mid-1950s, Dallas architects Howard Meyer and Max Sandfield, in consultation with William W. Wurster, designed the building to reflect the Modernist style of the era. To create a unified aesthetic program, they hired György Kepes to serve as the art coordinator.

How did architects in Texas persuade a European-trained, Boston-based artist to come to Dallas to create a Modernist masterpiece? It so happened that Sandfield had earned his architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where the émigré Kepes began his teaching career at the Cambridge campus in 1947. Kepes previously taught design at the New Bauhaus school in Chicago. His connections to leading contemporary artists, as well as his aesthetic vision, helped create a building rooted in tradition while reflecting Temple's interest in embracing the future.

Rabbi Levi Olan was actively involved in all aesthetic decisions. Of greatest importance to him was imparting Judaism and its values. It is notable that the artists whose works fill Olan Sanctuary were all teaching artists. As such, they understood the power of visual communication to edify and inspire.

Mosaic

György Kepes taught art theory, giving him a unique way of thinking through problems such as the one posed by an enormous brick wall behind the bimah. As his first contribution to the space, he conceived a mosaic, representing a stylized menorah, that would weave through the bricks and, when illuminated by the sanctuary's pendant lights, be transformed into a shimmering tableau.

Kepes' mosaic was realized by North Texas artists Octavio Medellín and Charles Williams. Medellín crafted the gold, silver, turquoise and green glass pieces (tesserae) that he and Williams installed, piece by glass piece. In one of Temple's best anecdotes, after Medellín and Williams spent several weeks installing the mosaic, the architects came in and said that the installation wasn't working properly with the light. And so, back onto the scaffolding, the artists had to remove each piece before reinstalling it to perfection.

Medellín also conceived and created "The Promised Land," the sculpture that visitors first see as they approach the sanctuary entrance from Northwest Highway.



Ark Covers

The art world is a small place. To create the doors of the ark, Kepes called upon the best textile artist he knew, Anni Albers, another Bauhaus émigré. At the time, Albers had just completed a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the first textile artist to do so. For Temple, she designed geometric fields of color, woven in glistening Lurex fabric that created its own



visual dazzle. Rather than using a curtain, as conceived by Kepes, Albers chose to mount the material on eight staggered panels. At 20 feet high, the panels' strong physicality weaves together the palette of the stained-glass windows surrounding the sanctuary and the mosaic that dominates the wall enveloping the ark.

Ner Tamid

The ner tamid in Olan Sanctuary is one of the most iconic works of art in the building. While designed by Kepes, it was realized — along with the bimah's menorah — by fellow MIT professor Richard Filipowski, a noted painter and sculptor.



Octavio Medellín, The Promised Land

Walking toward the sanctuary along the building's south side promenade, visitors are greeted with Octavio Medellín's copper and brass sculpture, "The Promised Land." Anecdotal, it is one work for which everyone seems to have an opinion, interpretation and/or alternate title.

Medellín was one of the most influential artists and teachers to call Dallas home. His story echoed that of the European émigrés. Born in central Mexico in 1907, he arrived in Texas as a child when his family escaped the Mexican Revolution. He ultimately trained at the Art Institute of Chicago before moving to North Texas to teach and work.

This work was designed to reflect separation. Installed intentionally between the parking lot and the sanctuary, it was intended to be viewed as separating the secular week from Shabbat. Viewed another way, out of the chaos of our individual lives, we come together at Temple where we ultimately flow into a single community.

Medellín also fabricated the glass tesserae for the mosaic in Olan Sanctuary. He and Fort Worth-based artist Charles Williams installed the work, based on Kepes' design.



Ben Shahn Tapestry, ‘One Hundred and Fiftieth Psalm’

To have any work at Temple by Ben Shahn, dayenu! In addition to the three works on paper by Shahn, a pillar of 20th-century art as well as an influential teacher, Temple members are fortunate custodians of this spectacular tapestry. The story of its commission is as significant as the work itself.

Shortly after the current building opened in 1957, Patsy Nasher and Shirley Pollock launched the Significant Book Series under the auspices of Sisterhood. Almost immediately, it became one of Dallas’ most important intellectual series. Using funds raised from the program, Temple was able to commission this work as well as purchase a suite of 18 lithographs by Marc Chagall.

As the story goes, Rabbi Olan traveled to Shahn’s home in Roosevelt, New York, where he spent five hours with the artist. They discussed the commission, meant to reflect what they called a “Hallelujah Spirit,” within the first 10 minutes and then spent the rest of the time trading Yiddish stories. Working from Shahn’s design, this monumental tapestry was created at the Aubusson Factory in France by the skilled weavers of Pinton Freres.

There is one more incredible detail to this story. Ben Shahn joined the Communist Party in the 1930s, as did many other artists of his time. By the time the current building was under construction in the 1950s, the Red Scare gripped the country. The Dallas Museum of Fine Art (now the Dallas Museum of Art) barred work from artists who were or ever had been Communists. As a poke in the eye to the museum, Temple became the only public institution locally to acquire Shahn’s work at that time. Then as now, Temple has always been at the forefront of social justice.

Temple Works of Art, Part 2 — Stern Chapel, Chagall and Tamir Prints, Memorial Room and Czech Torah Scroll

By Nancy Cohen Israel



STERN CHAPEL

Stern Chapel is the latest gem in Temple's crown. Through the vision of architect Gary Cunningham of Cunningham Associates, this latest addition, completed in 2016, aesthetically pays homage to the historic building while being mindful of contemporary concerns. Cunningham and his team meticulously thought through every design decision. In some cases, they even combed through Howard Meyer's archive at the University of Texas at Austin in search of clues that led them back to the original intent of the building.

For the design of the newer wing, a connection to nature and the outdoors was a pressing concern. With a view into the tree-filled Nasher-Haemisegger Atrium, Stern Chapel offers a place where our souls and spirits can be nurtured.

As with the original building, art was considered an essential design element. A committee of Temple members, many with connections to the art world, was tasked with creating a timeless cohesive whole, uniting the natural world with this sacred space.



Ark Covers

With Torah, we are told to turn it over again and again. When New York-based artist Suzanne Tick presented her design for the ark doors in Stern Chapel, using recycled materials,

this idea of seeing something anew resonated. Literally turning trash into treasure, Tick fabricated this work using Mylar balloons that she found along the beach near her home on Fire Island. After washing, peeling and cutting them in half, she wove them in such a way that they reflect and radiate light. With their gradations of color, they echo the spirit of Anni Albers' ark doors in Olan Sanctuary while also looking boldly forward. Their riotous color and nubby texture provide a perfect balance with the matte white travertine ark, designed by architect Gary Cunningham.

Jeanette Kuvin Oren, one of the leading artists of the early 21st century working in Judaica today, was commissioned to create the Torah covers inside the ark. She worked closely with congregant Jon Rollins, an architect, to achieve specific shades of green and blue,

reminiscent of the palette in Olan Sanctuary. For the High Holy Days, these brightly colored covers are traded out for a pair in pure white, symbolizing the promise of renewal for a new year.



Ner Tamid

For the *ner tamid* in Stern Chapel, the art committee commissioned local sculptor Linda Ridgway to design a work that could create a visual dialogue with the natural world just beyond the windows. Ridgway's elegant branches, cast in bronze, beautifully

synthesize this idea. Even the cast string used to bundle the branches has the effect of wafting gently in the wind. She worked with Jim Cinquemani, another local sculptor, to realize this work. Cinquemani also designed the menorah in Stern Chapel.

Custom Bimah Furniture

Continuing the theme of repurposing and renewal, the art committee commissioned George Nakashima Woodworkers to create the furniture on the bimah. The Nakashima workshop's reverence for nature and its thoughtfulness in sourcing its wood aligns perfectly with Temple's emphasis on connecting with the physical world around it.

George Nakashima was born in 1905 in Spokane, Washington, to Japanese émigrés. Upon completing his architectural training, he accepted a job working in Antonin Raymond's Tokyo office, which integrated western technology with the aesthetics of Japanese design. Within a few years, Nakashima returned to the United States. In 1942, however, his promising career took a heartbreaking hiatus as he, his wife, Marion, and their young daughter, Mira, were forced into a relocation camp in Idaho. The following year, Antonin Raymond secured the family's release, through the promise of employment in New Hope, Pennsylvania. There, Nakashima began his furniture design firm, building it, its office and his home, quite literally from the ground up.

So much about Nakashima brings the story of our illustrious building full circle. After earning his architecture degree from the University of Washington, Nakashima continued his education at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Unsatisfied with its curriculum, he finished his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Through the years, he continued to add structures to his property. In 1967, he opened the Arts Building, with an inaugural exhibition of work by Ben Shahn.

Now in its fourth generation, the legacy of Nakashima Woodworkers continues. And, just as our Temple family, it endures *l'dor vador*.

Chagall Prints

Sisterhood (now Women of Reform Judaism) has always made an enormous contribution to the community, culture and social justice initiatives at Temple. In 1957, Patsy Nasher and Shirley Pollock chaired Sisterhood's Significant Book Series, which quickly became a leading program in Dallas. Proceeds from it allowed Temple to acquire a suite of 18 lithographs from Marc Chagall, as well as the Ben Shahn tapestry commission.



The Russian-born Chagall spent many of his formative artistic years in Paris, where his exuberant style drew on other flourishing, avant-garde movements of the early 20th century. He worked in several media, including painting, printmaking, stained glass and ceramics. Wherever he lived, his art soon reflected his surroundings. Childhood memories, folk life and the Judaism of his native Vitebsk, however, remained a constant source of inspiration.

This suite of prints based on Biblical themes arrived with a handwritten note from Chagall, expressing his friendship to the Temple community.



Moshe Tamir Prints

Anyone who has visited Jerusalem is familiar with the golden glow emanating from the city's unique limestone. Moshe Tamir's suite of 13 prints and one double-sided lithograph dedicated to this holy city envelops the Tycher Gathering Space, bringing the warmth of Israel to this space.

While Jerusalem may be a spiritual concept for us in Dallas, for Tamir it had a very real presence in his life. Tamir was born in Russia in 1924, and his family emigrated to Palestine when he was a toddler. While fighting in the War of Independence in 1948, he was wounded in battle while positioned in Jerusalem. When this suite was completed, in 1972, the city had only recently been reunited.

Tamir studied art at the New Bezalel School of Arts in Jerusalem, eventually becoming its director.

Interestingly, in 1978, he had a solo exhibition at a Dallas gallery.

Memorial Room Sculpture

Imagine walking into Temple for the first time in 1950s. Spacious, modern and new, it embodied the times. But Judaism also remembers and honors the past. When it was built, the Memorial Room was a circular space, echoing the structure of Olan Sanctuary. As such, it provided the perfect place of memory for deceased members. Within a few years of this building's consecration, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. To honor his memory, Temple installed a plaque close to the room's *ner tamid*.

Ludwig Wolpert designed the *ner tamid* for this space, titled *The Tree of Life*. Born in 1900 in Germany and originally trained in sculpture, Wolpert turned his attentions toward metalwork as a student at the School for Arts and Crafts in Frankfurt-am-Main, where he worked under the tutelage of Leo Horowitz, a former Bauhaus instructor. Perhaps inspired by the liturgical art of his native Hildesheim, he began to craft Jewish ceremonial objects in a contemporary vernacular.

In 1935, Wolpert fled to Palestine, where he taught at Jerusalem's New Bezalel Academy of Arts. He was invited to the United States in 1956 to assume the directorship of the Tobe Pascher Workshop at the Jewish Museum in New York. His many commissions included a silver Torah case that Chaim Weizmann presented to President Harry Truman. Travelers who have visited the Jewish Chapel at John F. Kennedy Airport may be interested to know that Wolpert also designed its entrance.

Czech Torah Scroll

Temple is lucky to be the keeper of a Torah scroll that is identified as being from Klatovy in the southwestern Czech Republic. It was among the more than 1,800 scrolls that were sent to the Central Jewish Museum in Prague, along with over 100,000 items of Judaica, following a letter sent by the Jewish curators with the agreement of the Nazis. After the war, the scrolls were transferred to a damp warehouse, which had been the 16th century Michle Synagogue. They were bought from the Czech government by Ralph Yablon in 1964 and sent to the Westminster Synagogue who set up the Memorial Scrolls Trust to repair and care for them. In 1976, the Confirmation Class of Temple Emanu-El and Rabbi Levi Olan made arrangements to take on the care and guardianship of the scroll. Our scroll is #726 and was written in 1880, according to the Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust. It has distinctive curlicues and crowns in many of the letters that are known as a "kabbalistic font" believed to date back to the 17th century.



Historic and Eternal: Temple Cemetery and Mausoleum

By Connie Dufner



The tree-lined Temple Emanu-El Cemetery and Mausoleum tells the story of our community over the past century and a half. It also tells the tale of the rise and growth of the city many of our members helped build and shape.

The cemetery occupies a tranquil, 11½-acre site now in the midst of modern, vibrant Dallas.

“Among those interred here are many of Dallas’ early business, civic, religious, political and social leaders,” according to the Texas historical marker at the cemetery. “Also buried here are veterans of World War I and World War II, as well as several survivors of the Nazi Holocaust.”

Established at its present site in 1956, the cemetery joins Greenwood Cemetery, Freedman’s Cemetery and Calvary Cemetery as one of four historic graveyards in Uptown Dallas, just west of North Central Expressway.

The cemetery was the second Jewish cemetery built in the city. The first Jewish cemetery was built on Akard Street in 1872 by the Hebrew Benevolent Society, which would

become Temple Emanu-El. The gravestones with dates prior to 1884 were moved here in 1956 from the original cemetery.

The first burials were those of Aaron L. Levy and Jacob Rosenthal, who both died on Oct. 7, 1884. Some famous Dallas citizens are buried there, including Abraham Zapruder, the clothing manufacturer who became a witness to history on November 22, 1963, when he filmed the presidential motorcade moving toward the Triple Underpass and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. So too are members of prominent Dallas retail families, including those of Carrie Marcus Neiman and many in the Linz, Sanger, Harris and Titche families.

“Rabbis Row” has the graves of Rabbis David Lefkowitz, Levi A. Olan and Gerald Klein and their wives.

Two private mausoleums are on site, for the families of Hyman Pearlstone and Asher Silberstein.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Temple enlisted architects Duane and Jane Landry — onetime associates of renowned architect O’Neil Ford and the designers of spiritual spaces at the University of Dallas, St. Mark’s School of Texas and many Dallas-area churches — to build a mausoleum and chapel open to all members. Their design has three separate wedge-shaped segments. The crypts, columbarium and chapel surround a courtyard entered through bronze open-work gates.

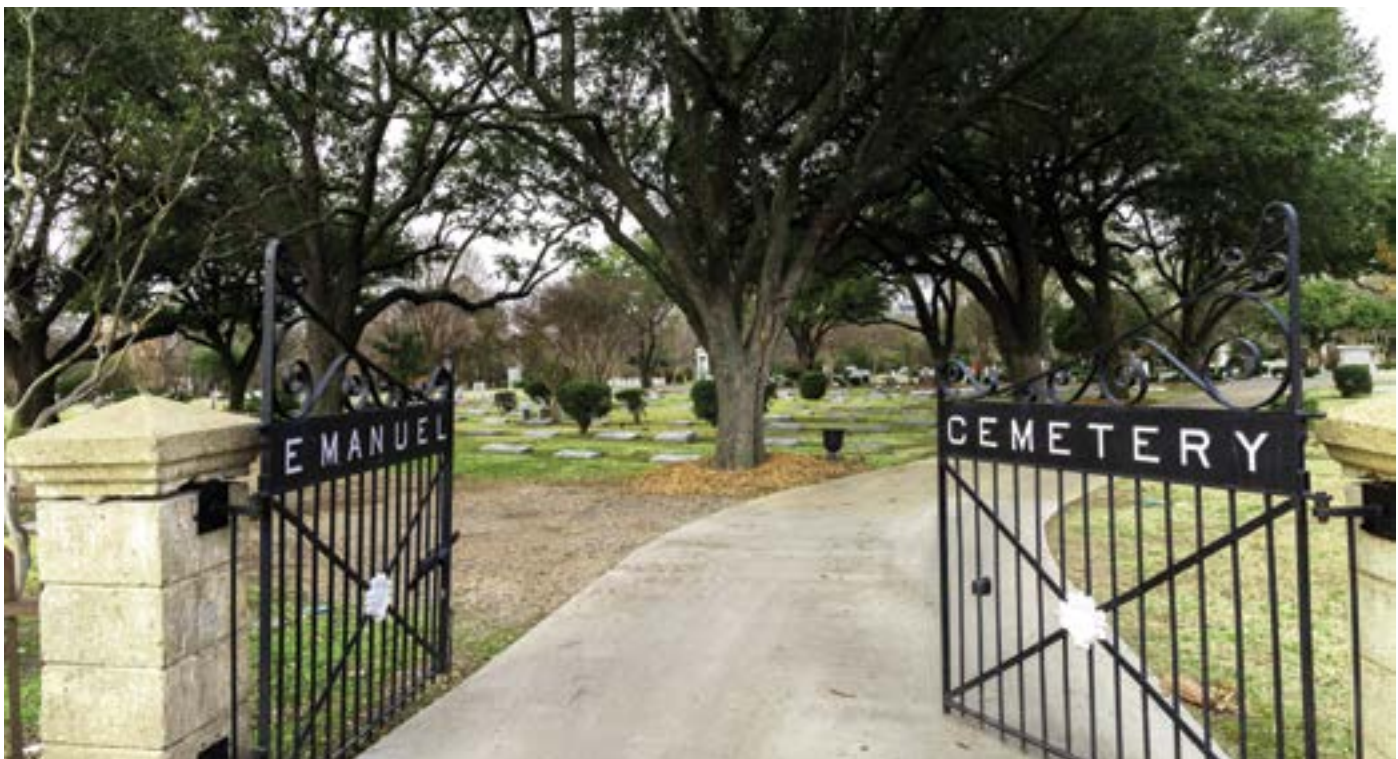
Throughout the cemetery are symbols of Jewish mourning and ritual.

The headstone can include the English and Hebrew name of loved ones, as well as the dates of birth and death in English and Hebrew. Some have the Hebrew letters *pei* and *nun*, standing for “here is buried,” and *tav*, *nun*, *tzadi*, *bet* and *hei*, standing for the phrase, “May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life.”

The practice of leaving stones at the gravesite expresses the permanence of our memories of our loved ones.

Cemetery Today

As of Spring 2023, the cemetery had about 5,000 burials, which represents 82% of capacity. The mausoleum has 216 burials, which represents 37% of capacity. The columbarium has 130 occupied niches, which represents 55% of capacity.



Social Justice and Advocacy — Central to Temple's Mission

By Ann Zimmerman Gallant

“**M**itzvah is prayer in action,” wrote Abraham Joshua Heschel, the renowned 20th-century rabbi, Jewish philosopher and civil rights activist. From Temple's first breath as a living Jewish institution in Dallas, the pursuit of mitzvot, tzedek and social justice has motivated its members and defined its mission.

The Long Road to Changing Minds

Temple's social justice advocacy work, guided by its Advocacy Committee, ensures that the long arc of history bends toward justice. This involves the painstaking but essential work of changing hearts and minds on the most crucial issues of the day. Most recently, that has meant:

- meeting with state legislators and advocating for stricter, sensible gun reform, as a group of Temple members did (in conjunction with the Dallas chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women Dallas) in the last several sessions of the Texas state legislature, after numerous mass shootings at schools, churches and stores;
- taking to the streets in marches, as members and clergy have done, to protest Texas having some of the loosest gun restrictions in the country and the highest gun murder rate;
- traveling to the border as silent witnesses to immigrants and refugees stuck in sprawling makeshift settlements in Mexico as the country's legal process for adjudicating asylum cases grinds to a halt; and
- advocating for reproductive rights and the deliberate, thoughtful process of crafting a statement — rooted in Jewish tradition that values a woman's life over that of her unborn child — that women have the right to decide whether or not to have an abortion.



Our Social Justice Origin Story

The seeds of Temple's founding were planted when a handful of Jews came together to provide a proper Jewish burial to a young Jewish immigrant with no family or strong connections in Dallas. They cared for the stranger

in their midst, and Temple members have followed their lead ever since.

The good deeds within and without the community have been plentiful and began not long after the Temple's inception, when the nascent congregation raised \$1,000 to send to Shreveport for victims of a yellow fever outbreak.

Several years before the turn of the 20th century, the first economic depression beset the young city of Dallas, and the Sanger Brothers, Temple founders and merchants, used their warehouse as a central distribution point for food and clothing for families in need — a blueprint for a citywide charity that would later be known as the United Way.

Blanche Greenburg and Sadie Lefkowitz, dynamic wives of Rabbis Greenburg and Lefkowitz, would leave lasting legacies of social action: Blanche Greenburg created a free milk and medical clinic for impoverished children and women, many of whom worked at the cotton mills in Deep Ellum. Sadie Lefkowitz provided at-home maternal care with the founding of the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA).

Rabbi David Lefkowitz would use his pulpit as a tool for social justice as well, calling out the antisemitism and racism of the Ku Klux Klan as their numbers swelled in Dallas and their members infiltrated the ranks of the police and city government.

Temple and the Civil Rights Era

Temple members' efforts to improve the lives of their brethren ratcheted up in the '50s and '60s as Rabbi Levi Olan called out from the pulpit the sin of segregation and separate but unequal conditions in housing and education. The congregation responded in kind, finding ways to shape President Johnson's promise of a Great Society.

Former Temple President Louis Tobian, then head of the Dallas Housing Association, secured funds to build thousands of government-subsidized housing units in the city, where too many citizens still lived in unplumbed shacks. Led by Temple's first Community Action Committee, headed by civic volunteers and Temple member Hortense Sanger and Billie Frauman, members gave money and countless hours to build a model preschool in South Dallas in the early 1960s (Rhoads Terrace).

Broadening Our Coalition and Extending Our Reach

The good deeds multiplied in the ensuing decades, and subtly changed course. Instead of exclusively working on our own to conceive good works, we searched for partners like Dallas Area Interfaith and worked aside their member organizations to support programs that were jointly deemed valuable. In 2014 and 2015 those efforts were directed toward helping low-income residents obtain greater health coverage under insurance made by possible by the new Affordable Care Act.

We have also been attentive to the needs of a close-by community — the residents of Vickery Meadow — who live just two and a half miles from the synagogue. The Vickery Meadow neighborhood is densely populated and ethnically diverse; its residents include immigrants and newly-arrived refugees, many who have left dangerous situations and are struggling to survive. Temple volunteers grow food for the Vickery Meadow Food Pantry, sit on the board of Literacy Achieves, which teaches English to refugees and immigrants in the neighborhood, sponsor coat drives and support new refugees in myriad ways. And they do so in coordination with a raft of other religious groups and nonprofits.

Either alone or with others, Temple and its members today continue Temple's long tradition of striving to repair the world.



After 150 Years: A Time to Reflect and Learn from Our History

By Nina Cortell

Temple has a glorious, rich history of which we are rightfully proud. We have been in the vanguard of social justice and have made the world a better place. But, in addition to celebrating our history, we should also learn from it. Each Yom Kippur holiday, we are called upon to consider our shortcomings and ways we can learn from them. So, too, as a congregation we are not free to desist from an internal examination of ways in which we could have done better — and ways in which we can do better in the future.

Race, Privilege and Power

A 2020 Pew Research Center survey revealed increasing diversity among Jews and Jewish households, with data showing that 17% of U.S. Jews live in households where at least one person — adult or child — is Hispanic, Black, Asian, another (non-White) race or ethnicity, or multiracial. Recent Temple conversion classes echo this trend, with as many as half of the classes being diverse in these ways. This has presented challenges and opportunities to Jewish communities throughout the country, including Temple, around recognition, inclusion and equal treatment. The challenges have not gone unanswered, but much remains to be done. In 2021, a Temple antiracism task force identified issues to be addressed, including a lack of diverse representation in governance/committees/public displays and the need for detailed demographics and accountability. Work is underway to implement the task force's recommendations. Temple is also participating in a city-wide Racial Equity NOW Cohort (a project of Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation), to work on Dallas' racial healing and transformation. And, on a personal level, Temple's "Facing Our Truths" campaign launched small-group conversations to explore new ways to think about race, privilege, and power — and to create opportunities for transformation of our own understanding and actions.

Accessibility and Physical Accommodations



Long before the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) banned discrimination against individuals with disabilities in public places, Temple had to answer to the protests of Rose Saginaw. Wheelchair-bound due to polio, she demanded access to the bimah. This led to the installation of a lift in the Olan Sanctuary and other modifications throughout the building, under the leadership of Connie Rudick and Bruce Bernbaum. More recently, the needs of various communities — including young and older members with physical, cognitive, and special learning needs — have been addressed in a number of ways, including through the provision of increased access to the building, quiet spaces for parallel activities, and alternative programming. These efforts are ongoing.



LGBTQ Outreach

After a misstep in the late 1980s, Temple is now a leader in LGBTQ outreach. Around 1989, two gay couples asked the Temple Board of Trustees to recognize their

membership status as "families." When the Board declined, these couples, along with others from the Dallas

Jewish community, formed Congregation Beth El Binah (which means “house of an understanding God”) — a Reform Jewish congregation founded with an outreach to the LGBTQ community. From day one, Beth El Binah enjoyed the full support of Temple clergy. Just one of many examples: Rabbi Zimmerman helped the new congregation obtain prayer books for their first High Holy Days services, and he recorded the trope, which enabled the leaders of new congregation to lead those services. Today, Temple is a leader in LGBTQ outreach, with clergy that includes members of the LGBTQ community and programming that includes Pride Shabbat celebrations, speaker forums and other inclusive programming.



Responding to Challenges

As a congregation, we are, from time to time, called upon to consider how best to move forward when confronted with challenging events.



The Covid pandemic that began in 2019 presented one such challenge. There was an array of views among our congregants — sometimes contentious — on how Temple should proceed. Our clergy, staff and lay leadership worked tirelessly to reimagine Temple’s processes, procedures and protocols, guided by the Jewish value of preserving life and the goal of providing continued opportunities for sacred encounters, meaningful learning and communal prayer. A task force of doctors, clergy and lay people provided medical guidance — advising the board on policies that were implemented and revised over time, with health safety being the overall guiding principle. While disagreements emerged, the congregation worked through them. And, out of these very difficult circumstances emerged new opportunities, most notably the opportunity for expanded, remote participation through web-based sharing of religious services and classes, making it possible for those not physically able to be present to participate and have the benefit of a much-needed sense of connection.

In 2021, Temple conducted an investigation after allegations of sexual misconduct by Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman emerged from an investigation by New York’s Central Synagogue related to his tenure there. Rabbi Zimmerman had been Temple’s senior rabbi from 1985 to 1996, and, at the time of the Central Synagogue investigation, Rabbi Zimmerman was employed as a scholar-in-residence at Temple. The findings in New York led to the termination of Rabbi Zimmerman’s employment at Temple. Temple’s own investigation did not yield any complaints against Rabbi Zimmerman. It did lead to important recommendations that have helped us to strengthen our efforts to be a community of safety and sanctity for all our congregants. These efforts include



the improvement of personnel procedures, and the adoption by the Board of Trustees of a Congregational Code of Ethics, which articulates values and standards for respect and integrity in our community, as well as a detailed process for addressing alleged violations of the code. At the national level, HUC-JIR (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion) and CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis) have reviewed and enhanced their policies and procedures for reporting, investigating and remedying misconduct. Based on an investigation initiated by CCAR in 2021, the organization expelled Rabbi Zimmerman in 2023 for violations of the rabbinic code of conduct.

Collective T'shuvah

Jewish tradition teaches that we need to engage in the process of t'shuvah (repentance) year-round. One author has distilled Maimonides' Laws of Repentance into six steps: (1) Regret — recognize the error of our ways; (2) renounce — acknowledge our wrongdoing; (3) confess — give voice to our error; (4) reconcile — sincerely apologize; (5) make amends — take action; and (6) resolve — ensure we do not repeat our error. (paulkipnes.com/6-steps-of-teshuvah).

"T'shuvah involves speech, heartfelt internal resolve, and renewed action — it is 'in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it' (Deut. 30:14). We all possess the ability to verbalize our transgressions before God, to feel remorse over our past actions, and to strive for better deeds in the year ahead." (jtsa.edu/torah/torah-and-teshuvah). As the above examples show, this is an ongoing process and challenge, for Temple members both individually and as a congregation. Happily, our faith fully supports this important work. In the famous words of Pirkei Avot: "It is not incumbent upon us to complete the task of repairing the world, but neither are we free to desist from trying."

Bounty: A Year in the Life of the Community Garden

By Nancy Rivin and Ann Zimmerman Gallant

Photos by Rick Coke



For many years, Temple dreamt of building a community garden that would nourish both congregants and people in need. In 2012, after much planning, a dedicated group of volunteers and clergy finished the construction, and gardeners began planting the Jill Stone Community Garden. Eventually all the produce would be donated to the food pantry in nearby Vickery Meadow, a neighborhood with among the lowest average household incomes in the city, just 2.5 miles from Temple.

A decade later, more than 65 volunteers — old and young, members and non-members — now gather on Wednesday and Sunday mornings to till the soil, plant, weed, fertilize and harvest. Each shift begins with a morning prayer acknowledging the role of volunteers as God's partners in planting and repairing the world.

"I've met a diverse group of people from all walks of life," says volunteer Michaela Braun. "I have such gratitude for watching the garden grow and evolve throughout the seasons...believing we can make a difference and contribute to the community."

The garden is named in memory of Temple member Jill Stone, an early advocate for and passionate volunteer in the Vickery Meadow neighborhood. A gift from the children of Ruthie and Harold Kleinman of blessed memory, in honor of their 60th wedding anniversary in 2014, allowed the garden to expand. A greenhouse was

added, then outfitted with air conditioning that allows the gardeners to propagate seeds all year long. The garden began a three-year expansion in 2017, with the beds increasing from 19 to 48, and the output growing exponentially.

The Jill Stone Community Garden is so large and productive today, "It is a farm, not a garden," says Wendy Leanse, lead gardener and Temple member.

The volunteers who show up each week feel like they are undertaking a sacred encounter — with each other and with the world. "The one thing I know how to do is grow food," says lead gardener Lori Droppo. "Why wouldn't I use that skill to help feed people?"

The volunteer gardeners focus relentlessly on how to make this plot on the north side of the synagogue produce as much food as possible for our neighbors who struggle — refugees and immigrants who find themselves in a strange new world and don't know how they will feed their families.

And produce the garden does: from 86 pounds when it started a decade ago to 7,221 pounds — more than three tons — in 2021. Season after season, these gardeners continue to fulfill their sacred task of trying to find a way to get one more potato, one more onion, one more long bean out of the hard-as-cement North Dallas soil.



Highlights of Jill Stone Community Garden at Temple Emanu-El

- When the garden was started in 2012, there were 19 beds. Today there are 48 raised beds and three farmers' rows.
- Food is harvested and delivered to the pantry every week of the year.
- Our gardeners use 100% organic practices.
- Water is a resource that is monitored closely, so that only the water that is needed is given to the plants. The watering team checks the beds daily and adjusts the irrigation as needed.
- Refugees and immigrants crave the foods of their home countries. As the people living in the Vickery Meadow neighborhood changes, gardeners adjust the assortment of food grown so that people can have a taste of home.
- Beds are covered as a freeze approaches and removed when the weather warms.
- Starting in ECEC and continuing through Confirmation, students have the opportunity to work as volunteers in the garden.
- Two thriving compost areas — made from coffee grounds, egg shells, leaves from around the Temple campus, and other materials — help enrich the soil of the garden beds.
- Preparing, feeding and turning compost is an ongoing chore for the team.



- The garden was open and producing food during the Covid pandemic.
- Because of its mission to provide food to the Food Pantry, the Temple garden was the only Dallas County Master Gardener project that was not shut down during the pandemic.
- As wood beds in the original garden deteriorate, they are replaced with metal Vego beds that will last much longer.
- Okra is a vegetable that is known and loved by many cultures around the world. It thrives in our Dallas summers and is in great demand at the food pantry.
- Monarch butterflies are welcome visitors that contribute beauty and pollination.
- Flowers that attract a variety of pollinating insects are a key ingredient to a healthy garden.
- The addition of a greenhouse makes it possible to start all of the produce from seed. Air conditioning was added in 2021 so that seeds can be propagated all year round.
- All the garden plants start from seeds in the greenhouse. When they are large and healthy enough, they are “bumped up” to larger pots.
- After several weeks, seedlings are ready to be moved outside, where they will spend a few days adjusting to life outside the greenhouse before they are planted in the beds.
- Beds are prepped and amended with compost and organic fertilizers before each planting.

Temple Brotherhood: 101 Years of Service and Camaraderie

By Risa Gross with contributions from Xico R. Baruch Garcia and Brotherhood members

Temple Brotherhood has been a central part of the Temple community, providing the glue and support that allows its members to fulfill their spiritual and community mission. The Brotherhood has been everywhere in Temple life, undertaking tasks from the menial — deep cleaning kitchen equipment and prep areas — to the sublime: providing fifth graders materials to make their own shofars and providing ushers and greeters for Shabbat and the High Holy Days. Whether it is raising funds through plant sales or helping the wider community through blood drives, Brotherhood members continue to do it all while forging strong bonds.



Highlights from Brotherhood's history:

- **1922** | Temple Brotherhood is formed, following Rabbi David Lefkowitz's suggestion that the monthly men's poker game in the basement of the South Boulevard building become a "brotherhood organization." Early service efforts include hosting speakers, outfitting the Temple youth basketball team for the Sunday School League, and providing ushers for services.
- **1923** | Brotherhood joins the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods, predecessor to the Men of Reform Judaism, and oversees arrangements for Temple's 50th anniversary. That event includes a congregational Jubilee Banquet at the Adolphus Hotel.

- **1925** | Brotherhood arranges a radio broadcast of High Holy Days services for Jews who cannot attend.
- **1930** | With Brotherhood's support, Rabbi Lefkowitz begins broadcasting a weekly half-hour radio program on WFAA-AM. He stays on the air for 19 years, succeeded by Rabbi Levi Olan in 1949. Rabbi Olan's sermons are broadcast until 1970. (smu.edu/libraries/bridwell)
- **1962** | The National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods recognizes Brotherhood as one of the outstanding large brotherhoods in the country. Brotherhood hosts an "Ask the Rabbis" program, where the questions include "Is Temple too large?" and "Need Temple involve itself in civic affairs, such as the low-cost housing controversy, or race relations?"
- **1963** | Brotherhood starts an art festival, raising \$3,700 (nearly \$36,200 in 2022 dollars) to fund Temple projects and showcasing 207 pieces by 134 artists. In its 20-year run, it expands to a weeklong community-wide show, consistently takes in \$20,000 annually and eventually taps noted local and out-of-town galleries for



sale objects. Works by Michelangelo, Pablo Picasso and Marc Chagall are among the highlights.

- **1960s** | The Christmas Mitzvah program begins. Brotherhood members and their families volunteer at hospitals to free up staff to spend Christmas with their families. It expands to other caregiving facilities

in the early 1980s. The project includes janitorial work and food service along with spending time with patients, and runs until about 2010 with the advent of new medical-confidentiality rules.

- **1970s & '80s** | Congregation-wide Monday Community Breakfast/Coffee events are held, with guest speakers (including Roger Staubach in the mid-1970s) and panels. Brotherhood members prepare and serve food.
- **Mid 1980s** | Brotherhood holds its first membership drive. Using a Compaq portable computer and a wide-carriage printer, the database takes 10 minutes to sort and 30 minutes to print. The mailings return a membership of 600 members, a 50% increase over previous campaigns. Brotherhood's Ron Cohen eventually teaches Brotherhood's lessons at NFTB conventions.
- **1980s** | Brotherhood holds an original religious service once a year, led by Brotherhood members.
- **1989** | Mitzvah Cooking begins. The initial focus is food for Bryan's House, which was focused at the time on assisting children with HIV/AIDS. Jonathan's Place and Community Homes for Adults Inc. are added over the next 10 years. The project — held at Temple's kitchen early on Sunday mornings — eventually swells to 2,500 meals monthly. It was put on hold during the pandemic.



- **Early 1990s** | Brotherhood builds Temple's first playground.
- **1992** | Rhea Faye Fruhman, a Brotherhood supporter, begins Giving Brotherhood, an annual donation for youth projects and youth programming.
- **c. 2000** | Brotherhood starts Coats for Kids, in partnership with the Dallas Police Department East Dallas Storefront and the Dallas Department of Parks and Recreation. The program collects donated warm clothing (including coats, hats, sweaters, scarfs, and gloves) for those in need.
- **Early 2000s** | Brotherhood begins hosting two or three breakfasts a year with speakers of interest to the general community.

A SAMPLING OF MORE RECENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Cleaning and maintenance

- Brotherhood cleaned out and organized Temple storage areas that had been collecting items that should have been disposed of decades before, as well as useful items that had been "lost."
- Fifteen men, on a Sunday morning, cleaned the Temple kitchen equipment, prep areas and refrigeration equipment, restoring it to as close to original as possible. There were also a few water fights in the process!
- Greene Family Camp maintenance and repairs

Support for other agencies, including



- Dallas Child Protective Services
- Golden Acres Retirement Home (provided Friday Shabbat Services)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Lion's Club (eyeglass collection)
- Meals on Wheels
- Vogel Alcove (book donations)
- Blood drives



Jewish holidays, observance, and learning through the years

- Hosting a men's seder
- Organizing morning minyan for many years
- Providing ushers for Shabbat and High Holy Days
- Offering classes on how to conduct a seder
- Hosting Lunch with the Rabbis (study sessions on a topic of Jewish interest)
- Along with Women of Reform Judaism, sharing costs of weekly oneg Shabbat receptions, kiddush cups given to b'nai mitzvah students, and cost of books given to Youth Learning + Engagement Confirmation students
- Maintaining and operating games at the annual Purim carnival

Support of family and youth programming

- Shofar Factory — providing materials and instruction to 5th-grade religious school students to make and have their own shofars
- Sponsored the Temple Emanu-El Boy Scout Troop 729 and built the Tembro Lodge at Camp Wisdom. Not only did Brotherhood sponsor Boy Scout Troop 729, but several of our members were leaders of the troop. Troop 729 was established in 1918 with Brotherhood becoming its charter organization not long after the founding of Brotherhood
- Financial support for Temple's Family Mitzvah Corps, DAFTY, and a teen lounge
- Leah's Kitchen, in partnership with WRJ — Leah and Harold Pollman provided Thanksgiving dinner for 250 Vickery Meadow residents

This timeline was compiled with contributions from Steve Birnbaum, Ron Cohen, Buzz Deitchman, Robert Hirsch, Ken Schiller, Stephen Shore and Richard Wasserman.



Women of Reform Judaism/Sisterhood: Full Hearts and Hard Work Touch All Parts of Temple Life

By Leah Beth Kolni with contributions from Celia Saunders

Temple Sisterhood began when its predecessor, The Women's Guild of Temple Emanu-El, became affiliated in 1920 with the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods at the urging of Rabbi David Lefkowitz.

During the late 1950s, more than 60 Sisterhood committees were actively participating in work for Temple and the community. An essential objective: making strong efforts to educate people of differing backgrounds about Judaism.



The turbulent Sixties brought many social changes to the country that deeply affected Dallas and Temple. In response, Sisterhood established a speaker's bureau to address topics of Reform Judaism with any group seeking information. Also in the fall of 1963, Sisterhood members staffed the United Nations booth at the State Fair of Texas, distributing pamphlets and answering questions.

In May 1964, 5000 Years in the Kitchen, Sisterhood's first cookbook, sold out the first printing at a price of \$3.98 each. With fundraising successfully underway, attention turned to social issues in a bigger way: poverty, inequality, and lack of equal opportunities in our society. In 1966, Sisterhood members established the Rhoads Terrace Pre-School for disadvantaged 4- and 5-year-olds,

demonstrating that enhancing a child's early learning environment has a positive effect on their future.

Temple Sisterhood, which changed its name to Women of Reform Judaism in 2021, continues to place a priority on enhancing the lives of our congregation and of those in need in our greater community.



The WRJ Judaica shop, Judaic Treasures, provides significant income for WRJ, helping to fund scholarships, projects and programs. It also offers a warm and welcoming place for its volunteers to educate the congregation and the community about ways to enhance Jewish experiences in the home.

WRJ raises funds for the national WRJ's Youth, Education, and Special Projects Fund (YES Fund), which provides Reform Jewish institutions and individuals worldwide with the tools and financial support necessary for religious, social and educational growth. Further, the YES Fund enhances Jewish life worldwide by supporting clergy, cultivating women's leadership and advocating for social justice. The YES Fund provides grants for rabbinic and cantorial students and other individuals in pursuit of furthering their Jewish learning.

WRJ also provides scholarships and grants to our Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) students, our Youth, Learning and Engagement (YL+E) youngsters, and provides funds to send our congregation's children to Greene Family Camp, as well as to programs in Israel.

WRJ is today comprised of a group of dedicated and diverse women who care deeply about, and are involved partners in, Temple projects and programs. The work of their hands and hearts touch the lives of children, young adults, families, our Dallas community-in-need and our Jewish family around the world. Members are of all ages

and in all stages of life — from moms who have toddlers in ECEC to working women who squeeze volunteer hours into very busy lives to full-time volunteers who generously share their life experiences and expertise.

There is something magical about women supporting women, sharing their knowledge and offering their friendship and counsel. They are women who study together, play and laugh together, worship together and work together toward goals of tikkun olam — making the world a better place.

Together, they strengthen the voice of women in the congregation and encourage them to cultivate personal and spiritual growth.



Historical dates of note:

- **1872** | The Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association is founded and begins raising funds for both charity and to build a house of worship. Temple's first building opens in 1876.
- **1886** | The Emanu-El Aid Society is formed. Projects include visiting the sick and needy, as well as helping Jewish immigrants settling in Dallas.
- **1900** | The Emanu-El Aid Society becomes the Women's Guild of Temple Emanu-El and expands its work to include educational and social development of the congregation. The Guild organizes musicals, receptions and sewing groups.
- **1920** | The Guild, with 100 charter members, formally affiliates with the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods. Sisterhood members establish the Women's Exchange, a seasonal store selling handmade goods.

- **1925** | A tearoom is added to the Women's Exchange. Additionally, a Mother's Circle is organized and hosts seminars on child development.
- **1930** | In its first 10 years, Sisterhood raises over \$32,000 (almost \$570,000 in 2023 dollars). Among other projects, these funds are used to retire congregational debts, carpet and furnish the temple, and install a ventilation system.
- **1934** | Sisterhood's Peace Committee writes letters to U.S. senators to encourage them to keep the U.S. out of the escalating war, to express horror at Germany's treatment of Jews, and to urge the signing of the League of Nations petition.
- **1936** | Sisterhood participation flags as a result of the Great Depression. To support people in the community, both the sick and those hardest hit by the economic downturn, a Good Cheer Committee distributes baskets of fruit.
- **1940** | The Peace Committee is disbanded and the War Activities Committee is formed. Efforts include sewing for the Red Cross, furnishing a recreation hall at Camp Wolter, and baking cookies for the USO. The Friendship Aid Committee helps settle Eastern European immigrants. By this point, Sisterhood has raised over \$70,000 (nearly \$1.5 million in 2023 dollars) for various projects.
- **1949** | Sisterhood decides to focus its activities and projects on human relations. This includes the work of the SOS Committee, which sends canvas bags filled with layettes, yarn, needles, thread and other "essentials" (including rouge) to the women of war-torn Europe.
- **1957** | Sisterhood sponsors the Institute on Judaism, in which non-Jewish participants learn about Judaism, tour Temple and enjoy a Sisterhood-prepared dinner. This year also sees the start of the Significant Book Series. Its widespread popularity (1,900 people bought series tickets in 1958) allows Sisterhood to raise enough funds to purchase 18 Chagall lithographs and to commission a Ben Shahn tapestry. These now hang in the foyer outside Olan Sanctuary and in Linz Hall, respectively.
- **1960s** | Sisterhood hosts a program called The Psychology of Censorship in response to efforts to curtail free speech (including attempts to ban books from the Dallas Public Library). Sisterhood also establishes a Speaker's Bureau to provide speakers on Reform Judaism to any interested groups.



- **Late 1960s** | Sisterhood focuses its work on societal inequalities, with an emphasis on community service at Rhoads Terrace Pre-School.
- **1967** | Sisterhood programs addresses topics from civil rights to the Vietnam War.
- **1973** | Sisterhood begins hosting an Interfaith Shabbat.
- **1980** | Sisterhood, along with University Park United Methodist Church, sponsors the first North Dallas Health Fair. This work, along with other efforts, leads to the creation of the groundbreaking East Dallas Health Clinic in 1984, which provided free medical care to the immigrant community.



- **1965** | Sisterhood creates a cookbook, 5000 Years in the Kitchen, which sold over 5,000 copies at \$3.98 each (\$38 in 2023 dollars).
- **1967** | Second Edition of 5000 Years in the Kitchen.
- **1971** | Third Edition of 5000 Years in the Kitchen.
- **1986** | Sisterhood publishes Eight Days in the Kitchen, A Collection of Recipes for Passover.
- **1990s** | Sisterhood supports organizations including Meals on Wheels, CHAI (Community Homes for Adults, Inc.), Golden Acres and Bryan's House. It also sponsors a weekly Bible class.
- **1990s to present** | Sisterhood/WRJ decorates the Sukkah.



- **1993** | Sisterhood publishes a cookbook, From Generation to Generation, A Treasure of Recipes and Traditions.
- **1986 to present** | Sisterhood celebrates its Hall of Fame honorees.
- **1990s to present** | Sisterhood/WRJ bakes hamantaschen for Purim.
- **Mid 1990s** | Sisterhood hosts a seated dinner at the Westin Hotel for Rabbi Gerald Klein to honor, and express gratitude for his love of Sisterhood.
- **1995** | Interfaith Shabbat features Texas Governor Ann Richards.
- **1999** | Sisterhood brings contemporary Jewish artist Gary Rosenthal to Temple for a Hanukkah bazaar.
- **2015** | Sisterhood publishes Temple Emanu-El Directory 2015 and delivers a copy to each Temple family.
- **2015** | Sisterhood celebrates 100 years of Sisterhood.
- **2015-2019** | Sisterhood packs and delivers meals to Austin Street Center.
- **2018** | Sisterhood holds Learn to Play Mahjong classes in Linz Hall.
- **2018** | Sisterhood honors Holocaust survivor Jack Repp.
- **2021** | Sisterhood changes its name to Women of Reform Judaism.



Community: “Shalom Lev” — A Caring Heart, Inside and Outside Temple’s Walls

By Peggy Papert

For Judaism and Temple, caring about community large and small has always been a core value. Temple’s origin was as a benevolent association, where a fledgling group of Dallas newcomers came to the aid of their less fortunate Jewish brethren to provide financial and spiritual support and other acts of loving-kindness.

Within two years, the outgrowth of these efforts led to the formation of Temple. Throughout the decades, Temple became known for tackling the city’s big issues, from health care and education to segregation and housing. A case could be made that caring for our community inside Temple’s walls made that possible. Concern and support for one another — celebrating our simchas, sharing our sorrows — made us stronger, more cohesive, and more in touch with our spirituality and moral obligations.

As Temple grew to more than 2,000 families in the early 2000s, it became apparent that there was even more of a need to care for and build a sense of internal community. In 2001, Temple created the first staff position devoted to ensuring a caring congregation. Following the Union for Reform Judaism model of having a department for family concerns, our efforts became more organized, and we expanded the benevolent works already being done by many volunteers and staff.

Volunteer hospital visits increased. Members knitted and delivered booties (wrapped like Neiman Marcus gifts) to each baby born to Temple members. Challah bakers created mini loaves for mitzvah meal deliveries and worship services. Condolence and get-well cards were personally addressed and signed by loving volunteers. In partnership with Jewish Family Service, support groups were made available to members in a number of areas, including grief, cancer and addiction.

Our Caring Congregation initiative also expanded programs for older adults. The first, called Leisure Club, encouraged senior members to meet socially, enjoy lunch cooked by volunteers, and participate in educational lectures and entertainment.

This group evolved into Tuesdays at Temple, a day of programming that included Tai Chi in the back of the sanctuary and lunch. D Magazine cited it as the “holiest exercise class” in the city. Expanding on this, the G2G (Generation to Generation) program for 55-and-older congregants organized travel, arts and music performances, and educational opportunities.

Along with building networks of member-to-member care, Temple leaders also realized a need to make the congregation feel “smaller” and more personal. Beginning in the ’80s, chavurah groups (small Jewish fellowship groups) gathered for prayer, study, worship and socialization.

“Chavurot were a way to shrink Temple,” said Renée Karp, a longtime Temple employee and member who ran the chavurot program and participated in it as well. “We were all there for each other and felt total support in all kinds of ways. The participation also fostered great leaders who later became more involved in a variety of ways such as different activities, committees and many even serving on the board of trustees.”



Sh'ma Groups grew from that, starting around 2013. Congregants with varied interests met at arranged times for an array of activities, from hiking to the theater, to sharing their love of gardening to doing volunteer projects. For many, it was a way to worship regularly in a smaller group. At one point, there were more than 50 active groups meeting regularly, and the program continues to evolve today.

The notion of forging deeper organic connections helped drive the expansion and remodeling of Temple in 2014-2016. Even with abundant programming, Temple lacked areas that promoted informal gatherings. Tycher Gathering Space, with its comfortable couches, low tables and coffee bar, became a successful solution as a result of the Our Temple | Our Future capital campaign.

In the spring of 2020, as the Covid pandemic closed down physical spaces, Temple leaders rushed to ensure that congregants did not lose touch. Services, Torah study, minyanim and even Yoga Emanu-El reached members online, while innovative music programs moved to the parking lot. Several times throughout the almost two-year ordeal, staffers and volunteers reached out to the most vulnerable congregants to check on their well-being.

Today, Temple is making a concerted effort to make its facilities accessible, inclusive and comfortable for all members, with attention to those with special needs. Congregants are regularly visiting senior living facilities to visit and worship with members and residents.

Looking toward the future, Temple will continue to strive to be a close community with a “shalom lev,” a caring heart.



The Temple Preschool Delivers on Vision

By Nina Cortell



The history of Temple's preschool is the story of inspired leadership by women leaders and Sisterhood, a forward-thinking Board, and great preschool directors who made the early vision a reality and built on that vision in a remarkable way.

When the Temple Emanu-El Pre-School — now known as the ECEC (Early Childhood Education Center) — opened its doors in the fall of 1981, there were eight students who occupied two classrooms. Today — with the benefit of more than 40 years of active support from the ECEC Parents' Association and the Temple's board and membership — enrollment exceeds 350 (with over 150 on the waiting list), the students use over half of Temple's building and the preschool enjoys national prominence. And, the early hopes that the preschool would bring young families to Temple as members and leaders has been fully realized, time and again.

The initial impetus for the preschool dates back to the 1970s, when a group of prominent women members (including Carmen Michael, Norma Schlinger, Nita Mae Tannebaum, Rose Tobey and Shirley Tobolowsky) met to start the planning. An initial and critically important financial pledge from Sisterhood followed, under the presidency of Ruth Pines.

But there were challenges as some in the community were reluctant to support Jewish mothers who were working outside the home, and those objections came from both women and men. Times, however, were

changing. The women's movement was gathering momentum, as exemplified by the hiring in 1979 of Temple's first woman rabbi, Ellen Lewis, who had a young child. Rabbi Lewis's "wholehearted support" for the preschool has been cited "as a major reason for the successful launch of the preschool," according to "A Light in the Prairie," a book about Temple's history written by former Temple archivist Gerry Cristol.

The initial preschool proposal envisioned a school that would provide "a quality education," have "Jewish content," and "be designed to serve each child's individual needs as well as providing interaction with other children in a positive group experience." The program would be "open to both the Jewish and general communities."

This visionary proposal was written by the preschool's inaugural director, Nita Mae Tannebaum, who launched the school in 1981, led it for a decade, and is widely credited for the school's early success. Nita Mae created a loving, supportive environment that was a model of excellence, both within the Jewish community and beyond, as reflected by accolades from local and national leaders who visited and were impressed by the school.



Other impactful directors followed: Jane Kadosh, Sheryl Feinberg, Gale Friedman (interim), Shelly Sender, and, most recently, Meagan Friedman. Under their inspired leadership, the ECEC has flourished, becoming a national leader in early childhood education.



Together with talented educators, these directors greatly expanded curriculum and enrollment. For students ages 3 months through kindergarten, the school offers an exciting, multifaceted, inquiry-based, child-centered program that is designed to develop thinkers, innovators and globally-minded children, based on Jewish teachings and values. Reflecting this excellence, the ECEC was accepted for the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program in 2023, which makes it part of a global community of educators known for their dedication to learner agency, developing critical thinking, supporting play-based inquiry and international mindedness.

A walk through the preschool's halls tells a joyous story: children's photographs and work cover the walls; natural light and visually pleasing and curiosity-inducing natural materials fill the rooms; and the sweet sounds of children's laughter and singing abound. Simply stated, it is a fun, inspiring and vibrant place that plays a significant role in the lives of Temple members as well as the larger Dallas community.

A beacon to the national Reform Jewish community, Temple's ECEC is a model of excellence, a builder of leaders, and a key to the present and future success of the synagogue that founded it.



At Every Possible Time and Place: 150 Years of Youth Education & Engagement

By Elena Dufner Paull



Youth learning and education have been at the heart of Temple since its inception. Just a year after the congregation was formed, it established its first school, Emanu-El School, for children of members and, later, for all children in the community. Dallas wouldn't establish its own public school system until eight years later, in 1884, making Temple an early pioneer of education in the city. Temple has been ahead of the curve in youth education, learning and engagement ever since.

For the first 75 years of Temple's history, religious schooling centered on teaching children Jewish knowledge and heritage. This was accomplished through traditional methods, with textbooks such as *A History of Jewish Life in Modern Times* and *First Hebrew Reader*, as well as experiential ones such as collecting and distributing tzedakah to causes ranging from war relief to the Jewish Federation and everything in between. This blend of traditional learning with experiential practices remains a pillar of youth education 75 years later.

By the middle of the 20th century, Temple's religious school was well-established with about 400 students and an education committee, run primarily through the Sisterhood by mothers of students. As Rabbi Levi Olan began his tenure in the 1950s, he moved education to the very center of Temple life, stating, "Temple should teach Judaism and its religious values — in the pulpit, in

adult classes, in the religious school for children, in the meetings of the Brotherhood and Sisterhood — at every possible time and place."



He set out to do just that, hiring Temple's first education director, Raymond Israel, who brought experience as a public school principal in Washington, D.C. and

former director of the religious school at Washington Hebrew Congregation. At the time of Israel's hire, there was no standard curriculum guide for a Reform religious school. There was also no school building as Temple's campus was under construction. But Rabbi Olan believed education was too important to be delayed by lack of classrooms, stating, "It is unwise and unsound for us to keep on postponing the day when we can teach our children — properly — their religious heritage."

Israel turned this challenge into an opportunity, finding classrooms around the city, such as on SMU's campus, and creating them in congregants' homes across North Dallas. During this time, he also led the creation of a comprehensive education committee as an official committee of the Board of Trustees, further centering education in Temple's work.

The religious school model established by Rabbi Olan continued to evolve throughout the next 75 years, ebbing and flowing with larger societal trends in religious affiliation and Jewish education. Through the second half of the 20th century, education itself was changing, and Temple was quick to incorporate those changes into its youth experiences, expanding from formal classroom learning to include experiential learning such as family retreats, mitzvah projects, and DAFTY, the teen youth group. Many talented leaders joined the Temple staff and continued the long tradition of innovation and experimentation to keep education



relevant and engaging. This period saw the hiring of the first youth director, Judi Ratner, who infused youth learning with song-leading and music. Karen Trager expanded the Hebrew program to incorporate more family-based learning and introduced the longstanding bar and bat mitzvah family retreat. When reflecting on what made Temple unique, Karen said, “In a setting as large and dynamic as Temple Emanu-El, you could try and experiment on a smaller scale and then adapt it.” Jo-Sandra Greenberg, longtime Temple member, started Temple’s first special needs program and made inclusion a core tenet of education at a time when that wasn’t otherwise happening on a regular basis in other settings.

In 1993, Temple announced the hiring of Rabbi Barry Diamond, who ushered in an era of inspiring, participatory worship and centered community at the heart of youth and family education. This included expanding family education programming, the introduction of Celebration Circles to gather in family’s

homes, and more. Rabbi Diamond believed that Judaism provided a framework for maintaining and developing a sense of humanity. He invited students to “play with” Judaism, to experiment with different ways of connecting, wrestling with text and tradition, and to “reduce the oy, and increase the joy.”

Another significant highlight of Rabbi Diamond’s tenure was the transformation of the Lomdim (Learners) program for students with special needs under the leadership of Eileen Kreiser. At the time, traditional programs segregated students with special needs into their own classrooms. However, education as a field was starting to change, moving away from self-contained classrooms for students with special needs in favor of fully integrated classrooms with specially trained teachers and the introduction of “shadows” (helpers) to support every student to participate fully in the same environment. By becoming an early adopter of these larger education trends, Lomdim attracted new families to join Temple. Eileen recalled: “Many times, initial discussions with parents started with some version of “I know my son or daughter can’t have a bar mitzvah,” and we were able to say, “Yes, they can.”

Change has remained the constant in the 21st century, too. In the 2000s, Rabbi Adam Allenberg joined Temple as the Director of Lifelong Learning and hired Rabbi Amy Rossel as Director of Youth Learning. During this time, Temple’s youth education continued the tradition of focusing on families, introducing parent education and more specialized paths for youth and teens to experience Judaism and connect with Temple, such as teen tracks and internships.





Technology has also transformed the ways in which Temple connects with its students. “The way we bring technology into education in supplemental schools that don’t have technology budgets is a critical thing to think about,” said Rabbi Rossel. “If we don’t evolve to meet the way that kids are experiencing the world, it exacerbates the challenges we’ve always had of demonstrating the relevance and modernity of Judaism.” But the opportunity for Temple, Rabbi Rossel stressed, surpasses the challenges. “We’re not only an ancient religion but a modern, relevant one. We have the opportunity to help kids discover that in new ways and make Judaism more accessible than ever before.”

No moment proved that more than the Covid pandemic, which closed Temple’s doors and brought religious school into students’ homes in yet another new way, this time via screens and YL+E Sunday Morning Live, a streaming and virtual classroom experience. This period also seeded yet another evolution in Temple’s commitment to inclusion. The existing Shabbat B’Yachad program, a worship experience specifically for students with special needs, evolved into All-In Shabbat, a hallmark of Temple’s calendar today, which celebrates and brings together the entire Temple community of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

In 2021, Andrew Paull joined the Temple team as Director of Youth Education, overseeing the YL+E K-12 learning program, Hebrew learning, family engagement and parent education, special needs inclusion, and teen engagement programs. Andrew’s background as an experiential educator and proponent of youth-led evaluation continues our strong legacy of evolving Temple’s education programs to be relevant for today’s learners. “Our 150th year coincides with a pivotal moment in the trajectory of Jewish education writ large — the shift from education that is directed from the top to Jewish engagement and learning that meets students where they are and recognizes the importance of social and emotional spiritual learning,” he noted. “We are striving for a new era of Jewish education that not only asks our young people, “Why be Jewish?” but also asks “What does this mean in your life today?” Jewish education is best when it is relevant in the day-to-day lives of our students.”

In some ways, today's youth education programming is unrecognizable from that first synagogue school on Commerce Street. In many other ways, what was true then is still true now. Temple remains committed to teaching Jewish knowledge, cultivating sacred community, and helping every young person find their voice and humanity. Temple's first religious school led the way for Jewish education in Dallas, and Temple has remained at the leading edge of education and innovation ever since. "Temple Emanu-El is a beacon within the Reform Movement, illuminating the path for excellence and serving as an innovative education model for congregations of all sizes," Paull said.

In his letter to the congregation upon accepting his position in 1993, Rabbi Barry Diamond said, "Our job in education is to look ahead twenty years, see what the world will be like and begin to develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will help us and our children with a higher sense of goodness." Thirty years later, Temple's commitment to education is just as steadfast as it was then or 150 years ago, fulfilling Rabbi Olan's vision of a congregation that would teach and inspire at every possible time and place.



Temple's Role as a Locus of Adult Learning Dates Back Decades

By Ann Zimmerman Gallant

Introduction

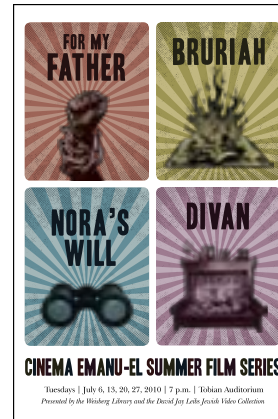
Rare is the day that you can't find a learning opportunity at Temple.

The richness, complexities and ambiguities of our faith are explored with clergy each Saturday morning during Chever Torah and on many Wednesday mornings during Rabbi David Stern's Talmud class.

Hardly a month goes by without a noted scholar or panel of experts spending a night or a weekend educating congregants on an endless array of subjects, spanning antisemitism and the future of Reform Judaism to social justice concerns such as food deserts. Today, Temple has five endowed funds supporting these rich topical and provocative learning sessions.

For 16 weeks every year, Temple holds an Introduction to Judaism course, attended by the Jewish curious, those planning to convert or those of us who want to brush up on, or delve deeper into, what we learned in religious school.

Spiritual learning at Temple takes on different forms. Regular yoga and Qigong classes combine movement and mindfulness. Spirituality classes explore change at the depths of our being through a mix of text study, meditation, and contemplation. Our clergy teach often, such as the ongoing class by Rabbi Debra Robbins based on the study of her book "Opening Your Heart with Psalm 27."



The summer film series Cinema Emanu-El also incorporates a learning component, as the films explore issues that frequently align with a topic of concern or special interest to Temple. For instance, in the summer of 2022, after Temple spent several years exploring diversity and inclusivity, Cinema Emanu-El showcased three movies dealing with racism, transgender issues and autism.

Temple's efforts to be a place of continual learning whether through film, modern poetry or sacred text harken back to our earliest days. Every generation adds to and enriches the offerings, reflecting changes within Reform Judaism and the larger culture.

Lyceum Course — 1934

Rabbi David Lefkowitz started a popular Bible study class when he arrived in 1920. In the mid-1930s, he wanted to nourish and expand the intellectual and cultural appetites of his congregants and the community at large. He launched the Lyceum Course, charging \$2 a person for a season subscription, to hear such notable speakers at the South Dallas Temple as Dorothy Thompson, the first American journalist to be expelled by Nazi Germany, and foreign correspondent Marvin Lowenthal. All discussed pressing issues of the day.

The Lyceum Course can be seen in retrospect as setting the foundation for the plethora of cultural intellectual institutions that sprung up later, including the Dallas Museum of Arts & and Letters Live, TITAS and SMU's Tate Lecture Series. In 1934, Temple and SMU co-sponsored the lecture series on the SMU campus, which included such luminaries as authors Alexander Wolcott and Thomas Mann, and the Martha Graham Dancers.

The Levi Olan years — 1949-70

Rabbi Levi Olan's mission was to broaden and deepen adult Jewish education to, in the words of former Temple President Arthur Goldberg, "refurbish and enrich our faith in the context of contemporary society." Toward that end, he initiated a lecture series that complemented his weekly Bible study classes.

In setting forth his vision, Olan told the congregation, "We, as Jews, are the heirs to a great religious faith and philosophy, which can help us live our lives more fully. The courses are planned to make that faith more meaningful for you."

Initially, Temple offered four lectures in the fall dedicated to some aspect of Jewish study. In the spring, four consecutive lectures were dedicated to the importance of religion to contemporary society. The lectures included Dawn of American Jewish History and Aspects of the Good Society, the latter taught by Erik Jonsson, the Dallas Chamber of Commerce president who would eventually become mayor.

The following year, Temple presented 21 consecutive lectures on interpreting our faith through the study of Jewish philosophers, music, Torah and the prophets.

Significant Book Series

In 1957, Sisterhood launched a widely attended lecture course called the "Significant Book Series." Chaired by Patsy Nasher and Shirley Pollock, the series had one criterion set by Rabbi Olan: The books selected had to be particularly significant to the time.

The first year, Olan reviewed "The Nun's Story" by Kathryn Hulme, "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy and the "Dead Sea Scriptures" by Theodore H. Gaster. The first season, the series brought in 900 attendees. The following year, 1,900 people bought series tickets and another 700 single tickets were sold. It became one of the most popular social and intellectual events in Dallas.

It proved very lucrative as well. With proceeds from the ticket sales, Sisterhood purchased a series of 18 biblical lithographs by Marc Chagall and commissioned Ben Shahn to design a tapestry that hangs in Linz Hall. The piece was woven by the Aubusson Factory in France.

Once Endowed, But Not Forgotten

Generous members have endowed lectures that happen from time to time. The Leonard M. Cohen Adult Education Fund, established in 2006, sponsored two timely lectures in 2018 and 2019. Dr. Elana Stein-Hahn spoke on "People as Objects: Considering the Foundations of #MeToo" and Dr. Lisa Miller addressed "The Spiritual Child." The Ackerman Family sponsored a talk by Dr. Gary Zola in 2011. The Nasher Fund was designed to bring the larger community to Temple in the early 2000s with well-attended talks by Holocaust survivor and writer Elie Wiesel, civil-rights leader and former member of the Georgia State Senate Julian Bond (pictured below), author and historian David Halberstam, former Brown University President Ruth Simmons and broadcaster Marvin Kalb.



TEMPLE ENDOWED LECTURES: EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES

The Rabbi David Lefkowitz Memorial Lecture

The Rabbi David Lefkowitz Memorial Lecture was established in 1961 "in appreciation for the enlightened and dedicated ministry of Rabbi David Lefkowitz to the city of Dallas." The lecture is made possible by grants from the Rosenstein-Sonnentheil Family Fund of the Temple Emanu-El Foundation and the Florence Foundation.

For the first lecture, an invitation was extended to the city at large. The speaker was historian and author Maurice Samuel, whose topic was "When Jew and Christian Parted." Other speakers have included:

- **2023 | Rabbi Carole B. Balin, PHD** | Our Reform Jewish Story
- **2022 | Rabbi Rachel Mikva** | Out of the Danger Zone
- **2020 | Dr. Deborah Lipstadt** | Conscience and Courage

- **2018 | J.J. Goldberg and Jonathan Tobin** | Left and Right, The Battle for Israel's Soul
- **2016 | Rabbi Kerry Olitzky**
- **2013 | Elliott Abrams, Dennis Ross, David Gillette** | Inside the Oval Office: How the White House Crafts US Policy in the Middle East
- **2012 | Mark Bittman** | Food Matters



- **2011 | Rabbi Mark Washofsky** | Modern Questions, Jewish Answers (Co-Sponsored with Neustadt Lecture)
- **2010 | Anat Hoffman** | Israel Religious Action Center
- **2010 | Henry Cisneros** | Housing: A Platform for Uplifting Families
- **2008 | Rabbi Andrea Weiss, Ph.D.** | New Voices for an Ancient Text
- **2007 | Dr. David H. Aaron** | Seeing Ourselves Through History's Mirror: Obligation, Loyalty and Repentance in Judaism

The Rabbi Levi A. Olan Lectureship

The Rabbi Levi A. Olan Lectureship was established in 1973. In 1994, the Hochman Fund was created to endow the Olan Lecture Series. The goal is to engage the congregation and the community in a dialogue about leading intellectual ideas, moral views and theological beliefs, from a universal and provocative perspective. The Olan Lecture Series is organized under the auspices of the Adult Education Committee with input from the family and friends of Rabbi Olan, in consultation with the senior rabbi.

- **2021 | Rev. Jennifer Butler** | Who Stole My Bible
- **2019 | Dr. Erica Brown** | Jewish Identity in the 21st Century
- **2017 | Dr. David Blumenthal** | Aliya, The Rebirth of Israel-Dalí exhibit
- **2015 | Morris Dees** | Justice for All in a Changing America

- **2014 | Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller** | One Community Many Voices
- **2013 | Rabbi Jack Bemporad**
- **2012 | Judith Shulevitz** | How the Sabbath Works: Sabbath as a Day of Meaning and Hope
- **2010 | Rabbi Howard Berman** | Renewing Our Heritage for the 21st Century: Classical Reform Judaism
- **2009 | David Moss** | The Art of Illuminating Traditions
- **2008 | Robert Pinsky** | The Autobiographical Hero of the Jews
- **2006 | Dr. Sylvia Barack Fishman** | Juggling Acts: American Jews Negotiate the Jewish & Secular Pieces of Their Lives
- **2005 | Dr. Jonathan Sarna** | Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor? American Jews and the Immigration Dilemma

Dolores & Walter Neustadt Lecture Series

Established in 1999. Rabbi David Stern or his successor has the right to determine how to spend the funds each year to explore topics such as those listed below.

- **2019 | Rabbi Andrea Weiss** | Healing Division through Dialogue: Lessons Learned from "American Values, Religious Voices" I
- **2018 | Rabbi Myriam Klotz** | Shavuot Weekend
- **2015 | Alan Morinis**, founder of the Mussar Institute
- **2013 | Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg** | Coming Home to the Language of the Heart
- **2011 | Rabbi Mark Washofsky** | Modern Questions, Jewish Answers (Co-Sponsored with Rabbi David Lefkowitz Lecture)
- **2009 | Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg** | The Path to Forgiveness
- **2009 | Rabbi Samuel M. Stahl** | Do Jews Still Consider Themselves the Chosen People
- **2008 | Rabbi Ronal Sobel, Rabbi Marvin Tokayer**
- **2007 | Dr. Mark Kligman** | Shabbat Shirah Weekend
- **2005 | Rabbi Kenneth Roseman** | Jewish Family, Community Issues in Post-Civil War America

Candice & Robert Haas Visiting Scholar

Established in 2002 to ensure that the Temple continues to attract noted rabbis, scholars and lecturers to enrich education programs.

- **2018 | Rabbi David Jaffe** | Selichot Weekend Teshuvah
- **2017 | Rabbi Donniel Hartman** | What Justice Demands
- **2016 | Rabbi Rachel Cowan** | Wise Aging: Waking Up to the Rest of Your Life
- **2014 | Rabbi Nehemia Polen** | Selichot Weekend
- **2010 | Rabbi Or N. Rose** | Spiritual Renewal: Head, Heart, and Health
- **2008 | Dr. Alan Morinis** | Discovering Everyday Holiness
- **2006 | Dr. David B. Ruderman** | A Tale of Three Jewish Cities: Prague, Venice and Amsterdam

Katherine F. Baum Adult Education Fund

Established in 2006. The intent of this fund is to support an annual adult education course on a topic chosen by the senior rabbi, ideally related to the current congregational study theme or adult learning curriculum. Two relatives of Katherine F. Baum, designated by the donor, will be invited to serve on the planning committee for this program.

- **2019 | Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman** | Kabbalah
- **2018 | Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman** | American Jewish History
- **2014 | Dr. Rachel Korazim** | Windows into Israeli Society
- **2013 | Janie Metzinger**, Public Policy Director, Mental Health America The State of Healthcare in Texas
- **2012 | Dr. Rick Halperin, Rabbi Jill Jacobs, Betsy Healy** | Human Rights: The Birthright of All People
- **2011 | Dr. Mark Chancey and Rabbi David Stern** | Parallel Pathways: A Jewish-Christian Dialogue
- **2010 | Elliot Dlin** | Understanding the Holocaust: Changing Reflections in Film, Media and Beyond
- **2009 | Dr. Eli Avraham** | Israel at 60: Through the Looking Glass Reflections on Media, Culture and Society
- **2008 | Dr. Mark Chancey** The New Testament: First Century Jews, First Century Christians

Henry D. Schlenger Ethics Symposium

The Henry D. Schlenger Ethics Symposium Fund was established in 1989 by Temple leadership as a tribute to Henry Schlenger for his personal integrity and outstanding service to the congregation and the community. This symposium is designed to address the complex, demanding and compelling ethical issues of our day.

- **2022** | Leaving the Food Desert
- **2021** | Pandemic Perspectives
- **2020** | In This Together: Navigating Moral Landscapes of the Pandemic
- **2019** | Artificial Intelligence
- **2018** | The Undocumented: Our Ethical Responsibility
- **2017** | Gun Violence Prevention
- **2016** | Conversations about Race: Discomfort and Discovery
- **2014** | Welcoming the Stranger — The Ethics of Immigration Policies
- **2013** | Marriage and the Changing Face of Modern Family
- **2012** | Caring for All in Times of Limited Resources — The Ethics of Social Welfare
- **2010** | Watergate to Wikileaks: Exploring Truth and Bias in Today's Media
- **2009** | Ethical Dilemmas in War
- **2008** | What's Right and What's Wrong: The Bible, Moral Values and Public Education
- **2007** | Ethical Perspectives: Investing and Consuming in a Global Economy
- **2006** | Religion in the Public Square
- **2005** | Aging in America: Ethical Challenges and Jewish Values
- **2004** | Poverty: Children in Crisis — Who is Responsible?
- **2003** | The Ethical, Religious and Public Policy Issues Surrounding Stem Cell Research and Therapeutic Cloning
- **2002** | "All the World's a Stage" for the Use and Abuse of Power
- **2001** | How Do I Know If I'm Right?
- **2000** | White Lies and Dastardly Deceits: The Ethics of Truth-Telling in Jewish Tradition
- **1999** | The Power of Words

- **1998** | Ethical Responsibilities of Families: Jewish Views and Modern Realities
- **1997** | Forgiveness: Is it an Ethical issue?
- **1996** | Ethics in the Workplace: Employer-Employee Relationships
- **1995** | Ethics in the Media
- **1994** | What Can We Do When There is Not Enough to Provide for All Our Needs: The Morality of the Allocation of Scarce Resources
- **1993** | For the Love of Our Children
- **1992** | Ethics and Politics
- **1990** | The Environment as an Ethical Issue
- **1989** | Crime, Punishment, and Rehabilitation
- **1988** | What's Happening to Trust Relationships?
- **1987** | Personhood and Ethical Responsibility

Sampling of classes that have been offered at Temple

- Talmud study



- Alice Liebman Bible Study



- Prayerbook Hebrew
- Adult Beginning Hebrew
- Theology Seminar
- Bible Study
- Stepping Stones (for conversion)
- Sam Bloom Memorial Scholar-in-Residence
- Jewish Parenting
- 75 Minutes: Intellectual Food for Adults (topics ranging from Shabbat to Jewish gender issues)
- Going to the Chuppah
- Going to the Delivery Room
- The Conversation Project (end of life conversations in a Jewish context)
- Tuesdays at Temple (social and learning opportunities for seniors)
- Rabbi Olan Radio sermons (class taught by Morton Prager about these sermons)
- Temple Book Club
- A Touch of the Sacred (Covid online class)
- For a Dreamer of Houses: The Idea of Sukkah and Shelter in Uncertain Times (Covid online)
- Daughters of Abraham

Step by Step, Temple Opened Path of Conversion for Jews by Choice

By Anjelica Ruiz

Many reasons drive a decision to convert to Judaism. Some people arrive at the choice on their own. Others find their curiosity piqued by a Jewish partner. Temple has a consistent stream of people interested in exploring the journey and currently employs a formal process far different than in decades past.

The historic path to conversion in many traditional synagogues was intense study with a rabbi on Jewish traditions, customs, holidays and theology. The would-be convert then would go before a *beit din*, a panel of learned community members consisting of two lay people and the conversion rabbi, and answer questions regarding Judaism and how that person would live a Jewish life. From there, a male would undergo either a circumcision or *hatafat dam brit*, a ritual drawing of a drop of blood. Both males and females would then go to the mikvah, a bath used for the purpose of ritual immersion.

While there is little documentation on how our early rabbis at Temple conducted conversions, we do have a general idea of what happened. In the case of one student, the process began with meeting a rabbi to discuss the student's backgrounds and beliefs. The rabbi assigned readings on Judaism on which to write a report. The conversion took place at the second meeting, which consisted of reciting the Sh'ma and receiving a Hebrew name.

One of our most early converts was N. Anthony Jones, an African-American professor of international relations and government at Bishop College. During Irving Goldberg's 1955-1957 term as Temple president, Professor Jones took classes with Rabbi Levi Olan and, with Olan's unconditional support, applied for membership. While the Board of Trustees was hesitant to approve, Rabbi Olan championed Professor Jones, who became Temple's first Black member.

Temple formalized its conversion process in the 1980s. Students take two classes, Introduction to Judaism and Choosing Judaism, before being assigned to a clergy member and a congregant mentor. The student studies

Judaism and participates in Temple life and the Jewish community while developing a personal commitment to Judaism. When the student is ready, the student completes the questions for *gerut*, which takes the place of a traditional *beit din*, undergoes circumcision or *hatafat dam brit* if applicable, enters the mikvah, and has a ceremony of welcome as a new member of the community.

In recent years, interest in the Introduction to Judaism class has grown. A 2014 Pew Research Center study found that one in six American Jews is a convert. At Temple, interest has increased among young people and people of color. The spring and winter 2022 classes each had more than 30 students — some Jewish and wanting to learn more deeply, and some wishing to convert. It is estimated that at least 25% were people of color. It is a testament to Temple's open and welcoming atmosphere that so many find their spiritual home here.

CONVERSION STORIES

By Ariana Cook



Besides avid biking and hiking in Alaska, one of my uncle's retirement hobbies included hours of poking around on Ancestry.com. What began as a passing interest soon evolved into ordering documents, hiring German translators and comparing handwriting samples.

His discoveries included the revelation of Jewish family members. While my mother and I were both raised Episcopalian, this information wasn't much of a surprise, considering we had a menorah as a family heirloom.

In my early 30s, I came across the Introduction to Judaism class at Temple via a conversation with a colleague. I had been non-religious for many years. I was not interested in a spiritual life, and I had no intention to convert. I attended simply to learn more about Judaism as it was a part of my family history.

A component of the course includes attending a Shabbat service. In the back corner of the Lefkowitz Chapel, not 30 seconds into the service, I was suddenly overcome with tears. I felt as if this is where I was supposed to be all along. This onset of intense emotion surprised and shocked me. The message was clear, and I now see that moment as the beginning of not only my conversion, but a new chapter. I never could have imagined this path for myself, but it is now clear to me that my journey to Judaism is part of a divine plan for my life.



By Spencer Riley

In the midst of my search for a new spiritual home, while debating with a friend, I got paid a compliment that I didn't know what to do with: "You know, if you became a Jew you could make a great rabbi." Trying to decipher that compliment led me into a love for Jewish tradition

and sense of being called home to my people.

My conversion study took place during the worst of the pandemic. I knew I was ready to embrace Judaism; I wasn't sure how I would know I was ready to call myself a member of the community. Then, seemingly out of the blue, I was asked to give the motzi blessing for the Shabbat Zoom service. I met with my converting Rabbi after the service and said, "Well, everyone knows who I am now, so I guess I'm officially in."

Being visibly queer always carries a degree of anxiety about how you will be seen by new communities. Temple has been a place where I have felt shockingly normal, another welcome Jew in a crowd of Jews. I've enjoyed being a member of this community and relished the opportunities to dive into Jewish learning.



By Scott McCartney

I fell in love, then fell in love with Judaism. When Karen and I started dating seriously, she made one thing clear: she wanted to raise Jewish children. I was raised Episcopalian, so I did some research, went to services in North Carolina where

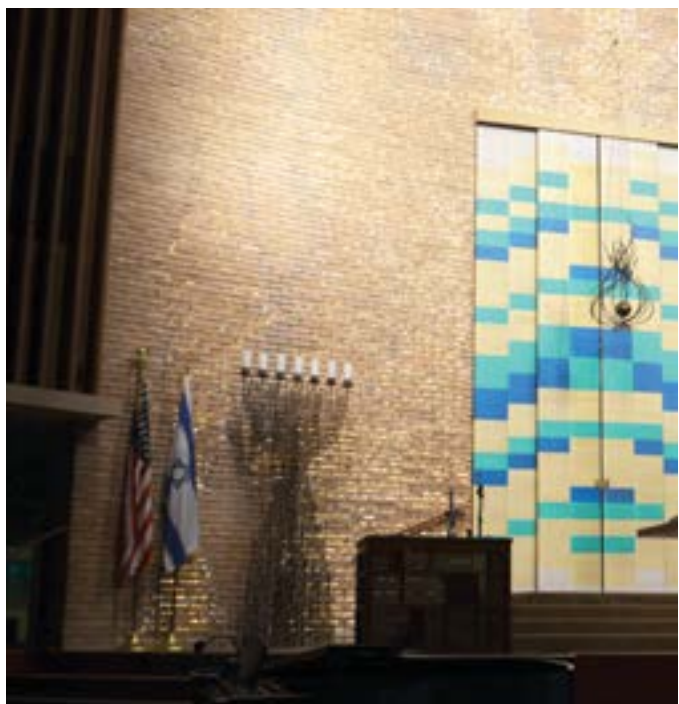
she taught Sunday school while in college and got comfortable with having a Jewish home. We were married under a chuppah by a rabbi – with an Episcopal minister offering a blessing.

Over the years, I fell in love with Judaism and considered myself a Jew, fully participating in Temple life. Or so I thought. One day my younger daughter expressed a feeling that we weren't wholly a Jewish family. About the same time, I was startled at bat mitzvah rehearsal for my older daughter when Rabbi David Stern made clear I couldn't hold the Torah. I was shocked — it was the first time in more than 10 years of active participation that I ever felt not fully accepted. The dual disappointments prompted me to convert — one of the best decisions I ever made for my life.

I like to think we are all Jews by choice. We choose to participate, worship, learn, volunteer and give. We choose to raise Jewish children. My choice was more formal than some, but no different than all.

Temple's History Traces Ever-Deepening Connections with Israel

By Pam Rollins



Temple has always stood at the forefront of Reform Judaism, and Temple's relationship with Israel has been no different.

At the dedication of the first Temple building in 1876, congregational president David Goslin expressed the prevailing view of early Reform Jews toward Israel: "This great United States is the land we recognize as our country, and glorious Texas and our prosperous city of Dallas as our home."

Goslin's remarks echoed Gustavus Poznanski's 1841 speech to Congregation Beth Elohim in Charleston, South Carolina. "This synagogue is our temple, this city our Jerusalem, this happy land our Palestine, and our fathers defended with their lives that temple, that city and land so will their sons defend this temple, this city and this land," declared Poznanski, a pioneer of Reform Judaism.

This sentiment was codified in the Pittsburgh platform, a pivotal 1885 document laying out the influential thought of Reform Judaism of the day. It defined Jews as a religious community, not a nation, and explicitly rejected Zionism as inapplicable to American Jews at home in the U.S.

Many in the Reform movement began to soften some of the classical positions as the years passed. The Columbus Platform of 1937 affirmed the obligation of Jews around the world to aid in the building of a Jewish homeland. But when the Central Conference of American Rabbis passed a 1942 resolution to establish a Jewish army in Palestine, several rabbis split from the group. They formed the American Council for Judaism to oppose Zionism and the state of Israel. By the end of World War II, many Temple congregants were ACJ members and staunch anti-Zionists.

Rabbi David Lefkowitz was an early supporter of the group and accepted his nomination to ACJ's national board of directors. He requested the ACJ send literature to Temple's membership and actively solicited members to join the group. Lefkowitz's anti-Zionist position began to moderate after hearing the extent of the horrors of the Holocaust from his son David Lefkowitz, Jr, who was a chaplain in the U.S. Air Force. By 1948, Rabbi Lefkowitz favored supporting Israel, but his name remained on the ACJ letterhead until 1950.

These tensions simmered in the background when Rabbi Levi Olan arrived in January 1949, six months after the state of Israel's creation, intent on teaching about Judaism and Zionism. He hired Rabbi Herbert Yarrish as director of education that August. Israel became a regular part of the religious school curriculum, making many parents uneasy.

Anti-Zionist parents shuddered when their children wrapped Hanukkah presents in blue and white, the colors of the Israeli flag. When someone suggested placing an Israeli flag on the bimah, several hundred congregants met with Rabbi Olan, accusing him of leading the congregation towards Zionism.



Temple and Reform Judaism made an ideological shift toward Israel during the next 20 years. Irwin Goldenberg studied and worked in Israel for a year before being hired as an assistant rabbi in 1969. That predated the Israel Experience of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, which debuted in 1970. The Reform rabbinic student year in Israel also foreshadowed the CCAR's Centenary Perspective of 1976, a pivotal document of Reform ideology recognizing a reciprocal relationship between Jewish peoplehood and the state of Israel. However, it was not until 1989 that Temple members took their first congregational trip to Israel, with Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman.

Temple-sponsored Israel trips are now a staple, with itineraries focusing on issues spanning social justice to the Reform movement in Israel to food and culture, and, of course, Jewish history. The unifying principle has been the building of a meaningful connection between our congregation and Israel.

“The word to consider regarding our connection to Israel is relationship,” Rabbi Stern noted. “Why relationship? Because Israel is more than the sacred sites, more than the latest news of political strife or progress. Israel is a modern state, revitalized by a population dazzling in its diversity. Now more than ever our relationship to Israel, and our responsibility to Israel, means a sense of connection to the people who live there.”

