



Sinai Temple Bulletin

*Take Back Your Time:
Rediscover Shabbat*

*January / February 2016
Shvat / Adar I 5776*

For Your Consideration

– Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

Picture...pictures...Sinai Temple has literally thousands of photographs. Some date back to our founding in 1931. The vast majority has been taken since I became rabbi in 1988.

And what a treasure they are. During these last 27 ½ years, 425 posters have hung on the bulletin board in the Temple hallway. Look through those reflections of life at Sinai and you can see Simchat Torah celebrations with little children, our teenagers, and so many adults from all the generations. The posters also capture Chanukah with hundreds of candles being lit over so many Decembers.

Then there are the many celebrations for Israel's birthday. Delicious photos of the cakes we baked to celebrate Israel's 50th anniversary and then her 60th anniversary. Photos of our 75th anniversary festivities. Photos of luncheons for Seniors and dinners when we honored recipients of the Rabbi Snyder Award. Year after year the posters present the faces of children when school opens, when they do a special art project, when they are little and when they have grown up.

The Confirmation Class has a special place on the posters with zany, energetic photos of the kids on retreats from the Berkshires to Manhattan to Alabama.

And best of all? Even if they are not the most "important" pictures, there are the fabulous pictures of all those Megillah readings, costumes, smiles, and laughter with hundreds upon hundreds of Sinai congregants.

It's enough to make one just a little bit nostalgic. So much energy, creativity, and life over close to three decades. Looking at all the pictures, I find myself awed and humbled as well by what we have done together.

It's as if an era is coming to an end - which is somewhat true. But, then again, it is not as if Sinai is coming to an end - which it is not.

For the greatest truth is that Sinai is larger than me. Judaism is not about the fun you and I have had together. (It's not even about the tears we have shed together.) As sacred as all of our shared past is, the melody carries on. After June 30, I will remain a Jew and a member of Sinai. After June 30, friends, your biggest gift to me will be the knowledge that you too will remain Jews and members of Sinai.

Judaism is colorful and magnificent. Promise me that you believe that. Promise me that you will live that truth. We have so much to do as we build our faith and our Temple for many, many years to come

Friday Evenings in January

All January services begin at 6 p.m.

January 1

Welcome to 2016 with melody and story.

January 8

Service followed by dinner and speaker, RICH MICHELSON. See Page 3.

January 15

Martin Luther King Day weekend leads to thoughts about racism and xenophobia.

January 22

TWO SERVICES AT 6 P.M.

#1 - For families (Kg to Grade 5) with potluck dinner.

#2 - For the "rest of us." Something "adult."

January 29

Congregational service fighting the winter cold. Young or old, Sinai can always be your home.

Friday Evenings in February

All January services begin at 6 p.m.

February 5

Food and Film Festival

Dinner and movie after the 6 p.m. service. See Page 3.

February 12

Take the chill off the winter with Shabbat candles and worship.

February 19

Congregational Shabbat Service.

February 26

TWO SERVICES AT 6 P.M.

#1 - For families (STUFF Infant to Five Years Old) with dinner.

#2 - For the "rest of us." Something "adult."

Saturday Mornings

February 27

Maestro Kevin Rhodes Returns

Otherwise - Torah Study at 9:00 a.m. and Service at 10:15 a.m.

Please note – This bulletin is an eight-week bulletin – covering January AND February 2016.

**From the Executive Committee...
Karen Mendelsohn, Recording
Secretary 2015-17**

Experiencing my first Union for Reform Judaism - URJ Biennial was awesome. The convention was held in Orlando, Florida at the beginning of November. It was an amazing feeling being in the same place with 5,000 Reform Jews. There was a palpable feeling of excitement and energy in the convention center. Everyone was so friendly.

The Biennial had many different offerings that would appeal to a wide variety of interests including music. The huge conference hall was large enough for all participants to assemble during certain sessions such as Shabbat Services and Song Session. Then there were smaller rooms for the learning sessions and smaller music venues. The learning sessions were divided into four categories: Strengthening Congregations, Audacious Hospitality, Tikkun Olam, and Transforming Text. There were so many great programs to choose from.

My husband, Jeff Cossin and I attended the morning and evening plenary sessions, learning sessions, worship services, Torah study, Shabbat Dinner, song session and music concerts. Jeff chose learning sessions in Strengthen-

ing Congregations and Transforming Text while I chose sessions in Strengthening Congregations and Audacious Hospitality. There was still time to meet with friends for coffee or have a meal in between running to the next program.

My daughter, Sumner, enjoyed herself in the teen program. She met the North American Federation of Temple Youth - NFTY President Jeremy Cronig, who spoke eloquently when he addressed the entire convention. She met many new friends and stayed up late singing and dancing with them. She learned many great ideas that she will share with SPFTY, Sinai Temple's youth group.

For me, the convention highlights were hearing from Ambassador David Saperstein, former longtime director of the Religious Action Center in Washington DC; Vice President Joe Biden; Stav Shaffir, the youngest member of the Knesset; Rabbi Eric Yoffie, President Emeritus of the Union for Reform Judaism; NAACP President Cornell Brooks; Anat Hoffman, Israeli activist; and Six13, an a cappella group. Overall the song sessions themselves were fabulous.

The days were enjoyable, long, and filled with knowledge and information. We are enthusiastically looking forward to the next Biennial, December 6-10, 2017 in Boston. Come join us. I highly recommend it.

Thank you to the Grayboff Family:

The family of the late Howard Grayboff, who was a President of Sinai and a long-time supporter of everything in our congregation, created a fund to honor Howard when he passed away several years ago. The family has now expanded the fund's name to honor Howard's wife, Lee Grayboff, who remains a member of Sinai and has supported the Temple through many decades of generosity and hard work. The fund which is used for capital work throughout our building will now be called **The Lee and Howard Grayboff Fix-It Fund**.

Thank you!!!!

**SINAI TEMPLE JUDAICA
GIFT SHOP**

A great big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who worked during our busy Chanukah season. We were able to make so many people happy and often found exactly what they were looking for!

Now with spring just ahead of us, we will have for B'nai Mitzvah beautiful tallises and many appropriate gifts.

Also for upcoming engagements and weddings, special mezuzzahs, Kiddush cups, candle sticks and more.

We're back to our regular hours, Tuesdays from 2 to 4:40 PM and Sundays 9:30 to 12 noon - and always special appointments.

Thais Fischel 786-9577

Sinai Weighs a Lot

This past Yom Kippur through our Food Van and YOUR DONATIONS Sinai sent 2,679 pounds of food to the Open Pantry.

Thanks!!!

The Sinai Temple Bulletin is published every other month by Sinai Temple, Springfield, Massachusetts. This is Issue Number 4 for 2015-2016.

- Mark Dov ShapiroRabbi
- Martin LevsonCantor
- Heather SullivanDirector of Education
- Bruce LeshinePresident
- Steve KesslerVice President
- Laurie WeinbergVice President
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- Jack HenriePresident, Men & Women of Sinai
- Ron WeissCemetery Chair
- Maggie & Sarah CohnMembership Committee Chairs

Visit our website: www.sinai-temple.org

Coming on Friday, January 8 Food and Friendship Shabbat Returns

*Followed by guest speaker, writer, poet,
and artist Richard Michelson*

6 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service

7 p.m. Dinner is Served

Reservations Required \$10/person

www.sinai-temple.org



As Martin Luther King Day approaches, Richard Michelson will be with us after dinner to discuss *Writing Race: Poets on the Complexity and Contradictions of Race in America*.

Michelson is the Curator of Exhibitions at *The National Yiddish Book Center* and owns *R. Michelson Galleries* in Northampton, Massachusetts.

He is also a prize-winning poet and children's book author.

In January 2009, "*As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King and Abraham Joshua Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom*," was awarded the prestigious *Sydney Taylor Award Gold Medal* from the Association of Jewish Libraries.



Friday, February 5 Food and Film Festival

Featuring Havana Curveball

Play Ball!!!!

6 p.m. in the Sanctuary for the Shabbat Service
(baseball caps welcome)

7 p.m. in the Auditorium for Dinner (a la
baseball) and Film

Mica is a 13 year old Bar Mitzvah student who launches a grand plan to send baseballs to embargoed Cuba. He knows only that Cubans are poor and love baseball-and that Cuba saved his grandpa's life. *A true story*. Perfect for now when Cuba's doors may at last open to all.

Reservations Required
\$10/person.
www.sinai-temple.org

**Conductor Kevin Rhodes at Sinai Temple
Saturday, February 20
9 to 11:30 a.m.**

**A Conversation and More about
George Gershwin and Aaron Copland**



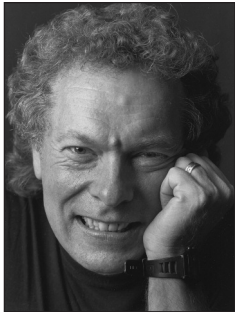
The Springfield Symphony Orchestra will be performing the Porgy and Bess Concert Suite and Copland's Fanfare for the Common Man on February 27.

On February 20, Kevin Rhodes will be at Sinai as part of an expanded Torah Study. Maestro Rhodes will dialogue with Rabbi Shapiro about George Gershwin and Aaron Copland - two Jewish Americans whose music enriched the world.

Last year the Rabbi and Conductor dialogued with humor and energy about Leonard Bernstein. Now they are back with Gershwin & Copland. Don't miss the fun!

The morning will conclude with Kiddush and a light lunch.

Our morning is made possible in part by a gift from the friends and family of the late Pudsie and Sid Cooley.



**Faith and Doubt: Jewish Poetry Asking
the Great Questions**

Wednesday, March 2, 9 & 16 from 7:30 – 9:00 pm

**Sponsored by Sinai Temple and Temple Beth El
Taking Place at the JCC**

Jewish sources have always expressed both belief in God's protection and struggled with that belief, expressing anguish and anger over God's absence. We will engage in a close reading of biblical, medieval and modern poems that wrestle with faith.

Rabbi Ed Feld will teach this 3-session class, co-sponsored by Sinai and Beth El. This class will be held at the Springfield JCC. The cost is \$25 for members of Sinai and Beth El; \$50 for non-members. To register, please contact the Temple office at 736-3619.

Rabbi Ed Feld is senior editor of the two new prayerbooks published by the Conservative Movement. The Forward Magazine lists him as one of the Forward 50 – the 50 outstanding American Jews.

Best of all, Ed lives in Northampton. He is our neighbor!

**Previewing Ed Feld...Saturday, February 27 at Sinai...9 to 10 a.m.
Joy, Despair and Hope: Reading Psalms**

The Book of Psalms speaks to a variety of emotions -- celebration, despair, loss of faith and hope. Here is a chance to meet Ed Feld. We will closely examine two psalms which have messages as fresh as today.

Adult Opportunities

Books - Read - Discuss - Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, January 13

"The Killing of the King" by Dan Ephron, the book about the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the context of Israel at that time.

Wednesday, February 17

"Until Our Last Breath: A Holocaust Story of Love and Partisan Resistance" by Michael Bart (cousin of our former congregant Rickie Leiter). Tells the story of Jewish partisan resistance led by Abba Kovner in the Rudnicki forest of Lithuania. (Please note that Bart's book on resistance anticipates the visit of filmmaker Julia Mintz. She will be at Sinai on Friday, March 4 showing parts of her new film on resistance during the Holocaust.) Copies of the books are available in our Temple library as well as the Longmeadow library. For more information, please contact Laurie Weinberg at sagecitrus@aol.com

Saturday Morning Services

Every Saturday morning

A regular weekly Shabbat morning service. When there isn't a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we meet at 10:15 a.m. in the Oneg Shabbat Room for the service complete with the Yahrzeit list.

Monthly Morning Service

Wednesday, January 6 at 7:30 a.m.

A chance to start your day with a different focus. We meet on the bimah for a service of 20 minutes. Breakfast follows. Those who need to leave for the rest of the day are free no later than 8:15 a.m.

Future "morning minyan" services will take place on Wednesdays, February 3, March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1.

Tales from Judaism's Mystical Tradition

Saturdays, January 9, 16, and 23 from 9 to 10 a.m.

Rabbi Devorah Jacobson

You've heard of the Kabbalah? Perhaps you've heard about the Zohar? On three Shabbat mornings at Torah Study, Rabbi Jacobson will present stories from mystical and Chasidic tradition inviting us to dig in and discover new ways to understand Judaism. **Rabbi Jacobson's teaching is made possible by a gift from the family of the late Ruth Webber who loved adult learning.**
Thank you.

For High School and College students

A Summer Program Making Money; The Susan M. Broh Tikkun Olam Award

This summer Sinai Temple invites students to get involved with tikkun olam – repairing the world. We would like to underwrite students who choose to spend their summer in a project that enriches the world. Interested students can get involved by thinking of a project or an area of interest related to tikkun olam/fixing the world. Applications should be in the mail soon. Call the office if you haven't received one. Those who are selected will be paid a salary of approximately \$7.50 an hour. *(College students living outside the Pioneer Valley are welcome to find a project wherever they'll be spending the summer.)*

Why is the Temple offering this program? We began this program to honor the memory of Susan M. Broh, a Temple member who died in September 2001. Susan began her career of "tikkun olam" by dedicating two years of her life to the Peace Corps. After that, Susan devoted her professional and volunteer life to making this world a better place. She believed passionately in the Jewish obligation of pursuing justice. Susan's friends and family have created this program to honor her memory and to encourage other Jews to strive for holiness as Jews must always do.

NOTE...SINAI IS PRINTING ONLY SIX BULLETINS THIS YEAR. COMING BULLETINS WILL BE MARCH/APRIL, MAY/JUNE. THIS IS A VERY STRONG REASON FOR OUR WANTING TO STAY IN TOUCH VIA E-MAIL. PLEASE SEND US YOUR E-MAIL.



The MICAH Award Dinner Honoring Rabbi Mark Shapiro Saturday, February 6 at 6 p.m. at Sinai Temple

Sinai Temple is pleased to join forces with the Pioneer Valley Project for a community dinner honoring Springfield citizens who exemplify the words of the Prophet Micah: *What does the Lord require of you: to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.* Sinai is also honored to be the HOST CONGREGATION. The dinner will take place in our own building.

Our 2016 honoree will be RABBI SHAPIRO.

To attend the dinner in honor of Rabbi, please send a check for \$35.00 per person to Sinai at 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108. *Make the check payable to PVP – Pioneer Valley Project.*

During his time at Sinai, Rabbi Shapiro has been very committed to Sinai Temple's social justice profile, which has meant food collections at all seasons, "The Shoe Fits" program which links congregants to Gray House by purchasing over 100 pairs of children's shoes every Fall. When Sinai celebrated its 75th anniversary, the Rabbi challenged the congregation to look out into the community. In response, the congregation held a swimathon that raised scholarship money for swimming lessons in Springfield. The congregation also restored the playground at Washington School.

Rabbi Shapiro is a Board member of Friends of the Homeless. He has also been President of the Interfaith Council of Western Massachusetts.

When gay marriage became legal in Massachusetts, Rabbi organized a state-wide rabbinic statement of support. After the Newtown shootings, Rabbi Shapiro organized a statement from over 50 Springfield clergy in support of stronger gun safety laws at the state and federal levels. Rabbi Shapiro was given the 2007 Human Relations Award by the National Conference for Community and Justice.

Murder in Indian Orchard - Tzedakah Response

Thank you to the many Sinai congregants who responded to the tzedakah appeal on behalf of the Li Family.

Thanks to your generosity our World Crisis Fund took in \$525. A VISA card for that amount was purchased and passed on to the family to help them as they navigate this great crisis.

Just to remind you...back on Saturday night November 7, Fan Cheung Li was murdered in Springfield while delivering Chinese food. He left behind a wife and three young children. Our tzedakah will help the family as they struggle to regain their balance.

Remembering a White Cadillac

Back in November, Rabbi Shapiro received this remarkable thank you letter going back to the 1960's at Sinai Temple. The major question raised by the letter is who drove the MacDuffie students. Who owned a white Cadillac? Suggestions? Contact the Temple office.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a 1970 graduate of MacDuffie School for Girls. In cleaning my basement over the weekend, I found a copy of the book the Temple gave me as a graduation gift.

Over the years, I have thought about and talked about how truly kind the Men's Club was to us. I believe one of the girls made contact with you in 1968 as MacDuffie required "Church attendance" on Sunday mornings by all students. You ever so graciously extended your arms to the few Jewish boarding students at the time arranging for us to attend Seders at members' homes, etc. and satisfy our Church attendance by joining the Men's Club Sunday breakfasts and the short service thereafter. Only the few Jewish students came at the start, but then word got out that it was a breakfast and short service, and then many of the girls signed up for Temple rather than going to church. In hindsight, I believe that was probably the first time some of those girls were exposed to Judaism as we were such a minority at the school.

Unfortunately, I no longer remember the name of the couple who faithfully came to the school to pick us up in their white Cadillac and bring us back to school, sometimes diverting with a ride through Forest Park. I wish I had located the book with the name of the Temple years back when I probably did remember their names and not just their faces.

I've enclosed a check in honor of all you did for us to say thank you so many years later. (FYI - The gift check was placed into our fund for the Caring Community.)

Very truly yours,

Martha Ostrowitz Attorney at Law

Manalapan, NJ

Do You Like Children?

Do you love working with children? Are you willing to share your Jewish experience with the next generation?

The Youth Engagement Committee is looking for a Youth Engagement Director. We are seeking an individual who is energetic, enthusiastic, and approachable to lead youth programming for all ages. The goal of this position is to engage youth and facilitate programming for youth.

The primary responsibilities include:

- Plan and lead age appropriate programming for Sinai children grades Kindergarten through 8th, to have "fun with a focus," and to encourage these children to remain active members at Sinai and to become future members of SPFTY, the Springfield Federation of Temple Youth.
- Serve as a member of the Youth Engagement Committee, attend meetings, plan and help facilitate programming for Sinai Temple youth.

Salary: Commensurate with experience.

If you are interested, please contact Robin Blanchette-Gage in the Temple Office. Telephone: (413) 736-3619
Email: rblanchettegage@sinai-temple.org

At Washington Street School

Sue Samble is a substitute teacher and volunteer at Washington Street School. She is building a wall of fame at the school to inspire students to succeed by showing them all the things that former students have accomplished.

Please send Sue an electronic photo of yourself with your name, occupation, and years attended.

Her email is paulsamble118@comcast.net. You can also call her with any questions at 413-221-2600.

Your Voice is Welcome: What Do You Think?

Two Open Conversations

Social Action Committee

Our committee that considers social justice will be meeting again on Wednesday, January 20 at 7:30 p.m. As we plan for a Habitat for Humanity project and more, please visit! Share your ideas.

Ritual Committee

Our committee that considers how we arrange services and celebrate the holidays will be meeting again on Thursday, January 21 at 7:30 p.m. Purim...Passover...and more...Lots to discuss. Please share your ideas.

Notes from the Cantor

As I write this bulletin article, I am preparing for something I have never experienced in my twenty-five years as a Cantor. From mid-December through mid-February, I will be taking a sabbatical! Rabbi Shapiro and I have been working closely to make sure that there will still be music at Shabbat services, and that B'nai-Mitzvah students will receive their regular tutoring. You may ask, just what does a Cantor do on sabbatical? I'm still working that out, but here are a few of the things I am looking forward to during this time. I will be meeting with my Jewish liturgical songwriting group, *Kesher Shir*, in January, and I hope to be able to write some more Jewish music. If our temperamental New England weather cooperates, I hope to experience Shabbat services in a variety of other places around the northeast, especially in congregations which have a highly participatory musical culture. I hope to be able to learn from those places, so that I can create an even greater musical experience here at Sinai Temple. I hope to get a lot of reading done, and I hope to listen to a lot of new Jewish music. I look forward to returning to Sinai Temple in mid-February rested, refreshed, and renewed, and ready to bring new enthusiasm and ideas to Sinai Temple.

lvdu et Hashem B'simcha! Serve the Holy One with JOY!

Message from Heather Sullivan

Director of Education

Dear Families,

As Project Solel (the merger of schools for Sinai Temple and Temple Beth El) moves forward, outreach to Sinai families will begin to get underway. It's an exciting time but also requires some well-thought planning and we need your input! In the coming months, be on the lookout for ways in which you can gain more information about the merger and also how your thoughts can be shared with task force members.

On January 22, Sinai and Beth El will gather their families with students in Grades K- 5 together for a joint Shabbat celebration at Sinai Temple. Families will be bringing in dairy dishes for a combined pot-luck style Shabbat dinner. In addition, students in grades 8-12 are invited to participate in a Havdalah/ movie night at Temple Beth El on Saturday, January 30.

These events are a wonderful way for our two communities to begin to build relationships amongst students and parents. I certainly hope your family will take advantage of these unique and worthwhile programs.

L'Shalom, Heather

STUFF - Sinai Temple Under Five Families Planning for Sinai's Future

By Lindsey Weber

Our STUFF families have been off to a busy start this year! We welcomed the high holidays with children's services, lots of songs and dancing, stories, and sweet apples. The children were excited to experience the sights and sounds of the season.

At our October Shalom Sunday, the children made spice bags for Havdalah. We used an assortment of spices, and each child created their own blend. We also ventured outside to gather colorful fallen leaves, which we then ironed between wax paper to make an autumn placemat.

We gathered for Tot Shabbat in November and welcomed more than 40 people! The children loved singing with Cantor Bim Bam and helping with the Torah. The week's Torah portion told the story of Jacob and Esau, and the children could relate to a story about arguing with a sibling. We followed our service with pizza, fruit, and dessert.

During our December Shalom Sunday, we were excited to celebrate Chanukah! We had a snack and read two Chanukah stories. The children also chose from several craft projects, including dreidel spin painting, homemade Chanukah cards, and Star of David decorations made from sparkling popsicle sticks.

During our autumn events, our families have collected donations for the PJ Library pajama drive and the Holyoke Backpack Program food drive.

STUFF events are designed for children under 5 years old and their caregivers. Older siblings are always welcome. Participants do not need to be temple members. STUFF events are a great way to meet our lively, caring Sinai community!

Message from Jack Henrie *President,
Men and Women of Sinai (MWOS)*

I am writing this as we prepare for one of our largest, warmest, and most "enlightening" events of the year, for the service and our Chanukah Shabbat dinner. In 2014, 280 joined in our celebration. At this time, we are at 180, but reservations are still being accepted...hope that you get to join in the festivities.

The next MWOS event will be a breakfast on Sunday, January 10th at 9:30 a.m. MWOS invites you to our standard breakfast fare of bagels, lox, and cream cheese, coffee, and OJ (free for members and \$5 for others). Rabbi Max Davis of Congregation B'nai Torah will share his ideas about changes in today's Orthodox world (e.g., women rabbis and "Open Orthodoxy"). His story is fascinating, and Rabbi Shapiro will join in this conversation expected to touch upon [roles of] religion in our modern world. This is a great way to start 2016!

Please watch in the e-Vents for announcements of other upcoming MWOS events.

Many thanks again to all who have joined the Men and Women of Sinai and to all who have pitched in to help us in any way. If you have not joined, we would love to have you do so (dues for single adults or couples are \$50); please assist in our support of the Sinai community.

Women Rabbis?

Orthodox Rabbis?

"Open Orthodoxy?"

**What's Happening in Today's
Orthodox World**

**Rabbi Max Davis in Dialogue
with Rabbi Shapiro**

Sunday, January 10 at 9:30 a.m.

Breakfast and Conversation

Men and Women of Sinai proudly invite you to hear Rabbi Max Davis of Congregation B'nai Torah share his ideas about changes in today's Orthodox world. Rabbi Davis came to Springfield in 2010. He was ordained at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah in New York. His story is fascinating. He and Rabbi Shapiro will talk about religion in our modern world.



**Shabbat Chanukah at Sinai
Andy Goldberg and son, David**



**Shabbat Chanukah at Sinai
Melanie Courtemanche and daughter, Talia**

Mazal Tov to the 2015 Adult Confirmation Class

Back in December, seventeen Sinai members participated in Sinai's first ever Adult Confirmation Class. As part of the service, which took place on Shabbat Chanukah, the class created the following prayer about "miracles."

In Israel, the sides of the dreidel proclaim "a great miracle happened HERE." In the Diaspora, the four sides of the dreidel form an acronym declaring that "a great miracle happened THERE." Imagine that wherever we are in the world wonderful blessings can come our way. Our task as Jews is to find the "extraordinary" in the ordinary. These are the miracles we need to hold up to the light as much as we can.

This morning we recognize the miracle of life itself - from the birth of a child to the myriad ways in which he or she grows: crawling, walking, speaking, and onward as the years go by.

There is also the miracle of our own bodies each and every day: breathing, seeing, touching, and learning.

The miracle of love and compassion. The gift of community. The almost physical feeling in one's chest of loving another, the ability to form unconditional connections with other people, the strength to go on after a broken heart.

Art is a miracle. From Vermeer to Chagall, the miracle of creativity that we can appreciate and the equally fabulous gift of our own ability to create beauty.

Every sunrise, the changing of the leaves, the beauty of a snowstorm and the delicacy of a snowflake.

The miracle of invention. Telephones, cell phones, landing on the moon, a spacecraft traveling for years until it leaves our own solar system for points yet unknown.

The miracle of our grandparents' decision to leave Europe. Their journey to freedom gave us life.

And there is the miracle as well of renewed Jewish life in Europe alongside the miracle of Israel reborn. The Six Day War, Jewish pride, Jewish rebirth, Jewish resilience.

For all these "miracles" we give thanks on this special morning dedicated to learning and growth.

Save the Date!

Cantor Martin Levson, Cantor Elise Barber, and Adrian Durlerster

In Concert

**Saturday evening,
March 19 at 8 p.m.**

Decadent Desserts & Spirits

Just before Purim ---

A Musical Evening with a Touch of Humor

"Purim: It's not just for the kids!"

Sinai is Forming a Green Team

On November 5, 2015, the Social Action Committee unanimously approved the creation of a Sinai Temple "Green Team" which will educate the congregation about climate change issues and encourage our members to become engaged in legislative action regarding these issues on the state and federal levels.

In forming this new committee, SAC members cited the importance of fulfilling tikkun olam, the Jewish tenet that stresses the importance of "repairing the world."

Sinai's Green Team will join an area-wide coalition of Green Teams that includes the Unitarian-Universalist Society in Springfield, the First Church of Longmeadow, and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Longmeadow.

The group has identified fossil fuel divestment, promoting the growth of the Massachusetts solar industry, and passage of a fair carbon law as priority topics for education and legislative action. In addition, the coalition is discussing plans for an interfaith climate conference to be held in the Springfield area in early April.

If you are interested in joining this important effort, please contact Richard Segool at 860-668-6595 or Michele Marantz at 413-567-4220.

More on Syrian Refugees - A Message from the Valley Syrian Relief Committee

Panel Presentation on Saturday, January 9

The Valley Syrian Relief Committee and The Tikkun Olam/Social Justice Committee of Congregation B'nai Israel in Northampton are organizing a program entitled, "**Syrian Refugee Resettlement in Western Mass: A Panel Presentation and Discussion,**" on Saturday, January 9th, at 1 p.m. in the library of Congregation B'nai Israel, 253 Prospect St., Northampton, MA.

The event will cover the following topics:

1. What are the differences between refugees and immigrants?
2. How do people get refugee status?
3. What is involved in the process of being resettled as a refugee in the U.S.?
4. What are the needs of refugees? What challenges do refugees face when they come to Western Mass.?
5. How do local agencies resettle and help refugees?
6. What are the challenges involved in resettling Syrian refugees?
7. How can our community be responsive to the needs of Syrian refugees?

For information and/or to RSVP as soon as possible, please reply via e-mail. spw128@comcast.net

Shabbat Chanukah - Friday, December 11



Ethan and Ella Halpern



Adria, Samuel, and Alan Patterso



Shawn, Camryn, Samantha, and Delaney Schragger



Hans Despain, Risa, Elyana Bassell



Carly, Jill, Justin, Sami Baker



Cantor Levson, Bruce & Liz Leshine



Sinai Temple Bulletin

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



**Mazal Tov to Sinai's first ever Adult Confirmation Class -
Shabbat Chanukah - December 12, 2015.**

Top row from left to right...Rabbi Shapiro, Donna Broker Epstein, Jody Maple,
Robin Dunn, Buff Maniscalco, Cantor Levson

Middle row...Bonnie Thomas, Ronnie Leavitt, Richard Alpert, Steve Kessler,
Elaine Geha, Marla Shelasky

Bottom row...Cheryl Blonder, Jodi Maniscalco, Laurie Weinberg, Karen Mendelsohn,
Sarah Shtrax, Cheri Haimowitz, Leslie Hager (Photo by: Joel Solomon)