Committee and Staff Reports for the
Annual Meeting

June 7, 2020
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Adult Learning Committee

The year began very strong with many classes utilizing the Weintraub Family Room for second sessions (11:10-12:30). The Charles St. Room was helpful when Weintraub was booked or when the presenter preferred a quieter atmosphere. The 13 members (including Rabbi Vogel) met monthly to plan and execute our increasingly popular programs including the Cohon Lecture and the Scholar in Residence program. Toby Axelrod continues as Co-chair providing helpful guidance to Barry Schwartz who assumed primary co-chair a year ago.

Special thanks to Linda Katz, Heidi Smith- Hyde, and Paul Kelly for all their help. We hosted 31 presentations and beginning in March utilized Zoom for presentations. While this took additional effort by many, the increased attendance made it all worthwhile.

Our Cohon Lecture was by Rabbi Jaffe from Hebrew College. His topic was on Jewish wisdom and utilizing the practice of Mussar to enrich spiritual practice. Our Scholar In Residence was Rabbi Micha’el Rosenberg, also from Hebrew College who spoke about the Virgin Mary and the development of Miriam as a central character in Judaism.

As mentioned previously the use of Zoom for presentations has allowed us to continue our programs during the Covid 19 pandemic. We are thankful that our presenters have stepped up to the challenge using this new format and our attendance has actually increased. We continued building on our theme of “Our Jewish Values Our Jewish Inner Lives”. There were practice sessions on Mindfulness by Neil Motenko and another series of sessions with Alex Borns-Weil. We had a group of people meeting for 7 weeks with a focus on the study and practice of Mussar, A new group met weekly to discuss Talmudic readings. Unfortunately our Cinema @Sinai film series had to end due to the virus.

We have recently selected possible presenters for the Cohon and Scholar in Residence presentations for next year. Speakers are being lined up for next year so we anticipate another exciting year of presentations.

We have 13 very active committee members: Barry Schwartz, Toby Axelrod, Rich Goldstein, Rose Mandelbaum, Janet Seckel-Cerrotti, Paul Jacobson, Amos Lassen, Merry Arnold, Judith Freedman Caplan, Andrea Jones Berasaluce, Jeremy Wolfe and Doug Bitman (with Rabbi Vogel attending most meetings).

Submitted by Barry Schwartz, Co-chair

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Building Committee

The Building Committee has been concerned primarily with three issues in the past year.

First, in response to the plans that were filed with the Town of Brookline for a significant residential project at 1299 Beacon Street, on the site of the former Neena’s Lighting store, Building Committee Co-Chairs Yuval Gilbert and Jeffrey Simon attended several meetings of the Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), at times joined by other members of the Sinai community. On behalf of Temple Sinai, the Co-chairs offered testimony raising concerns about safety of Sinai congregants, particularly on the High Holidays and Shabbat. It is worth noting that the review process for this project took three years, during which Temple Sinai wrote a half dozen letters to the ZBA indicating our strong opposition to this project, especially our concerns for the safety of our members. In spite of very compelling neighborhood opposition, the (reduced) proposal for 55 units (8-9 stories) of age-restricted rental housing, 2 levels retail, and 2 levels below grade parking (57 parking spaces), was approved by the ZBA under Chapter 40B, with the direction to the Sinai community to engage with Town officials when the safety plans for the project will be developed. As of the date of this Annual Report, work on 1299 Beacon Street has not commenced. We expect that the construction phase of the new building will have
a significant impact on traffic patterns around the temple and on our daily operation. We will communicate any construction-related impacts to our members once that works begins.

Second, the Committee talked in general about repairs and maintenance of the building. Members toured the building in detail, observing both the many improvements that have taken place in the past and seeing some of the items that need to be looked at in the future. A meeting was held with architect Don Mills and discussions about potential improvements and options were held, both on short- and long-term strategies. In the short term, for example, repairs were required from a flood that took place in one of the second-floor bathrooms. Over the longer term, a discussion took place about ways to preserve and maintain the sanctuary, to have a program for window repairs, and to have a longer-term plan for programmatic improvement and stabilizing of the historic building.

Third, considerable time was spent responding to an initiative to initiate a long-term energy improvement program throughout the building. Meetings and communication were held with a newly constituted Green Team that put forward a proposal to do energy improvements to the building and to use the savings from those improvements to fund future improvements. After reviewing the proposal, it was forwarded to the Board of Trustees, who approved it and approved a separate accounting of savings. The Board, in its discretion, may use those funds for future energy improvements. The Green Team will produce a plan for energy improvements that will be reviewed and approved by the Building Committee. Current year plans will focus on quick and easy fixes. The plan will not only suggest specific improvements to be made during a given year but will include programs to involve Temple youth in this energy-saving initiative.

Submitted by Jeffrey Simon and Yuval Gilbert

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Camp Report

This past year was a banner year for Temple Sinai when it came to Jewish summer programing. The Camp Committee is overjoyed to report that we had a record number of people from all ages taking part in Jewish camping. The number of campers at Union for Reform Judaism’s (URJ) sleepaway camps did not go unnoticed, Temple Sinai received a special award for having the highest number of campers per capita than any other temple in the Northeast. This award was presented by Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the URJ to the members of Temple Sinai at Eisner, and Crane Lake’s annual assembly of stakeholders.

Once again Mike Klau led a group of Temple leaders to tour Eisner and Crane Lake. The tour gave our leaders firsthand understanding of the importance of Jewish Camping.

The Camp Committee was also pleased to host our third annual speaker for a Friday night D’var. This year we hosted Emily Gill Messinger. Ms. Messinger spoke about Jewish Camping, NFTY (North American Federation for Temple Youth) and teen trips to Israel and how important this is to the future of our movement.

Temple Sinai is unique in that we have two congregants on the URJ Board, and a member on the Eisner and Crane Lake Board. We are also one of few Temples with an active Camp Committee. These plus a combination of lay and professional leaders working together to ensure that our youth spend their summers engaged in meaningful Jewish activities.

Submitted by Mike Klau
Caring Network

In both happy and challenging situations, Temple Sinai congregants care for individuals and families who had or adopted babies, experienced a loss, fell ill, became injured, had surgery, became isolated at home, or spent time in a hospital or rehabilitation center.

This year, our 20th of operation, we changed our name from Caring Committee to Caring Network, to better reflect that our activities are performed by a wide network of volunteers rather than a small subset of committee members. We have a rotating Monthly Coordinator leadership model to better distribute our work of assisting the Rabbi in providing support to the congregation. Two Monthly Coordinators each month match congregant issues with members willing to provide assistance.

Deepen Communication
During the 2019-2020 year,

- We arranged for the delivery of cards, meals, shiva platters, fruit baskets, floral bouquets, plants and get-well gifts to those in need of our support. We visited those who were sick or bereaved, made check-in telephone calls, and sent messages of cheer, condolence, encouragement and congratulations. We also transported congregants to temple services or to other locations as needed.

- With the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, we updated our meal delivery procedures to reflect the need for prudent behavior including social distancing. We also implemented an initiative to match volunteers with congregants who, due to their life circumstances, might feel isolated. Our volunteers connected with these members through regular and ongoing phone calls and, in some cases, organized deliveries of groceries and/or prescriptions.

Broaden Commitments
- Many of last year’s monthly coordinators returned for the 2019-2020 Caring Network year and new volunteers signed up to fill open positions.

- We continue to expand our volunteer base by encouraging members to help us with our work. Our goal is 100% participation of the congregation in doing mitzvot for one another. Please contact Hildy Neumann (hildyneumann@gmail.com) to add your name to our volunteer list.

Gain Inspiration
- We thank our Monthly Coordinators for their generous donation of time, caring and commitment to our community.
- We thank the many volunteers who acted as “phone buddies” for potentially isolated members during our coronavirus outreach initiative.
- We thank the many other volunteers who stepped up to provide support and assistance to our community.
- We thank Emily Case for the many lovely cards she has written and sent on behalf of the Caring Network.
- We thank Deena Blau for monitoring and restocking the supply of MiSheberach cards and the Jewish Lights Publishing Company pastoral care pamphlets. These materials, which help our members and visitors deal with various life and death challenges, are available on the tables in the back of the sanctuary and outside the Ehrenfried Hall restrooms.
Caring Network expenses are covered by the Temple Sinai budget, the Aryeh Friedman Fund and the Caring Network Fund. We also receive many generous monetary and in-kind donations from Temple Sinai congregants, family members and friends. We thank all those who showed their appreciation for the work of the Caring Network by making a monetary donation.

Respectfully submitted by Hildy Neumann & Andrea Fein on behalf of the Caring Network

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Development Advisory Group and Free Will Annual Campaign

The Development Advisory Group (DAG), made up of about a dozen Sinai members with expertise and experience in fundraising and philanthropy, was formed last year as a “think tank,” advising us on how to enrich and grow Temple Sinai’s culture of philanthropy; with Temple Sinai’s growth, increased staffing, renovated building, and rich programming, new resources are needed to sustain our work and community. Forming the Group was a result of a recommendation by the Strategic Planning Committee.

Beginning last summer, several innovative events and strategies were implemented for FY20. In July, the Development Advisory Group gathered with Rabbi Vogel to discuss how to grow our Engagement Fund, which subsidizes our engagement efforts and in particular our Assistant Rabbi position. This outstanding effort raised $265,000 for the Engagement Fund, ensuring as many as six more years of this important priority for Temple Sinai. Thank you to all those whose leadership and generosity made this possible!

A new event was a “thank you” reception for our larger donors, held on a late Saturday afternoon in early November 2019. It included hors d’oeuvres, wine, music and Havdallah. Warm words of thanks were expressed to the attendees, whose gifts to Sinai—almost half of the Free Will donations received in 2018-19—provided more than 90% of last year’s Free Will Annual Campaign’s financial support. Many thanks go out to Cathy Cotton, who organized the event, and to Arlene Weintraub for donating her condominium’s lovely “clubhouse” as the venue. It was a beautiful event, with a wonderful, casual and caring feeling of community felt by all.

This year’s chair of the Free Will Annual Campaign was Tracey Hyams. Tracey delivered the High Holiday speech for Free Will and jump-started the team of writers of the fall and spring Free Will appeal letters. Thank you Tracey for your leadership of the Free Will Annual Campaign. Also included were personal solicitations, and testimonials and communications via Constant Contact and the Sinai Update. This year’s budgeted Free Will Annual Campaign goal was $135,000, based on the record-breaking success of Free Will in FY19, which brought in $141,500. As of mid-May this year we have raised $122,000, thanks to our generous community and the Development Advisory Group’s dedication and wisdom. We believe we will be able to meet our $135,000 budgeted goal. We are most grateful!

One more exciting piece of philanthropic news is the addition of the Arlene and Howard Weintraub Endowment Fund for the Senior Rabbi position. Arlene Weintraub’s generosity will ensure the spiritual vibrancy and will buttress the financial health of Temple Sinai for many years to come. Arlene, thank you thank you thank you!

Finally, DAG has begun focusing on how to ensure Temple Sinai’s future by developing a planned giving program, legacy gifts, endowments, and bequests. We hope to launch a planned giving effort this summer or next fall. In addition, with COVID-19 dramatically impacting our community and Temple Sinai this spring, DAG has begun thinking about how to further support Temple Sinai going forward in this “new normal.” Enhancing our resources so that Temple Sinai can continue to thrive and be the best it can be, now and for many years, is the Development Advisory Group’s goal.

Respectfully submitted by Nora Abrahamer, Chair of the Development Advisory Group
Distinguished Service Award Committee

The Distinguished Service Award committee was delighted to name Mel Stoler and Jill Winitzer as the co-recipients of the 2020 Harry Wheeler Distinguished Service Award. This was the first time that the award was given to two individuals, and for good reason. They have each made such important contributions to Temple Sinai and the larger community over so many years that it was only natural to present the award to them both.

Mel and Jill have been the driving forces behind Temple Sinai’s sponsorship of a Syrian refugee family, coordinating efforts to ensure that the family’s myriad needs were met. This project began around 2017 when Jewish Family Service of Metrowest, which coordinated the program, asked if Temple Sinai was interested in sponsoring a family. Mel and Jill both agreed to participate, and they became co-chairs of the Syrian Refugee Committee, making an excellent team. It was a big commitment, requiring both financial support and volunteer time to assist with housing, food, employment, schools, and many other aspects of the family’s life. As the years went on, Mel, Jill and many others supported the family in countless ways, support that continues to this day.

Both Jill and Mel have made numerous contributions in many other ways. With her graphic design talents, Jill was enlisted to create flyers for innumerable events, and over the years created a Temple Sinai Cookbook, designed programs and costumes for the Purim Spiel and other events, created logos, planned fundraising dinners, and co-chaired the 75th anniversary gala celebration. Her first foray into social justice at Temple Sinai was coordinating the SNAP challenge, where members of the temple were challenged to eat for a week on a SNAP budget. Tzedek@Sinai was an offshoot of that project – and she created the logo for that, too. She also served as a co-chair of the Education Committee.

Mel has been active in the Caring Committee since its inception, mentored 2 congregants who converted to Judaism, chants Torah at High Holiday and other services, has been a High Holiday greeter, proofreads the Lu’ach and Kolot, and has served as an Assistant Treasurer. Mel twice participated in the CJP Follow Me to Israel program. He also makes many contributions outside of Temple Sinai. He’s ridden in the Pan Mass Challenge for more than 30 years, raising almost $200,000 for the Jimmy Fund. He’s a long-standing platelet donor at the DFCI and recently marked his 500th donation. And he’s a volunteer courier for the National Marrow Donor Program, picking up and delivering stem cells hundreds of times since 2004. (Jill Winitzer has become a courier as well.) Mel also volunteers twice a month at the Brigham and Women’s Emergency Department.

Jill and Mel demonstrate a volunteering spirit, care for community, and commitment to Judaism that are to be admired and emulated. They are most worthy recipients of the Distinguished Service award.

Thanks to committee members Nora Abrahamer, Alex Cooper, Harvey Cotton, Michael Klau, and Rochelle Seltzer. And special thanks to Cathy Cotton, who participated in the committee’s work this year in preparation for assuming the role of chair next year.

Submitted by Rose Mandelbaum, Chair

Education and Youth Engagement Committee

School Enrollment
While teen participation is holding steady with 50 active teens, religious school numbers in Grades K – 7 are down this year. In 2019 – 2020, we welcomed 3 new families, as opposed to the 13 who joined two years ago. This reflects an ongoing national trend in which it is more and more difficult to get young families to ‘join’ or ‘become members’ of organizations and institutions. This year the Education Committee operated as a task
force to brainstorm ways to boost our school numbers (see strategies below). Our attrition rate continues to be very low.

**Outreach Strategies**
The Education Committee has been devising ways to reach unaffiliated families who live in the Boston neighborhoods of Roslindale, West Roxbury, and JP. Our ultimate goal is to plan a series of events that meet outside the Temple walls, and to build relationships out in the community. Some of these ideas might include regular story hour at a bookstore or traveling Tot Shabbat at a local library. Our goal is to create opportunities for unaffiliated families to connect with Temple Sinai as a way of building community, making meaningful action in the world, and connecting to a spiritual practice. While joining a religious school may not be the hook for everyone, connecting with a community that shares similar values and encourages families to be active, thoughtful, caring people may be what we need to focus upon right now. We’ve also discussed having open activities on a quarterly basis where families who have not yet joined can take part; such as Mitzvah day, or a family Havdalah with a planned activity afterwards. *We realize that we will have to make modifications to our plan based on the health situation.*

**School Security**
This year, the Brookline police led two security trainings for our teachers. In addition, a CPR class was offered. Each Sunday that school was in session, a security officer was stationed at the front door.

**Inclusion Matters**
Last February, Jared Matas, Director of STEAM Innovation at the Jewish Community Day School, visited Temple Sinai to do a mini make-a-thon for students in Grades 3 – 7. This project matched our students with ‘need knowers’ (defined as experts who have challenges) with makers to help them problem solve and do a design project. We continue to offer professional development for our teachers. Rebecca Redner from Gateways, Access to Jewish Education, led a workshop on making our classrooms more welcoming for all types of learners. Joanna Ware from Keshet conducted a session on how to make our school a more inclusive, welcoming and safe environment for LGBTQ individuals and families. Beginning this fall, the religious school will be part of the Gateways Educational Consortium. This partnership will allow for facilitated discussions with Gateways professionals to nurture reflective practice.

**Sinai U Participation**
Our Sinai U program for teens is flourishing, thanks to the efforts of student Rabbi Sam Blumberg and youth advisor, Juliadele Male. 50 teens participated in the many initiatives we offered. We are proud of the fact that we now have an active NFTY group for the first time in many years. Last fall, 8 Sinai teens visited Camp Eisner to take part in NFTY’s Fall Kallah. On Friday, May 15, we celebrated our teens at the Aliyah Ceremony and Teen Shabbat. A record number of students showed up for this Zoom Shabbat service to speak about their experiences.

**A Day of Chesed**
In lieu of Mitzvah Day, we had a virtual Day of Chesed on Sunday, May 3. Thank you to those individuals who took part by delivering 32 bags of groceries to the Brookline Emergency Food Pantry, donating clothing to the homeless, bidding on hand painted bowls to benefit the Sunrise Movement, supporting FamilyAid Boston, and writing letters and cards to 35 Temple Sinai members. A shout-out to Family Learning Coordinator, Leah Carnow, for organizing the event, Rose Mandelbaum for creating the sign-up genius, and Caroline Kaplan and Sam Blumberg for coordinating the online auction during which $369 was raised.

**Virtual Learning**
Last March, we successfully converted our religious school to an online learning community. Our students delved into ‘Shalom Learning’, an innovative and interactive program focusing on Jewish values and Hebrew. Our virtual lessons took place on Sunday mornings and Tuesday afternoons, and attendance was consistently high. It felt good to foster a sense of community among our families during a period of intense isolation. Rabbi Vogel led a number of Havdalah services, along with Yoni Battat and Talia Stein. Student Rabbi Sam
Blumberg and Youth Advisor Juliadele Male organized virtual youth gatherings, while our Rosh Hodesh and Shevet groups continued uninterrupted. A big shout-out to Yoni Battat, our talented Shira teacher, who served as our Shalom Learning Coordinator. Yoni did a remarkable job managing this new technology, helping to train the teachers, and troubleshooting issues as they arose. Many parents reported the convenience of having online learning available. Having a virtual option is something we will definitely consider for next school year.

Submitted by Heidi Smith Hyde on behalf of the Education/Youth Committee
Co-Chairs: Justeen Hyde & Emily Case

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Engagement Committee

Members of the committee include Pauline Gerson, Student Rabbi Talia Stein, Larry Marks, Adam Rogoff, Ivy Brackup, Elaine Ober, Nora Abrahamer, Jane Silberberg, Julie Bruno, Caryl Hull, Judith Jaffe, and Alice Speck.

The Temple Sinai Engagement Committee’s mission is to strengthen our Jewish Community by fostering social connections, to provide on-ramps for people to engage with each other, to deepen relationships and to connect to our Judaism.

Our goals (or purpose) include:

1- supporting staff and Temple Sinai leaders with an eye towards creating opportunities that engage temple members socially in new ways.
2- assessing the demographics of the Temple Sinai community to learn who we are reaching and who we need to reach.

The Engagement Committee had started planning events for late spring and early fall. Our gears have shifted to try to offer some online engagement opportunities including cooking classes, both focused on families cooking together and for adults only, small group onegs or dinners, and other ways we can connect.

During the fall and winter, the engagement committee started working on a few programs to help build relationships. This included starting Temple Sinai Mahjong classes and games, which unfortunately had to be put on hold due to COVID-19. We look forward to starting those up again when it is safe!

Additionally, the havurot program is an essential part of engagement at Temple Sinai and one which we are looking to build up. The JP/Rozzy Havurah which began a few years ago is still going strong. This year we revamped the Young Adult Havurah for 20s and 30s. We were able to have one Shabbat dinner in person before Covid and held another on zoom at the beginning of the pandemic. We have a group of about 15 or so young adults and are looking forward to finding more ways to connect. This year, we also held our first “West of the River” Havurah for folks living in Watertown, Cambridge, Somerville, etc. Thank you to Mike and Michele Klau for hosting and we look forward to continuing these smaller groups when we can meet safely in person and on zoom in the meantime!

Please look out for new ways to be engaged at Temple Sinai in the coming weeks, months, and years!

Submitted by Alice Speck, committee chair, and Talia Stein
Executive Director’s Report

Listed below - in no special order – I describe some projects, activities and events which have taken place since May, 2019:

Conversion to the ShulCloud Customer Relations Management System
For about 20 years, Temple Sinai used a program called Rakefet for member data. Financial information was maintained separately utilizing a separate program called QuickBook on Line. Over the years, a large number of temples of our size - many of which began with Rakefet -- had changed to a Customer Relations Management system called ShulCloud which integrates financial and member data. ShulCloud was highly recommended by other synagogues and several members of Temple Sinai’s Board of Trustees strongly encouraged us to move to this more modern way of managing our data.

This web-based system offers many benefits to members, including the ability to view their own financial and other records, a real time member directory, the ability to make payments on line using credit cards or e-checks, and the ability to schedule those payments.

After obtaining Board approval, we began the process of converting our Rakefet data into ShulCloud and integrating it with our QuickBooks records. This required a major revamp of our bookkeeping processes; financial staff had to learn an entirely new way of maintaining income records. Of course, insuring the integrity of the data was of paramount importance. Because the bulk upload of data to Shulcloud was problematic, much of the financial and member data needed to be reviewed and uploaded on a record-by-record basis. There was very little assistance available from the ShulCloud parent company, so several outside consultants were hired to help with various aspects of the conversion. Our members Rose Mandelbaum and Alex Cooper provided a great deal of their time and expertise to assist in making this change. By early May, we rolled out the new ShulCloud program to the congregation and the initial feedback has been very positive. The rollout went smoothly in large part because of the careful preparation which preceded it.

More improvements are in the works. Over the coming year, we will continue to install and utilize additional ShulCloud features, concentrating on the ones which will encourage community involvement in the life of the synagogue and stimulate interactions among congregants.

Facility
A number of improvements and repairs were made to our building over the past year:

~At end of last fiscal year, we needed to repair part of our slate roof because of a persistent leak into the Education Director’s office and hallway. During that repair, we discovered that the chimney which exhausts the Temple’s heating system was in need of a major repair: bricks had fallen out, repointing was needed and there was even plant life growing from the inside of the chimney! The work was done and a cap put on the chimney to stabilize it.

~Installation of wiring and a key pad allowing for monitored electronic access to our building at the sunken garden entrance to Ehrenfried Hall

~Painted Ehrenfried Hall and the hallway outside of the kitchen

~Our kitchen had been in need of attention for a long time. Last summer, we painted the peeling walls, installed new flooring and replaced the freezer. That work made an enormous difference to the appearance of the kitchen.

~Painted the Student Rabbis’ office to match the other rooms in the school building
For the safety of our congregants, we added a metal railing to the balcony of the sanctuary.

Similarly, we replaced an exterior railing at the rear of the building. The old one was rusting, unsafe and no longer functional.

At the end of the 2017 construction, 40 chairs were purchased for the Weintraub Family Community Room to replace some of the older ones. This year, a generous donation from one of our congregants enabled us to purchase 60 additional chairs to provide a full complement of new chairs. Some of the Weintraub older chairs were moved to the library to replace the even older chairs in that room. The remainder of the chairs will be donated to a small local synagogue which requested them.

Off-Site Program Space
Temple Sinai continued to utilize space at a nearby building on Charles Street for adult learning programs on Sunday mornings. However, we learned at the end of the year that our landlord, the Trauma Center, was closing its office and the space will no longer be available to us. Because of budgetary restrictions, limited Coolidge Corner space availability, and the Adult Learning Committee’s plan to schedule classes at varying times through the week, no replacement off-site space is currently being sought.

Payroll Protection Program /Cares Act Loan
At the end of March, Congress voted to lend money at very low interest rates to small businesses to allow them to continue to pay their employees during the COVID-19 crisis. Those loans will be forgiven if certain criteria are met. After Temple Sinai learned that it qualified for the loan/grant program, Charlie Homer and Yuval Gilbert completed the formal SBA application and submitted it on the first day requests were being processed. As a result of this quick action, Temple Sinai was one of the early recipients of a PPP loan and was awarded approximately $121,000 in April. The funds will be used to pay staff salaries and utilities as we proceed into a period of economic uncertainty.

Communications
Temple Sinai sponsors a large number of programs and activities which we publicize within our own congregation and in the wider community. Our weekly electronic newsletter sent to over 1,000 people, is our primary form of communication and serves as the basis for material disseminated in other formats and media. Additional emails about various Temple programs are sent each week – some to our entire database and some to smaller selected groups of people who might find the program of interest. Our Constant Contact program allows us to monitor how many people read our emails and the “open” rate is high. Information about programming is included on a Temple Facebook page which is maintained by member Wendy Weiser. In addition, flyers are created and distributed for most Sinai programs.

We continue to sponsor cloth banners advertising Temple Sinai which hang from light standards on Beacon Street, a highly visible “24/7” advertising to the Brookline community. We installed a TV monitor in the Wolkoff Lobby which displays pictures and information to visitors.

Our printed news publications are mailed to almost 500 individuals and printed at no cost to the Temple under an advertising and printing contract with Liturgical Publications Incorporated. The Sinai “Lu’ach,” a newsletter published 10 times a year, is put together by Content Editor Deb Nam-Krane and Production Editor Beth Winkoff. Karen Keely is the Content and Design editor of our magazine-format publication “Kolot.” Kolot is published three or more times a year.

A goal for the coming year is to work with our Committee Chairs to update content on our website.

Rental of our facility
Construction in 2017 required us to terminate our agreements with our long-term tenants during renovation. Some, but not all, of our former tenants returned to Temple Sinai after construction ended. Others chose to remain at the alternative spaces they had found.

To attract new tenants, last year we created a rental information page on our website, [https://www.sinaibrookline.org/about-templesinai/general-information/facility-rental/](https://www.sinaibrookline.org/about-templesinai/general-information/facility-rental/) which offers general information and pictures of our available rental space. This has been a very effective tool to attracting interested parties to view our space. Over the past year, we acquired several new one-time use tenants and a larger organization – a classical music program for children – was scheduled to begin classes here in the spring and summer. When our building closed, that organization suspended its rental plan.

With Covid-19 quarantine restrictions, our existing tenants stopped holding classes and events here in mid-March. The shut-down has caused many of them to experience severe financial difficulties and it is unclear whether some will be able to maintain their viability once the COVID emergency has ended. The Temple’s rental prospects for 2020-2021 are very much in doubt.

**Staff Changes**
The professional and office staff remained stable this year and there was one change to our custodial staff. In addition to our fulltime custodian, Mario Calderon and part-time Sunday Custodian, Ron Luce, we employ an additional part time custodian on Fridays and Mondays. That third custodian, Estela Fernandes, moved and left our employ and we recruited and ultimately hired a replacement. However, at the time of his hire, we were required to close the building because of COVID-19 quarantine restrictions and additional custodial help was no longer needed. We are hopeful that he will still be available when our building reopens.

**Community Shabbat dinners**
Prior to discontinuing our monthly Community Shabbat dinners because of COVID-19, we held eight dinners, including dinners immediately before Purim and Simchat Torah services timed to attract young families. In addition, our large All-Ages Chanukah dinner and Tu B’Shevat Seder (organized by Zippy Ostroy) were held. Because we couldn’t hold our annual on-site Seder and dinner, we sponsored a virtual Second Night Seder led by Jeremy Wolfe which attracted almost 100 participants. Despite our best efforts, attendance at our scheduled Friday night dinners in 2019-2020 was slightly lower this year than last.

**Memorials**
There were six new plaques installed on the memorial wall of the Temple’s sanctuary in 2019-2020: Celia Cohen, Samuel Cohen, Lawrence Dubin, Helen K. Kass, Sherie L. Wekstein and Walter D. Wekstein. As it is every year, a printed Scroll of Remembrance booklet, prepared by congregant Rose Mandelbaum, was distributed at the Yom Kippur *yizkor* service.

**Paid Family and Medical Leave**
A Massachusetts state law established a program of Paid Family and Medical Leave which entitles employees to three months paid leave to care for a new child as well as leave for personal and family medical needs. The funding comes from a payroll tax paid by both employees and employers. Religious institutions are not required to participate but have the option to do so. A proposal was made to the Board of Trustees at its September 2019 meeting for Temple Sinai to enroll in the PFML program. After some discussion, the Board voted its approval and the requisite deductions and employer contributions began in January, 2020.

**An end-of year dominated by Covid-19**
In mid-March, Massachusetts issued a stay-at-home quarantine and all non-essential businesses were ordered closed. Temple Sinai’s leadership made the determination to close our building and cancel all in-person meetings for the safety of our members, staff and visitors. Work then began to move services, meetings, school and adult learning classes to the Internet. The goal was to maintain the Temple Sinai’s core value of *Kehillah Shel Hesed*, a caring and inclusive community, at a time when “social distancing” was necessary.
That change took place with astonishing speed. Services and classes were cancelled for only one weekend, March 14-15. After that – with a great deal of help from Alex Cooper and Paul Kelly - our religious services were held via YouTube. Meetings and Adult Learning classes took place using Zoom teleconferencing technology and our Religious School classes moved to Shalom Learning, an Internet-based curriculum. During the emergency, Temple Sinai has continued to maintain a rich array of offerings, keeping members connected to each other and to the synagogue. Planning is now underway for the fall when we anticipate the quarantine will be partially lifted and in-person services and events will resume with new requirements.

Acknowledgement and thanks to congregants....
Over the course of the year, there are many programs and initiatives which are organized and produced by Temple Sinai congregants, with staff providing varying degrees of assistance and support.

~Creating the “About Our Synagogue” pamphlet placed in our pews (Rose Mandelbaum)
~The Temple Membership Directory (also prepared by Rose Mandelbaum) is distributed in January
~On Super Bowl Sunday every February, Temple Sinai holds a Jewish Poetry Festival, attracting both poets and poetry-lovers. This past year, the eleventh annual festival featured poet Rachel Kann. Deb Leipsiger organizes these popular events and Larry Lowenthal serves as the moderator.
~The Temple’s annual budget – a complicated and important document -- is put together by a hard-working committee of congregants. Once again this year, the Budget Committee was chaired by Yuval Gilbert. In March, it became apparent that the original budget crafted by the Budget Committee would be unsuitable for FY 2021 because of an expected drop in donations and an increase in the number of requests for dues remissions. Yuval subsequently created a series of “contingency” budgets which will be presented to the Board. That new budget maintains dues at their 2019-2020 level.
~The Distinguished Service Award Committee is headed by Rose Mandelbaum. For this first time in its history, the Distinguished Service Award is being presented to two rather than one recipients. Mel Stoler and Jill Anne Winitzer are both highly deserving of this recognition.

And finally .......
It is my good fortune to work with a gifted staff and with Temple Sinai’s Board of Trustees, officers, committee chairs and members who are generous in providing assistance and expertise. I am grateful for the support and guidance I receive throughout the year.

Submitted by Linda Katz, Executive Director
History Committee

The primary activity of the History Committee is historic preservation of items from Temple Sinai’s past. We maintain the Temple Sinai archive, promote community/continuity with our history, and serve as a resource for inquiries and events. Our work of incorporating new material, culling unneeded items, and performing other maintenance activities preserves the record of Temple Sinai’s history – where we came from and what we’ve accomplished – for the future.

Deepen Communication & Broaden Commitments

During the past year, we sent five framed citations to Rabbi Sam Cohon, grand-nephew of founding Rabbi Beryl Cohon, for display in his new synagogue in Tucson AZ. We also, with Temple Sinai staff, reviewed the artwork stored in the archive closet, selected items for display in the newly renovated spaces, and delivered several pieces to Kolbo Fine Judaica Gallery for inclusion in their winter sale.

In doing so, we ensured that these items are better placed and will have more use, thus strengthening Temple Sinai's connection with the broader Jewish community. We also loaned a beautiful donated ketubah to the 7th grade for use in their study of Jewish lifecycle events.

In the past we selected certain historical items for digitization so that these materials can be made more widely available, will be preserved digitally as their physical forms deteriorate, and are protected by a back-up copy. Our plans for digitizing these materials are on hold for now as the assistance needed for implementation is currently focused on other projects.

Gain inspiration

Archives are only as useful as they are used. While ours remains largely dormant, our hope is that it will serve as a valuable resource for current and future rabbis, cantors, educators, and researchers. We can’t anticipate how, exactly, the archive will be used in the future, but we can and do employ our best judgment about what should be preserved today because we believe it might be important to others in years to come.

Respectfully submitted by Hildy Neumann on behalf of the History Committee

Committee for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities

In 2019-2020, right before the High Holidays, the committee acquired a variety of fidget tools for the sanctuary, to help anyone who might need focus support, and also arranged for inclusion awareness training for the HHD Greeters. The committee collaborated with Heidi Smith Hyde to bring Jared Matas, Director of STEM education at the Jewish Community Day School, to Temple Sinai in February to conduct a mini make-a-thon with our Grades 3 – 7 students. Jared’s work is inspired by Tikkun Olam Makers, an Israeli non-profit that strives to match ‘needs knowers’ (experts who have challenges) with student ‘makers,’ whose job it is to help solve a design problem. Our ‘needs knower’ was a Temple Sinai neighbor, Deborah Klein. Debbie, who uses a power chair, spoke to the students about the real-life struggles she encounters on a regular basis and they worked to design a device to hold doors open longer so that she could get through. At the beginning of March, Jared was the speaker at the annual Inclusion Shabbat to mark the end of Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month (February) so that he could share his work and experiences with the broader congregation. The committee is working on food-identification labels (for use at dinners, onegs, kiddush luncheons, etc.) to alert anyone with food allergies to what is/is not safe for them. The committee has plans for conducting a congregation-wide survey, is revising the welcome card (to put in each pew), and is always looking for new members.

Respectfully submitted by Hildy Neumann on behalf of the History Committee

Committee for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities
Submitted by Elaine Ober and Lisa Stephani

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Israel Education/Action Committee

For the 2019-20 year, the Israel Committee planned a number of activities. Unfortunately, many were cut short or cancelled as a result of the current public health emergency.

However, we were able to present a lecture by several of Wexner fellows from the Harvard Kennedy School. The two speakers (Guy Arutsky and Tamim Saad) had a fascinating talk on Israeli government and tech sector development. Tamim is a Druze and he had many interesting insights on what it means to be a non-Jew in Israeli government.

Also in November, the Committee co-sponsored a well-attended talk by members of “Breaking the Silence,” a group devoted to illuminating excesses by the IDF.

In addition, we presented several Israel themed movies, at least until the series had to be curtailed.

In November we met with Rabbi Alona Nir Keren, an Israeli Reform rabbi from the town of Mevasseret Tzion (just outside Jerusalem), who spoke to us about issues facing progressive Judaism in Israel.

We had hoped to sponsor other talks, including a dinner to commemorate Israel’s 72 anniversary. Maybe next year.

Submitted by Richard Goldstein

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Library Committee

The Temple Sinai library consists of the Beit Midrash Corner, in memory of Rose and Carl Thurer and Lilly and Sidney Lehrer in the Weintraub Community Room, and the Larkin Library on the lower level. The library is one of the temple’s greatest resources to carry out the mission of life-long learning.

The library continues to improve with great books and better organization, all accomplished by hard-working committee members. One of our biggest accomplishments this year was cleaning up and categorizing the Larkin library space. Temple members will find newer and more popular books upstairs. Downstairs is where older and research-related books are shelved.

During the cleanup, we gathered up duplicate and non-relevant books and kindly donated them to More Than Words.

We also surveyed other temple committees asking what books they would like to see on the shelves. This list will be reviewed, and we hope to acquire some of those suggestions in the next few months.

Like many temple functions, the COVID-19 lockdown halted library operations, including our plan to install new and improved signage and instructions. Once we get back up and running, we encourage all temple members to make use of this valuable temple resource. Please go online and browse our selections anytime at https://www.librarything.com/catalog/TempleSinaiBrookline.

Submitted by Laurie Ferrell
Membership Committee

The Membership Committee develops and implements programs to reach out to prospective members, strengthen bonds, and deepen support for new and existing members. We organize events and personal outreach to insure that all may engage meaningfully in the Temple Sinai community.

Committee Members: Elynn Finkelstein, chair; Bev Zibrak, Betty Canick, Jen Katz, Amos Lassen, Lucy Sandler, Jane Silberberg.

Membership Report as of May, 2020
The number of current members is 353 households. Membership one year ago was 350. This year, New Members accounted for an increase of 21. There were 15 resignations and 3 deaths.

Sinai Ambassador Program: Elynn Finkelstein, Bev Zibrak, coordinators.
Goals: To assign an Ambassador who offers to meet 1:1 and welcome new members to Temple Sinai. The new member has a contact at Sinai, and the Ambassador helps identify new member’s interests and goals.

The Sinai Ambassador Program, which began in 2016, is an initiative designed to strengthen engagement and outreach at Temple Sinai. It demonstrates that as a community, we personally welcome each new person who chooses to join us. We honor community, connection, and commitment.

Ambassadors: Merry Arnold, Betty Canick, Roberta Falke, Laurie Ferrell, Elynn Finkelstein, Sharon Hessney, Charlie Homor, Tracy Hyams, Jen Katz, Amos Lassen, Michele Mendoza, Deb Nam-Krane, Lilly Platt, Doug Reichgott, Joyce Schwartz, Robbie Singal, Jeremy Wolfe, Bev Zibrak.

Annual New Member Shabbat Service and Dinner
The Membership Committee welcomed new members at our annual New Member Shabbat Service and Community Dinner, January 2020.

Rabbi Vogel’s Welcoming Dessert, December 2019
Membership Committee representatives were included in this warm and informal evening at Rabbi Vogel’s home with his family. New and existing members introduced themselves and focused on the journey that led them to Temple Sinai and their current interests and paths forward.

Prospective Member Shabbat@Six and Dinner
In September 2019, we greeted prospective members and sponsored the pre-service nosh. The dinners are another venue for all to mix and mingle casually. We had to cancel the second Prospective Member Shabbat scheduled for May, 2020.

December Ambassador Celebration
This event enabled the community of ambassadors to spend time -- to mingle and compare notes, as well as to celebrate Chanukah together.

Goals for the Coming Year:
1. To promote creative ways to reach out to prospective members.
2. For the Ambassador Program to continue to grow in strength, number, and visibility.
3. To develop a community among the ambassadors by coming together for a fall meeting and an annual spring event.
4. To consider extending the Ambassador Program’s outreach to actively engage Temple Sinai’s newest members of the last 3 years, as we face the challenging times ahead.

Submitted by Elynn Finkelstein, Chair of the Membership Committee
The MPR Committee advises and supports the rabbis and cantorial soloist in matters concerning the music, prayer, and ritual activities of the congregation. As the voice of the congregation on these matters, the Committee strives to be aware at all times of the spiritual needs of the congregation. In partnership with our clergy, the Committee formulates policy for ritual activities that are part of the life of the congregation. Updates on the Committee’s activities over the past year are listed below.

1. The MPR Committee offered “Teaching and Reflection” services on both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur mornings that ran parallel to the traditional services in the sanctuary. Student Rabbi Talia Stein and Family Education Coordinator Leah Carnow co-led the services, which emphasized participatory singing, discussion, and quiet reflection in the Weintraub Community Room. The services were well received and helped relieve overcrowding issues in the sanctuary.

2. The MPR Committee consulted with a sound specialist for the 2019 High Holiday services. Based on survey results, the congregation noticed and appreciated the improvements to our sound system.

3. The MPR Committee approved expenditures from the MPR Committee Fund to bring in guest musicians at various Friday night services throughout the year. Many congregants indicated that they greatly enjoyed the opportunity to hear new and different kinds of music.

4. The MPR Committee congratulates Student Rabbi Talia Stein on her ordination, which will take place in June. We are also pleased to welcome her as our new Assistant Rabbi starting July 1, 2020. Over the past year, Talia has infused our community with her warmth, her passion for Judaism and social justice, her deep knowledge of Jewish texts and history, her boundless energy, and her ability to connect with people of all ages and backgrounds. As Assistant Rabbi, her primary responsibilities will focus on building and deepening engagement with current and potential members, serving as the primary staff member responsible for our Teen and Youth Engagement, and supporting and guiding the work of Tzedek@Sinai, community organizing, and our social justice efforts writ large.

5. The MPR Committee welcomes Student Rabbi Leah Carnow as our vocalist for Friday night services next year. In addition to serving as Temple Sinai’s Family Education Coordinator, Leah has provided musical support at the High Holiday Teaching and Reflection services and at select Friday night services this year. We look forward to hearing her beautiful voice more often!

6. The MPR Committee met in May to begin planning for High Holiday services in the fall. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we agreed that this year’s High Holiday services are unlikely to include large gatherings in the sanctuary. Committee members brainstormed ideas for how we might instead develop a variety of offerings not just on the High Holidays themselves but in the days and weeks leading up to them. We agreed that it makes sense to provide a menu of options with diverse types of experiences in order to meet the disparate needs of our members. This conversation will continue throughout the summer, and we welcome additional input.

Respectfully submitted by Robin Orwant, Chair
Nominating Committee

Nominations for the Board of Trustees

Officers – for a term ending in 2021

President    Charles Homer
Vice-Presidents    Susan Laster
Scot Osterweil
Treasurer    Yuval Gilbert
Assistant Treasurers   Laurie Ferrell
Elynn Finkelstein
Zippy Ostroy
Secretary    Alice Speck

Board members – for a term ending in 2022

Harvey Cotton  Glenn Kaplan
Erin Deemer  Robin Orwant
Roberta Falke  Barry Schwartz
Marvin Kabakoff  Aminah Sloan

Board member– for a term ending in 2021
Justeen Hyde completing the unexpired term of Caroline Potter-Ng

Continuing on the Board of Trustees, in addition to the 17 members who will be elected in the upcoming election, are:

- Past Presidents, continuing under the by-laws: Nora Abrahamer and Michael Klau
- Board members with a term ending in 2021: Andrew Darien, Bonny Gilbert, Heidi Holland, Karen Keely, Elaine Ober, Teen Representative Amelia Orwant, Robert Thurer and Bev Zibrak.
- The Rabbi and Executive Director are members of the Board, ex-officio.

Proposed Dues/Member Support for Vote

- 2 adults 22-32; 1 adult 33-70; 2 adults over 70: 2019-2020 dues $2,390 – Proposed 2020-2021 dues $2,390
- 1 adult 22-32, 1 adult over 70: 2019-2020 dues $1,665 – Proposed 2020-2021 dues $1,665

The Nominating Committee consisted of: Nora Abrahamer, Ivy Brackup, Leah Cotton, Abby Cox, Tracey Hyams, Deborah Nam-Krane, Doug Reichgott, Elyse Seltzer

Submitted by Jon Katz, Chair
Passport to Israel

“Passport to Israel” is a program that enables a child to take an educational trip to Israel when he/she is in high school. It is a special kind of savings plan that helps make travel to Israel affordable. Annual contributions are made for seven years beginning in the 3rd grade. Additional contributions are made by Temple Sinai and Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

- Ongoing participants 34
- In 2019-2020 we had 2 new 3rd grade participants
- In 2019-2020 we had 0 new 7th grade participants
- In 2019-2020 we had 7 participants request the funds for a summer trip to Israel; unfortunately because of COVID-19 the trips have been cancelled and the money returned to their account at CJP.
- In 2019-2020 we have 11 other participants eligible to take their trip
- In 2019-2020 we had 1 participant withdraw from the program
- In 2019-2020 we had 1 participant transfer their account to a sibling

Submitted by Kathy Arnstein on behalf of Temple Sinai

Personnel Committee

This past year, the Personnel Committee completed a handbook that outlines employment policies and benefits for Temple staff. It also worked with Linda Katz and Heidi Smith Hyde to develop job descriptions for the Executive Director and the Director of Education, respectively.

In addition, the Committee provided input into various administrative and budget matters from time-to-time, including health plan contribution options and the hiring of additional Temple personnel and review and negotiation of employment terms.

We are thankful for the contributions of Committee members Gary Altman and Arlene Weintraub and the input of President Charlie Homer, and all of us would be thankful for some additional members. Any other Temple member interested in serving on the Committee should feel free to contact Harvey Cotton or Judy Ferber.

Submitted by Harvey Cotton and Judy Ferber, Co-Chairs

Rabbinic Liaison Committee

The Rabbinic Liaison Committee is standing committee as determined by the Rabbi’s contract. It is typically a small group of both board and non-board members who meet regularly with the Rabbi in order for the Rabbi to have a sounding board. These meetings are considered non-public and therefore minutes are available only to committee members. The committee also offers one of many ways for members to connect with the Rabbi around any concerns. In order to reach all members the committee routinely advertises its availability in various member-wide Temple Sinai publications.

The 2019-2020 Rabbinic Liaison Committee: Chair: Susan Laster (Board member), Janet Fine, Mark Goldner

Meeting dates in 2019-2020: 1/7/2020, 6/2/2020

Due to the Rabbi’s sabbatical, personnel on boarding (the new student Rabbi) and then the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee has only had 2 meetings on the calendar this year.
There will be no change in the composition of the Committee for 2020-2021.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Laster, Committee Chair

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Rainbow Committee

The mission of the Temple Sinai Rainbow Committee is to ensure the temple’s welcome for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender individuals, and to continue to educate members of the Sinai community on LGBTQ life and history.

To that end this year, we had two wonderful speakers for our Rainbow Shabbats. On December 20, our speaker was Robin Reardon, a novelist whose characters are often young, LGBTQ, and dealing with finding themselves and with bullying. She has published nine novels, several of which have won awards. Robin has contributed work for LGBTQ charitable causes, including a novella benefitting the Trevor Project, and a short story supporting author Brent Hartinger’s Real Story Safe Sex Project. In her well-received talk at Sinai, she read from a novel about a young man coming to terms with his sexuality.

Our spring Rainbow Shabbat took place remotely on April 17. Russ Lopez, our speaker, read from his most recent book, The Hub of the Gay Universe: An LGBTQ History of Boston, Provincetown, and Beyond. Russ has also written histories of Boston and the South End, and on public health and the environment; he is currently an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Environmental Health at the Boston University School of Public Health. Russ’s talk was well-received by a large number of remote attendees.

The Rainbow Committee also co-sponsored and participated in an educational program on LGBTQ issues for religious school staff. The program was set up by Heidi Smith Hyde, and the presenter was Joanna Ware.

The Rainbow Committee is already planning for next year’s programming, which we hope will include, in addition to our two Rainbow Shabbats, some type of panel discussion on LGBTQ youth in religious schools. We will continue to work with Temple Sinai groups, as well as with Keshet and other organizations on Programming relating to LGBTQ and Jewish issues during the coming year.

Submitted by Marvin Kabakoff

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Shabbat Mishpacha

Shabbat Mishpacha is a Shabbat morning program for families with children ages 0-7. During the service, we sing Shabbat songs, play musical instruments, take out the Torah, and hear a story. During the oneg, we share a snack, play and socialize together. This year Tot Shabbat met monthly from September-June, even moving to Zoom for the past two months! Like K’tonton, this is a free program that is open to all, and it serves as a good introductory experience for children who might join religious school. Many new families who are otherwise unaffiliated with Temple Sinai have tried out Tot Shabbat this year and many of those families have returned. We also have a few Temple Sinai families who are regular attendees. It's been an absolute pleasure leading Tot Shabbat this year.

Submitted by Leah Carnow
Security Committee Report

The committee members are Heidi Smith Hyde, Linda Katz, Nora Abrahamer, Yuval Gilbert, Scot Osterwell, Jon Katz, Toby Romer, Susan Laster, Julie Bruno, Mike Lewitt, Mike Klau, Charlie Homer and the chair was Michele Mendoza. The Security Committee had one formal meeting in the fall of November 2019.

- In July 2019, the Brookline Police conducted a tour of Temple Sinai so that they could better understand the layout of the building in the event that they are needed. Mike Klau led the groups around in small groups of 2 or 3 officers each.

- In the fall, there were two workshops on safety and security trainings offered for school staff led by Brookline Police personnel. All teachers were asked to attend one of the security meetings. These workshops were also open to greeters, ushers and Board of Directors.

- After a number of Sunday school mornings in the fall when the Police Detail did not show up for duty, the Security Committee recommended, along with the Board approval, that the Temple hire a private Security Firm for Sunday School mornings. We begin to use guards from ISA Security in mid-November 2019.

- In February, the Security Committee began the process of applying to the state for the Nonprofit Security Grant. Linda Katz and Heidi Smith Hyde met with Brookline Police Officer Peter Muise in February 2020 to obtain a security assessment on what areas of the building were vulnerable and what are some of the safeguards that could be put into place. Linda Katz, Charlie Homer and Michele Mendoza compiled and submitted the necessary documents for application which was submitted on March 27, 2020. Grant awards will be announced in October 2020.

- Future work for Security Committee - There was some discussion at our last security committee meeting (November 3, 2019) around the idea of developing safety and security training, guidelines and expectations for ushers and greeters during services. This need was particularly relevant following a medical emergency that occurred at a High Holiday service last fall. There has not been any more progress made on this and in light of the new requirements/guidelines around current health safety issues, this topic could be work that this committee carries on through the next year.

Respectfully submitted by Michele Mendoza

Sinai U

Sinai U is Temple Sinai’s multifaceted teen engagement initiative for students in grades 8-12.

This year Sinai U continued to strengthen and deepen teen engagement, encouraging teens to be involved in various social, learning, and service-oriented programming that fit their interests and schedule. 47 teens were enrolled in weekly or monthly programs. Here are a few highlights of the year:

- Teen participation grew in TSIPPY, Temple Sinai Passionate Proactive Youth, with 10 teens attending the first event of the year. Events were planned and promoted with teen assistance, and teens met monthly for social programming and to work on social action projects. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, teens have continued to meet frequently over Zoom to play games, socialize, and write letters to seniors in the Temple Sinai community.
• 8 teens participated in the regional NFTY Fall Kallah at URJ Camp Eisner, meeting with teens from the Northeast and New York regions. 2 Temple Sinai teens served as delegates from our local TSIPPPY youth group to vote on regional NFTY initiatives.
• Java Nagila, Temple Sinai’s Sunday morning café, was staffed by 7 teen baristas who helped to continue to provide a warm and caring community atmosphere for Religious School families each week.
• Rosh Hodesh (for girls) and Shevet (for boys) met monthly with trained facilitators to talk about Jewish identity and issues facing teens. This year 15 teens were involved in the programs.
• Facing History and Ourselves engaged 8 teens in monthly learning about the Holocaust, with a final presentation tentatively scheduled for the fall.
• Madrich Corps and Tikkun Olam Sundays continue to be successful in engaging multiple teens in meaningful service work.
• 6 teens were enrolled at The Tent: A Jewish Learning Community for Greater Boston Teens, a weekly Jewish learning program for 8-12th graders held at Temple Israel of Boston.
• In conjunction with Tzedek @ Sinai, 2 teens worked to launch the Tzedek Scribe, Temple Sinai’s new youth-led social justice publication.
• Though summer programs have been canceled, 10 teens were registered to travel to Israel this summer, 8 of whom were scheduled on URJ-affiliated trips.

Submitted by Student Rabbi Sam Blumberg

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Tzedek@Sinai Committee

Tzedek@Sinai is a catalyst for organizing people at Temple Sinai for social justice, to work towards sustainable social change. We connect members of the temple community with people and resources, both within and outside the congregation, to build and use the community power of Temple Sinai for social justice. We follow the principles of community organizing and we seek opportunities for collaborative action to increase our impact and deepen community relationships. This year Temple Sinai continued many of the initiatives we have been working on for the last few years and began two new initiatives.

The Tzedek Scribe led by Eric Gordan and Deb Nam Krane

Tzedek@Sinai started The Tzedek Scribe, a teen-led publication focused on people within our community that are working for social justice. We are happy to have Alice MacGarvie Thompson (9th grade), and Ezra Weintroub (8th grade) as the Tzedek Scribe's two incredible editors and we are always looking for guest writers! Every few weeks, there will be new content, including interviews with congregants, features on pressing issues impacting our communities, editorials on Jewish values and perspectives, and creative media pieces. The Tzedek Scribe is a way for us to learn about each other, the impactful work many of us are doing in our personal and/or professional lives, and the valuable perspectives we all bring in our striving for a more just world.

Racial Justice led by Tammy Kallman and Heidi Holland

This year, Tzedek@Sinai began a racial justice initiative. Based on several of our relational meetings, we realized this was an issue that affected many people in the community and that people wanted to work on. In January, Temple Sinai hosted a large interfaith MLK Shabbat service with other members of the Brookline community. It was incredibly successful, and next year we are looking forward to our MLK interfaith service on the Sunday morning of MLK weekend.

In order to do racial justice work at Temple Sinai, we need to work on understanding racism and white supremacy and the effect those have in our culture. On Feb 9, we welcomed racial justice educator Emilia Diament to begin this conversation. Unfortunately, the pandemic slowed down our work, but serves as a reminder of how important racial justice work is.
We are continuing these conversations and look forward to more trainings and workshops in the fall. Our goal is to get both adults and teens/pre-teens involved. In the meantime, we are beginning two summer book clubs for those wanting to engage in racial justice work and deepen our own understanding.

**Immigrant Justice led by Roberta Falke, Susan Harr, Lynn Shyevitch, Jane Silberberg and Charlie Homer**

Last June, the family in sanctuary in Newton left sanctuary and since then the Newton Sanctuary and Solidarity Collaborative has been in a period of transition, of which our immigration team has helped with. The Immigration Team continues to lead Temple Sinai’s involvement in our community efforts for immigrant justice through our participation in the Beyond Accompaniment Network (BIJAN), which supports people detained in immigration jail in Boston and their families.

This year, we welcomed Rev. Gretchen Grimshaw for HIAS refugee Shabbat. Unfortunately, this was at the start of the pandemic so we could not be physically together, but Rev Grenshaw inspired hundreds of people in their homes that evening. In addition, the immigration team has been working in support of the Safe Communities Act and the Work Family Mobility Act, two pieces of legislation in the Massachusetts legislature that have a profound impact on immigrants in Massachusetts. Right now, we are urging you to contact your legislators to get the Safe Communities Act out of committee (to be heard on the floor) by July 15!

Finally, beginning in 2020, the immigrant justice team has decided to focus their efforts on the November 2020 federal elections as we believe that the presidential administration and congress have a huge impact on the immigration policy and the treatment of immigrants in this country.

**Criminal Justice Reform (CJR) led by Michael Nam-Krane**

The CJR team continued its work with District Attorney campaigns. We held a meeting with Norfolk DA Michael Morrissey, which was very successful. We now have a relationship with his office and he recognizes that Temple Sinai constituents are knowledgeable and want just policies. We also held an event looking at Juvenile incarceration and how we can be involved promoting more just policies for juveniles in the criminal justice system.

Other present efforts in the works are collaborations on gun control, and on the treatment of immigrants by law enforcement. This year Temple Sinai signed on as a member to the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence. We also are working to get the Safe Communities Act passed in Massachusetts.

**Food Justice led by Deb Nam-Krane**

The Food Justice Team works to both address systemic problems and provide immediate solutions to hunger that stems from income inequality. In addition to our own work, we look for ways to partner with other Tzedek@Sinai issue teams, including on promoting bills addressing child poverty and hunger. The food justice team held a few events with speakers over the year that went well. Additionally, the team composed of both adults and teens, worked to reduce food waste at Temple Sinai. They analyzed data they collected to reduce waste at Friday night onegs and Noshes and with the help of our teens, they began a composting initiative for the cafe to limit waste on Sunday mornings.

**Health Care Reform and GBIO led by Bonny Gilbert and Scot Osterweil**

This year GBIO has been working on a refounding campaign and has been limiting their external work to their Healthcare reform campaign, led by Temple Sinai’s own Bonny Gilbert. GBIO has been focused on getting healthcare legislation passed in the 2019-2020 Massachusetts Legislative year (ending at the end of the month!). The areas of focus are: lowering the prices of medications; improving and creating affordable and accessible mental health care; and reducing out-of-network & surprise medical bills. At this point, the
Governor and Senate have both come out with good bills, but there has been no movement in the house. In January and February, GBIo organized in-district meetings with house members that Temple Sinai members participated in. Since the start of COVID-19, GBIo has been involved in State decarceration efforts and continuing the healthcare campaign. This June, Temple Sinai and GBIo are doing another push (primarily in the House) to get this legislation passed by the end of the month. Please join us in this effort!

Submitted by Eric Gordon, Deb Nam Krane, and Talia Stein

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Technology Committee

The Technology and Website Committee’s accomplishments this year included the following:

- Implemented ShulCloud to manage the back-end of the Temple’s operations
- Connected ShulCloud to our main website to enable online dues payments and credit card transactions
- Adjusted the site to reflect all the changes due to Covid19
- Worked with Temple staff to present/organize streaming services
- Updated the online school registration/enrollment process to integrate with ShulCloud
- Continued the ongoing process of updating committee and other descriptive pages on our website
- Maintained the main event calendar on the website
- Maintained the monthly school calendar
- Posted each issue of the Sinai News email newsletter on the website
- Posted the Kolot and Lu’ach newsletters to the site
- Made frequent changes and updates to the layout and content of the website’s home page
- Created online registration for all community dinners from September – May ...(OK, so maybe this year it was only until March)
- Assisted the staff by providing technical expertise on a variety of issues

Submitted by Alex Cooper, Rose Mandelbaum, Danny Ruberman