

TEMPLE SINAI

# Kesher

MARCH - APRIL 2021 | ADAR, NISAN, IYYAR 5781



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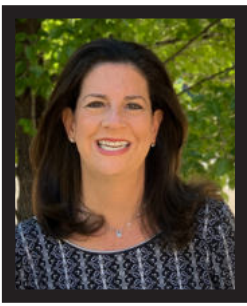
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# Lisa Thorner

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## CONGREGATIONAL UPDATE

DEAR TEMPLE SINAI CONGREGANTS,

This has been a trying year for our entire congregation, and our Temple has seen many changes. Throughout it all, your loyalty, patience, and fortitude has been a blessing to our community. We know that everyone misses seeing one another in person. We understand that being unable to worship in-person has been difficult, and at the same time, it is also true that we are learning new ways to connect as a community. Our online worship services not only continue to unite us, but also draw a wonderful diversity of people from a wide range of geographic locations. Along with prayer experiences, our range of virtual gatherings continue to provide rich and deep opportunities for learning and community. We are so grateful for the generosity that our congregation has shown, both the generosity of spirit in caring for one another and the financial generosity that has allowed us to continue to provide spiritual, educational, social and cultural programming to all of our members.

### HERE ARE SOME OF OUR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS AND STATS:

•Virtual worship services attracted over 3,000 unique viewers this year (a 400% increase from last year). Our virtual programs collectively - through real-time participation and engagements on recordings - attract an average of almost 10,000 views per month. We continue to provide a consistent schedule of diverse virtual programs and engagement opportunities - providing an average of more than 16 virtual programs open to the community each and every week.

•Programs we all know and love were quickly converted to virtual experiences. Our weekly Lunch & Learn class with Rabbi Rick Rheins, our monthly Healing Service, Lifelong Jewish Learning lectures, Shabbat Morning Torah Study with Rabbi Ray Zwerin and Rabbi Steve Kaye (continuing the 35-year staple and bringing it smoothly into its 36th year), and more!

•In response to the pandemic, we created dozens of new opportunities to connect virtually: Havdalah streamed into our homes, new classes taught by Rabbi Rick Rheins and Rabbi Jordy Callman, music and meditation sessions led by Dan Yolles, a virtual women's Shabbaton, a 27-hour Zoom-a-Thon featuring

everything from a renowned comedian to international Jewish activists, to cooking demonstrations.

•We have gathered in large and small numbers all year - through large-scale programs like our virtual Seder attracting over 100 participants, and through intimate virtual sessions like our Erev Shabbat schmooze following Friday night services. We have gathered young and old - on virtual Preschool programs and a Pre-K graduation ceremony, youth group gatherings, young professional events, and programs for retirees.

•Our virtual programming for adults, children, and families includes worship services, learning experiences, music sessions, live concerts, social programs and game nights, cooking classes, and at-home rituals. In addition, we provide virtual religious school classes throughout the week and countless personal connections informally and for lifecycle events such as virtual B'nei Mitzvah, Shiva and memorial services. Our Chavurot, book clubs, Women's Group and Brotherhood continue to meet regularly.

**W**hile we have responded to the pandemic with the full strength of what it means to be a part of the Temple Sinai family, it has been a trying year financially to say the least. When our matching campaign began seven months ago, we were astounded by the outpouring of generosity. We have been blessed with so many donors, all of whom have helped our community get to where we are today. Temple Sinai is so fortunate and grateful to have long-time members Max and Elaine Appel generously pledge a \$200,000 matching gift to help the congregation navigate through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**W**e are excited to share that as of March 1, we have reached and surpassed our critical and ambitious fundraising goal!

**W**e are so thankful of every gift we receive. Your donations have made such an impact in our ability to sustain on-going programming, educational and worship opportunities and compensating our hard-working staff during these difficult times. We want to thank the critical work of our clergy, staff members, Board of Trustees and amazing volunteers. The Board and staff of Temple Sinai realized that drastic measures had to be taken to protect the financial health of our synagogue and the work we do to keep our community vibrant and engaged in Judaism.

**W**e pray that we can safely be together in person soon. The Temple Sinai COVID-19 Task Force continues to meet monthly and follow the science and data pertaining to COVID-19. The Task Force is also comparing notes with other congregations throughout our region and is considering the best practices for the health and safety of our sacred community. Again, thank you for being part of our lives and stay well. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us.

## WE'RE LOOKING FOR NEW FACES!

Are you a passionate and driven community builder?  
Join Temple Sinai's Board of Trustees today!

Applications are open to join the Temple Sinai Board of Trustees!

You may apply online through our website at  
<https://www.sinaidenver.org/form/board-of-trustees-application-2021>

***APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2021***

# TEMPLE SINAI WELCOMES

# Mara Simon

## TO STAFF AS NEW CONTROLLER

**W**e are excited to welcome Mara Simon into our Temple Sinai family as our new Controller. Mara's 20-plus years in the finance and accounting field brings Temple Sinai crucial expertise, leadership, and support.

**M**ara will work closely with Lisa Thorner, Temple Sinai's Executive Director, overseeing and managing all accounting functions. She will prepare financial statements and other financial reporting along with supervising, training, and mentoring the accounting support staff. In addition, Mara will serve as the primary financial contact to the Board of Trustees and congregants.

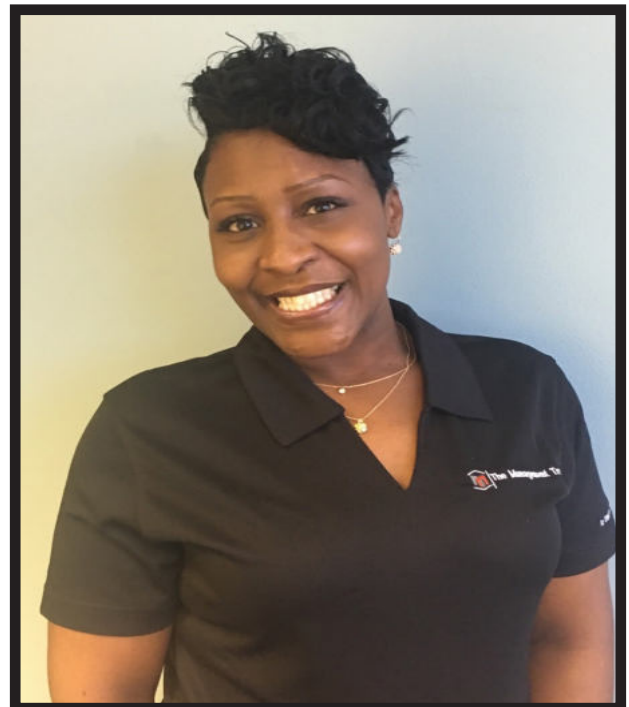
**B**efore working at Temple Sinai, Mara spent nearly three years at Charlotte's Web where she served as the Lead Accountant managing the accounting functions related to third party manufacturing. Prior to that, Mara was the Division Controller at The Management Trust where she applied her financial expertise for almost 10 years in the real estate/HOA Community Management industry serving over 200 boards and thousands of homeowners.

**O**riginally from northern California, and after a few years living in Virginia, Mara attended East High School where she competed in varsity

swimming, volleyball, and played violin in several orchestras.

**M**ara is the proud mother of Amir who is almost 16 and attends Rangeview High School. He is an avid bowler, loves internet gaming, and enjoys any activity involving water. In Mara's free time, she loves to cook, dance and loves water and outdoor activities.

**Y**ou may contact Mara at [mara@sinaidenver.org](mailto:mara@sinaidenver.org) or 303-759-1827.



PLEASE JOIN US AS WE CONGRATULATE MARA AS OUR  
NEW CONTROLLER!



Rabbi  
Rick Rheins

# I'M NOT THROWIN AWAY MY SHOT!

With all due apologies to Lin-Manuel  
Miranda and Hamilton:

I am not throwin' away my shot  
I am not throwin' away my shot  
Hey I been waiting quite patiently  
I'm not cutting in line, just waiting for the  
call to me  
But when it comes - I'm not throwin' away  
my shot!

I've been keepin' my distance, wearin' a  
mask  
My glasses are so foggy, I'm not sure what  
I saw  
I've been washing my hands now they're red  
and raw  
No, I'm not complaining  
Like you, I've been up to the task

But after months and months of waiting  
Longing for some nurse to jab me  
With that precious shiny needle of  
vaccination,  
Well I'm not hesitatin', there'll be no delayin',  
I'll be running if not flyin' to wherever they  
send me  
Because I am not throwin' away my shot  
No, I am not throwin' away my shot!

It has been over a year since the COVID-19  
pandemic began to shut down our world and  
finally there's some light shining to brighten our  
hopes that there really is an end to the tunnel.  
As I write this, more and more have received  
their first shots. Some have even received their  
second vaccination shots. Still, the vast majority  
are way down that list. Forgive me for  
preaching the obvious and urging patience. But  
besides being a virtue, patience can also help  
us avoid blowing a gasket or causing our loved  
ones to start checking the fine print on the  
*ketubah*.

Good news. Bad news. Good news is that there  
still will be Passover this year. Bad news is  
that most of us still won't be able to crowd  
together with friends and family around for our  
seder. Good news is that Temple Sinai will once  
again offer a *Virtual Seder*. Susan and I will be  
delighted to have you join our *Virtual Seder* on  
Saturday evening, March 27. The bad news is  
that our longing to see you, be with you, pray,  
sing and celebrate in-person with you will have  
to wait another year.

More good news: even after this pandemic is  
over, we'll do our very best to keep up the  
virtual programming. We've learned that so  
many of our Temple Sinai members are often  
not able to drive to our beautiful building to join  
us in person. Therefore, even when our services,  
programs, and classes will be at Temple Sinai,  
we'll continue to broadcast many, if not most, of  
them virtually.

One final word. Yes. "Yes" is a positive word of  
affirmation. "Yes" conveys hope and optimism.  
Hope and optimism may appear to be in short  
supply after all these COVID months. And so, I  
pray that when you and your loved ones finally  
get that call for your vaccinations, that you'll  
say, "Yes" Yes, I'm not going to miss my shot!

*B'vrakhah, With Blessings,*

*Rick*



Rabbi  
Jordy  
Callman

## SINAI TZEDEK

One of the challenges of Judaism is also its greatest strength and beauty; Judaism rarely says one thing about anything! It is on us to sift through our tradition, to turn it and turn it to see all of the different sides and perspectives. That said, there are a few ideas on which our tradition is clear. Arguably, one of the clearest, most consistent perspectives of our tradition is that we have a responsibility for one another as humans. Exodus 23 reminds us, "do not oppress the stranger for you know the soul of a stranger as you were strangers in the land of Egypt." In Deuteronomy 15 we learn, "if, however, there is a needy person among you" do not harden your heart and shut your hand. Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for his need." And perhaps most simply, Leviticus 19 teaches us us "you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Our tradition is clear; we have a responsibility for one another as humans. Looking to live up this pillar of living a Jewish life, we have created a new initiative at Temple Sinai - Sinai Tzedek (*tzedek* meaning justice). Our Sinai Tzedek committee, chaired by Kathy Zeiger, has begun an intentional process to examine how we can best affect change in our community. As we discussed, we use a number of questions to help guide us. What can we, as the Sinai community, practically do? How could we affect meaningful change? What are the immediate needs in our local community?

Our compassionate and thoughtful committee came to the decision that our new social action and social justice focus issue would be food insecurity. We are fortunate to have resources and recommendation from the national organization Hazon who see themselves as a Jewish response to environmental sustainability. Under that umbrella, they were on issues of food insecurity. Hazon writes, "aligning with the food justice movement and local food security efforts challenges your organization to be relevant and respond to your community's needs, to live Jewish values, and to provide meaningful opportunities for members, congregants, and students."

We look forward to engaging with this issue of food insecurity both by taking action in our community as well as educating ourselves about this issue and all of the ways it can permeate society. If you are inspired by fighting food insecurity, please join us! Sinai Tzedek is an open committee and happy to welcome new members as we work together to make change. If you are interested, please contact myself or Kathy Zeiger and join us at our next committee meeting on March 9 at 6:30 PM (contact me for a Zoom link).

We believe that together we can do amazing things and lift up the responsibility of caring for one another that our tradition has placed on our shoulders.

*B'Shalom,*

*Jordy*

READ MORE ABOUT SINAI  
TZEDEK ON PAGE 25

# Tune In Weekly To:

## SHIR PREMIERE WITH DAN YOLLES

TUESDAYS AT 10:00 AM

Tune into our Facebook page and YouTube channel every Tuesday morning for our new Shir Premiere with Dan Yolles! Shir Premiere is our way of teaching you the many songs and prayers that we share during our worship services on Shabbat, holy days, and special occasions throughout the year.

## THIS WEEK IN TORAH WITH RABBI RICK RHEINS

TUESDAYS AT 12:00 PM

Join us every Tuesday at noon for a look at this week's Torah portion. We'll focus on a section of the text along with commentary from the Talmud, traditional perspectives, and contemporary scholars. Of course, the highlight of the class is the discussion that unfolds as we explore the Torah and share personal insights.

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK WITH RABBI JORDY CALLMAN

WEDNESDAYS AT 12:00 PM

Tune in every Wednesday at noon for a brief and profound insight shared by Rabbi Jordy Callman. Listen in as Rabbi Callman infuses ancient and modern wisdom, Jewish and secular music, deep and relatable concepts into a mid-week boost of inspiration.

## SONG CIRCLE WITH DAN YOLLES

WEDNESDAYS AT 5:00 PM

Join Dan Yolles as he leads us in an interactive session of Jewish music and song. Dan uses the healing and uplifting power of music to bring warmth, connection, and joy into the afternoon hours at the end of our weeks. All are welcome to participate, sing, play along, or listen in Dan's weekly Song Circle.

## LUNCH & LEARN RABBI RICK RHEINS

THURSDAYS AT 12:00 PM

Tune in to learn, discuss, discover, and meet friends! We'll review ethical & moral issues in selected Jewish texts, discuss hot current topics, discover nuggets of wisdom and the joy of comradery. Make your own lunch, we will serve the Text and Topics! Newcomers quickly and easily fit right in! It's a great way to learn and meet new friends - and it's all FREE!

*All classes are being held virtually, primarily via Zoom; most classes can be watched live or recorded on Facebook and YouTube.*

# Tune In Weekly To:

## WEEKLY VIDEO MESSAGE FROM RABBI RICK RHEINS

FRIDAYS AT 9:00 AM

Watch a video message from Rabbi Rick Rheins on Facebook or YouTube! Every Friday morning at 9:00 AM, we post a short video message in which Rabbi Rheins speaks to the lessons of the weekly Torah portion and wishes us all a Shabbat Shalom.

## SHABBAT MORNING TORAH STUDY WITH RABBI RAY ZWERIN AND RABBI STEVE KAYE

SATURDAYS AT 10:30 AM

Learn Torah after the conclusion of Shabbat Morning Minyan from the comfort of your own home. This weekly Torah class was founded by Rabbi Ray Zwerin and Rabbi Steve Kaye in 1985. The class welcomes everyone regardless of Torah literacy or Hebrew fluency.

*Sick? Struggling? Want a call or a meeting?*

### INFORM THE RABBIS!

Adding to the agony and frustration of dealing with illness or struggling with a difficult time is the nagging thought that you are forgotten and that no one cares. Temple Sinai most certainly cares about every one of our members. Rabbi Rick Rheins and Rabbi Jordy Callman will be quick to make a call. Depending on COVID restrictions, we will also do our best to visit Temple Sinai members. In addition, we have a group of volunteers on our Caring Committee who will do their best to respond with cards, calls and offers of assistance.

So please call or write to our Rabbis and let them know that you'd like their help and attention. Confidential messages can be made directly to our Rabbis at:

[rabrheins@sinaidenver.org](mailto:rabrheins@sinaidenver.org) | [rabbicallman@sinaidenver.org](mailto:rabbicallman@sinaidenver.org)

# Tune In To Services:

## Weekly:

(VIRTUAL + LIMITED IN PERSON SERVICES)

### MUSICAL SHABBAT WELCOME & EREV SHABBAT SERVICE

FRIDAYS AT 5:50 PM

Welcome Shabbat with music, song, and worship. Prior to the start of the Erev Shabbat Service at 6:00 PM, tune into the live stream a little early to get into the Shabbat spirit. At 7:00 PM, following our Erev Shabbat Service, join us via Zoom for a virtual Shabbat schmooze.

### SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN

SATURDAYS AT 9:00 AM

Tune in at 9:00 AM for our Shabbat morning service, streamed live from the Temple. Bring the voices of our clergy into your homes and celebrate Shabbat with us.

### HAVDALAH

SATURDAYS AT 7:00 PM

Join the Temple Sinai clergy after sunset as we invite you to conclude Shabbat and begin the new week with Havdalah blessings! Grab a cup of wine or grape juice, a delicious smelling spice, and a multi-wick candle to actively participate in real-time from home.

## Special & Monthly:

### YOM HASHOAH, HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL SERVICE

: WEDNESDAY APRIL 7 AT 7:00 PM

This year we will honor the memory of the victims of the Shoah, the Holocaust, at a unique service and program on the evening of Wednesday, April 7. We will share prayers, meditations, and presentations that recall both the tragedy of the Holocaust, pay tribute to the survivors, and hear the testimony of a survivor. Our act of remembering is important because the number of Holocaust survivors is diminishing with each passing day. As we lose this precious link, those who deny or minimize the Holocaust gain strength. Sadly, too many have little or no knowledge about the Holocaust. They are ripe for the revisionist history.

### HEALING SERVICES

THURSDAY, MARCH 25 AND APRIL 22 AT 11:00 AM

For our Healing Service, we gather together for prayers, meditations, music and the warm embrace of friends to renew our sense of hope, strength and healing. The Healing Service is for those who are struggling with their health, those who are struggling with sadness and grief, caregivers who seek inspiration as they pray for the welfare of loved ones. All are welcome. If you are unable to attend the service, just send us the name(s) of the loved ones you would like mentioned during our prayers. And be sure to let them know that they are in all of our thoughts and prayers.

# Temple Sinai's Virtual Passover Seder!

SATURDAY, MARCH 27 AT 6:00 PM

The First night Passover Seder is on Saturday night, March 27. Though we will not be able to host an in-person Seder again this year, the experience of last year's proved that this annual Virtual Seder can be a meaningful, warm, and joyous celebration of Passover.

Rabbi Rick and Rabbi Susan Rheins will once again host the Virtual Seder from their home. We'll use The New Haggadah which will be "screen shared" for all participants. Of course, copies of The New Haggadah are available for purchase at Temple Sinai (pg. #).

Joining the Virtual Seder is free but reservations are required for all participants. To sign up simply visit: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMIce-rrDloEtz4XbB4b7qaQLd4IKKgXR7g>

## Getting Ready for Passover?

IT'S TIME FOR THE PASSOVER REFRESHER COURSE!

SUNDAY, MARCH 21 AT 11:00 AM

Rabbi Rick Rheins will offer a fun and hands-on review that will help make this year's Passover seder and experience a joyous celebration.

- *Tips for running a Passover seder*
- *A quick review of the history and significance of Passover*
- *We'll rehearse the basic prayers and blessings*
- *And we'll practice the favorite Passover songs*
- *We'll even hand out some favorite recipes!*
- *ALL FREE! What a deal!*

# Passover 2021 Schedule

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 25:

SEARCH FOR CHAMETZ: RITUAL REMOVAL OF ALL LEAVENED PRODUCTS FROM OUR HOMES

FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 26:

FINAL REMOVAL OF CHAMETZ

## Service Schedule

(VIRTUAL + LIMITED IN PERSON SERVICES)

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 27:

FIRST NIGHT PASSOVER SEDER (6:00 PM VIRTUAL SEDER)

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 2:

7TH DAY PASSOVER SERVICE (6:00 PM)

SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 28:

1ST DAY PASSOVER SERVICE (10:00 AM)

SATURDAY, APRIL 3:

LAST DAY OF PASSOVER & YIZKOR-MEMORIAL PRAYERS  
(10:00 AM)

## What is the Yizkor Service?

*Yizkor* is a memorial service that is held four times a year: on the last day of Passover, *Shavuot*, *Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah* and on *Yom Kippur*. It is a sacred time during which we lovingly remember and honor our family and friends who have died. It is also a time of healing as we reflect on the on-going legacy of those who nurtured us.

The *Yizkor* prayers contain many beautiful and meaningful prayers and meditations. A central part of *Yizkor* is the prayer that begins "*Yizkor Elohim* (May God remember)," which expresses the Jewish

belief that the souls of our deceased loved ones are bound in the "Bond of Eternal Life." These prayers are especially poignant for those who have suffered the loss of parents, grandparents, spouses and children.

At our Temple Sinai *Yizkor* services, we will read the names of our loved ones who died during the past 12 months. In addition, we will read and honor the memories of those that have died in past years. Simply email to us the names and we will honor their memories.

# The New Passover Haggadah is Available

INCLUDES ILLUSTRATIONS FROM  
ACCLAIMED ARTIST TODD SILER

Over the past five years, Temple Sinai has used *The New Haggadah*, Celebrating Freedom that was written by Rabbis Rick and Susan Rheins. The new text and the phenomenal artwork by Temple Sinai member Todd Siler, an internationally acclaimed artist, was so popular that many have wanted to acquire copies for their own families and friends. After refining the text, layout and printing, we are proud to announce that copies of *The New Haggadah* are now available for purchase.

For those who want to know "mah nishtanah --- what's different about this Haggadah?"

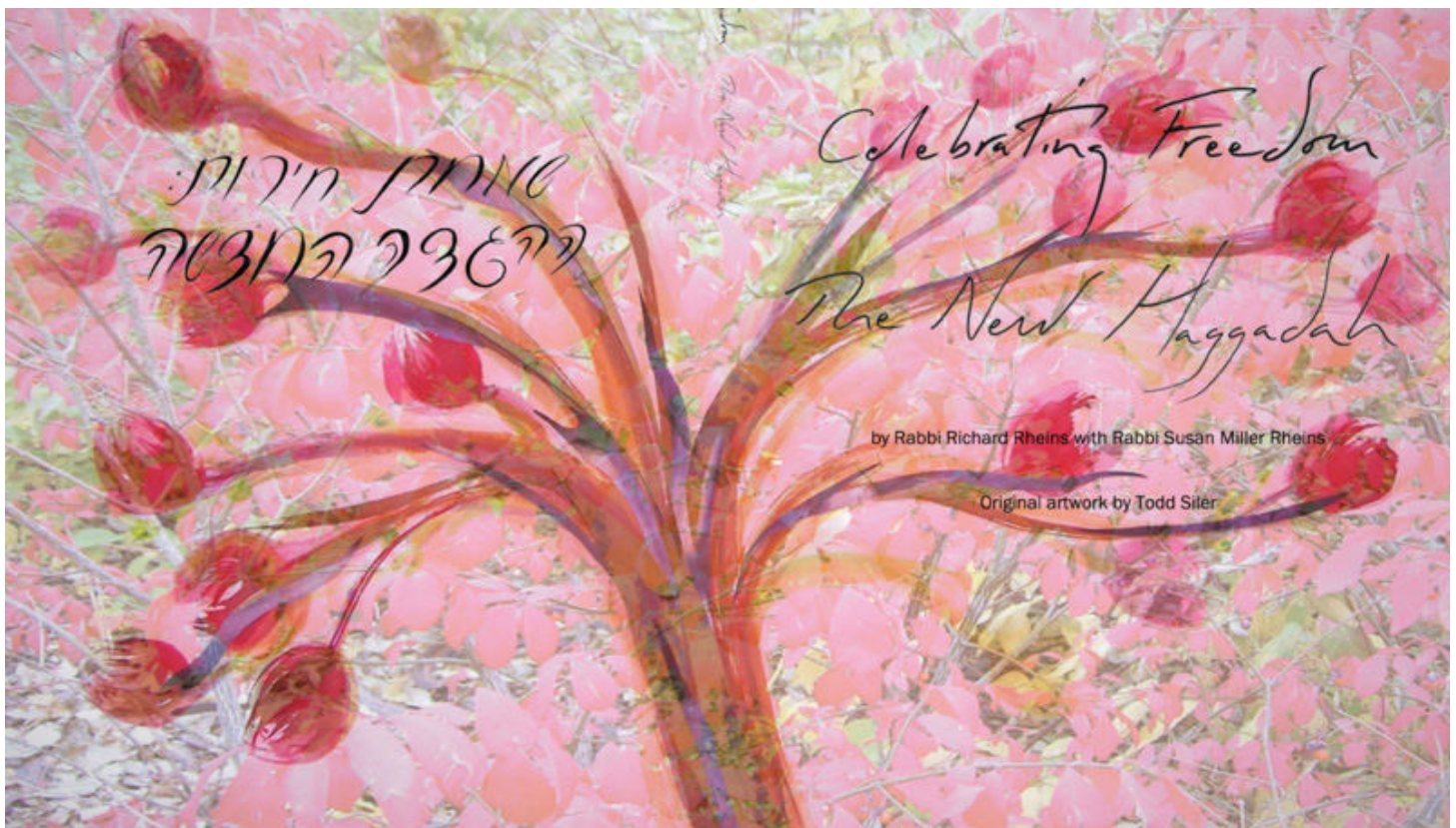
Know that *The New Haggadah* is designed for modern families. Traditional liturgy predominates, but greater emphasis has been given to the original story in the Torah.

Some of the Medieval passages have been pared away in order to focus on the essential message in the Torah of freedom, courage and hope.

Since Moses is central to the Torah's Passover story, his presence is also felt in this Haggadah. In addition, the women who played heroic roles, Miriam, Shifrah and Puah, are also highlighted in *The New Haggadah*.

The creations of the great artist Todd Siler adorn the pages of this *The New Haggadah*. They complement the text with captivating images that promote personal introspection and summon group dialogue in the retelling of our story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. (Check out more on Todd on his website: [www.toddsilerart.com/bio.html](http://www.toddsilerart.com/bio.html) )

To purchase copies of *The New Haggadah*, go to our Sinai website: [www.sinaidenver.org/the-new-hagaddah.html](http://www.sinaidenver.org/the-new-hagaddah.html)



# Preschool



*Sheila Purdin*

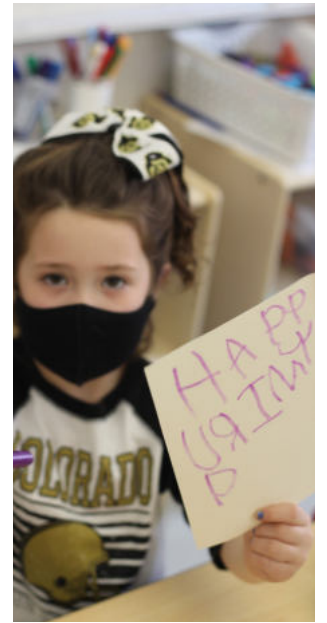
DIRECTOR OF EARLY  
CHILDHOOD

This year our families went all out to make sure our preschool teachers know just how much they are appreciated! For an entire week they were showered with love! Including a giant sign on Glencoe, daily delicious treats, flowers and notes from children and gift cards. The teachers were overwhelmed with gratitude!

For Purim at Preschool this year we focused on the four mitzvot: caring for those less fortunate by creating birthday bags filled with everything needed to celebrate a child's birthday and donated to Jewish Family Service and The Gathering Place, the festive meal with a hamentashen baking class for families with young children and Rabbi Jordy, shaloch manot baskets created by children for someone they loved and a super silly Purim spiel performed by our teachers and clergy. We will also had themed days for the week leading up to Purim to elevate the fun! Check it out!

Warmly,

*Sheila*





# Ron Leff

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

## SEDER NIGHTS

**S**eder nights are magic. They both transcend and unite history. They are also an ideal learning environment. They provide for all different learning styles. The *Seder* combines reading, singing, tasting, acting - a little of everything. *Seder* night also connects us to generations past, present and future. As we sit at the *Seder* table, Jews around the world sit with their families, singing the same songs, retelling the same story, dipping the same *karpas* and, hopefully, enjoying a magical time with their families.

I'm always amazed at the different stories I hear when I talk to people about their "*Seder* Memories." Some remember only boredom and some remember another family dinner devoid of meaning. How can this be? Sure, there were parts of the *Seder* that were boring, but those aren't my memories of the *Seder*. I remember being at my grandparent's house with aunts, uncles and cousins. I remember asking the Four Questions (yeah, I was always the youngest). I remember stealing and hiding the *Afikomen*, I remember Grandpa Harry, of blessed memory, leading the *Seder*. And, of course, the amazing food Grandma

Sonia, of blessed memory, served. I remember searching the house for gym shoes, because that was always what my grandparents gave us as the *Afikomen* gift.

Last year was tough - the lock down began weeks before Passover and we had to make quick changes to our plans. Zoom *Seders* became the norm and the way in which we were able to stay connected with family and friends while continuing family traditions. This year we're still faced with the reality that inviting family and friends into our homes is not safe. We have time to prepare - please take a look at a special Jewish Family page on the Temple website: [www.sinaidenver.org/jewishhome](http://www.sinaidenver.org/jewishhome). I have shared many different resources that I hope will help you in the task of making memories. If I can be of assistance, please be sure to contact me.

Best wishes to you and your family for a wonderful and meaningful Passover celebration. May you create wonderful, lasting memories.

- Ron

## ALAN FARBER MEMORIAL CAMP

JEWISH SUMMER CAMP OF YOUR CHOICE!  
FIRST TIME CAMPERS & NEEDS BASED

Temple Sinai members Lori and John Spanbauer generously established the Alan Farber Memorial Camp Scholarship Fund in loving memory of Lori's brother Alan. This annual scholarship will help Temple Sinai students from qualified families attend a two-week or three-week Jewish sleep-away summer camp. The scholarship is also available for any mini-camp sessions for a camper's first camp experience. The scholarship is available to all campers based on financial need that otherwise would prevent them from attending sleep-away camp. The applications will be handled confidentially by Rabbi Rheins and by Lori and John Spanbauer. For additional information, contact Ron Leff. To apply, please complete the online form on our website - <https://www.sinaidenver.org/form/campscholarshipapplication.html>

STAY CONNECTED WITH:

# Youth Programming

## *All Star Musical Passover Seder!*

SUNDAY, MARCH 14 FROM 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

We're excited to participate in a Musical Seder in preparation for Passover with leading Jewish music professionals from around the country. During this highly-interactive seder experience, we'll sing traditional and contemporary songs, tell the Passover story, and explore the foods on the seder plate, the blessings, the questions, and the highlights of the Exodus - from slavery to freedom. A great way to gather ideas for your family's Seder!

## *Yom HaShoah Commemoration*

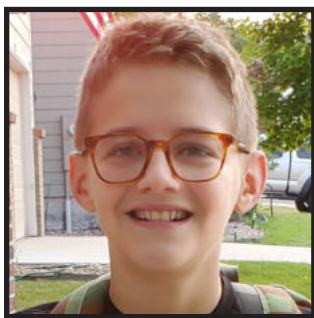
SUNDAY, APRIL 11 FROM 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

The Religious School (grades 4-10) will commemorate *Yom Hashoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day, with memorial prayers, music and reflection. Parents are invited to join us.

## SUBMIT GRADUATION ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE MAY-JUNE KESHER ISSUE

If someone you love is graduating this year - from high school, college, graduate school, etc. - and you want them to be featured in our May - June Keshet issue, please send Yoni Buckman ([yonibuckman@sinaidenver.org](mailto:yonibuckman@sinaidenver.org)) their full name, institution from which they are graduating, plans for next year, and a senior photo or recent headshot.

# B'nei Mitzvah

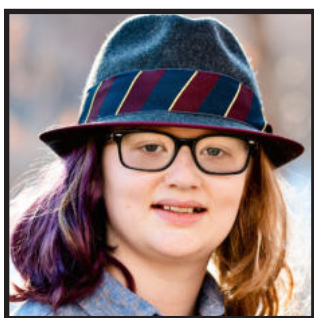
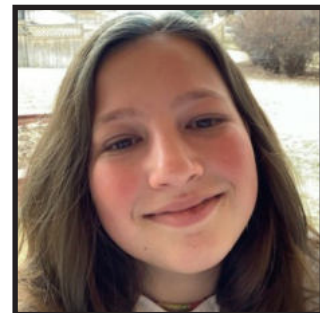


## RYAN SEROTA – MARCH 6, 2021

Ryan is the son of Lee and Laura Serota and the brother of Adin and Kian. He attends Mesa Middle School in Castle Rock. Ryan enjoys video games, Dungeons & Dragons, and hanging out with his friends.

## ABIGAIL WENIG – MARCH 20, 2021

Abigail is the daughter of Matthew and Nancy Wenig and the sister of Samuel. She attends Slavens Middle School. Abigail enjoys skiing, baking, reading, and playing volleyball.

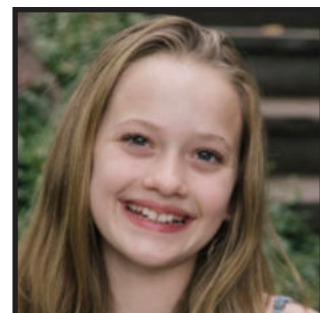


## DYLAN BRIDGE – APRIL 17, 2021

Dylan is the son of Rachel and Jeff Bridge and the brother of Jake. He attends STEM School in Highlands Ranch. Dylan enjoys reading, video games, art, Nerf guns, and watching Marvel and Star Wars movies. For his Mitzvah Project, Dylan will provide supplies and support rescued animals at Zuma's Rescue Ranch.

## SOPHIA DINA EISON – APRIL 24, 2021

Sophia is the daughter of Michelle Draznin and Robert Eison and the older sister of Jonah. She attends Cherry Creek Academy. Sophia enjoys playing volleyball, skiing, rock climbing, playing the piano, and creating art.



## DATES ARE AVAILABLE FOR B'NEI MITZVAH 2022 & 2023

Know that it is never too late to have our children experience the life-affirming joy and pride of accomplishment by leading a service as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Each year around 60 students become Bar or Bat Mitzvah at Temple Sinai. If you have a child who will turn 13 (or older) in 2022 or 2023 and you do not yet have a reserved date for a service, please call Rabbi Rick Rheins or Rabbi Jordy Callman and we'll answer all your questions

and help you find a date that works for your family.

Date selection request forms also are available in the Temple Sinai office and can be mailed directly to you.

Know that our clergy work personally with each student and his/her family to help create a memorable celebration that will bring a lifetime of blessings.



# Dan Yolles

CANTORIAL SOLOIST &  
YOUTH COORDINATOR

## KEEPING UP WITH THE YOUTH GROUPS

### *Upcoming Meretz & Ruach Programs:*

#### **MERETZ (GRADES K-2) HOME SCAVENGER HUNT BINGO (VIRTUAL)**

SUNDAY, MARCH 7 AT 2:00 PM

Fill out your bingo card with things you can find in your house and win a gift card! First three winners get a prize! Sign up below to play:

<https://forms.gle/PqKXuJJqsumpw2AA6>

#### **RUACH (3-5) HOME SCAVENGER HUNT BINGO (VIRTUAL)**

SUNDAY MARCH 7 AT 3:00 PM

Fill out your bingo card with things you can find in your house and win a gift card! First three winners get a prize! Sign up below to play:

<https://forms.gle/kQrtrMrJULMXkR4E8>

### *Upcoming Junior Youth Group Programs:*

#### **HAVDALAH IS AMONG US**

SATURDAY MARCH 6 AT 6:00 PM

Join JYG (Grades 6-8) for a fun Havdalah ceremony with Dan Yolles and collaborate with others to find the imposter in several rounds of Among Us!

<https://forms.gle/VHE4ThnnkaX8Y2EW6>

### *Upcoming Temple Sinai Youth Group Programs:*

#### **TSYG 8th Grade Rush!**

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

Save the date as we welcome in the next generation of TSYG! We are hoping we can hold this in person so stay tuned for details!

STAY CONNECTED WITH:

# Classes

## *Women's Torah Study*

WITH RABBI JORDY CALLMAN

THURSDAY, MARCH 4 AT 6:30 PM | THURSDAY, APRIL 1 AT 6:30 PM

Join us on the first Thursday of the month to come together for Women's Torah Study, an opportunity to see our tradition in new lights and through new lenses. We'll look at commentaries, both traditional and also more out-of-the-box, modern works. This group is open to all women and no background in Torah study is necessary!

Register online: [www.sinaidenver.org/form/womens-torah-study-with-rabbi-jordy-callman](http://www.sinaidenver.org/form/womens-torah-study-with-rabbi-jordy-callman)

## *Brotherhood, Bible & Beers*

WITH RABBI RICK RHEINS

THURSDAY, MARCH 25 AT 6:00 PM | THURSDAY, APRIL 29 AT 6:00 PM

Each month we get together for another session of BB&B. We have timely and interesting topics that provide food for thought and prompt lively discussion. Whether this will be your first BB&B or you are a regular, make yourself a nice dinner, pour a refreshing beverage and let's virtually meet, schmooze, learn, laugh, renew friendships and make new friends. No reservations are required!

## *Elevate Meditation & Nigun Circle*

WITH DAN YOLLES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17 AT 7:30 PM | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14 AT 7:30 PM

Join Dan Yolles as he offers a virtual meditation and nigun circle! This experience is for those seeking to participate in guided meditation, elevate their kavanah and personal strength, and dig deeper into the practice of chanting nigunim. We hope you can join Dan for this wonderful chance to connect with yourself, the community and the Divine through meditation and nigunim.

## SPECIAL LUNCH & LEARN CELEBRATING YOM HAATZMAUT, ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE DAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 15 AT 12:00 PM

Join Rabbi Rick Rheins for a special edition of Lunch & Learn on *Yom HaAtzmaut*, Israeli Independence Day! *Yom HaAtzmaut* immediately follows *Yom HaZikaron*, Israeli Memorial Day (Wednesday, April 14). Learn about these modern Israeli holidays with Rabbi Rheins!

# STAY CONNECTED WITH: *Programs*

## *Pesach Concert:*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

Save the date for a special Pesach concert  
With HEA's Cantor Arielle Green and our  
very own Dan Yolles! More details to come!

## *Chailands Ranch Chavurah Virtual Book Club:*

FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Hey Temple Sinai! The Temple Sinai Highlands Ranch Chavurah has a book club! It is a great place to chat about books that you are reading and get recommendations for what to read next.

**WHAT WE ARE READING AS A GROUP:** *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende

**WHEN IS THE DISCUSSION?:** First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM on Zoom.

**WHO LEADS THE DISCUSSION?:** We rotate, the person who picks the book leads the discussion.

**THE FOLLOWING ARE THE NEXT MEETING DATES:** March 9 and April 13 at 7:00 PM

**WHAT IF I LIKE BOOKS AND I WANT TO TALK ABOUT THEM?:** Then contact Jennifer Meyers to let her know that you are interested at [Jenn.meyers05@gmail.com](mailto:Jenn.meyers05@gmail.com)

## *Temple Sinai Book Club:*

MEETINGS ON THE FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH - SEPTEMBER UNTIL JUNE FROM 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Books are selected at our June meeting. All books selected have a Jewish theme or a Jewish author. We have been meeting for over 15 years and have over 25 people who belong and at least 15 people attending regularly.

Try us out! We have lively discussions about the content of the book as well as the issues which are suggested by the content. Sometimes we digress a bit, but that adds to the fun.

We hope you will join us for a morning of stimulating discussion with a group of interesting people who have a variety of backgrounds. Everyone is welcome and no RSVP is needed.

# SAVE THE DATE FOR

# Zoom-a-thon PART TWO

## APRIL 16-18, 2021

Building on the success of last year's Zoom-a-thon, we're back for another weekend of 27 hours of programming, coming together as a Temple Sinai community. While some of the fan favorite portions from last year's Zoom-a-thon will make a reappearance, we're working on bringing you all new, innovative programming targeted at all demographics and interests.

Last year, we set a fundraising goal of \$50,000 for Zoom-a-thon and we were so grateful and touched to more than double that goal! This year, we're hoping to once again raise \$50,000 to continue to secure a bright future for Temple Sinai.

We are again offering sponsorship opportunities to support the Zoom-a-thon and Temple Sinai.

SPONSORSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE AT \$360, \$540 AND \$1000 WITH THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

### \$360 SPONSORSHIP

- Shabbat dinner from A Perfect Pear for 2 OR Shabbat lunch from The Bagel Deli for 2
- 1 Homemade by Rabbi Jordy challah (with sous chef Lisa Thorner)
- 1 tshirt
- 2 bingo cards
  - Name recognition in Keshet and during the Zoom-a-thon

### \$540 SPONSORSHIP

- Shabbat dinner from A Perfect Pear for 4 OR Shabbat dinner for 2 and Shabbat lunch from The Bagel Deli for 2
- 1 Homemade by Rabbi Jordy challah (with sous chef Lisa Thorner)
- 2 tshirts
- 3 bingo cards
- Name recognition in Keshet and during the Zoom-a-thon

### \$1000 SPONSORSHIP

- Shabbat dinner from A Perfect Pear for 4 and Shabbat lunch from The Bagel Deli for 4
- 2 Homemade by Rabbi Jordy challah (with sous chef Lisa Thorner)
- 4 tshirts
- 4 bingo cards
- Name recognition in Keshet and during the Zoom-a-thon

We're hosting a silent auction beginning on Zoom-a-thon weekend. If you have anything from mountain home stays to Judaica to professional services, we'd so appreciate your donation to the auction. In addition, we all know it's been a difficult year and many small and local businesses have been hit hard. We are asking for those who can to buy gift cards to local Denver businesses that we will then auction off in our Zoom-a-thon silent auction. We think this is an all-around win in which we continue to work towards a strong financial future for Temple Sinai and at the same time, support local business owners after a tough year.

Please stay tuned for more Zoom-a-thon updates including teasers of our big programs followed by a full schedule for the weekend. We cannot wait to share this experience with you all again and next year, hopefully we'll come together in person!

Visit: <https://www.sinaidenver.org/zoomathon2021>

STAY CONNECTED WITH:

# Lifelong Jewish Learning

## BLACK AND JEWISH?

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10 AT 6:30 PM

A Panel of Temple Sinai Congregants: Sam Howard, DeAngelo Smith, and Dawn Kessler Nakamura will talk about their personal experiences being black and Jewish - and what Black Lives Matter means to them.

## DO JEWS BELIEVE IN REINCARNATION?

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24 AT 6:30 PM

Dr. David Sanders, Founder and Spiritual Director of Kabbalah Experience, makes a long-awaited return to Lifelong Jewish Learning with an introduction to reincarnation as taught through Kabbalah sources. As he notes, "Judaism itself, and that includes Orthodox, Reform and Reconstructionist have a negative attitude to this belief." Sanders will approach the subject "from the sources in Kabbalah which go back 800 years and integrate that with what we have learned from science regarding the validity of reincarnation."

## A VIRTUAL CONCERT OF JEWISH MUSIC COMPOSED BY WOMEN COMPOSERS AND PERFORMED BY ZAMIR CHORALE OF BOSTON

TUESDAY, APRIL 6 AT 6:30 PM

In a change of pace, Lifelong Jewish Learning will present a virtual concert on Zoom. Josh Jacobson, founder and director of the Zamir Chorale of Boston, will open the concert and provide a brief bio on the featured women composers. Because female composers and performers have had so much difficulty in having their works heard in a predominantly all-male profession, the concert Kolot

Nashim - the voices of many women - was designed to elevate women to their well-deserved position.

Jacobson served for 45 years as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Northeastern University, including nine years as Music Department Chair and six years as the Bernard Stotsky Professor of Jewish Cultural Studies. He is also Visiting Professor and Senior Consultant in the School of Jewish Music at Hebrew College.

TEMPLE SINAI AND KAVOD ON THE ROAD WILL CO-SPONSOR THE FOLLOWING EVENTS:

## THE ETHICS OF VACCINES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3 AT 11:00 AM

Black Death, Spanish flu, AIDS - many are the pandemics that have plagued the world throughout human history, and never have we had it within us to immunize people the world over against a pandemic until now. But questions remain. How should we allocate vaccines against COVID-19 when the demand exceeds the supply? Should people battered by poverty and beaten by the batons of racist policies or healthcare workers and those on the frontlines have priority? And given that some people are choosing to forego immunization, what, if anything, obligates us to seek vaccination in the first place? Victims of COVID-19, the dead sadly number nearly two and a half million; how will we the living respond? Together, we will explore some classical rabbinic texts and responses to seek ethical instruction on these matters of life and death.

## AMERICA AND THE JEWS

TUESDAY, APRIL 27 AT 11:00 AM

Hasia R. Diner, Paul and Sylvia Steinberg Professor of American Jewish History at New York University discuss the history of the Jews in America which goes back to the 17th century and reflects all the developments and issues that the nation faced over those many centuries. How did Jewish history reflect American history and how did the Jews leave their mark on their new home and its many other people?

# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN

## *Scholarship Program*

**A**s the 2021 Scholarship Chair for the Annual NCJW Scholarship Program, it is my pleasure to inform you that the 2021 Scholarship Application is now available on our website. Although the application is sent to all school districts throughout the State of Colorado including Jewish day schools, we have found that providing it to the synagogues directly often leads to a more thorough distribution to Jewish women in financial need and may better assist someone to achieve their dreams of higher education.

**T**he scholarship is available to all eligible women that will be attending an accredited higher education institute in the Fall of 2021. This includes women that will either be attending a college/technical school for the first time, perhaps continuing their education, or might be returning later in life to an accredited higher education institute in the Fall of 2021. This summer, we will be awarding a number of scholarships to Jewish women who are Colorado residents. The Awards Brunch will be held in Denver on Sunday, June 13, 2020 (COVID protocols allowing). We encourage all eligible women within the state to apply.

**I**f you have any questions, please see my contact information below. To view the application, visit: [www.ncjwcolorado.org/programs](http://www.ncjwcolorado.org/programs)

Sincerely,

*Shelley*

Shelley Tuteur

Scholarship Chair

National Council of Jewish Women, Colorado Section - 2021 Scholarship Program

[shelley.tuteur72996@gmail.com](mailto:shelley.tuteur72996@gmail.com)

## CARING COMMITTEE

Each month the caring committee is providing Temple Sinai with health and wellness information or other areas of interest.

## STOP FRAUD COLORADO-THROUGH THE COLORADO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

[stopfraud@coag.gov](mailto:stopfraud@coag.gov) [coag.gov](http://coag.gov)

We constantly hear stories about scams and fraud on the news and radio, or from friends who fell victim. There are so many types of scams and the culprits get more creative and use technology to their advantage. It is imperative to educate yourself and family members about the different types of scams and how to handle them if you are confronted. Below is the beginning of a true scenario taken from the Stop Colorado Fraud website.

**F**amily Emergency Scam: "A popular telephone scam targeting older citizens has taken a threatening new twist. Family emergency scams, often referred

to as the 'grandparent scam' are often perpetrated when an older adult is called by someone pretending to be a grandchild or relative of the potential victim. Callers have made many claims including being arrested in a foreign country for drunk driving or being involved in a car accident. They are asking the potential victim to send money so they can return home safely and not to tell anyone so they don't get into more trouble."

I can think of another scam that comes to mind similar to this one. The email you receive from a desperate "friend" who is stranded in another country and can't reach family and urgently needs money. Some people recognize these as scams, but what about your kids or older parents? Do they know what to do if confronted with similar scenarios? Having those "what if" conversations with an action plan can take the stress off of everyone involved.

# STAY CONNECTED BY: *Volunteering*

## SINAI TZEDEK

BY KATHY ZEIGER

**W**hat a year... to look back yet forward, there is so much; to reflect on, to grieve, to take joy in, and to act upon.

**J**udaism teaches us that every life is sacred. That we should do what we can to help others. As Jews, issues of social justice have always been in our prayers and our actions. To fully live our justice values, we believe that we must involve ourselves with those who are in need now. By being social justice advocates we try to listen to those who are suffering - hear their stories, become connected with their pain and then help by standing with and for them.

**T**zedek, the Hebrew word meaning justice, is the word we have chosen to represent our commitment to our actions. Sinai Tzedek this year has chosen to focus programming around food justice and hunger issues, Our first effort has been to add to the amazing work of that group of committed Sinai congregants has been working on for years. Thank you Susan Levin for leading our efforts to the continued work of Jewish Family Services (JFS) in providing 150 lunches every Friday to Jewish Family Services

(JFS). This is an example of a current ongoing project, while others will evolve in response to current events, partnership opportunities and the needs of our community and beyond.

**S**inai Tzedek wants to engage with ALL in our community, we want everyone from those who are 1 year old to those who are 120+ years old (G-d willing) . We encourage and welcome others to join Sinai Tzedek to help us in our efforts. We would love to hear from everyone! Commitments for a given activity are usually on a one time basis, although some projects will have a long "shelf life" and dedicated volunteers are essential to the program's success. Notice of activities and requests for volunteers are sent out during weekly/monthly in congregational emails; but if you want to be sure of seeing the notice, or would like to be a committee member, or hear about our work, email the social action committee at [sinaitzedek@sinaidenver.org](mailto:sinaitzedek@sinaidenver.org)

**OUR NEXT SINAI TZEDEK MEETING WILL BE  
TUESDAY, MARCH 9 AT 6:30 PM.**

## GREEN TEAM

Temple Sinai has partnered with Ekar Farm to become a Hazon Seal of Sustainability site in Colorado! Ekar Farm is a local communal urban farm inspired by Jewish values:

- KAYAMUT: SUSTAINABILITY
- L'OVDAHUL'SHOMRAH: LAND STEWARDSHIP
- KEHILAH: BUILDING COMMUNITY
- ADAM V'ADAMAH: INTERCONNECTIONS WITH THE EARTH
- PEAH: SHARING ABUNDANCE
- TZEDEK: FOOD JUSTICE
- SHABBAT & SHMITA: HONORING SACRED CYCLES OF WORK & REST

Here at Temple Sinai, we are creating a Green Team to promote sustainability, help translate our desire to become healthier and more sustainable goals into concrete, achievable goals and clear projects. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Lauren Bubis at [lauren@sinaidenver.org](mailto:lauren@sinaidenver.org) or 303-759-1827.

# Jewish War Veterans

Our Post is currently holding our meetings over Zoom. We do have a call in phone number for those who do not have Zoom capability. Temple will be posting the Zoom links and phone links before the meeting.

We are conducting Zoom interviews of our veterans and their lives and military history. Please email Don Price at [donpriceusna73@gmail.com](mailto:donpriceusna73@gmail.com) for more information about our Jewish War Veterans group.

## JWV MARCH MEETING

SUNDAY, MARCH 14 9:00 AM | HELD VIRTUALLY OVER ZOOM



Our speaker will be Captain Jason Geddes, USN, former commanding officer of attack submarine *USS Colorado* and now Prospective Commanding Officer of guided missile submarine *USS Michigan*. His topic will be "The U.S. Navy's Submarine Force"

Captain Geddes grew up in Indianapolis, IN and enlisted in the Navy in May 1990. He was selected for the Nuclear Enlisted Commissioning Program and attended North Carolina State University, where he graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering in 1997. He also earned Master's Degrees in Engineering Management from Old Dominion University, and National Security & Strategic Studies from the Naval War College.

His tours at sea have included *USS Henry M. Jackson (SSBN 730)*, *USS Alexandria (SSN 757)* and *USS Memphis (SSN 691)*. These assignments resulted in deployments to the

Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, Southern Atlantic Ocean, Arctic Ocean and five Pacific Ocean strategic deterrent patrols. He was named the Submarine Squadron Seventeen Junior Officer of the Year for 2001.

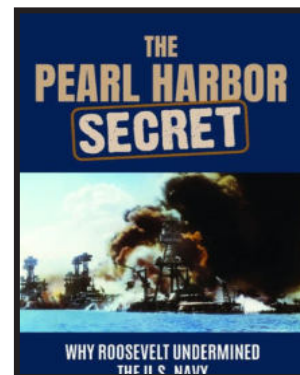
From October 2014 to August 2018 he commanded the ballistic missile submarine *USS Nebraska (SSBN 739)*, during which time he launched two D-5 test missiles and completed the ship's first strategic deterrent patrol in over four years.

He commanded attack submarine *USS Colorado (SSN 788)* from May 2019 to March 2020 completing the ship's first deployment after commissioning. In January 2021 he became the prospective commanding officer of the guided missile submarine *USS Michigan (SSGN 727)*.

## JWV APRIL MEETING

SUNDAY, APRIL 11 AT 9:00 AM | HELD VIRTUALLY OVER ZOOM

At the April 11 virtual meeting of the Post, Dr. Sewall Menzel, who teaches American Foreign Policy, War: Strategy and Politics, and Latin America Politics at Florida Atlantic University, will talk about the subject of his latest book, "The Pearl Harbor Secret - Why Roosevelt undermined the U.S. Navy." Menzel, a retired U.S. Army officer who served in Vietnam and Latin America is a long-time friend of Post Commander Jim Barnard. Be sure to tune in. This will be a fascinating and enlightening program.



# Member Spotlight

## Stephanie Podolak

Stephanie Podolak, assistant U.S. Attorney for Colorado, spent her first five years on the job in the Eastern District of New York, which was prosecuting mafia boss and head of the Gambino family John Gotti.

Initially assigned to the general crime unit like most new assistant AGs, Podolak soon decided to tackle organized crime - specifically narcotics. "It was my choice," she says of the atypical path for young female attorneys in the 1990s. "And it was personal."

Podolak's sister got involved in drugs around age 16. "Thank G-d she's OK now. But I saw what this did to my family and developed really strong opinions about the impact of drugs on our society. "Some people assume that drugs are a victimless crime," she says. "But they are connected to violent crime, theft, addiction, prostitution, credit card fraud, identity theft and any criminal offense you can think of."

Podolak, who with her husband Dr. Michael Podolak moved to Denver in 1996, became assistant AG for Colorado that year and has successfully prosecuted major drug cartels and heroin rings operating in the city. In December, 2019, she won prestigious Lifetime Exceptional Service Award from the Department of Justice but was unable to attend the service in Washington, DC, due to COVID.

Podolak, who joined Temple Sinai's board last year, is tough in the courtroom but very warm, open and humorous outside of that sphere. Have a listen. "I was born in Fort Riley, Kansas," she laughs, "only because my dad was a physician and a captain in the military." Her parents, both die-hard New Yorkers, returned East ASAP.

The Podolaks, who are the parents of William, 26, an audio technology engineer in California and

Katherine, 23, a Hillel Springboard fellow at the University of Illinois, did not shul-shop when they arrived in Denver. It wasn't a priority then and may never have made their bucket list if Katherine hadn't intervened at age 10. "One year Katherine came home from JCC [Ranch] Camp and told me that she wanted to have a Bat Mitzvah," recalls Podolak. "I said, 'Well, we don't belong to a synagogue.' Katherine said, 'Now you have to join one.' My daughter has been the impetus of most religious things in my life. I always joke that it's "L'dor v'dor" - just backwards."

In 2008, the Podolaks made an appointment at Temple Sinai, which is in walking distance of their home, and had a long talk with Rabbi Rick Rheins. "We just fell in love with him because he's such a warm and wonderful person."

Podolak admits that she didn't feel that connected when she first joined Sinai. "Katherine wanted a Bat Mitzvah, and we wanted her to have a Bat Mitzvah. Michael is not Jewish. He was raised Catholic - although now he's very active at the temple." It wasn't until the couple visited Katherine, who went to Israel with the Israeli leadership program *Nachshon* her junior year in college, that push came to shove for Podolak. "We saw all the sites; did the usual tours," she says. "Yet I just felt so disconnected, as if I didn't know anything. I thought I had a pretty strong Jewish education and identity, but I was clueless - and realized I was the only one who could fix it."

Upon their return, the couple immersed themselves in a variety of programs and experiences at Temple Sinai: the Saturday morning minyan; Torah study with Rabbis Zwerin and Kaye; committees; community "Lisa Thorner does a great job of engaging people," Podolak says. "Try this committee, try that committee!"

Last year, the board came calling. Despite a daunting workload, Podolak accepted because

# Member Spotlight

she felt this level of participation was important to her community. "I had no great skills like accounting or finance but I can listen and vote for what I think is a good idea."

She says that COVID is at the heart of all board issues now: economic difficulties; preschool problems; fundraising; classes; the best way for clergy to deliver services. "COVID has turned everything on its head, but we're staying afloat. And I've been very impressed about how conscientious the board is about every single issue."

Zoom programming and services are a boon. "I've talked to older members who love the video

stuff. They think Zoom is the greatest thing in the world. The numbers of people accessing the site are astronomical. - that's engagement," she says. "And we need to consider how we continue this even after COVID goes away."

Podolak feels this might be the perfect time for Sinai congregants feeling isolated from the temple due to the pandemic to dive into action. "You have to take the first step and do something," she says. "Get involved. Join a committee. Find something that interests you. I think it just builds from there, because of the nature and warmth of our community."



# Member Spotlight

## Alison Sorkin

Alison Sorkin, associate general counsel at University at Colorado Health, has deep roots at Temple Sinai. Her parents Dr. Marc and Laurie Sorkin belong to Sinai, as did her grandparents the late Al and Shirley Sorkin.

In addition to family ties, she was a Bat Mitzvah and confirmed at the temple - all strong predictors of future membership. But Alison delayed making it official until late August of 2020. "I returned to Temple Sinai because of my mah jongg group," she says. "It's kind of a funny story."

Two years ago, a friend in her mah jongg group suggested that Alison join her for Shabbat services at Temple Emanuel. But whenever her friend was unable to go, Alison popped up at Temple Sinai. "There's just something about being at Sinai that felt like home," she says.

Once COVID precluded in-person gatherings, Alison tuned into a live-streamed Shabbat service on the Temple Sinai website. "I lit candles. I put on my grandfather's *tallis*," she says. "As I watched the service, I realized how important Sinai was to me and that it would need additional support due to COVID. One of the best ways I could help was by showing up."

Her current activities include Sinai Sundays, an opportunity to discuss serious topics together with her parents, and Temple Sinai's COVID Task Force, which monitors state, city, county and CDC requirements and reports to the board to ensure the temple operates safely.

Alison, a graduate of Washington, DC's American University and a two-time Capitol Hill intern, returned to Denver in 2006 for law school at the University of Denver. "My parents never pressured me to join Temple Sinai," she says. "They understood it had to be my decision, for my own reasons."

The attorney, now 40, has since discovered them. "I work at a very stressful job, in a very stressful environment," she says. "On Friday nights, the ability to take an hour to center, connect, and let go of whatever I've dealt with that day really grounds me. Temple Sinai is familiar. It's safe. I'm very grateful for the time to reflect."

"Sinai also encourages me to explore more possibilities for community engagement. I feel a little bit helpless right now, as do so many of us. Temple Sinai affords me the opportunity to really do something, and gives me the resources to accomplish it."



# Donations

## ADELSTEIN CULTURAL ARTS FUND

*In loving memory of:*

Marian Hoffman  
Gary & Barbara Hoffman

## ALAN FARBER MEMORIAL CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*Donors:*

John & Lori Spanbauer

*In loving memory of:*

Hyman Farber  
Sandra Farber-Volk  
Galina Kurzon  
John & Lori Spanbauer,  
Allyson Spanbauer and  
Cooper Kaplan

## BUILDING MAINTENANCE FUND

*In loving memory of:*

Leon and Rose Dorfman  
Jan & Linda Dorfman  
Lynne Finer Karlson  
Dave Karlson  
Anna Wolfson  
Art & Marilyn Wolfson

## BUILDING OUR FUTURE FUND

*Donors:*

Rabbi Raymond & Rikki Zwerin

## CARING COMMITTEE FUND

*Donors:*

Robert & Sondra Broude  
Gerritt & Ana Koser

## CEMETERY BEAUTIFUL FUND

*In loving memory of:*

Mollie Botkin & Stanley  
Rosenberg  
Beatrice Botkin

Harry Dvosin, Celia Sorkin, and  
Ann Surkin  
Marc & Laurie Sorkin

## COHEN FAMILY B'NEI MITZVAH CHUMASH FUND

*In honor of:*

Temple Sinai Staff and Board  
Members for their hard work  
and dedication to Temple Sinai  
during these crazy times in  
keeping the Temple up and  
operating  
Jay & Sing He Cohen  
and Jeffrey & Shelly  
Cohen

## COVID19 RELIEF EFFORT

*Donors:*

Dr. Robert and Marsha Gold  
and Family

## ENCORE FUND

*In loving memory of:*

Carol Melnick and Barbara  
Rosenholtz  
Richard & Elaine Ricklin  
Dean Gordon Smernoff  
Jo Smernoff

## JOSEPH H. SIGMAN YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*In loving memory of:*

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