DECEMBER SERVICES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4
7:30 PM  Erev Shabbat Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11
7:30 PM  Erev Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12
10:00 AM  Egalitarian Traditional Minyan

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18
6:30 PM  Shabbat Rocks!
7:30 PM  Erev Shabbat Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25
4:00 PM  Special Evening with Erev Shabbat Services anticipated to start at 6:45 PM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26
10:00 AM  Egalitarian Traditional Minyan

OFFICE HOURS
Mon.—Fri.  9:00 AM—4:00 PM
(217) 352-8140
www.sinaitemplecu.org

OFFICE CLOSED:
Christmas Day........ Dec. 25th
New Year’s Day ...... Jan. 1st

Annual Chanukah Cabaret

Wednesday, December 9th, at 5:30 PM

Join us for our annual Latke Potluck Dinner Cabaret. Following dinner and candle lighting, please join us for our Chanukah Cabaret. This always entertaining showcase will feature music by the Shabbat Singers; some special surprises from Rabbi Alan; and other not-to-be-missed moments that are sure to be fun for the entire family.

Please bring your menorah & candles, and a nonmeat main or side dish for 12 people. Scrumptious latkes with many different toppings will be provided.

To ensure that we set up enough tables/chairs for all, please RSVP by December 4th at this link http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d44afaf23a5fc1-chanukah indicating the dish you are bringing. The suggested donation for this event if you bring a dish is $5 person/$15 family. Otherwise the donation is $10 person/$25 family.

If you have questions, please contact Diane Ore at 356-7688 or dianeore@att.net.

JOIN US for some SPECIAL FUN on DECEMBER 25TH!

On Friday, December 25, we will have a special afternoon and evening of programming. We’ll begin at 4PM with the showing of a family-friendly movie.

At 6 PM, we will enjoy a delicious Chinese dinner buffet.

At 6:45 PM, we will join together for an abbreviated Kabbalat Shabbat service, suitable for the entire family (please note that this will be our only service that evening), followed by an oneg celebration.

At 7:45 PM, adults are invited to join Rabbi Alan for a second movie (on a more adult theme) and brief discussion.

Please sign up for all this fun at: https://sinaicu.wufoo.com/forms/sinai-temples-chinese-dinner-service-and-movie/ so that we know how much food to order! The price is only $12 per adult (ages 14 and up) and $8 per child (ages 5 to 13). Kids under 5 eat at no charge!

We hope to see you here!

***Please see Enclosed insert for more Temple news***
As Gary mentions in his president’s column, he and I had the privilege of being part of Sinai Temple’s eight-member delegation to the URJ Biennial held in Orlando, Florida at the beginning of November. I am a proud product of the Reform movement, and for me, these conferences help to reaffirm all that I love about Judaism, and particularly progressive Judaism: the vibrancy of worship, with 5,000 voices united in prayer and song; the vastness yet smallness of the Jewish community (I bumped into my first cousin, whom I haven’t seen in person for over thirty years!); the commitment to Tikkun Olam, improving the world by engaging in works of social justice; opportunities for Torah Lish’ma, study undertaken merely for the joy of learning; and practical networking with members, clergy, and staff from other congregations from across the county, who find themselves confronting some of the same questions and challenges which we face.

In many ways, the diversity of those gathered in Orlando mirrors the rich diversity of all of us here at Sinai Temple. Not all of those who attend URJ Biennials were born and bred in the Reform movement. In fact, on Shabbat morning, three group aliyyot to the Torah were offered. By far, the most-subscribed aliyyah was the third, which called upon attendees who had discovered Reform Judaism later in life. In this group, we saw Jews-by-Choice as well as those who had decisively abandoned other denominations for ideological reasons. But we also saw individuals who, like many at Sinai, find themselves connected with a URJ congregation by happenstance, even if they don’t personally consider themselves Reform Jews. And, just as Sinai Temple continues to strive to do, the URJ opens wide its tent flaps and welcomes all, regardless of ideological or theological differences. Just as we do here in Champaign, the URJ offers a home for the chiloni (secular) Israeli who rarely (if ever) thinks about Judaism in a religious sense) and the traditionalist who is most comfortable davvening (praying) with tallit and tefillin.

We had the opportunity at the biennial to learn Torah from a variety of individuals. Perhaps the most striking d’var Torah for me was delivered by the president of NFTY (the North American Federation of Temple Youth), a young man named Jeremy Cronig. He spoke on the Hebrew word, Ayekha, which translates to, “Where are you?” “Ayekha” appears in the Torah in Genesis 3:9, as God questions Adam following Adam and Eve’s tasting of the forbidden fruit. The question, we are taught, is not designed to pinpoint Adam’s physical location. Rather, it is a question of responsibility: what is your place in the world? How do your actions impact others?

I believe that we confront this question on a daily basis. We strive to answer in a manner consistent with our Jewish values and consistent with the expectations that God has placed upon us. We hope that we live up to our greatest potential, and serve our community in a meaningful way.

Particularly as we approach our festival of lights, Chanukah, we consider how we may be a light to others. How can we help open the doors of opportunity to those less fortunate than we are? How can we shine a light upon those who are facing sadness and despair?

In the Talmud, we are told of a debate between the disciples of the sages Hillel and Shammai regarding the lighting of the Chanukah menorah. Shammai’s students felt that the chanukiah should be lit with eight candles on the first night, with a candle being removed each night in order to mirror the diminishing oil that is a familiar part of the Chanukah story. Hillel’s students, on the other hand, argued that we should begin with one candle, and add each night—the tradition that has prevailed. “We ascend in holiness, and never decrease,” the Talmud concludes.

May we, too, ascend in holiness. May we continue to work to bring justice and peace to our world. And when God calls to us and inquires, “Ayekha?” may we be fully present to answer the call.

Wishing you a Chag Sameach and a very happy New Year,
Rabbi Alan Cook

Birthday & Anniversary Blessings

If you celebrate a birthday or anniversary in December, please join us at our services on Friday, December 11th, at 7:30 PM. Rabbi Alan will invite all those marking a milestone to join him on the bimah for a special blessing. After the service, we will enjoy treats at the Oneg in your honor! No RSVP is necessary to participate!

There is still time for your donation to Sinai Temple to earn a 2015 tax credit! All donations postmarked by December 31, 2015 will be credited to your account for 2015. In January, the office will mail out IRS contribution letters for all contributions made during 2015. We wish you and your family a joyous New Year!
At the end of October, Ray Spooner started a journey to ride his bicycle from the west coast to the east coast to raise money for MDA to find a cure for ALS. Tragically, on the 5th day of the bicycle ride, he had an accident. Those of us following his blog were heartbroken to learn that, while he was ok, he was not going to be able to complete the ride as planned. Then Ray asked for people to ride for him and “donate the miles” that they rode to help him complete his journey. He was hoping that people would donate 2500 miles to his ride.

Over the next few days, a flurry of emails between me, Rabbi Alan, Rabbi Jody, and Dan Kopelow hatched a plan to help with Ray’s ride. Dan created a route and an email blast was sent out. On November 1, we would meet at Sinai Temple and each ride approximately 13.1 miles for Ray. Additionally, Rabbi Jody organized the children to ride around Sinai Temple (each lap was 0.2 miles). We had no idea how many people would ride.

In the end, I was so pleased to see that we had about 33 adult riders who rode for over 500 miles (including miles ridden to / from Sinai Temple). We also had about 22 children who rode between 1 and 3 miles around Sinai Temple (for about 50 miles in total). Additionally, $1018 was raised for MDF. This was such a great example of the community coming together to help and support one another. Thanks to everyone who organized the event and those that participated. Ray finished his ride on Nov 19th. For more information, please visit his site: http://rays littleride.com

Also in November, the URJ held their Biennial conference. Sinai Temple was represented by Rabbi Alan, Natalie Frankenberg, Toni Lachman, Rob and Diane Ore, Susan Schomer, Paul Weichsel and myself. Personally, I was not sure what to expect from a Jewish conference attended by approximately 5000 people. Prior to the event, the eight of us had gone through the conference workshop schedule and tried to divide and conquer. There were many wonderful workshops from which to choose. At the conference, I found myself in many conversations with other presidents and presidens-elect talking about many issues that we were all facing. While we all like to think of our congregation as unique, in reality there are many similarities; however, solutions are almost always unique to the congregation. I am looking forward to continuing discussions with both our regional colleagues and members of the URJ.

Aside from the many workshops and opportunities to learn about Torah, there were also many opportunities to come together to sing and dance. I have to admit that it is very hard to describe what it is like to attend Friday night and Saturday morning services with 5000 other people. The feeling of community is very strong and the energy in the room provided by the congregants, the rabbi, the cantor and the musicians leaves you feeling energized for the rest of the day. We also had the opportunity to hear Vice President Joe Biden speak about the support that he has received over the years by the Jewish community. I can’t say that I enjoyed these services more than those at Sinai Temple; but there is certainly a different feel. As Randy Rosenbaum said to me before I attended, this is a conference and experience that everyone should have at least once. The next Biennial will be in Boston in December 2017.

As we close out the Thanksgiving holiday and prepare for Chanukah, I can’t help to think about how important it is at this time of year to provide opportunities to gather as a community. I hope to see many of you at the Chanukah cabaret (December 9), and other special events listed in the bulletin. Please consider giving of your time to a project such as Meals on Wheels or a soup kitchen.

Chag Sameach,
Gary Bernstein

Sinai Temple Board of Trustees - November 2015

- Motion to approve October 2015 minutes, with one minor change, made by Sanford, 2nd by Jennie. All in Favor.

- The Rabbi reported about the Biennial he attended with 7 other congregants. There was a lot of great programming, including keynote speaker, Vice President Joe Biden. The URJ passed a welcoming resolution for Trans Gender individuals as well as a new dues structure which will reduce our annual dues and eliminate our arrearage. MUMs dues will be based on 4% of revenue.

- We have received an $11,600 payment on an insurance claim for the heat pump. Finance approved two expenses for the Religious School. First is a Mezuzah project for students up to the 9th grade - total around $500 - 600. Second is a Small Congregation’s Retreat for 5th and 6th graders being held at OSRUI. Families and temple would split the cost (to be determined). This would come out of the Special Projects for Religious School Fund. Jody will apply to the CUJEF for possible funding to pay part/all of these.

- There was discussion that one pod wall has likely come off of the track. We have one quote of about $3000 to fix it, clean all the tracks and fix any broken parts. We will try to get other bids. Motion was made by Sanford, and approved by Jennie, “to approve up to $3000 for repair and maintenance of all the partition walls. If bids exceed that, we can vote by email.” All in Favor.

- There was discussion about having a wall with pictures of our rabbis. We are aware of 8 rabbis but there may have been more. Suggestion was made to include our current Rabbi and to consider one of the brick walls in the Davis/kitchen area. Gary will continue to discuss location and arrangements. Board is in favor of this being done.

- There was discussion about Rabbi Neuman’s parking space. Motion made by Sanford that we “Return Rabbi Neuman’s spot to a handicapped space and give Rabbi Klein a reserved spot close to the circle drive, providing Rabbi Klein wants a reserved spot.” 2nd by Sena. All in Favor.

The Rabbi gave his thoughts on creating a broad vision for our future in terms of our finances, physical space and enhancing our worship experience. More discussion will follow.
MITZVAH MADNESS
It is very clear that we are part of a generous and caring community. Some of the recent activities that our students have been involved in that help others and/or our world:

1. On November 1, we held a Bike Ride to raise money, awareness and miles for Ray Spooner/MDA/ALS. In total, we raised $1018 for MDA (see that 18 at the end!!!), accumulated over 500 miles in one day and put smiles on so many faces. If you would like to continue to support the cause, please send miles that you ride and/or donations (made out to MDA) to Rabbi Jody. T-Shirts are also available—$10 per shirt, $5 goes directly to MDA.

2. The religious school families were instrumental in providing Thanksgiving meals to eight local families in need. Thank you for your donations of oil, vegetables, canned goods, butter, stuffing and more. At a time when we give thanks for all that we have, providing what we can to another person adds meaning to our lives.

3. Hebrew High students have been involved in cleaning up Sinai Temple. They cleaned bookshelves in the library and came together to rake the enormous amount of leaves that fell to the ground in recent weeks.

4. The 1st Grade is requesting YOUR help. They have voted to hold a TOY DRIVE to collect gently used and new toys for area children for the upcoming holidays. Your support is important as this collection is something that they can relate to in many ways. By helping other children, our children learn a valuable lesson. Whether you give Hanukkah gifts to celebrate Hanukkah or have unused toys at home (in good condition), please consider bringing something to Sinai Temple to put in the Toy Drive Collection Box and support local children as well as the 1st grade class. The drive will run through December 13.

Religious School Calendar
Upcoming December Events

School Dates:
- Sundays: December 6, 13, 15
- Wednesdays: December 2, 9, 16

Special Events:
- December 6–13: Hanukkah
- December 9: Sinai Temple Hanukkah Dinner and Program
- December 13: Youth Choir Elective to sing at Clark Lindsey
- December 18: Shabbat Rocks! Next Dor Services
- December 17–January 19: No Religious or Hebrew School

CUTY CORNER

It’s been an exciting fall for CUTY! In October, CUTY members took to the UIUC campus for their Photo Scavenger Hunt. Three teams were charged with finding and photographing a wide range of items and tasks that the team members needed to be photographed performing. Favorites included photographing a team member pretending to sleep while studying, a team member doing exactly* what a sign says, and objects spelling out the letters C-U-T-Y. Visit facebook.com/cutempleyouth to see some of the pictures from this event.

Our November meeting was the first meeting of the three CUTY committees- Kef V’Ruach (Fun & Spirit), Tikkun Olam (Service & Volunteering), and Nilmad V’Na’aseh (Religion & Culture). Each committee will be working on developing programs and events for their fellow CUTY members. These committees are open to any CUTY member who is interested in taking a leadership role in our youth group! Visit cutempleyouth.weebly.com for information about joining CUTY and upcoming events.

ELECTIVES/CHUGGIM HIGHLIGHTS

Short Stories: In conjunction with Jewish Book Month, there was a book related chug offered for both the older and the younger groups. The older group was led by Dana Rabin and the focus was on Israeli short stories. The younger group, led by Elana Zelden (4th grade teacher) learned about Chelm stories and created video book reviews of short stories.

Israeli Dancing: The North Pod has been full of energy! Again, this chug was offered for both the younger and older students. The older students (12 or so who chose this elective) revisited popular Israeli dances that they learned at camp and they also learned new dances taught by Leah Zinder. The younger group enjoyed learning the moves as well as becoming familiar with popular Israeli Dance music.

Choir: The Junior Choir elective, led by Sarah Rabin (a music education student) has been working to prepare for performances at Sinai Temple (during the Hanukkah Cabaret on December 9) and at Clark Lindsey (on December 13). The kids are focusing on Hanukkah songs and are learning new lyrics as well as singing Hanukkah favorites.

Additional Chuggim that have been offered recently: Creative Writing, Krav Maga (an Israeli form of Martial Arts, Jews in the News and Midrash).

I am beginning to fill slots for the chuggim that we will offer after winter break. We will have 3 more rotations for each of the groups. If you have a particular area of interest and you would like to offer to lead 3 classes (1 hour each), please be in touch with Rabbi Jody! It is always a treat for our students to have community members involved in their education!
Where would we be without our volunteers? There are many people working behind the scenes contributing their time, energy and talents to the weekly tasks that keeps the Temple running smoothly. And we would like to give a BIG THANK YOU to everyone of you who volunteer for these essential tasks. We will be featuring different groups of volunteers each month in the bulletin.

Did you know that when you buy from the Sinai Temple Gift Shop you are supporting the Religious School? It has been that way from its conception. So this month, we give tribute to the Gift Shop volunteers past and present! Who help run the shop and set up and take down the Chanukah and Passover Showcases, and are part of the sales crew during these events. During the first few years after Natalie Frankenberg became chairperson in 1998, Rachel Rohr-Krutsinger was a regular volunteer until she moved. Joyce Francisco and Pam Olson (Pam has been volunteering at the Gift Shop for over 30 years) work together to arrange the outstanding displays. Reva Eggerman has been our main substitute salesperson and is often assisted by her husband, Bill. Jessica Kopolow is always “on-call” to help and files the quarterly state taxes for us.

Thank you: Jaime Barra, Carol Belber, Laura Blell, Susan Cohen, Susan Donohue, Terry Fear, Phyllis Gingold, Joan Kozoll, Toni Lachman, Leslie Mason, Susan McQuaid, Anna Mehl, Barb Nelson, and Bette vanEs who have helped with the Chanukah and Passover Showcases.

And a BIG THANK YOU to all our customers. We couldn’t continue to financially support the Religious School without your loyal patronage.

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Sinai Temple Gift Shop

(All Gift Shop profits go to support the Religious School)

**CHANUKAH SHOWCASE continues in the Gift Shop**

Wednesday, December 2nd, 4:00 PM-6:00 PM
Thursday, December 3rd, 10:00 AM-1:00 PM
and Sunday, December 6th, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

**DECEMBER SPECIALS**

20% OFF ALL Children’s Toys
CHECK OUT THE CLEARANCE TABLE BARGAINS
40% OFF merchandise on our inventory clearance table

*We will be closed during Religious School Winter Break beginning Dec. 20th and will reopen on Jan. 20th*

**REGULAR HOURS OF OPERATION**

Sundays: 9:00 AM–1:00 PM  
(during Religious School)

Wednesdays: 4:00 PM–6:00 PM  
(during Hebrew School)

Thursdays: 10:00 AM–1:00 PM

We are ALWAYS open by appointment.

Email: nataliefr@comcast.net or call Natalie Frankenberg (390-4168), Jessica Kopolow (344-6683) or Pam Olson (384-4335). Cash or checks are always welcome. Credit cards accepted for charges over $25. We now accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover using SQUARE.

Please note: The Gift Shop is staffed by volunteers. Occasionally, we are unable to be open as planned (especially on Thursdays) so we suggest you call the Temple Office 352-8140 to make sure someone is in the shop.

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Thank you!
BUILDING FUND
Michael Finke & Elizabeth Oyler
Aaron Johnson & Cheryl Silver
Paul & Susan Schomer in memory of Rima Siegel Fox and Robert Rosenbaum

COHEN GARDEN FUND
Stanley & Joan Levy in memory of Rose Weinberger Levy and in appreciation of Roger Marsh for courtesies rendered

GARDEN FUND
Gary & Leslie Mason in memory of Robert Rosenbaum and Rima Siegel Fox and Sue Falender’s mother
Natalie Frankenberg in memory of Robert Rosenbaum and Rima Siegel Fox

GENERAL FUND
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Stanley & Joan Levy in honor of Ray Spooner
Ruth Morhaim in memory of Art Robinson, Judy Seligman and Robert Green, and Edythe Davis
Richard Pikowsky in memory of Harry Pikowsky
Barak Rosenshine in memory of Judy Seligman
Veronica Shavitt in memory of Michael Neuwirth
Myron & Sonya Sholem in memory of William Sholem, Bessie Siegel & Isaac Neuman
Judith Siess & Stephen Bremseth in memory of Della Kranson and Julius Cohen
Gwen Steinberg in memory of Jean Ginsberg, Abraham Ginsberg, MD, Penny Ginsberg Magence, Ruby Carol Ginsberg Miskie
Blanche Sudman in memory of Elythe Davis, Rima Siegel Fox, Robert Green, Arthur Robinson, Robert Rosenbaum, Judy Seligman and Marilyn Cohen
Julie Swedarsky in memory of Judith Seligman

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MUSIC FUND
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RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND
Toni Lachman in honor of Ray Spooner

ROBINSON FUND
Arnold & Rita Blockman
Mary Lou Brotherson in memory of Arthur our dear friend and in memory of Don Brotherson and Harry David Nelson
Annette & John Buckmaster
Stacy Deckard in memory of Art Robinson
Stanley & Susan Dilley in memory of Art Robinson from the Crames’ Family. Our family is grateful for his love of Sinai Temple
William & Reva Egererman in memory of Art Robinson
Ann Einhorn in memory of Art Robinson
Natalie Frankenberg
William & Elaine Hall in memory of Art Robinson
Paula Kaufman in memory of Art Robinson
Toni Lachman in memory of Art Robinson
Bernice & Laurence Lieberman in memory of Art Robinson and Robert Green
Diane & Rob Ore in memory of Art Robinson and in memory of Robert Green
Barak Rosenshine in memory of Art Robinson
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Please send your donations made payable to Sinai Temple. Only donations of $15.00 or more per fund and honoree will be listed in the Bulletin.
Adding memorials to your membership record is simple. Just call the Temple office (or email us at stoffice@sinaitemplecu.org) and let us know the name of the deceased, their relationship to you, and the secular or Hebrew date you wish to observe their yahrzeit. If you are unable to attend services and wish to reschedule the observance, please let us know a few days in advance.
The purpose of Sinai Temple is to worship God in accordance with the Jewish faith; to cultivate a love and understanding of Jewish heritage through education; to stimulate fellowship in the Jewish community; to strengthen bonds of loyalty with Jewish people everywhere; and to bring nearer the Dominion of God on earth through an emphasis on righteousness (tzedakah), commandments (mitzvot), and goodwill (gemilut hasidim) to one another and to society at large.

**Bulletin Submission:** The deadline for the January Bulletin is December 13th at 10:00 AM. All submissions may be edited for length and content. **EMAIL submissions to:** Kathy Douglas stoffice@sinaitemplecu.org.