

Temple Emanuel

5771/5772 2011/2012



ANNUAL REPORT

Community & Connections

Av, 5772—August, 2012

Dear Friends:

This past summer, Shira and I were visiting the Jewish museum in Gerona, Spain, which in the 13th century, the time of Ramban, Nachmanides (1195-1270), featured a vital Jewish community, albeit one that lived in a walled Jewish ghetto known as the "*calle*." But local persecution and harassment caused Jews to convert out; and those that remained were kicked out by the expulsion decree of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. The museum in Gerona describes Jews entirely in the past tense.

There were Torah scrolls in a glass museum case. This is what Jews used to study.

There were *siddurim* and *tefillin* in a glass museum case. This is how Jews used to pray.

There were wedding documents, *ketubot*. These are the wedding contracts Jews once used to get married.

Everything, past tense. Everything, in a museum case. Nothing alive. When I asked the woman who sold us tickets if there were any Jews left in Gerona, she said maybe a few families, who do not want to be identified, but no synagogue or living community.

Spain. Europe. Where Jews and Judaism go to die. Thank God, there are two centers today where Jews and Judaism go to live and thrive. North America and Israel. Both come together here at Temple Emanuel.

This Annual Report will show you men, women and children loving their Judaism. You will see families at a campfire at our annual retreat Saturday night, after *havdallah*, roasting marshmallows; boys and girls learning how to make and wear *tefillin*; teenagers hoisting the *sefer Torah* as they learn how to do *hagbah*; and little children literally dancing in the aisles on the first night of Hanukkah. Decorations for the Sukkah; masks for Purim; lighting candles and sanctifying memories for *Yom Hashoah*. People coming together for worthy causes. Celebrating our community at our annual barbeque. Coat drives on cold December mornings. Torah classes here, and in Jerusalem at Hartman. Moments of radical amazement where we felt blessed to be alive and uplifted by the sacred words of our Torah and *siddur*.

Gerona can have the museum of what was.

Thank you for your generosity, which makes possible what is, what ought to be, and what will be: a rich and compelling Jewish present and future for you and the ones you love.

Temple Emanuel. Where Jews and Judaism go to live.

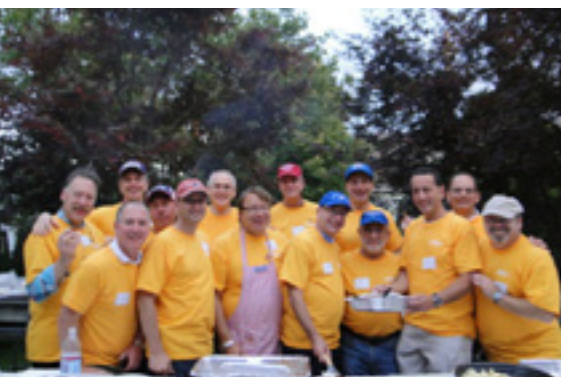
Shanah tovah u'metukah! A healthy and happy New Year!

Wes Gardenswartz

Rabbi Wes Gardenswartz

Lisa Hills

Lisa Hills, President



The background features a low-angle photograph of the Temple Emanuel building, showing its modern architectural lines and glass facade. Several banners are visible, including one on the left that reads "Temple Emanuel THE GATE OF REDEEMING THE WORLD" and another on the right that says "THE GATE OF ISRAEL". The image is overlaid with a grid of semi-transparent, colorful squares in shades of purple, blue, green, orange, and yellow, creating a vibrant, abstract design.

Temple Emanuel Mission Statement

Temple Emanuel is a warm, welcoming, diverse Conservative congregation that:

- Inspires our members to a love of God, Torah and Israel;
- Builds lasting relationships that provide each of us with strength and support in life's hard times, shared joy in life's good times, and friendship at all times;
- Transmits a love of Jewish living from generation to generation; and
- Helps our members make ordinary days holy by filling our lives with the *mitzvot* God has given us to make our lives matter.

In pursuing these sacred purposes, Temple Emanuel offers the best of big and small: the resources that allow for choices, and the communities of shared passion that allow for intimacy.



The Gate of Torah



"Talmud class doesn't actually begin at 8:30 on Saturday mornings, nor is it over at 9:30. On Thursday, sitting at your desk at work or reading your Blackberry, it starts: 'The release of Gilad Shalit: moral greatness or dangerous madness?' 'Why should our children choose to be Jewish in a post-modern world?' The

rabbi's email describing the topic and the sources stays with you, consciously or below the surface, turning over in your mind. You come to class with your thoughts formed, but only until the discussion begins and twenty or so different perspectives inform your thinking. And after class, you realize what perhaps you should have said in response, and on Monday or Tuesday you might compose an email to Wes. And then it is Thursday again. And you are looking forward to 8:30 am on Saturday."

- Michael Gardener, member since 1975

"Having enjoyed the Shabbat morning Talmud classes for many years, this year I had the opportunity to take study to the next level by joining a large group of other members at the Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. It was a pleasure to spend an entire week engaging important questions with inspiring teachers who share Rabbi Gardenswartz's approach of combining a deep respect for traditional sources with a commitment to the importance of doubt and questioning."

- Harvey Mamon, member since 2011

"We offer adults the most amazing opportunities for education possible – limited by only your time and inclination. For a lifetime learner to be able to do Me'ah (100 hours of university-level learning over 2 years) with fellow congregants and to share the Adult B'nei Mitzvah journey (2 years of learning), to attend lectures on a wide range of topics from modern Israel to ancient texts and to read together in Book Club and the community-wide TE Reads – as one of our Rabbis always says: 'It just doesn't get any better than that.'"

- Maida Rubin, member since 2002





The Gate of Prayer

“Why does one seek out a place to pray? We come to the Minyan morning or evening for many reasons. It was the loss of our parents that first brought us to the Minyan seeking to fulfill our obligations. We were surrounded by people who understood our loss and became friends, teachers and family. We are now the next generation in a long established tradition of Temple Emanuel’s Morning Minyan, providing a quiet place to meditate and pray in our beautiful Gann Chapel, then join together for breakfast, conversation and friendship.”

- Phyllis and Jerry Gordon, members since 1981

“We offer such a panoply of prayer opportunities that anyone can find a service that is comfortable to them spiritually. Although I came to love the disciplines of yoga and prayer quite separately, both were enhanced when combined at the Yoga for the Soul Minyan. I particularly appreciate the inviting nature of the Yoga Minyan, allowing practitioners of all levels to participate and enjoy. That it is so well attended adds a social element that keeps me coming back regularly.”

- Phyllis Brody, member since 1992



The Gate of Israel

"The Israel gate gets wider with each passing year. We are working to strike the balance of taking our members to Israel, and bringing Israel home to our community."

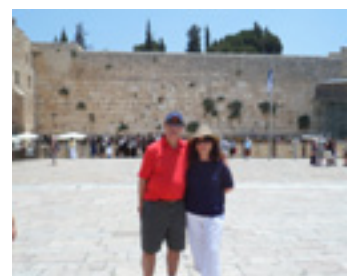
- Merle Hass, member since 1988

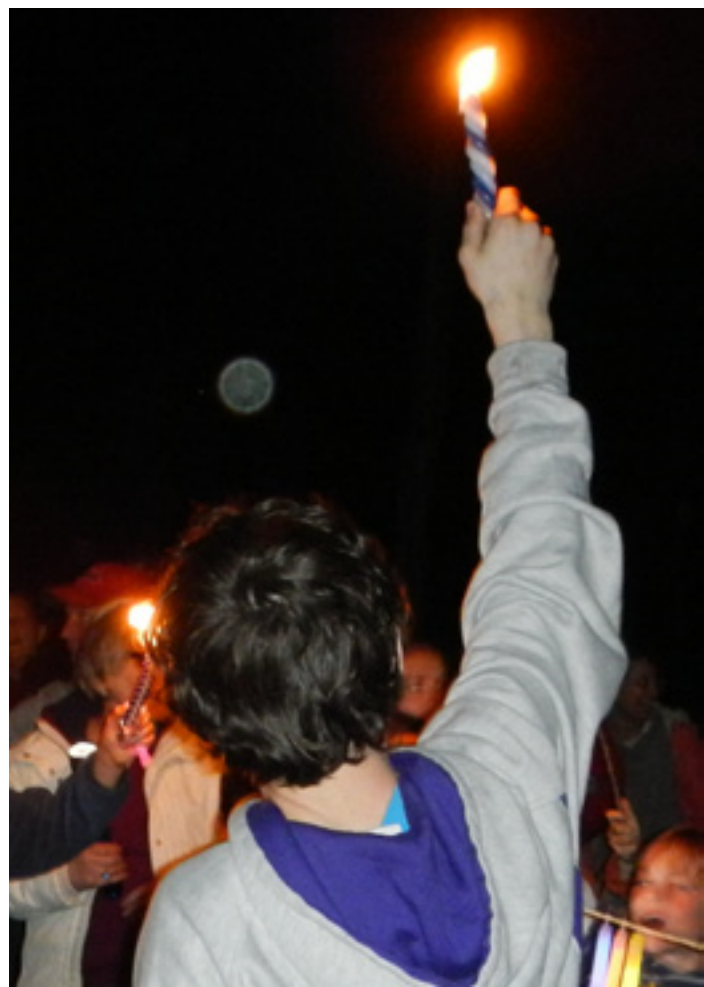
"Last year, along with a large group of Temple Emanuel friends, we studied at the Hartman Institute with some of the leading Jewish scholars in the world. We walked the streets of Jerusalem together. We visited archaeological and strategic sites with top Israeli experts. We davened together. We had our community meals together and grew even closer. Back home, we were able to relive our Israel experience again and again by learning from the extraordinary visiting scholars from Hartman and participating in the excellent programs of our Israel Action Committee. Thank you Temple Emanuel for enriching our connection to Israel!"

- Carol Harris and Bob Kann, members since 1988

"We were new members at High Holiday services last fall when Rabbi Gardenswartz implored us all to 'Go to Israel' this year. That struck a chord, and when we learned of the Hartman trip, we decided to make that our first trip to Israel. It turned out to be an incredible, almost indescribable, transformative nine days and the perfect way to make that first trip. We loved the studying at Hartman, which brought a spiritual component to the trip, and we loved seeing and experiencing Jerusalem. However, the trip was made truly meaningful by sharing the experience with 36 members of our Temple Emanuel community."

- Joan Ackerstein, member since 2010





The Gate of Shabbat



"The highlight of my week is Shabbat Alive where my soul is filled with song and I am once again renewed. The profoundness of being immersed in a community that sings and prays together as we raise our collective voices is so gratifying. Music touches the deepest part of me and I feel blessed to be able to share in this extraordinary experience. It transcends my daily

life and stays with me during the week until we meet once again to rekindle our spirits."

- Sara Weiss, member since 1995

"After my son Philip's recent *aufruf*, he said that Temple Emanuel is what a synagogue should be – a place that celebrates community: a bat mitzvah, an engagement, a community honoree, and a 90th birthday. Thank you for making Philip and Amanda's *aufruf* so special."

- Marc Gary, member since 2007

"I am deeply involved in our lay-led Shabbat Chapel Minyan because I was looking for a prayer group that meets on a regular basis with all the participants deeply invested in the quality of the service and willing to participate and give of themselves to ensure a spiritual experience. When we have services that consist of two hours of loud singing, learning and laughing, I know that it is indeed a Shabbat Shalom."

- Ralph Isberg, member since 1994



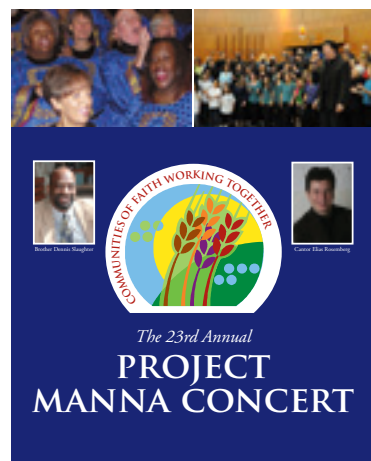
The Gate of Redeeming Our World

"Social Action gives me a chance to express my Judaism in the most meaningful and powerful ways and has been the most important connection for me imaginable – both to the congregation I love and to the work I am passionate about. Through our coat, clothing and furniture drives, collections for Cradles to Crayons, literacy program, serving hot meals through Sunday's Bread, collecting food for Family Table, hosting the amazing Project Manna Concert to raise funds for Mass Ave Baptist Church's Soup Kitchen, and so much more, we have been able to reach out to those in need in the communities around us and – hopefully – make the lives of others a little better and a little easier. An added benefit for me has been the contacts I have had with members of our generous and caring synagogue who – at the drop of a hat – will donate services, support, material items, advice, and whatever is needed to help others."

- Ellen Kass, member since 1986

"How wonderful that we've established a priority of programs for our most senior members! The Chesed Caring Community has blossomed over the past 5 years, offering friendly visits, rides to shul and programming for our seniors. Our Seminars for Later Life help all of us who are not only caring for our parents, but also planning for ourselves. Multi-generational excitement echoes throughout the shul for our programs – most notably on the special *Lamed Vavnik Shabbat* when our long-term members are acknowledged and our most senior members are called to the *bima* to be recognized. What they love most, beyond the festive Kiddush in their honor, is reconnecting with dear friends and familiar faces. I'm proud to be part of a synagogue that serves the social, caring, and intellectual interests of elder members with such enthusiasm!"

- Joanne Linowes Alinsky, member since 1989





The Gate of Community

"As I try to find a seat at a crowded adult learning program, I survey the crowd. I have a few friends at a table at the far end of the room, but I hear my name called faintly at my left. 'I saved a seat for you, my dear,' Bunny Shapero says to me, and I can think of no one I would rather sit with. You see, Bunny, despite being over 30 years my elder, has become my good friend – I love her. And that is the magic of our Sisterhood: different generations of women coming together and forming lasting friendships, allowing women of all ages with common interests to bond while creating fabulous programming for our community: donor event, Torah Fund brunch, Sisterhood Shabbat, book clubs, cook books, educational speakers and much more. Our Sisterhood opens eyes, as well as hearts."

- Ronna Benjamin, member since 1984

"Having a building with a sanctuary and Torahs, with outstanding clergy, staff, and lay leaders, with classrooms and meeting rooms and activities morning, noon, and night seven days a week does not make a community. That's the bones. Community needs flesh and heart. Community certainly comes from the feeling its members have toward that place and what it means to them. But more importantly, it's the feeling they – we – have toward each other, of standing side by side in good times and bad, of celebrating *simchas*, of having each other's back in times of need, of just wanting to be with each other at services, in class, eating egg salad at *kiddush*, on the softball field, in each other's homes for Shabbos dinners, and ten times *chai* other ways we elevate a shul into a community and make it personal to who we are. We're lucky to have Temple Emanuel and all it offers, but we're blessed to have the community it inspires."

- Rick Thau, member since 1984

"Brotherhood is about genuine friendship that is special to a group of men who feel a connection to Temple Emanuel in their own unique way. Whether it is learning from a noted scholar or bike riding in support of Camp Ramah, remembering the 6 million through our yellow candle program, participating in the World Wide Wrap or our annual scotch-tasting event, each is really just an entry point into sharing the joys and challenges of life with a community that really cares about each other."

- David Beckman, member since 2002





The Gate of Teaching Jewish Values to Our Children



סידור רוח שבת
Siddur Ruach Shabbat:
Spirit of Shabbat Family Prayerbook
Temple Emanuel, Newton Centre, Massachusetts

"Two years ago a group of parents created an interactive Saturday morning service for our school-aged children. Our goal was to spend 'quality time' with our kids while teaching them Jewish values and helping them become comfortable going to synagogue – the prayers, the format of the service, the Torah

readings. We wanted going to services to be fun and accessible. Our kids started coming for the ice cream sundaes at Kiddush after services and for the Twizzlers during questions about the Torah *parasha*, but over time they became comfortable with the service and grew proud of learning to lead the prayers. The Family Service surpassed all of our expectations, and we invite you to come and try it out!"

- Pam Weinfeld, member since 2004

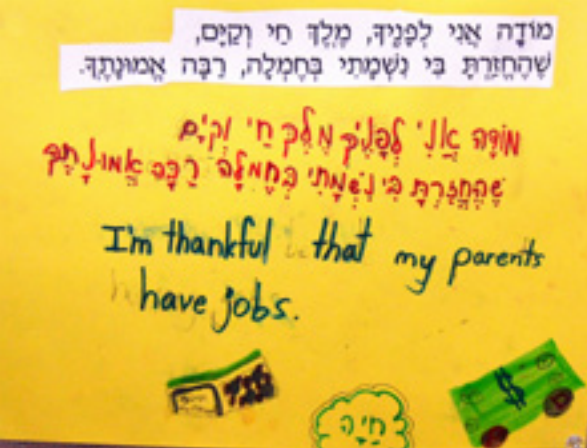
"I wanted to commend everyone for so many great programs and particularly comment on the Hanukkah dinner and the Fountainheads concert. It was simply wonderful! We brought our two young grandsons (4 and 2 years old) and they continue to think that Temple Emanuel 'rocks' like that every day...Both woke up for several days and volunteered they want to go to Temple."

- Larry Heimlich, member since 1974

"Having four children ages 12, 10, 7, and 4, we have found that the Temple provides the foundation – the expertise and the continuity – that supports our family unit. This foundation, of course, begins in the classroom at nursery school, Hebrew school and Makor, but is fully supported outside the classroom as well: Youth group activities, *zedakah* opportunities, holiday preparations as well as Shabbat services. Our children come home with extensive knowledge and enthusiasm that has a trickle effect on us all! This includes the obvious: Hebrew language, prayer, and holidays but also expands into a love for Israel, and a very clear pride in being a Jew. As a family unit we have learned and grown together with the support of the Temple's programs."

- Leslie Gonzalez, member since 2000





WHY WE NEED YOUR HELP

Our Annual Appeal drives the financial health of our community. As our Annual Appeal goes, so goes our financial health. And as our financial health goes, so goes our spiritual health, our ability to have the resources to connect with each of our members in the deepest way. *Ein kemach, ein Torah*, as our sages taught us in Pirkei Avot, there is no spirituality without sustenance.

Why does our Annual Appeal drive our financial and spiritual health? The pie chart pictured below is worth a thousand words. Dues, seats and nursery and religious school tuitions cannot sustain all that we do, particularly because we offer abatements to members who cannot pay full dues. In the continuing hard economy, our level of abatements is at a record high.

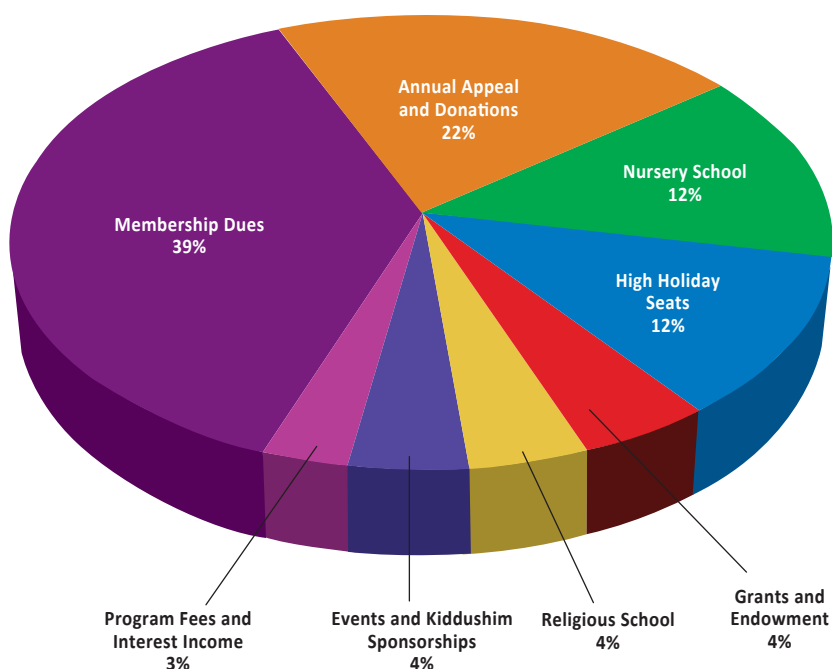
After membership dues, our Annual Appeal and Donations are our single greatest source of revenue. It is also the slice of the pie with the greatest capacity to grow.

Whether we have the resources to be a vibrant community, and a shul for all, depends on our Annual Appeal, which means that it depends on you.

We can do what we do, and we are who we are – a thriving shul with Seven Gates active every day – because of your generosity.

Thank you for sustaining our vibrant community.

Revenue Sources



Our Annual Appeal and Donations comprise 22% of all our revenue. Your gift directly translates into our reaching more people more deeply.

TEMPLE EMANUEL LEADERSHIP

2012 - 2013

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