

# TEMPLE EMANUEL

ANNUAL REPORT 5779/2019



**HERE  
FOR  
YOU**





August, 2019—Av, 5779

Dear Friends:

*Here for you.* That is our core prayer on the upcoming High Holidays. *Aneinu, aneinu b'yom koreinu.* God please be here for us when we call out to you. Here at Temple Emanuel we try our best to fulfill that prayer for each other every day.

Nearly three years ago, Jon and Ilana didn't know where to turn. They were sleep-deprived and stressed, trying to navigate life with a newborn in a home they had yet to fully unpack from their move to Newton. Out of the blue, they were invited to a baby brunch at Temple Emanuel. Then our clergy visited their home. They started coming to Temple Emanuel, first for baby programs and then for Shabbat morning. They made friends here. They began to feel the magic of community. Temple Emanuel was the place that brought them comfort in a stressful time. When their son's daycare closed suddenly in the middle of last year, Jon and Ilana knew exactly who to call. They reached out to us and within a few hours, their son was enrolled in our toddler class. *Here for you. Here for our youngest families and learners.*

Ann connected with Temple Emanuel as her husband was leaving this world. She joined the community in a time of unimaginable loss, but found that even then, this place filled her soul. In honor of her beloved, she began learning. She started reading Torah and leading services. She comes here to celebrate her milestones. This is the place where Ann comes to open her mind and to write another chapter. *Here for you. Here for our families at a time of loss and reinvention.*

Adina and Sophie, two rising high school seniors, yearned for a space where they could combine Jewish learning with social activism. Adina and Sophie shared their idea and, with the support of our educational staff, they created a program they call Teens for Tikkun, which gathers high school students to talk about social justice issues with community experts, and then identifies projects for teens to go out and make a difference. *Here for you. Here for our emerging adults as they navigate their contribution to making our world better.*

These are just a few stories. There are more that happen every day. *We are here for you. This is only possible because you are here for us.*

Running a vibrant shul that is here for every member 365 days a year takes a lot of resources. Those resources do not come entirely from dues and high holiday seat revenue. Rather, 27% of the revenue for our annual budget comes from our Annual Appeal. Your generosity allows us to do what we do and to be who we are. Thank you so much for your generosity that allows us to be here for you and for all of us.

In this new year, may we always be here for one another.

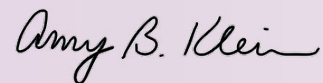
*Shana tovah u'metukah,*



Rabbi Wes Gardenswartz



Mady Donoff  
President



Amy B. Klein  
Chair of Annual Appeal

# 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

In *Witness: Lessons from Elie Wiesel's Classroom* (2018), Ariel Burger quotes Elie Wiesel as teaching: "Whatever you learn, remember the learning must make you more, not less, human."

In all the learning we do at Temple Emanuel—in our preschool, our religious school, our informal education, our family and adult education, Shabbat and Sunday mornings and weekday classes—that learning matters because it nurtures and deepens our compassion, our concern and our commitment to make our world a little bit better.



## HERE FOR YOU

*with Torah that elevates*





## The Gate of Prayer

In his classic *Who Needs God* (1989), Harold Kushner writes: "I have come to believe that the congregating is more important than the words we speak.

Something miraculous happens when people come together seeking the presence of God. The miracle is that we so often find it...Each of us came there looking for it because we did not have it when we were alone. But in our coming together, we create the mood and the moment in which God is present."



Our prayer matters because it connects us more deeply with one another in the good times, the hard times, and the ordinary times of life; it connects us to God as a source of strength and presence; it allows us to become the best version of ourselves.

## HERE FOR YOU

*with prayer that connects*





## The Gate of Israel

Go to Israel.

That is a consistent mantra across our community.

Go to Israel after your Bar or Bat Mitzvah with our ninth-grade trip, with our day schools, with our Passport to Israel program. Go to Israel to study Torah at Hartman. Go to Israel to volunteer. Go to Israel with other families. Go to Israel on March of the Living, to see the resurrection of Jewish hope and home after the *Shoah*.

Why does going to Israel matter so deeply?

Because Israel was, is and will always be the homeland of the Jewish people. We need our homeland with renewed intensity this year.

Because Israel is a sovereign state where Jewish values can inform the marketplace, the public square, the public conversation. What a blessing to be part of an ongoing conversation, a conversation without end, about what it would look like if prophetic ideals of justice and righteousness were embodied in a real country with noble aspirations.

## HERE FOR YOU

*with an eternal connection to our homeland*







## The Gate of Shabbat

Screens. We are awash in screens.

In our cars, we are on our screens. In between meetings, in meetings, we are on our screens. On hikes and bikes, on beaches and trails and mountains, we are on our screens.

Travelling to foreign cities, we are on our screens. Waiting for our show to begin, we are on our screens.

Who talks to anybody anymore?

When, if ever, are we *not* on our screens?

On Shabbat.

Shabbat matters because it provides us with the face to face alternative to the technology that is otherwise omnipresent. To talk to a friend, in person, with no agenda, to be with somebody for the sheer pleasure of being connected to a loving and caring community, to be with our thoughts in contemplation without distraction, that is the beauty of Shabbat.

## HERE FOR YOU

*with Shabbat that deepens our relationships*



# Save Lives.



## The Gate of Redeeming Our World

Our teacher Micah Goodman asks a simple but clarifying question. Do you see your life as *the* story? The point of your life is you. Or do you see your life as attaching to a larger story that was here before you, that will be here after you. The point of your life is to make a real contribution to that larger story while you are lucky enough to be alive.

The Gate of Redeeming Our World matters because it enables people who believe that the point of their life is not their life, the point of their life is to contribute to a larger story, to find concrete ways to make that contribution.

Fighting anti-Semitism in all its forms.

Feeding the hungry.

Clothing the cold.

Sheltering the homeless.

Protecting our environment.

Caring for the vulnerable, the refugee, the stranger among us.

When we attach our life to a larger story, our life matters.

## HERE FOR YOU

*with large redemption stories to which we can attach our lives*







## The Gate of Community

Our nation is experiencing an epidemic of loneliness. Recent studies reveal that close to half of Americans feel alone, lonely, disconnected. These studies also show that loneliness is bad for our health, resulting in medical challenges including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, depression. Connecting to other people meaningfully, sustainably, through the years is essential for body and soul.

Whatever it is that you might be interested in pursuing—from playing softball, to knitting, to discussing books and politics, to working for social justice, to baking *challot* for Shabbatot and holidays, to cooking for *chesed*, to engaging with Israel—you will find other people at Temple Emanuel who share your passion.

Being part of a community matters because life is better, healthier and happier when you share it with people you love.

## HERE FOR YOU

*with people that keep loneliness at bay  
and friendship close at hand*





## The Gate of Teaching Jewish Values to Our Children

The Talmud tells the beautiful story of a man wandering in the wilderness who is hot and hungry and thirsty when he comes upon a tree. The fruit of the tree was sweet, its shade was pleasant, and it had a stream of water flowing by its side. After eating, drinking and renewing himself, the traveler asks: "Tree, how shall I bless you? If I pray that you have sweet fruit, you already have sweet fruit. If I pray that you offer shade, you already offer shade. If I pray that you continue to be sustained by life-affirming waters, you are already sustained by life-affirming waters. My prayer then is: *may all of the shoots that are planted from you give birth to trees that are like you.*" Ta'anit 5B.

Our aspiration is that the best of our values—*tzedek, chesed, ahavat tsion, k'vod habriot, tzelem Elohim*, justice, righteousness, love of Israel and the Jewish people, respect for human dignity, seeing the divine image in all of God's children—will be transmitted from generation to generation.

The Gate of Teaching Jewish Values matters because Jewish values are beautiful, and we create a better and kinder world when those values are owned, lived and loved by our children and grandchildren.

## HERE FOR YOU

*transmitting our noblest values to the next generations*







## What is the Point of Your Life?

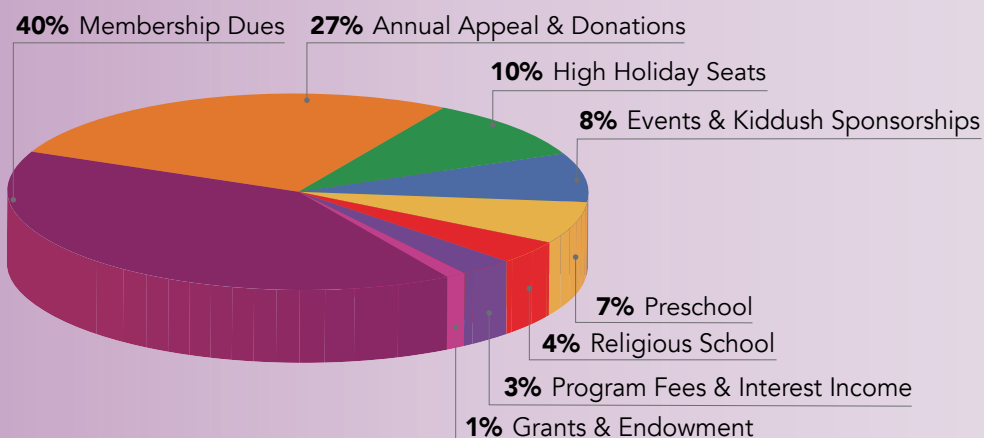
If what Hillel taught is true, the point of your life cannot only be your life. If what Hillel taught is true, the point of your life must also include, in real and important ways, the lives of others. "If I am not for myself who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what is my life? If not now, when?"

Our purpose at Temple Emanuel is to be faithful to all of Hillel's teaching: a better you, a better world, now.

To do that, to run a shul that has programs, services and happenings that deepen your game, that allow you to have the impact on the world that you want to have, and to do all of this with urgency, takes a lot of resources.

That is why our Annual Appeal is so crucial. We offer deeply meaningful opportunities to a deeply diverse community, across Seven Gates, seven days a week, for all. We can do so only because of our Annual Appeal.

## REVENUE SOURCES



*Your gift to our Annual Appeal gives us the resources to build a Jewish community for a better you and a better world.*

As the pie chart shows, our Annual Appeal is the linchpin of our budget, comprising 27% of our revenue. Dues, seats and school tuitions alone cannot sustain all that we do, particularly because we offer abatements to members who cannot pay full dues and to a growing segment of Next Generation members, young people just starting out, looking for community and meaningful connections. We can be a shul for all, we can encourage the membership of young families, and we can be active in all Seven Gates every day of the year, only because of our Annual Appeal.

The point of our life cannot only be our life. The point of our life must include something beyond our life. Thank you for your continued generosity, which helps us create lives of meaning, purpose and joy, and which helps us shape a better world.



# Our Prayer

What is our heart's call? What is our prayer? There are hundreds of pages of liturgy, hundreds of hours of services, over the course of a year. All these pages, all these hours, all these services, all these prayers, boil down to a single essential plea: *"Lord, help me be the best version of me."* Help me not just get through the day, though it is important to get through the day. Help me not just discharge my duties and responsibilities, though it is important to do so. Rather, help me fully embody all of my highest ideals and noblest values.

For each of us, there are many versions of us. The Hebrew word for face, *panim*, actually means faces. It is plural, because no one has one face. Everyone has faces.

The purpose of our community is to bring out everybody's best version of themselves: the most loving, the most generous, the most caring, the most honest, the most impactful. If our prayer is answered, and we can become the best version of ourselves, we can have our best impact on making our world a better place.

Because we are such a splendidly diverse community, different things will bring out the best in different people. For some it is learning. For others it is a trip to Israel. For others it is serving in the kitchen of the Mass Avenue Baptist Church. For others it is daily minyan. Or singing in a choir. Or hanging out with our friends in Sisterhood or Brotherhood or at Kiddush after services.

Thank you. It is only because of your generosity that we have enough going on at Temple Emanuel to bring out the best in everybody. Your gift to our Annual Appeal allows us to be alive and humming with energy, intensity, spirituality, impact, deep friendship, supportive relationships, inspiring learning, beautiful singing and urgent prayer, which fulfills our core prayer: *"Lord, help me be the best version of me."* If we have been able to help our members fulfill this prayer, so that they can shape a better world, we have you to thank.





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Temple Emanuel  
**Challah Bake**



**Challah Bake**

Redwood





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**And for Graphic Design to**  
*Fenway Group*



Temple Emanuel welcomes the participation of interfaith couples and families, and people of all abilities, backgrounds, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations and gender identities.

Annual Report 2019





TEMPLE EMANUEL

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