



2026

TEMPLE SINAI ANNUAL MEETING

Board Reports



President Elect | Emily Webb

Professional Relations Committee {PRC}

- Chair of 8-member PRC overseeing clergy and senior staff.
- Completed 2 contract renewals this year.
- Led structured performance reviews and annual goal-setting meetings.

Executive Leadership Integration

- Partnered closely with President Chuck Fox for leadership continuity.
- Participated in Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, biweekly senior leadership and budget meetings.

Committee & Task Force Involvement

- Planned annual structure for committee work and collaborated with staff and VPs to ensure engagement touchpoints
- Held first Volunteer Expo and Kabbalat Panim honoring committee chairs.
- Worked with VP of Membership Benji Ellis on board engagement practices.
- Standing Committees: Endowment, Fine Arts, House, Tzedek, Security.
- Supported Development, Endowment and Legacy goals, including legacy outreach and sponsorship outreach for the upcoming Ruby Gala.
- Held on-boarding conversations with new board members.
- Strategic Task Forces: Membership Sustaining Commitment, Strategic Planning (chair).

Learning & External Engagement

- Member of URJ President's Cohort (monthly meetings).
- Participant in Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta's Board Chair Convening program.

Strategic Vision & Planning

- Convened Strategic Planning Task Force – with guidance of Thiesen Consulting – to develop shared goals for Temple Sinai's immediate future.
- Collected and analyzed data from stakeholders (congregation survey; Board and Past Presidents working sessions; senior staff, clergy and lay leadership interviews) and Culture of Belonging work.

Living a Jewish life is not only about observing holidays and Shabbat, but also about engaging in acts of loving kindness, pursuing justice, and helping repair the world. A special thank you to each of our volunteers, and to the dedicated leadership of our committee chairs, for bringing these values to life through your meaningful work and service.

Addressing Antisemitism

Chaired by: LaWana Streger

- Provided congregation-wide learning opportunities for all ages, from NOAR students to adult education participants, focused on antisemitism awareness, Jewish history, and remembrance initiatives.
- Participated in the Daffodil Project by planting daffodils as a symbol of remembrance and hope.
- Distributed take-home Kristallnacht educational bags for students and families to encourage learning and discussion beyond the classroom.
- Expanded educational engagement through adult learning programs, discussions, and podcasts related to antisemitism awareness and Jewish identity.
- Continued to prioritize the safety and security of congregants, families, staff, and guests at Temple Sinai.

Backpack Buddies

Chaired by: Nikki Goldstein and Pam Miller

- Held 15 Backpack Buddies packing sessions throughout the school year, with two additional sessions scheduled before year's end, involving more than 30 Temple Sinai volunteers.
- Packed and distributed food bags every other Wednesday for 60 children at Powers Ferry Elementary School in Cobb County through the Backpack Buddies program.
- Prepared two weeks of food at a time, including additional bags for Winter and Spring Breaks, resulting in approximately 2,160 bags of food distributed during the school year.
- Engaged NOAR second graders in a hands-on Backpack Buddies service project connected to their curriculum by having them help pack food bags in November.
- Expanded volunteer participation by welcoming Temple Sinai Preschool parents to monthly packing sessions beginning in January.
- Special recognition to Teresa for consistently setting up tables for packing sessions, Brittany Schear for providing additional volunteer support when needed, and Carrie Bohn for her ongoing assistance and dedication to the program.

Civic Engagement

Chaired by: Beth Lasher

Jewish tradition teaches that voting is more than a civic duty. Many rabbis view it as a mitzvah and a way to help create a more just and equitable world where every voice is heard. Temple Sinai's Civic Engagement Committee worked to ensure that members and the broader community had the information and resources needed to exercise their right to vote successfully.

- Recruited and trained 31 individuals to become certified Volunteer Deputy Registrars through the State of Georgia, enabling them to participate in voter registration drives throughout Fulton County.
- Hosted voter registration drives at Temple Sinai, the Benson Senior Center, Sandy Springs Farmers Market, The Mansions at Sandy Springs, and Holy Innocents' Episcopal School.
- Participated in additional voter registration drives throughout Fulton County, including events at the High Museum, Georgia State University, and the Sandy Springs Library, in partnership with Fulton County's Office of Voter Registration and Elections.
- Provided ongoing election information and voter education regarding early voting, primaries, and runoffs through Temple Sinai's weekly communications and Tzedek emails.

Civic Engagement (con't)

- Created and maintained an “Elections Central” information display in the Temple Sinai lobby featuring calendars, voter resources, and election handouts.

Goals for next year:

- Increase our presence at The Weber School, Holy Innocents' Episcopal School, and Riverwood Charter School by partnering with the Fulton County Office of Voter Registration and Elections to provide voter education programs alongside voter registration drives.
- Expand outreach to senior living facilities by providing one-on-one assistance to residents needing help updating voter registrations and applying to vote by mail.

Community Assistance Center (CAC)

Chaired by: Andi Kaufman and Sheri Weiner

- Staffed the Community Assistance Center Mini Market each month with an average of eight Temple Sinai volunteers per month.
- Organized the Hope for the Holidays program, sponsoring 100 children in need with holiday gifts and family grocery gift cards.
- Attended “Night of Hope,” a fundraising event for CAC featuring a performance of Mean Girls at the Sandy Springs Theater.
- Collected 6,237 pounds of food during Temple Sinai’s High Holy Day Food Drive as CAC’s Congregation of the Month.
- Temple Sinai volunteers sorted and processed High Holy Day donated food at the Roswell Road Food Pantry.
- Volunteered in CAC’s English as a Second Language program by teaching English to CAC clients.
- Assisted CAC clients with tax preparation services.
- Supported CAC operations through volunteer service in the CAC Thrift Shop.
- Participated in quarterly Saturday Operations meetings at the CAC home office.
- Expanded the volunteer base to include more than 45 Temple Sinai members serving in a variety of CAC programs and initiatives.
- Strengthened community within the volunteer group by organizing shared meals before and after volunteer shifts.

Family Promise

Chaired by: Mary Baron, Lisa Herman, Olen Earle, and Lori Spett

- Relied heavily on a small group of deeply dedicated volunteers to help sustain each of our four Family Promise host weeks.
- Faced ongoing challenges filling overnight host slots, often sending urgent requests for volunteers in the days leading up to Sunday move-in.
- Created a warm and welcoming environment during host weeks through holiday decorations, presents, treats, and a Christmas tree for guest families staying during the holidays.
- Inspired meaningful acts of kindness during host weeks from volunteers focused on helping children and families feel special and cared for during their stay such as stuffed animals, fuzzy slippers, and volunteer-led manicures.
- Overnight host coverage continues to be the program’s most critical volunteer need moving forward.

Habitat for Humanity

Chaired by: Phil Karlick

- Partnered with Northwest Metro Atlanta Habitat for Humanity, along with members of AA and Kol Emeth, to help raise the roof on a Habitat house during two Sunday volunteer builds in 2025, with more than 25 Temple Sinai members participating.
- Continued Temple Sinai's involvement in interfaith homebuilding efforts by helping complete a second Habitat house and preparing to begin construction on a third home during the summer of 2026.
- Engaged congregants of all ages and backgrounds, including mothers, sons, sisters, wives, fathers, and rabbis, in hands-on volunteer service building homes alongside future homeowners.
- Supported a 15-congregation interfaith partnership that collectively raised approximately \$170,000 to fund the construction of a Habitat home.
- Recruited volunteers through Temple Sinai communications, including the D'var and other congregational announcements, to participate in summer build days.

Immigration and Refugee Justice

Chaired by: Janie Fishman and Susan Schwartz

- Coordinated weekly volunteers to travel to Clarkston and assist with beginner English classes for Afghan women through the Parwana program at Friends of Refugees.
- Organized and hosted a baby shower in Clarkston for refugee mothers through the Embrace program at Friends of Refugees.
- Supported refugee mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum by helping provide education, transportation support, and guidance through Embrace.
- Participated in the Clarkston Winter Festival sponsored by Friends of Refugees.
- Provided Temple Sinai volunteers and financial support to assist with festival activities and community engagement.
- Partnered with Afghan American Alliance of Georgia and the Clarkston Community Center to support the Ink & Stitch initiative.
- Sinai volunteers helped create welcoming spaces where youth and seniors from diverse backgrounds connected through culturally rooted art activities such as crochet and embroidery.
- Fostered healing, belonging, and cross-cultural relationships within the Clarkston community.
- Hosted an Immigrant/Refugee Family Shabbat at Temple Sinai to strengthen relationships with partner organizations including Friends of Refugees, Afghan American Alliance of Georgia, and Ser Familia, creating meaningful opportunities for prayer, inclusion, and community connection.
- Organized a community dinner and service project following Shabbat services.
- Packed and distributed approximately 50 support bags for partner organizations serving immigrant and refugee families.

Military Affairs/USO

Chaired by: Allan and Sarah Gail Hytowitz,

- Continued Temple Sinai's nearly three decades of service supporting military personnel and their families in partnership with the Atlanta USO, an initiative originally established by Col. Irving Schoenberg (z'l) through the Temple Sinai Military Affairs Committee.
- Engaged approximately 20 Temple Sinai volunteers, many with personal or family military connections, in serving at the Atlanta Airport USO by providing food, hospitality, and civilian connection to active-duty military personnel, retirees, veterans, and their families traveling through Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport.
- Staffed two volunteer shifts during each service day on multiple Sundays throughout the year, including Easter, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day, to ensure continuous support for military travelers and their families.
- Continued Temple Sinai's financial support for food and hospitality expenses through the initiative established by Jay Weinstein (z'l), allowing volunteers to focus on service and outreach.
- Worked to recruit additional volunteers to sustain and expand Temple Sinai's USO involvement for future service dates.

Shomrei Adamah

Chaired by: Josh Marks

- Deepened relationships with ADAMAH and Georgia Interfaith Power and Light by sharing and collaborating on environmental programming and initiatives.
- Organized and held two electronics recycling drives, one in November and one in April.
- Hosted the first congregational Tu B'Shevat Seder in many years, bringing together 20 congregants to celebrate humanity's connection to the environment and affirm our responsibility as stewards of the earth.
- Observed Earth Day by welcoming Sally Bethea to share the bimah and speak with the congregation.
- Continued to support preservation efforts for the Okefenokee Swamp by signing and sharing letters and petitions advocating for its protection.
- Prepared to support Sinai's future environmental advocacy efforts through the proposed Justice Initiative focused on protecting the Okefenokee Swamp for the 2026–2027 program year.
- Updated signage along the Teva Trail to include additional inspirational quotes designed to create a more meaningful experience for visitors.
- Continued congregational recycling and composting initiatives, collecting 2,348 pounds of compostable material from July through March.
- Supported campus sustainability enhancements, including air conditioning upgrades that complied with the most current EPA environmental standards.

Tzedek Committee

VP of Community: Sheri Weiner,

- Filled open seats on the Tzedek Committee to strengthen participation and leadership.
- Revised the Justice Initiative application process to better reflect current community needs and priorities.
- Conducted a successful congregational campaign to promote Justice Initiative applications and encourage member participation.
- Continued the 2026 Justice Initiative review process, including consideration of the "Save the Okefenokee" proposal for Board approval.
- Planned for an additional year of support for SHIELD as an ongoing Justice Initiative partner.

A special thank you to Carrie Bohn, our Engagement Manager, for her tireless dedication, support, and countless behind-the-scenes efforts that help make the incredible work of each of these committees possible. Her organization, leadership, and commitment to our community are valued and deeply appreciated.

VP of Development | Kevin Levingston

The 2024-2025 fiscal year was another step forward for Temple Sinai's development efforts. Highlights included the following:

- Our annual gala was a success from both community participation and finances. This year's gala on March 1st, "A Night in the Big Easy" attracted nearly 300 participants and netted \$190K exceeding our fundraising goal by nearly 30%.
- We are proceeding with a mid-summer installation of a donor wall in the Lehrman Rabbinic Garden. Funds from plaques purchased by Sinai members will support the Rabbinic Endowment Fund to ensure future rabbinic leadership by providing Rabbinic salaries in perpetuity. We have already raised \$240K from plaque purchases. The wall and inaugural plaques will be installed this summer, with several plaques still available for purchase.
- Progress was made in expanding participation in Legacy Sinai. This included several members formalizing their legacy giving and an overall increase in participation. A kabbalat panim was held in late January to recognize both Legacy Sinai participants as well as members who have previously established endowment funds.
- The Sinai Executive Committee and Board have held a series of meetings with a philanthropic consultant, to continue fostering a "culture of philanthropy" at Temple Sinai and we look forward to continuing this work in the coming year.

The Vice President of Governance is a new role for Temple Sinai. After multiple discussions with senior leadership, senior staff, and clergy, the consensus is that this position was created to focus on: (a) overseeing the identification and development of lay leaders, (b) supporting and improving the experience for current leaders, and (c) synagogue governance issues (e.g., by-laws consideration and updates).

To bring structure to the leadership development portion of this role, I identified three areas of focus: (a) Identification of Potential Leaders, (b) Support of Leaders, and (c) Retention of Leadership Related Wisdom.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AREAS OF FOCUS

A. Identification of Potential Leaders

- Met with clergy, senior leaders, leadership development task force representatives, and senior staff to discuss areas of focus.
- Assisted with identification of potential Nominating Committee members.
- Met with immediate past President to discuss collection of names and categories of information to be captured to assist Nominating Committee.
- Conducted exit interviews of Board members and officers leaving office to solicit feedback on Board service and gather information about their prior and future service.
- Attended organizational meetings and Zoom conferences with incoming and former Atidaynu leadership.
- Continued dialog with senior leaders and immediate past president regarding leadership pipeline, sources for consideration by nominating committee, and potential recommendations for Atidaynu.
- Solicited names of potential lay leaders.
- Met with senior staff to discuss ways to use Salesforce platform to capture, organize, and search information about prior and current leadership.

B. Support of Leaders

- Assisted with preparation of materials for New Board Member Orientation sessions.
- Conducted New Board Member Orientations sessions (2).
- Coordinated summer interviews with new Board members and officers.
- Presented on VP Governance position and leadership development topics at Committee Chair Orientation.
- Presented at Board retreat on VP Governance position and leadership topics.
- Assisted with preparation of materials to be included in Sinai Portal for Board Members.
- Reviewed materials to be included in potential Leadership Library.
- Met with leadership training professional to discuss potential leadership development topics to be presented.
- Conducted mid-year Board survey.
- Reported survey results to Board.
- Coordinated leadership development program on delegation.

C. Retention of Leadership Related Wisdom

- Outlined categories of information to be collected from former, current, and potential leaders.
- Conducted multiple sessions with staff members to discuss capture and retention of information about congregants including Temple Sinai leadership roles, personal skills, and interests.
- Assisted with preparation of Board FAQ document to provide information to Board members about Temple Sinai history, operations, and governance.
- Work on best practices documents for mid-year survey, exit interviews, and summer check-ins.
- Conducting exit interviews of outgoing Board members and officers.
- Coordinating summer check-ins with new and returning Board members.

GOVERNANCE

- Analyzed language in recently updated by-laws regarding approval authority of Endowment Committee sub-committee.
- Communicated with Endowment Committee chair and senior leadership regarding approval authority and potential future modifications to language in by-laws.
- Presented to the Board regarding roles and responsibilities of Board, Executive Committee, and senior leadership
- Reviewed and analyzed Bylaws in order to update Board FAQ document.
- Conferred with representative of other synagogues to discuss governance challenges and best practices.

In this new position, I have had the opportunity to work closely with senior leadership and staff to leverage the wealth of existing knowledge, tools, and experience that Temple Sinai and its lay leaders have already developed. For next year, I intend to continue these discussions and initiatives while continuing to develop best practices for this position.

If you have ideas related to leadership or would like to get more involved, please feel free to reach out to me via email, text, or telephone.

Adam Katz
(404) 822-5371
leadership@templesinai.org

Immediate Past President | Robert Sinsheimer

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee met from November 2025 to February 2026. It solicited names for consideration, reviewed candidates, and selected nominees for the following open Officer and Trustee positions.

Officer positions for 2-year terms ending in May 2028 to be filled are:

- VP of Development
- VP of Learning
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Assistant Treasurer

Trustee positions to be filled are:

- Six (6) At-Large Trustees with 2-year terms ending in May 2028
- One (1) At-Large Trustee to fill the remaining 1-year term of a Trustee nominated to serve as an Officer
- Additional Trustees- Women of Sinai Trustee, Brotherhood Trustee, and Nonvoting Teen Representative, with 1-year terms ending in May 2027

Past Presidents Committee

Under Temple Sinai's By-laws the Past Presidents Committee is a standing committee that provides advice to, and serves as a sounding board for, the current President, Officers and Board of Trustees. All Past Presidents who are Members of the Congregation are members of this committee, and the Immediate Past President serves as the chairperson of this committee.

The Past Presidents Committee met once this fiscal year with our President, Chuck Fox, and members of our Senior Staff. Topics discussed included a review of fiscal 2024/2025 activities, a fiscal 2025/2026 financial update, and a discussion of fiscal 2025/2026 leadership goals.

The Past Presidents Committee also met with Theisen Consulting to share input on Temple Sinai's strategic planning efforts.

In the past year, Temple Sinai's educational programs have experienced remarkable growth and success. The community benefits from a broad array of dynamic educational experiences designed to inspire learning, deepen connections, and engage members at every stage of life.

Temple Sinai Preschool (TSPS)

There continues to be a high demand for early childhood programming, along with strong retention and ongoing inquiries from new families. Engagement opportunities such as Tot Shabbat, Babies & Blocks, and Daddy & Me are creating meaningful touchpoints that deepen connection, strengthen relationships, and foster a growing sense of belonging within our community.

- This year 4 rooms were added to the upstairs wing to accommodate expanding preschool needs.
- TSPS has a full enrollment of 170 students with waiting lists for Infant and Toddler rooms.
- TSPS now has The Light Lab and Loose Parts Lounge which provide preschoolers an additional learning space to build and create. Educators are experimenting with more inquiry-based learning opportunities with visible student engagement and creativity.

We are deeply grateful to Marisa Kaiser, Jamah Maman, Shana Wilons, Kate Hennessey, Brandon Gabay, Sigal Kahn and Sharon Clark for their continued dedication to our adult and youth programs' success.

K-12 Education- NOAR (K to 6th and Family) & HUB for Teen Learning and Engagement (7th to 12th-Hadracha U'kehillah v'Bina (Leadership-Community-Wisdom))

Teens Highlights

- With BeWellAtl, Sinai offered Teen Mental Health First Aid training to our teens.
- An additional program in conjunction with BeWellAtl included a Suicide Preventions program as well as Smart and Affirming Choices for our 11th and 12th graders.
- HUB 9-12 had a successful year with an impressive \$13,932 raised for Camp Jenny. There were approximately 25 high schoolers at every event this year.
- H.U.B. 78 Council was launched this year. This council meets once a month to develop different leadership skills. They successfully planned and led an event for forty 6th 7th and 8th graders.

NOAR Highlights

- Noar introduced the Tkiya program. This Jewish music program already works with the preschool, and it brought additional music into Noar Sunday.
- A \$4500 Boost Grant was received to enhance the Project Based Learning program, A Walk through the Haggadah , by bringing in specialists to support the learning.
- Parent Meet Ups with the Clergy was successfully launched this year as well. Each meet up focuses on one grade. This gives parents the opportunity to have time with a clergy member and to get to know other parents in the grade.
- In January, Club Sababa began on Wednesday afternoons. It is a new program focusing on Israeli Culture with our Shinshin, Rotem.

Adult Education Highlights

- Temple Sinai had an incredibly meaningful Sinai synagogue trip to Israel with the Amiyut (Peoplehood) Task Force, led by Rabbi Natan Trief. They explored Israel's culture and engaged directly with the current and complex geopolitical reality.
- Rabbi Natan also taught a multi-week Melton course with 70 students, examining centuries of racism and anti-Jewish hatred.
- An 18-week cohort of Exploring Judaism (formerly Introduction to Judaism), brought together for the first time 30 young adults and adult B'nai mitzvah students.
- The Scholar In Residence program "Flavors and Flamenco" was a huge success with 200 attendees. More events focusing on "world Jewry" are in the plans for next year.
- Seeking Sinia podcast continues to engage listeners across various topics with a variety of interesting and knowledgeable guests.

VP of Membership Engagement | Benji Ellis

This past year as VP of Membership Engagement has been defined less by launching new programs and more by deepening the infrastructure that allows our community to truly thrive. My focus has been on supporting the committees beneath me, keeping their energy and momentum alive, and ensuring that the right people and tools are in place for the work ahead.

Committee Support & Engagement

Rather than adding new layers of programming, my primary contribution this year has been active stewardship of the committees under the Membership Engagement umbrella — identifying and removing blockers, maintaining committee energy and focus, and ensuring each group had what it needed to execute effectively. This behind-the-scenes support is foundational to the sustained success of our congregational programming.

Board Collaboration & Communication

A meaningful area of growth this year has been elevating how our Board engages with and communicates around membership. Key efforts included:

- Establishing a Board WhatsApp group to improve real-time communication, collaboration, and information sharing among trustees — a step toward a more connected and responsive leadership team.
- Facilitating deeper cross-functional engagement, with a focus on ensuring the Board is not only informed about membership initiatives but actively participating in and championing them.

Technology & Engagement Infrastructure

In partnership with staff, I have been working closely on leveraging our new Salesforce CRM platform to begin defining what “membership engagement” means in measurable terms for Temple Sinai. Establishing a shared language and data foundation for engagement is a prerequisite to everything that comes next — targeted outreach, informed programming decisions, and tracking congregant connection over time. This work is ongoing and a priority for the year ahead.

Looking Ahead: Vision for 2026–2027

Building on this year’s foundation, the priorities for the coming year are:

- Defining a comprehensive engagement metric — Fully establishing a trackable engagement framework within Salesforce that allows us to understand how individual families are connected to Temple Sinai across all touchpoints, and to identify opportunities to deepen that connection.
- Targeted programming outreach — Using engagement data to match families with programming specific to their life stage, interests, and goals for how they want to engage with Sinai. The aim is to make every member feel that Temple Sinai has something meaningful for them — right now, wherever they are.

Temple Sinai’s strength lies in its people and the relationships that form here. The work of this role is to ensure that every family who walks through our doors — or joins us virtually — has a clear and welcoming path to belonging. I can’t wait for next year!

Sinai is our spiritual home and our clergy has continued, as always, to provide meaningful worship opportunities and insightful spiritual programming.

A highlight of this year was the Women's Spirituality Retreat at Miraval Austin. In April, over 50 women cared for their physical, mental and spiritual health both individually and together in community.

Activities have included:

- **Kesher** – Makes our community truly a caring community and continues to provide meals for congregants at critical life junctures.
- **Chevra Kadisha** (men's and women's groups) – Continued to perform the sacred ritual of tahara (preparing the deceased for burial) for Sinai members and their families. They are also moving forward with conversations about an Atlanta-wide Chevra Kadisha, with Sinai volunteers leading the way.
- **Shir Sinai** ("Sinai Sings") – held its most well attended coffee house program after a Friday night shabbat service in February. The Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah "Reconsidered" services choir added high school youth as members, adding to the experience of the congregation as a whole.
- **Shammashim** – The program evolves, utilizing technology to build community and leadership within shammashim, and also provide connections between congregants, shammashim, and opportunities at Sinai.