

SINAI



CONNECTIONS

CHICAGO SINAI CONGREGATION

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT CHICAGO

During the past few months the generosity and support from our Sinai community has been overwhelming. From making donations, cooking meals, planting and gardening, and standing up against racism, our community has found ways to go above and beyond to help. Below are just a few ways our community has come together.

Teens Be Heard (TBH)

On June 19, in downtown Chicago, Sinai joined 500+ interfaith leaders and houses of worship in a faith community led peaceful demonstration. TBH, a student led initiative at Sinai, focused on education and awareness in order to combat social injustices, joined this march. TBH is committed to providing resources and tools for teens to help them advocate change in our society and work to ensure that adults take them seriously on important issues. [Learn how you can become involved at teensbeheard.org.](https://teensbeheard.org)



Stone Temple Baptist Church Community Garden

Last summer our Sinai community began a partnership with our friends from the Stone Temple Baptist Church in North Lawndale to build a community garden. Every Tuesday at 1:30PM this summer we have joined together for weekly planting, weeding, and gardening. We always welcome volunteers to join us. If you would like to lend your green thumb, contact [Ann Courter](#) for more information.

Interested in helping in other ways? Donate personal care and household cleaning items for people in need. Find a list of needed items [here](#).



Blessings in a Backpack

Through the generous support of our members, and a grant from the national Blessings in a Backpack organization, we were able to distribute over 3000 Blessings bags to CPS students during the COVID-19 school closures. We have also served over 300 meals a week at three locations in light of virtual learning and lack of summer programming. Our work has included:

- Providing Blessings bags to CPS families at Walter Payton College Preparatory School and LaSalle Language Academy, the two schools serving as CPS "grab and go" weekly meal distribution sites.
- Partnering with the CPS Office of Faith Based Initiatives in order to distribute our Blessings bags to CPS students from more than 60 Chicago schools at the Soul City Church.
- Through a generous donation from the Girl Scouts organization, we treated CPS families to a box of Girl Scout cookies with each Blessings bag on the last day of the school year.

There is still great need. We are extending our program through the summer and are continuing to distribute Blessings bags at Payton and LaSalle. We are also hoping to provide bags to students participating in the CPS Summer Safe Haven Program.

If you would like to support this program, you can make a donation on the Sinai website [here](#).



Lincoln Park Community Services Dinner (LPCS) | [Sign up to help here.](#)

Join Sinai families once a month, on Saturday evenings, as they prepare dinner for individuals experiencing poverty and housing insecurity. LPCS is a temporary housing facility at the corner of North and Sedgwick.

Volunteers cannot currently cook onsite due to COVID-19 restrictions so we are asking our meal volunteers to either prepare a dish at home and drop it off, or order a dish from a restaurant for delivery. Meals do not need to be individually packaged; staff onsite serve our guests a plated meal.



MEMORIES OF SINAI FROM OUR MEMBER

Emil Hirsch, the grandson of Rabbi Emil Hirsch



My memory of Sinai dates back to 1927 when I was about a year and a half. My father, David, the eldest son of my grandfather, Sinai's Rabbi Emil Hirsch, after whom I am named, pushed my buggy from our home on Oakwood Boulevard to 46th and Grand Boulevard. Once we arrived,

I clearly remember Rabbi Mann coming out the huge main entrance of Sinai, down the twenty or more stone steps, to my buggy where my father lifted me up and Rabbi Mann patted me on my head. A blessing and a lifetime of generational ties had begun.

I graduated from Hyde Park High School in 1942 and graduated from Wilson Junior City of Chicago College in December 1943. I was confirmed at Sinai in 1940 and participated in the Junior Congregation until I left for WWII military service in January 1944. As a soldier, I was in Patton's Third Army, became a Combat Infantryman, and fought in the Battle of the Bulge and the Battle to capture Metz. While on a special combat team attached to the British Second Army, I was approached by a leader of the Dutch Underground, Nico Dohmen, and asked to accompany him to a farm with a hidden cellar. Once we arrive, I discovered that, for the past three years, he had concealed a 28-year-old Jewish Nurse from Rotterdam and, together, they were able to save the lives of 250 Jewish children. After the war, I was awarded a Combat Infantryman Badge and a Bronze Star.

I returned from the Army to Chicago in 1946 and attended, and graduated from, the Department of Mathematics at the University of Chicago. I also returned to Sinai where I taught religious school and, with my brother, led a Great Books Group. I also participated in the "Sinai Seniors" a group of younger Sinai members, mostly unmarried, in their twenties. I would eventually serve on Sinai's Board of Directors.

In 1953, I was married by Dr. Mann to Mary Portis. Our children, Beth and Bernie, attended Sinai's religious school and were confirmed by Rabbi Karff. After Mary's

death in 1966, I remarried Minnie Epstein Pollack. After Rabbi Karff left Sinai to lead a new congregation, I made the decision to join North Shore Congregation Israel in Glencoe under the leadership of Rabbi Herb Bronstein, a Rabbi I knew well. There, I served on the Board of Directors and chaired the Library Committee.

Business-wise my brother, Myron, and I opened Whitehall Printing Company and Collage Books Inc., a national and international publisher and manufacturer of paper-back books. One of the books we published was *Environmental Space Science*, which for five years, was the first textbook on Space Science used at the Air Force Academy. A book I authored, *Copyright It Yourself*, was the main book in the Library of Congress bibliography on the new copyright law of 1976. I also am the author of *Rev. Dr. Emil G. Hirsch Early Ministry Thru 1881* where I detail at length my grandfather's key role in the founding of the Hebrew Union College.

In 1991, Whitehall Printing Company and Collage Books Inc. built a new printing and publishing plant in Naples, Florida and I moved there to manage the operation. There I joined a new congregation, Temple Shalom, and to my amazement, discovered a rabbinic connection to Chicago Sinai Congregation. Their first Rabbi, Abraham Shusterman, was emeritus Rabbi of Temple Har Sinai in Baltimore, the first congregation that my great-grandfather, Rabbi David Einhorn served in 1855 and then my grandfather, Emil G. Hirsch, served in 1877.

I returned to Chicago and in 2019 my brother and I decided to close our business. In November of last year, I moved to the Brookdale Northbrook Senior Residence, in Deerfield, to be near my daughter, Beth. During this pandemic, I have reconnected to Chicago Sinai through Zoom, enjoying Shabbat and finding comfort as I recall the many generations of Hirsch's that have travelled through this Congregation. It is with a deep sense of history that I share this story with you.

MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Nina Abnee

Nina was born and raised in Chicago. She lived on the Southside until she was 11, moved to Wilmette, and currently lives in Lincoln Park. Nina is a widow; her husband died of cancer 12 years ago. She has two daughters. Louise Keshaviah is married to Mayank Keshaviah and they have a 2 year old son named Krishna. Ellen Abnee is married to Kevin Hsu. Nina has two aging cock-a-poo dogs. She likes playing strategic board games with friends, knitting, listening to music, particularly The Beatles, going to art museums and attending live theater. She's an avid Chicago sports fan and has recently become obsessed with Hamilton.

Nina has enjoyed many events at Sinai. She has loved Sinai since her first visit for Simon Tanzman's Bar Mitzvah. She has enjoyed Shabbat, many B'nai Mitzvah and confirmations, spring concerts and tasting the great food at the cooking and baking contests. She recently joined because she wants to be a part of a faith-based community. Nina looks forward to meeting new people and participating as a member in many of the ways she participated as a guest. Nina expects to participate more frequently....especially with Zoom!



Katrina Barone and Spencer Gundry

Katrina was born in Cincinnati, OH and grew up in Zurich, Switzerland. Spencer grew up in the suburbs of Chicago (Glencoe). Katrina works in healthcare quality improvement at Erie Family Health Centers and Spencer works in finance. They met at a gym and consider themselves an active couple. During their free time, you can find Spencer at an ice hockey rink and Katrina rowing on the Chicago River with the Lincoln Park Boat Club. They also frequent Cubs and Blackhawks games!

How did they find Sinai? Spencer reached out to his Rabbi growing up, Rabbi Geffen from North Shore Congregation Israel, and she recommended Sinai. They checked out the website and loved the simple beauty of the synagogue itself. They are looking forward to attending services and celebrating holidays with the Sinai, as well as participating in volunteer opportunities.



Eileen Bell

Eileen grew up on the south side of Chicago. In her early years, her family belonged to Sinai (Hyde Park). She remembers wanting to go to Sunday school because it meant a visit to the Museum of Science and Industry afterwards. She was told that her parents were married in Sinai.

After attending college out of state, Eileen returned to Chicago for law school. She spent most of her career practicing labor law and eventually became a Labor Arbitrator.

Recently retired, Eileen spends her time working out at the gym (before the pandemic), taking adult education courses, and (most recently) learning cello. Eileen decided to join Sinai because it is the right time in her life. Additionally, she sees the need to support Reform Judaism. She hopes to take part in some of Sinai's classes with the Rabbis.

MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Sam Gensburg and Emma Szczesiul

Sam is from Highland Park and Emma grew up just outside of Raleigh NC. Sam is a UX Designer who, during quarantine time, has enjoyed going on jogs, working on new ideas with friends (virtually), and watching all things sci-fi. Emma enjoys playing the flute, cooking (she was making challah every Friday until Sam said they were eating too many carbs), and taking care of her 2 pet guinea pigs, S'mores and Minnie. They both enjoy having a home full of plants and have recently tried having an indoor herb garden, until aphids took over and a trip to visit Emma's parents killed the basil. They're attempting to start over.

When Emma moved to Chicago, they started searching for a temple that reflected their values of social justice, inclusion, and engaging community. Sam's grandparents, Roberto and Susane Freund, were members of Sinai in the 90s, and recommended they visit. Emma, coming from a Christian background, is eager to learn and grow in Jewish culture, and they both felt welcomed at Sinai with open arms.

Pre-COVID, Sam and Emma attended Shabbat services weekly and have gone to a few Saturday Torah studies. They enjoyed social events such as Sushi and Sake in the Sukkah, and a Reform Chicago 20s and 30s Shabbat dinner at Maggiano's. They can usually (pre-COVID-19) be found at Friend's Ramen after services on Fridays, and would love to meet more Sinai friends. They are looking forward to getting involved in more social and activism events in the future!

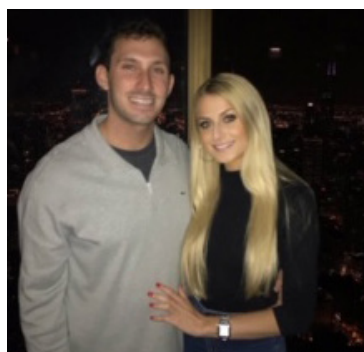


Amanda, Hollund and Adeline Shaf

Amanda and Hollund are both from the Chicagoland area; Amanda is from the south side of the city and Hollund is from Highland Park.

Amanda teaches third grade and Hollund works as a legal document service coordinator. They love music and enjoy going to concerts and adding to their (pretty impressive) vinyl collection. They are huge Sox fans and love going to games (or used to before the pandemic). Amanda loves to cook and bake, while Hollund loves to taste test. They also enjoy superhero movies and always see every Marvel movie in the theater.

Amanda and Hollund joined Sinai so they can learn more themselves and also raise their daughter, Adeline, in a Jewish community. They look forward to instilling in her the important traditions and values of Judaism and also getting to know other families in the process.



Jake Lobel and Michelle Karp

Michelle is from Boca Raton, Florida and Jake is from Newburgh, Indiana. They are both very active and enjoy going to the gym and participating in outdoor activities such as kayaking, biking, wakeboarding, and walking around the city. They also love the amazing restaurants in Chicago.

Michelle and Jake joined Sinai because they want to be able to give back and get involved with this Jewish community. Chicago is a big city and they hope that being part of Sinai will make it feel more like home. They are excited to get involved and provide some helping hands; in fact Michelle has already lent a "hand" at the garden at Stone Temple Baptist Church.

Welcome our new Songleader, Toby Pechner



Toby Pechner started songleading in 2005. Though he was only a teen then, he was inspired by his 14 summers at URJ Camp Newman and through working at local synagogues and decided to pursue songleading full time in 2016. Since 2016, Toby has brought the joy of communal singing to congregations, camps, and communities across the nation and world. In December 2018 Toby joined Netzer South Africa, a not-for-profit Progressive Zionist Youth Movement, for camp. Toby loves to bring people together to show how powerful we can be by connecting our voices in song during services.

[Email Toby](#) to say hello, welcome him to Sinai Chicago, and let him know your favorite song.

Watch him play Hinei Ma Tov during Shabbat Services [here](#).

MAZAL TOV

Welcome!



Nayan Roos Kirkpatrick

June 1, 2020

child of Poushali Bhattacharjee and
Aaron Kirkpatrick
sibling of Navya



Finn Isaac Davidowitz

June 17, 2020

child of Sarah and Matt Davidowitz



Wesley Richard Goldberg and Reid Herschel Goldberg

June 9, 2020

children of Flannery and Jeff Goldberg
siblings of Jane
grandchildren of Carolyn Allen Horwich
and Allan Horwich



James David Berger

July 14, 2020

child of Katie and J.R. Berger
sibling of Max



Henry Kibort

June 13, 2020

child of Adam and Nancy Kibort
sibling of Molly

B'nei Mitzvah

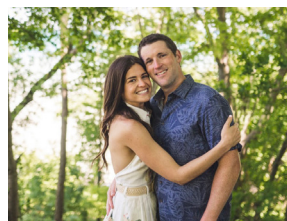


Sienna Oppenheimer

July 11, 2020

child of James and Jennifer Oppenheimer

Newlyweds



Ari Viner & Michael Wilson

June 14, 2020

Herbert "Herbie" Emilio Rodriguez

July 20, 2020

child of Lauren Goldstein and Jose Rodriguez

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

As a community, Chicago Sinai Congregation has led by example during these past months, demonstrating the very best in all of us. We have shown our ability to manage change and dislocation, strengthen and renew community connections, care, mourn and learn for and from each other, and generously invest in the sustainability of a sacred place that has been loved and cherished for generations.

Even before the Coronavirus crisis, we began to explore, for the financial health of the synagogue, additional membership levels above our current Sustainer level of \$6000. New membership levels of Patron at \$10,000 and Pillar at \$25,000 were created. In the best of years, these funds help us support congregants who are unable to afford full dues, Preschool or Religious School tuition and b'nei mitzvah fees. Support is needed now more than ever.

We thank our members listed here who have so generously increased their membership to these new levels.

Please consider joining them to ensure that Chicago Sinai Congregation continues to support, innovate, adapt and embrace our community today, tomorrow and into the future.

PILLARS

The Bluhm Family
James and Paula Crown
Michael and Tanya Polsky
The Pritzker Traubert Family

PATRONS

Anonymous
Donna Barrows
David Garfield and Laura Nelson
Thom Lobe and Kathleen Levitin
Harry Seigle

THANK YOU

Temple Fund

Donna Barrows
In honor of Norman Hirsch being named a Life Trustee
In honor of Susan Lucas's outstanding service as President of Sinai
In honor of Dr. Alison Tothy's election as President of Sinai
Sidney Bernstein
In appreciation for reading his father's yahrzeit
Dale and Howard Chapman
Nancy Friedland
In memory of Ida Mouscher
Mark and Shelley Grach
Aaron Kirkpatrick and Poushali Bhattacharjee
In appreciation of Nayan Kirkpatrick's baby naming
Nancy Garfien
Stuart and Susan Lucas
In honor of the birth of Emmanuelle Fay Tornow
Heather and Randy Nornes
In appreciation of Jean Metzler
Debra Magad
Bobbi Meyers
Eddie and Adrienne Rainey
In honor of Midge Perlman Shafon's Special Birthday
Larry and Michele Rivkin
Marilyn Salomon
In honor of the appointment of Alexandra Salomon to the Board
Harold and Mona Shabelman
Charles and Carol Siegel
In honor of Dr. Alison Tothy
Eric Terman and Mari Philipsborn
Bryan Traubert and Penny Pritzker
Ruth Winter

Sinai Initiative: Blessings in a Backpack

Grant and Jill Peters
Larry and Ellen Schor
In honor of Allie Bensinger's graduation from college

RefugeeOne

Larry and Michele Rivkin

Music Tribute Fund

Steven Andes

Sinai Education Fund

Dylan Lingelbach and Priya Mhatre

Rabbi Limmer's Discretionary Fund

David R. Baum and Tilly Macalister-Smith
Bayer Family Foundation
Hannah Deason and Josh Schroeder
Henry and Cookie Kohn
Barton Lewin
Steve and Shelley Limmer
In honor of Rabbi Limmer's 20th year in the rabbinate

Rabbi Greene's Discretionary Fund

Barbara Feldman
In appreciation of Rabbi Greene officiating at the baby naming of our granddaughter Nomi Mica Feldman
Julie Garfunkel

Rabbi Zinn's Discretionary Fund

Jeffery Miller and Marissa Brattain
In appreciation of Rabbi Zinn for officiating our wedding

Preschool Tribute Fund

Marc and Sharen Berman
In memory of Beatrice Margolis

Preschool Fund

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

Gala Donation

The 2020 Gala Committee has donated UPB III prayer books to the following Gala Donor. Their generosity allows us to continue to build a House of Prayer for All People.

Kathy Bernstein

Sinai Fund for Social Action

In honor of Thomas Philipsborn for Father's Day

Lisa Blumberg
Alan and Ellyn McCrea
Anne Philipsborn and Richard Ray
Eric Terman and Mari Philipsborn

Michael Darcy and Lenore Holt-Darcy
Jill Graham

In memory of her late husband, Burton Lewis Samuels

Andrew and Emily Meyer
Larry and Michele Rivkin
Larry and Ellen Schor

In honor of the birth of Emmanuelle Fay Tornow

In honor of the marriage of Emily Waife and Eli Kaufman

In appreciation of Susan Lucas's term as President

In honor of Dr. Alison Tothy's election as our new President



IN MEMORIAM

Our congregation extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of

Christine Ballot

sister-in-law of Alissa Ballot

Erika Bell

cousin of Eileen Bell

John Burroughs

father of Tim (Barbara Smith) Burroughs

grandfather of Jacob and Jeremy Burroughs

Lawrence Goldfaber

uncle of Penny (Steve) Pollack and Hilary Lewis

Fran Kaufman

cousin of Ellen (Howard) Gossage

Dave Keane

cousin of Carmel (Aaron) Eiger

Allen Mitzenmacher

father of Andrew (Lauren Niimi) Mitzenmacher

grandfather of Eli, Ben and Noah Mitzenmacher

Madeline Pelts Rosenberg

aunt of Edwin Eisendrath (Jennifer Schulze)

great aunt of Emma, Jake, and Hannah Eisendrath

sister-in-law of Barbara Manilow

Bedonna Weiss Perry

sister of Bradley Weiss and Dr. Ron Weiss

Cathy Zwaska

sister of Rita (Howard Tanzman) Kovac

*aunt of Simon Tanzman, Lawrence (Haley) Tanzman,
and William Tanzman*

A Caring Community

Chicago Sinai Congregation strives to be a Caring Community, we would like to know about joyful or difficult lifecycle events you are experiencing. If you are praying for yourself or someone you care about as they deal with physical, emotional, or spiritual difficulties, or if you wish to celebrate a joyful event, we want to offer support. We invite you to speak with a Rabbi.

We are all connected. Please submit your pictures and announcements for our next Member Connections to Alicia Allison at aallison@chicagosinai.org.

