



Temple Sinai and the State of Israel are Celebrating Their 70th Anniversary This Year

The 60's and 70's were times of growth and advancement as well as turmoil and upheaval. 1960 began with the election of John F. Kennedy and 1979 saw Ayatollah Khomeini return to power in Iran. During those decades we experienced optimism, protesting, and everything in between. Martin Luther King was silenced but his dream was not. Billie Jean King took a swing for women's rights. Apple was created and Nixon resigned. The first man walked on the moon and Temple Sinai took many significant steps of its own.

The 60's

Since its inception, Temple Sinai has been a cultural beacon of learning and discussion in the community. The committees that serve as arms of the synagogue have welcomed a diverse spectrum of distinguished lecturers. The list of distinguished speakers at Temple Sinai mirror to the conscience of the congregation, a social barometer of the country and a reaction to the events of the world. Those speakers, from the worlds of politics, religion, business, media and the arts are yet another example of the Temple's contributions to the congregation and to the community. The speakers at Temple Sinai during the 1960's reflected those turbulent years and included Bishop James Pike, former Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Manhattan, Dr. Maurice Eisendrath, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the parent body of Reform Judaism, and Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, former Under-Secretary of the United Nations.

By 1962, the demands of a rapidly growing congregation required the first major enlargement of the Temple since 1955. The \$450,000 expansion provided for an enlarged sanctuary, five additional classrooms, a new entrance to the east side of the Temple, modernization of the kitchen facilities and air conditioning, and expanded parking. The new sanctuary, which is still in use, was dedicated on August 28, 1964 and seated 510 people for regular Sabbath services. For High Holy Day services and other special events, the renovation allowed for expansion into a multi-purpose room, named Sinai Hall, allowing a combined seating for 1,500 people. The sanctuary, with its distinctive eight stained glass windows, depicts the major holidays in the Hebrew calendar. The new pulpit and stained glass windows were designed and executed by Albert Wood and Five Sons of Port Washington.



Rabbi Alvan Rubin (left) served as the first spiritual leader of Temple Sinai of Roslyn from its inception in 1948 until September 13, 1968 when, after almost twenty years of service to Temple Sinai, he received the call to serve as Chief Rabbi at Temple Israel in St. Louis, Missouri. As Rabbi Emeritus at Temple Sinai, he returned to celebrate special occasions and anniversaries of the Temple. Rabbi Norman Kahan (right) was installed in a special service as Sinai's new spiritual leader on September 13, 1968 and would eventually serve as our Senior Rabbi for over 17 years.

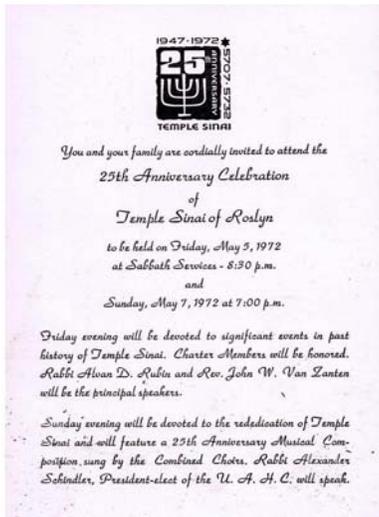


By 1962, under the direction of Cantor Norman H. Belink (lower right), Temple Sinai's first Cantor, the combined Junior and Senior Choirs of the Temple had reached over 100 members. By the Annual Music Festival in 1963, membership in Temple Sinai's choirs had grown to 130 voices. By 1967, the Temple's Junior Choir alone had grown to 50 voices. Helen Belink, the Cantor's wife, conducted the junior choir and often aided the Cantor in the musical portions of the service. From 1950 to 1961, the Temple organist was Leslie Garrison who passed away suddenly on June 4, 1961. G. Stratton Caryl performed as organist at High Holy Day services for the first time on September 10, 1961 and continued to provide musical accompaniment at Temple Sinai for fifty years!



If the Rabbi is the heart and soul of the Temple and the Cantor is its voice, then the Executive Director must be all the internal vital organs that allow the Temple to function. The Executive Director oversees all the day-to-day activities that keep the physical plant of the Temple operational, including the central administration of its full-time staff and lay leaders and the daily contact with the congregants. The first Executive Director at Temple Sinai was Edwin A. Kohen (left), who was hired in 1960 to serve in that new position. Ed Kohen would serve Temple Sinai as Executive Director until 1986.

The 70's



Temple Sinai celebrated its 25th anniversary with a rededication program that lasted from May 5-7, 1972, including a special Sabbath service conducted by Rabbi Norman Kahan. The congregation welcomed back its first Rabbi, Alvan D. Rubin, for special commemorative honors. The Rev. John W. Van Zanten, an honorary member of Temple Sinai, was given a special presentation by Herbert H. Hyman, senior past president of the Temple. The Reverend was instrumental in the founding of Temple Sinai by allowing the members of the congregation to hold their religious services in his church for more than two years while Temple Sinai was being built. Thomas T. ("Buddy") Pierce, also received special honors for permitting the Temple's Sunday school classes to be conducted at the Pierce Country Day School during the formative years of the Temple.

On the night of April 18, 1975, the synagogue was the target of vandalism when it was the object of an attack by a deranged individual, who was subsequently caught and committed to a psychiatric hospital. Several religious objects and antiques on display were destroyed, and seven torahs and the Holy Ark were desecrated. In a more serious incident, the Temple was again vandalized on the night of September 21, 1979. The silver crowns and breastplates from nine torahs, including bell-towers and silver pointers, were stolen just hours before the start of Rosh Hashanah. Although the artifacts had little monetary value, they represented a religious and emotional tie to the donors and families celebrating a bar mitzvah or memorializing a loved one. The vandal was never captured. After being without torah ornaments for 26 months, the Temple dedicated nine new unique sets of ornaments on December 18, 1981. The new sets of silver torah crowns and breastplates were designed and crafted by Moshe Zabari, artist-in-residence at the Jewish Museum in New York City. The ornaments were funded by a special fund-raising drive of the congregants to replace the stolen objects.



Rabbi Norman Kahan, the Temple's Senior Rabbi from 1968 to 1985, was the recipient of many honors for his energetic efforts to foster amicable relations with the Christian community, to benefit Russian emigrants in Israel, and on behalf of many other Jewish causes. In February 1975, in its centennial anniversary, Rabbi Kahan was elected to the Board of Governors of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In 1976, he was installed as the Vice President of the New York Board of Rabbis and elected to the vice-presidency of the Rabbinic Alumni of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In addition, he was recipient of the 21st Annual "Tzedakah" Award by the Commission on Synagogue Relations of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of Greater New York. In 1977, the degree of Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa, was conferred on Rabbi Kahan by the Faculty and Board of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.



Cantor Norman Belink, the first cantor at Temple Sinai since its inception in 1948, served as president of the American Conference of Cantors from 1975 to 1976. He also taught and was a mentor to hundreds of future cantors in the School of Sacred Music of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City for many years. In 1976, in honor of his 25th anniversary as Cantor at Temple Sinai, the Norman H. Belink Scholarship Fund was established for a cantorial student at the School of Sacred Music of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Cantor Norman Belink retired from Temple Sinai in June of 1978 but served as Cantor Emeritus for the next eighteen years.

During these decades, Temple Sinai its own share of growth and the need to replace. We are all the better for the expansion, growth and changes our Temple has gone through to be what it has been for so many and continues to be for all of us - our home.