

Holidays 2015-2016

September 14, 15 Rosh Hashanah
September 22..... Kol Nidre
September 23..... Yom Kippur
September 28, 29..... Sukkot
October 5..... Shmini Atzeret
October 6..... Simchat Torah
December 7-14..... Chanukah
January 25..... Tu B'Shvat
March 24 Purim
April 22..... First Seder, Passover
April 30..... Passover ends at sundown
May 5 Yom Hashoah
May 12..... Yom Haatzmaut
May 26..... Lag B'Omer
June 12, 13..... Shavuot



2015-2016 5776



סיפורי רעים *Siporei* **Reyim**

Stories of Friends



Storytelling is the oldest human art form shared for entertainment, education and cultural preservation. In fact, many ancient, Jewish traditions were preserved through stories shared from generation to generation. Today, stories continue to be a powerful tool for building communities in a relatable and memorable way. May the anecdotes in this booklet inspire you to meet someone new, join us for a service or program, and help strengthen our congregation of friends.

Temple **Reyim**

We are an inclusive, traditional, egalitarian, spiritually-focused community that engages the mind and nurtures the heart.

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Rabbi's Story

When I first came to Temple Reyim, we held a series of Sunday brunches after minyan so I could meet our members. On the very first morning, I met an older man in our community. We talked for a few minutes over bagels and lox when he told me that he wanted to ask a question. At that exact moment, another member introduced herself and I got a bit distracted. Our older member was disappointed, but understanding. I told him that I'd be happy to hear his question, thinking it was likely to be about my background or vision for the shul. I assured him we'd be in touch soon.



Later that night as I was organizing my notes at the shul, my phone rang.

"Hello."

"I'd like to speak to the Rabbi, please."

"This is the Rabbi."

"You don't sound like the Rabbi."

"I'm pretty sure it's me."

"OK."

At this point, I recognized his voice as the older member from the morning conversation.

"Are you OK?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Is there something I can do for you?"

"Yes, I have a question."

"Right, I remember. Do you want to meet this week and talk?"

"No, let's talk now. I need to ask you: where was God during the destruction of the Temple?"

Taken aback, I didn't muster a response for a few seconds, but it felt like much longer.

"Welcome to the shul, Rabbi," he jumped in. "Think about it. Give me a call sometime."

I could only smile. Yes, this is a community where our members are sincere, learned, serious, authentic and willing to jump right in. I knew I was home.



סיפורי ראים

President's Story

I never thought I would be President of Temple Reyim. Suzanne and I have been members with our children for more than 20 years. I sat on the Board and the Endowment Committee, but even that was many years ago. We love the place for sure, but getting more involved never even crossed my mind. Frankly, I was never asked to do more either. Things were fine.

First, David Carlen called. Then, Rabbi Dan Berman was hired. Next, I was President. This all happened within 10 days. Honestly, I would not have had it any other way. I love being the lay leader of the Reyim community; and the true highlight is being able to interface with everyone. You teach me, you guide me and you inspire me to be better. I have made mistakes for sure, but you are patient, supportive and rooting for both me and the community to thrive.

Running Temple Reyim is a team effort; and I am honored to be the captain. My biggest takeaway is how much the little things can make a big difference. Some are name tags, higher budgets for Shabbat kiddush, herring and scotch, new prayer books in the chapel and signage around the shul. You likely did not really think about or notice these changes. They are all there and the result of requests. We all make a difference. *Thank you.*



Andrew Offit,
member since 1991



Ayin Chefs

About a year before our B'nei Mitzvah, we walked into the kitchen and thought all the work to prepare the meal for an event was really cool. Our mom invited us to join her in volunteering about once a month. Initially, we were helpers tasked with designing the fruit/dessert plates, arranging bagels, washing vegetables and cleaning up. Since we are more experienced, we now own everything from rolling lox or "Jewshi" to making the many salads just the way it's ordered by the family enjoying a special occasion.

It's really fun to see some familiar faces and meet new people. Everyone is very accepting and inclusive. The lead chefs even give helpful directions for those of us who are not cooking experts.

The most rewarding feeling comes from congregants telling you that the food is wonderful. If you're looking to participate in the Temple Reyim community in a way that's easy, fun and enjoyable, meet us in the kitchen!



Lauren and Ben Gobler (15),
family members since 1993

Brotherhood Softball

My wife and daughter enjoy the religious services at Temple Reyim, but as an atheist I was looking for a different type of connection. When I learned about the softball team, I joined immediately. This gave me the chance to interact with some people I already met and make new friends as well. It also proved that the Reyim community extends far beyond the synagogue walls.

Two seasons ago, our team came together, engaged mental focus and dedication, which resulted in a playoff spot. This was a miracle considering we only get together for games (no practices)! This past season, some of our players retired. While we certainly miss them on the field, we landed some new players that are an excellent addition to our roster. This includes the rabbi, who plays a mean second base! For next year, we're recruiting new members to join the team. I only wish that the league would include women because that would foster additional friendships. Plus, we have some Reyim women, who are really good softball players, which might foster more playoff wins!

I truly enjoy playing alongside a great group and always have fun. Thanks to this easy entry point, I'm now involved with other activities such as the shul garden. Who knows what will be next.



Jaden Crawford, member since 2010

Chesed

In April 2014, I became very sick and needed a support system that took the burden off my elderly parents and young adult children. In discussing my needs during a visit with Deb Mendelsohn, she mentioned using the Chesed network. Deb sent an email to temple members explaining my situation and immediately people signed up to offer me rides and bring meals. Some stayed for dinner, called me or sent emails.

As a person used to being the giver rather than the recipient of kindness, I initially felt uncomfortable accepting so much help. However, I learned to accept this help graciously when my needs grew and appreciated the new friends I made during a difficult time. One congregant visited me in the hospital and shared his story along with words of encouragement. Other members also shared very confidential experiences, reassuring me and offering hope.

Now that I'm healthier and in a better place, I've been able to return the assistance by helping others. It's also nice that when I go to temple or even around town there are more people engaging me in conversation thanks to these new connections. Chesed was a life saver!



Linda Landsberg,
member since 1989

Community

As a new member, it's been rewarding to find a culture that is so open to new ideas that make a difference in our community. At my prior synagogue, I served on the bereavement committee for 15 years. When I shared some thoughts with Rabbi Berman, he was excited for us to work together and make them happen.



We now have shiva chairs that can be delivered to a house of mourning and can provide a house sitter during the funeral. We are looking into new shiva siddurim and hope to develop a booklet that can be shared with the community for both the mourner and those supporting the mourner. This past year, we held a class addressing end of life issues; and Rabbi Berman continues to teach how to be present at a shiva.

Temple Reyim is special because we not only think creatively, but also work hard to make ideas happen. I encourage you, my fellow congregants, to help continue the momentum for this idea by emailing me or the office if you'd be willing to house sit, attend minyan or deliver chairs/siddurim. If you have other ideas to make our temple even better, then please speak up and help us grow!

Cyd Josephy,
member since 2014

Family Shabbaton

In signing up for the Family Shabbaton, we initially were excited to step away from our busy lives and just enjoy being together. Spending time with people and friends we've met through services, Tot Shabbat and Shabbat Reyim dinners was another plus. However, we never would have imagined canoeing with our daughter, Leora, having her sleep in a bunk bed for the first time and getting to know our fellow congregants even better during this Temple Reyim experience.

We particularly enjoyed watching our then three-year-old daughter getting excited about Shabbat services, running in the fields for hours with her friends during a scavenger hunt and climbing a tree house. Leora's most magical moment was falling in love with the song *Mi Pi El*, which had been sung so animatedly by one of the teen counselors after dinner. She still sings it here at home!

In the evenings, adults had an opportunity to get to know each other better, while their kids were sleeping. We feel even closer to the families we met before and appreciate new friendships that were made during this weekend. In the truest meaning of community, we all took care of each other. We're really looking forward to attending the Shabbaton again next year.



Rob, Lesley and Leora Daniels,
members since 2014

Havurah

We never belonged to a *havurah* before and had no idea what to expect. When we were asked to join a group that was forming in the spring of 2014, we thought it would be a perfect opportunity to meet people from the congregation in a more intimate setting.

So far, we have enjoyed Shabbat dinners together and even a rainy walking tour of Jewish Boston. One couple invited us for a Shabbat weekend at their vacation home that was fantastic. Although we initially had concerns that a *havurah* might divide the community, getting to know others with a common experience makes it stronger.



Ronnie and Rich Klein,
members since 2013



Kallah

Although Temple Reyim has a wealth of creative and intellectually-minded adult education opportunities, I find the annual Kallah weekend most compelling. It's remarkable to me that Kallah has not lost any of the vitality, enthusiasm and appeal even in its 47th year. For me, the best part is the unique opportunity to spend an entire weekend immersed in a series of lectures and interactive conversations with a well-respected scholar-in-residence that I wouldn't meet otherwise.

Kallah attracts an inspiring array of guest speakers across the spectrum of Jewish life on topics such as Torah, Talmud, Arts, Music, Archaeology, History, Medicine, Law, Literature or Science. Each presentation is stimulating, entertaining, informative and thought provoking. It is also an excellent time to learn about unfamiliar topics.

Dr. Michael Grodin will be talking with us about Jewish bioethics the weekend of April 1-3, 2016. As the Kallah Chair, I'm personally interested in how traditional texts guide physicians and scientists pursuing new treatments and technologies. Discussing the complex intersection of philosophy, theology, Halacha and secular law with my Reyim friends will be fascinating.



Joel Bloom,
member since 2011

Limmud

I am excited to help plan Limmud events as well as participate in them. Each learning and teaching encounter changes in how and what I know about Jewish matters.

Professionally, I teach Jewish History and Thought at Brandeis. It's been a pleasure sharing my passion to understand the variety and depths of Jewish sources and experience. The new Beit Midrash project speaks to me in particular as a perspective learner since our guest teachers will help guide a dynamic and substantive approach through a well-spring of knowledge and communal vitality.



Eugene Sheppard,
member since 2011



Membership

My (Devora's) first Shabbat at Reyim, I was asked to lead *mincha* (the afternoon service). This was a big honor for a new person! My plan had been to explore all the Conservative synagogues within a 3-mile walking distance of my new home, but I never got around to it. The feeling of being valued and appreciated from that first day had me hooked and I joined. Even today, our family's connection to Reyim continues to revolve around Shabbat morning services.



We were the first same gender couple to have an *auf ruf* at Temple Reyim, but are proud to set new precedents. In the beginning, we needed to explain that we're not sisters. Now, we're welcomed in leadership roles (Devora: religious services, bulletin, Tot Shabbat; Steph: membership).

The multi-generational members, community investment and friendships have been some of the best parts of Temple Reyim. We often tell people about the many ways of getting involved, numerous educational programs, community connections and learning opportunities. Come hang out with us!

Stephanie and Devora Rohr, members since 2012
(Devora joined individually in 2011)

Minyan

I've been attending minyan nearly every Tuesday since joining Temple Reyim. For me, it's less about the spiritual connection and more about a strong desire to support our community. Sometimes, it's hard to get the 10 people required for a fellow congregant to say kaddish or observe a *yahrzeit*. When we don't, it's disappointing.

When we do get 10 or more, it feels great to know that you have helped someone out that day. So now it's my priority every Tuesday morning before work. Consider adjusting your schedule to attend for yourself or for others. The Reyim community will appreciate your support.



Carl Kruglak,
member since 2006

Sisterhood Designs

We celebrated the B'nei Mitzvah of our twins, Erez and Ariella, this year. I wrote down very specific ideas for Sisterhood Designs about what I wanted to make our 300-person, kiddush lunch a success, including the use of color, napkins and flatware to make each table look like a sunflower. From the moment I met with Aimee Baker and Deb Mendelsohn, I knew that I was in very capable hands. Sisterhood Designs immediately knew the websites to use and which items to purchase locally.

Most importantly, both Sisterhood Designs and Ayin Chefs know Temple Reyim inside and out from the timing of the services to engaging the resources they need to get things done well. Our family enjoyed the service without any concerns about the lunch logistics. When we opened the doors after the ceremony, everything was perfect. It would have been challenging to have such a wonderful experience with any other vendors.



Miriam Tuchman, member since 2010 (childhood family member as well)

Sisterhood

Iris Lavine suggested that I join Sisterhood after my husband and I joined the temple. As a CPA specializing in high net worth taxation, I find it difficult to attend events between mid-January and mid-April. However, I really enjoyed the "Sip and Schmooze" wine tasting and the Genealogy program.

I feel an even deeper connection to an organization when I engage my professional skills to improve volunteer opportunities. Without hesitation, I accepted the role of Sisterhood's Corresponding Secretary that opened when a congregant moved. Now, I feel even more comfortable in the role of Treasurer. I've had such a positive experience meeting new people and realizing how much we all have in common.



Susan Prizant, member since 2012

Tzion

Everyone has a different perspective on Israel. While it is an important part of my Jewish identity, I have previously felt unprepared to engage in conversations with people ranging from those who love Israel to those who think it should not exist. Having graduated from Me'ah, a two-year class on Jewish education, the timing of the Tzion program at Temple Reyim was perfect.

So far, I've found the course more richly complicated than I anticipated because there are real lives that matter on both sides of the equation. Jacob Meskin, our teacher, is empowering us to take several points of view simultaneously, which has enhanced my ability to have interesting conversations. This has been a fantastic community experience and a way of getting to know people better through shared experiences.

I appreciate being part of a community at Temple Reyim that does things together, including study. We find this class to be a safe, sacred space, where we can work through the complexities of issues about which we truly care, while respecting each other's points of view.



Vitaly Zakuta, member since 2012



USY

I started participating in Kadima and worked my way up to USY. Going to a majority of the events is a great way of connecting with Jewish friends and making new ones. It's important to me that Temple Reyim is uniting the next generation of Jewish youth through lively and fun activities.

This year, I've accepted the role of Programming Vice President on the Temple Reyim USY Board. I'll be planning new events for our chapter that hopefully will attract new members and get existing members more involved. I encourage kids and teens to try any event that piques their interest. Additionally, please share your ideas with me about future USY events. Your voice counts!



Alanna Horowitz, member since 2004



We are grateful to the Sloane family and Century Bank for underwriting the printing costs for this year's Siporei Reyim booklet.

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