



## Kol Yisrael Aravim Zeh La'Zeh, All of Israel is Bound Together



When Mordecai Kaplan envisioned the Jewish Community Center movement nearly a century ago, he pictured a place where Jews of all different backgrounds to pray, study, eat, and exercise. While today most JCC's focus on the latter two, Kaplan hoped to create a place that would house multiple

synagogues and Yeshivah's in addition to a gym.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the American Jewish community was divided between Jews of German and Russian decent, Ashkenazic and Sefardic, and Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, with very little to bring them together. The JCC was the one institution that would bring everyone together under one roof.

In many ways, very little has changed in the past one-hundred years. Synagogues compete with another for members, as do all other Jewish institutions, including the JCCs. While Kaplan's goal has not been realized there are certainly many bright spots.

Since arriving in Buffalo two years ago, I have been pleasantly surprised by how much cooperation there is across the Jewish community. Temple Sinai is involved in regular programs with almost every Jewish institution in the city. This month I would like to highlight three of those programs that are starting up again this September.

The first is our Geshher Hebrew School, which is made up of not one, not two, but three synagogue communities our own, Temple Beth Tzedek and Congregation Havurah. Led by our tireless Hebrew school administrators Einav Symons and Lori Morrison, the Geshher Hebrew school is a safe and warm place for children to attain a Jewish education. It is wonderful to see the smiles on all of the children's faces when they arrive at school on Sunday mornings and Tuesday afternoons.

Next is our High School of Jewish Studies program, led by the Board of Jewish Education President

Evie Weinstein, Jill Ginsberg, the Student Life Coordinator, and the administrator, Bette Davidson. As so many of our Jewish high school and middle school students drift away from their Jewish studies after completing their B'nei Mitzvahs, Hebrew High, as it is better known, helps to draw them back in to Jewish life. I love coming to the Broder Center on Sweet Home on Wednesday evenings, to see my friends and colleagues from every religious denomination leading classes. This year Hebrew High is starting an alternative Tuesday night day for students who are unable to make the Wednesday night program.

Lastly, I would like to highlight a program that Temple Sinai is also deeply invested in – our Joint holiday services with Temple Beth Am, Temple Beth El in Niagara Falls, Temple Beth Zion, and Congregation Havurah. Every year we hold services together on the first day of Sukkot, Simchat Torah, the seventh day of Passover, and Shavuot, rotating locations and speakers between the different communities. Afterward there is always a luncheon and an opportunity to shmooz. This year, I am happy to say we will be hosting the first day of Sukkot on Thursday, September 23 at 10:30. This will be our chance to show off our indoor and outdoor Sukkahs. It is also an opportunity to see all of the clergy and lay leadership in the participating communities leading together.

So, while we may never fully realize Mordecai Kaplan's goal of full communal cooperation in one building, I dare say, that in our Buffalo community we come very close.

Shanah Tovah U'Metukah – A Happy, and Sweet New Year,

Rabbi Alex

PLEASE SAVE **DASH'S** SUPERMARKET REGISTER TAPES FOR THE GESHER RELIGIOUS SCHOOL AND MAIL THEM TO TEMPLE SINAI, OR SIMPLY BRING THEM TO THE TEMPLE NEXT TIME YOU'RE THERE FOR SERVICES.

**THIS IS A GREAT FUNDRAISER AND IT COSTS YOU NOTHING!!!**