

Religious Practices Committee

In response to many member requests, a revitalized Religious Practices committee was formed. The committee is comprised of both prior committee members and new members.

Kevin Miller retired as chair of the committee, and Fred Feldman was designated as chairman midway through 2017. Committee members are: Jacqueline Berman, Bob Bender, Sandra Kassin-Deardorff, Rhoda Feldman, Stuart Mandell, Kevin Miller, Susan Shwom, Carole Taut and Fred Feldman (chair).

The committee continued a new streamlined Religious Practices pilot program designed to enhance the Shabbat morning service and make it more accessible and meaningful to Temple members who may not have been regular attendees of Shabbat services.

The pilot program continued on the first Saturday of each month, utilizing *Mishkan T'filah* as the prayer book and incorporating more English than the traditional service which utilizes *Sim Shalom*. *Mishkan T'filah* contains a broad selection of readings, including beloved passages from the Reform liturgical tradition and great poetic writings from throughout Jewish history

That service continues as a more abbreviated one than the traditional service starting at 9:30 in the morning and finishing about 11 am.

During the year, the committee voted to modify the standard service to eliminate *Musaf* after the Torah service in favor of permitting more time for a more extensive *D'var Torah* as a means of linking the traditional Torah message to an understanding of its relevance to current times and issues.

The committee reviewed and recommended that additional Friday night *Kaballah* Shabbat services be scheduled, the first of which was held on April 6. A special series was scheduled "Shabbat in Song," for Cantor Vera to conduct service and lead Torah study. Dates for those: March 17, May 12, and May 19.