

Religious School Committee Annual Report

May 5, 2019

Though the religious school is small in numbers we are eager to learn and our school is lucky to have such a dedicated staff to teach our eager students. Debbi and the teachers create an atmosphere around the curriculum that challenges and excites the students; when they come to school, they want to learn.

The religious school committee is a dedicated team of parents and other congregants. We are always trying to find new ways to improve the school and help the teachers in any way that we can. At the end of last year, we worked hard together on the curriculum for the 2018-2019 school year. Just recently, we tackled the budget for next year. We would love to see some new faces at our meetings, no children in the school is necessary and no experience required. We welcome any new ideas and are happy to have the support. If interested, please let either myself, or any member of the Temple Emanu-El staff know.

Cantor Vera continues to be a blessing to the Temple Emanu-El community. She helped the high school students, along with Rachel Hanson, create a fabulous and funny Purim skit that they performed during this year's Purim service. She always helps put together, not only our regular and special services, but the beautiful class services that the students participate in. The Cantor will be busy this coming year getting many of our students prepared for their Bar/Bat Mitzvahs. She has a well-established musical program that encourages involvement from all of the students. The students thoroughly enjoy getting to share her love of music and they join in willingly – especially when they can play the drums! This year's religious school theme was 'music.' Through generous donations from congregants, as well as the Adeline B. Watnick fund, Cantor Vera was able to have Ellen Allard come perform for our adults and students. Ellen is an award-winning Recording Artist, Performer, and Early Childhood Music Specialist. Ellen first engaged with adults during a Saturday night performance and then again on Sunday with the students during religious school. It was fun and the students really enjoyed performing and learning with Ellen.

Rav Mona has been a welcome addition to the temple, as well as to the religious school. She helped teach Hebrew to some of our students on Sundays and she has been teaching Jocelyne Lampron on Monday nights for confirmation. The students enjoyed snacks with Rav Mona during religious school on Sundays.

Cheryl makes sure the parents know about all of the wonderful things happening at Temple Emanu-El Religious School, as well as the temple events related to the school. We are thankful for the work that she does.

Don is always keeping up with our new ideas of how we want rooms set and he does so very willingly (we really appreciate that). He also keeps our classrooms and buildings clean which we are all grateful for. The religious school students always notice Don's hard work.

Thanks to Lisa Desberg and the rest of the PTO for hosting the fun events we have all grown to love! The Sukkot Hot Dog dinner is always a big hit as is our 'Make your own Sundae' on a Sunday after religious school. This year the PTO hosted a Read-A-Thon; the students received a Barnes & Noble gift card for reading Jewish related books and for sharing what they read. The PTO is working on another 'Night Out' fundraiser for next year...we will keep you posted. Thanks PTO!

Debbi continues to be an important part of the religious school. She truly cares about each child and wants to make sure they have the best religious school experience possible. She is always smiling and greeting each student (and parent) at the door before and after every school day! Debbi keeps us up to date about any issues that may arise, as well as what is going on in the temple and BCA.

We as families and as a community must come together to support the religious school, our children and the teachers. Please remember that coming to services and getting involved with events that go on during the year helps promote Jewish learning and shows the children how important it is to be connected to other generations of temple members.

Respectfully,
Andi Hannula