

Temple Emanuel Israel Engagement Committee Activities 2022-2023

The *Israel Engagement Committee* is committed to increasing the awareness of the contemporary issues in Israeli culture, religion, and politics for the Temple Emanuel community. The relationship of the Reform Jewish community to Israel should be an important aspect of our Judaism, as it is the homeland of the entire Jewish community.

In the 2022-2023 Temple year, we have sponsored several important programs. With co-sponsorship from Women of Reform Judaism and Brotherhood, we hosted Dr. Ilai Saltzman, Israel Institute Visiting Assistant Professor of Israel Studies at the University of Maryland, for a March 19, 2023 brunch speaking on, *The US, Israel, The American Jewish Community and its Discontents*. Dr. Saltzman gave a comprehensive presentation and hosted a lively question and answer session, accompanied by hearty coffee, bagels, lox, cream cheese, hummus and other goodies. This program was a great success, with nearly 50 Temple congregants participating, and having their questions answered.

The committee also participated in organizing a 75th birthday celebration for Israeli independence, with a special birthday dinner/celebration featuring Israeli food, an Israel themed Shabbat service, and Oneg. The dinner featured a panel discussion on current issues in Israel with Hagai Dagan-Schlacter, Head of the Israeli Shaliach Program, Dr. Itzik Eshel formerly head of the Temple Emanuel Education Program, Professor Mark Graber from the University of MD Francis King Carey Law School, and Adina Vogel-Ayalon of J-Street. The panel discussion was broad reaching and informative, and the Oneg following the service was festive featuring a delicious birthday cake.

We look forward to continuing informative and exciting Israeli themed programming for Temple Emanuel in the coming year.

I would like to acknowledge our committee members Seth Bernstein, Ellen Karch, Janet Lee, and Snir Holtzman, who were instrumental in helping make these events a success.

If you have an interest in Israel and are interested in participating in helping program our activities, please contact me. We are always interested in having new committee members.

Allan Mufson, Chair