

LARCHMONT TEMPLE 2017 ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

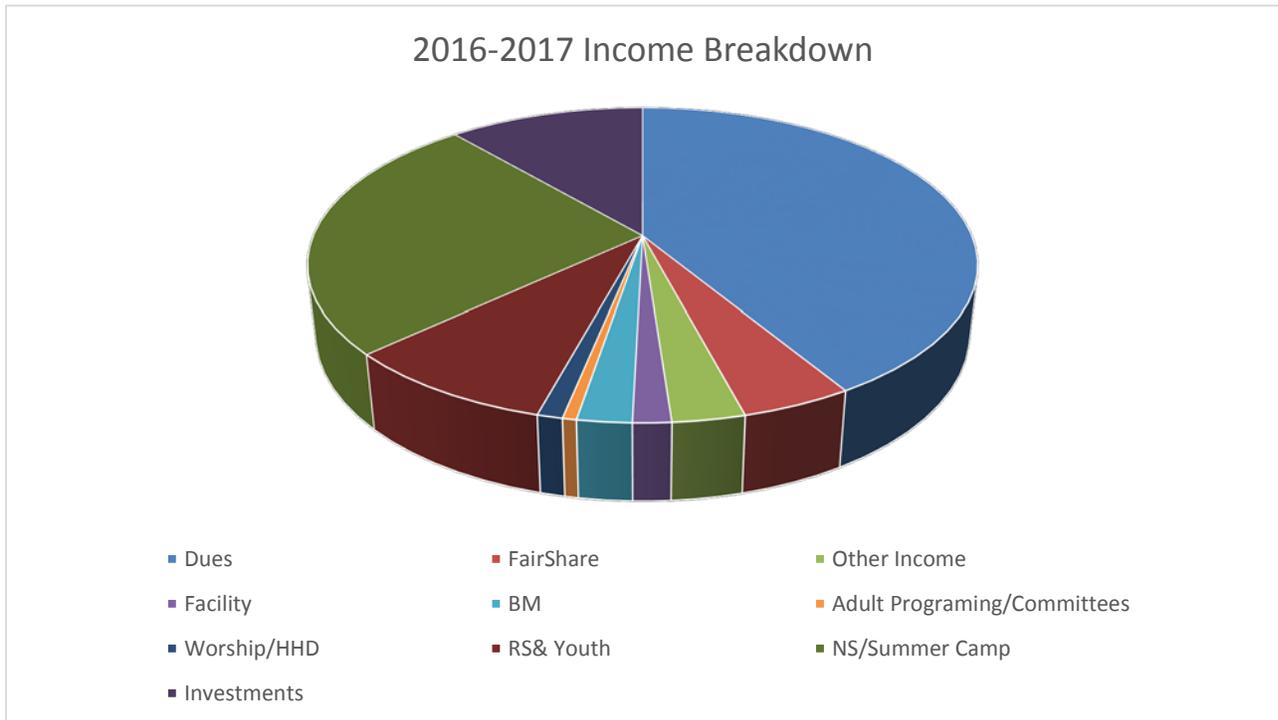
As of June 2017, we are a congregation of 822 membership units. 48 new families joined our Temple since last July while 38 families have departed. Counting children, who are included in family memberships, we serve approximately 3000 individuals.

This year Religious School enrollment was 406, ranging from 33 in our Kindergarten to 62 in 7th grade, from 18 in Confirmation to 9 in Post-Confirmation.

The Nursery School enrolled 130 children. Of these children, 52 are members of Larchmont Temple.

For the Temple's fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, the Temple's operating budget was approximately \$4.17 million. We project to end the year with a small surplus.

Fully 75% of the expense budget is related to personnel and fringe benefits (such as social security, pension, health insurance etc.) Certain increases are inevitable to account for cost-of-living increases and, where warranted, merit pay raises. The Temple spends an additional 25% on non- personnel related expenses. We are grateful that our Dues support 41% of our budget, our Yom Kippur/Fair Share Appeal funds approx. 5% of our budget (The 5777 Appeal raised \$212,000 from donors), our Endowment, Rungs of Vision and Torah Umadah support 11% of our budget, Religious School supports 9%, and lastly Nursery School and Summer Camp support 26% of our budget.



Including all worship services—Tot Shabbats, Kabbalat Shabbats, holidays, festivals, etc.—we conducted about 160 worship services in the current fiscal year. There are lots of opportunities to pray (or to see our friends and neighbors) at Larchmont Temple. We celebrated 57 of our children as they became B’nei Mitzvah; Rabbis Sirkman and Miller and Cantor Scher performed 16 weddings of congregants or congregants’ families, 13 baby namings, 1 conversion and, sadly, they officiated at 29 funerals.

House Committee oversees buildings and grounds **Submitted by Bob Goodman, House Committee Chair**

The House Committee takes care of the buildings, grounds and the capital assets of the temple and the rabbi’s house. The committee put together a long-term, mid-term and short-term list to follow and update annually. One of the most visible projects this year is the new Willow Ave entrance.

In addition, the committee has been extremely mindful of energy conservation and efficiency and we are happy to move forward on several large projects. The air conditioning units in the sanctuary and social hall are old and failing. This summer we will be replacing these units with new environmentally friendly and more efficient units. Also, through a Con Ed contractor we are replacing the light bulbs throughout the temple with LED bulbs taking advantage of grant money available for this purpose and anticipating full payback on our cost by reductions in our electricity bill within a year. Lastly, we are adding a zone in the ground floor for our heating system allowing better temperature management in the offices and classrooms.

LT Connects Small Groups Report

Our pilot year of small groups is wrapping up, and it was a BIG success! We reached a lot of people with our 18 groups, 40 leaders, and 200 participants, and the group experience has had a real impact strengthening connections to each other, to Judaism, and to Larchmont Temple. We now have statistical and anecdotal data that reflects those strengthened connections!

With the help of LT member Marshall Cohen, we designed a survey and sent it to everyone who signed up for a group this year [125 people did the survey, which is a remarkable percentage]. We are just beginning to analyze the data, but here some preliminary findings:

- 90% of respondents were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with their small group experience.
- The majority of respondents described their group experience as enjoyable, worthwhile, welcoming, comforting and interesting.
- 75% of respondents are planning to stay in their current group, try a different group, and/or becoming a “co-leader” of a small group...They want more!

These are great statistics, but people's reflections speak most powerfully. Here are a few responses to the question, "What did you like most about your small group experience?"

- Being able to meet other members of the congregation who were like minded. I felt it was a nice inroad to the community.
- It allowed me to connect with a group of women in our community who I don't see on a regular basis anymore since our kids are grown up.
- The supportive nature of my fellow group members.
- The sense of community and intergenerational sharing.
- I enjoyed the honest dialogue, the sense of humor and relatedness of the group, and the opportunity to think things through together.
- Feeling part of a close group related to LT & a continued study of Judaism.
- The connection, the learning, the openness amongst the group and the commitment.

Last month we had a reception to thank and celebrate our small group leaders, and we are currently planning next year's slate of small groups with many groups continuing in some way and of course new groups starting from scratch. We have learned a lot this year, and are looking forward to continuing to strengthen and expand the small group experience at LT. There is great potential in this model. Thank you everyone for your support of this new initiative.

LT Cares, Submitted by Carolyn Kamlet

We met approximately monthly to discuss the areas of mourning, care giving and visiting with our members in need. Attendance was inconsistent so we plan to re-envision our plans for next year.

New Members Committee Report-2016/17 Submitted by Ilene Rome and Wendy Kaufman

The new member committee serves to welcome new members and to introduce them to temple life and volunteer opportunities. Each new member is personally contacted by one of our committee members prior to each event. Our committee consists of two co-chairs and 5 members.

There were three scheduled new member events this year as detailed below:

New Member Brunch-Sun. Sept. 18, 2016: Clergy and temple committee members attended to meet the new members and tell them a little bit about their committees.

New Member Havdalah-scheduled for Sat. Nov. 12, 2016: New member families were invited to share wine/cheese and snacks at Cantor Scher's house followed by a Havdalah service led by the clergy. Unfortunately, this event was cancelled due to a family emergency and never rescheduled.

New Member Pre-Oneg and Shabbat service-Fri June 23, 2016: This event will run in conjunction with the Pre-Oneg before the service. New members will be welcomed at the service. Current committee co-chairs Ilene Rome and Wendy Kaufman have decided to step down from the committee and will also be honored at this service.

Shalom Corps and the Ambassador Program

In September of 2016, LT implemented a movement we call Shalom Corps to build and deepen a sense of community. It currently has two goals:

1. To ensure that everyone who visits Larchmont Temple for Shabbat and Festival services is treated to a prompt warm and hospitable welcome.
2. To draw in and, welcome the newest members of our congregation, and help them find meaningful connections at Larchmont Temple. We want to help them to find avenues for involvement and engagement so they can feel as if they “truly” belong.

We began with a group of forty leaders, who were “trained” in the art of Welcoming both by Cantor Scher and an outside consultant. With the implementation of this program, we changed the structure and time of our Shabbat services, to allow for a “pre-oneg” wine and cheese reception. During this half hour period, our Shalom Corps greeters “work” the room, greeting people, especially looking for people who seem to be first-timers or are attending alone. In reaching out, they make connections to and for our attendees and help them get situated and make them comfortable. They are also available to help late-comers find a seat and their place in the service. All Shalom Corps greeters wear a name tag to identify themselves as a “Welcomers”.

This year, we have a core team of eight people who were charged with identifying areas of our physical plant that could be enhanced to help our guests feel more welcome. These changes include upgrading signage, both indoors and outdoors, to assist people to find their way around and replacing our main entrance door with glass to create a more open and accessible feel.

We have also begun the work of our Ambassador Program which recognizes that personal outreach is KEY to making connections for our new members. We want to make them feel like LT is their new home away from home. We believe that new members will benefit greatly from having a buddy/mentor to help them find ways to connect to their new LT Family particularly in their first year. To that end, this team re-visioned our Membership application, making additions and changes that include questions on prospective members’ areas of interest and expertise to help us better match them with an Ambassador, whose job it will be to support their engagement as they learn their way around.

The Ambassador program is really on our “next steps” agenda, but the end goal is to have every member of Larchmont Temple be a “greeter” in their own right. Larchmont Temple should feel like their 2nd home, and in turn, they would treat everyone who walks in the door as “THEIR” guest!

Cultural Arts

The Cultural Arts team had another great year of Cultural programming. Chaired by Phyllis Jacobs and a crew of about 14 people, we created a diverse calendar of events, some of which brought in neighboring faiths and traditions to worship and celebrate with us.

Events included:

Pursuit of Harmony – a wonderful evening of sermon and song by world- renowned Jewish American songwriter, Michael Ochs (formerly an LT member!) and award-winning Muslim Peace activist, Alaa Alshaham.

Elana Arian (also a former LT member) and Noah Aronson, both famous multi - instrumentalist/songwriters in their own right for a Beit Café – thanks to the seventy people who braved the winter storm to come and be a part of the evening!

LT's Got Talent Too – We hosted an exciting evening as we celebrated all the talent that LT has to offer! With 17 individual performers, along with our adult and youth choirs, it was a night of sweet camaraderie and amazing talent!

Cornerstone

Larchmont Temple depends on talented, enthusiastic, and dedicated members to fulfill its mission to advance Jewish life and Jewish values for our families and our community. In 2014, Larchmont Temple embarked on a leadership development program called Cornerstone. The program's name acknowledges that our Temple community rests upon volunteers and leaders who are the foundation supporting our covenantal pillars of Torah (study), Avodah (prayer), and Gemilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness). To date, three groups of congregants have gone through this year-long, small group program which is spearheaded by the Leadership Development Committee and is attended by Rabbi Sirkman and the Temple President. We believe the participants find the program highly rewarding on many levels. Through Cornerstone, Larchmont Temple hopes to add to the reservoir of potential leaders for the future.

Nursery School Parent Association 2016-2017 Report

The Nursery School Parent Association has had another busy and successful year. We continue to adjust our sponsored events and programs, while fine tuning the responsibilities of the Parent Association to best fit the needs of the school. In an effort to continue to engage more parents, we have reworked several of the Committee positions in order to allow for larger sub-committees, with less of a time commitment, thus providing ample opportunities for parents to get involved. We also had a number of general members that were able to help out as needed. This re-organization has proven successful and we will continue it next year as we had a record number of parent volunteers this year.

The following details some of our accomplishments:

Programs:

Green Initiatives and the LTNS Community Garden: This was the sixth year the Parent Association coordinated the Green Initiatives program to formally bring environmental awareness into the curriculum of the Nursery School and helped to maintain the LTNS community garden. Throughout the year, the children participated in a range of activities. This year, all the classes helped to plant and cultivate the garden. The children continue to participate in and learn about composting, earth worms, planting and growing various plants. Students planted individual parsley plants and were able to take them home for Passover. For the third year we have planted our very popular pumpkin patch for observation and discovery in the Fall. The garden will again serve as a focal point for the 2017 LTNS Summer Camp Program. The produce for the garden is enjoyed by the children at specific events, such as our second annual Salad Day. We planted corn so that we can harvest the stalks for use in the Sukkah in the fall. We also planted sunflowers in the hopes of harvesting the seeds for each class to try in the fall. We also continued to update our new garden bulletin board to display photographs and information about our garden initiatives. During this school year we also created an outdoor classroom area, complete with a circle of tree stumps so that the children can more fully explore school grounds.

Mitzvah Program: This was the tenth year the Parent Association and the Nursery School Director coordinated a comprehensive Mitzvah Program in order to teach the concept of mitzvah and an appreciation of the joy and fulfillment in doing things for others as a way of tikun olam, "repairing the world". The students, teachers, and parents were involved in mitzvah projects including: participating in the LarFTY food drive, making lunches for the Midnight Run, baking for the Larchmont/Mamaroneck Hunger Task Force Food Pantry (through baking and donations we were able to provide over 350 pies whereas in years past we have donated about 50), planting in our community garden, and donating pajamas to The Pajama Program. We also started a new senior reading program in which we invited senior temple members into the classroom to read books to the children. The program got rave reviews from both the readers and the children so we will continue this partnership next year. We look forward to the continuation of the Mitzvah Program as a cornerstone of our curriculum.

Challah Program: Once again, the Parent Association ran a challah program for the nursery school. We sold challahs every week as well as facilitated purchasing the challahs for the Nursery School. This year we switched to a nut-free bakery to accommodate students with severe nut allergies.

Logo: Each student received t-shirts and car magnets with our new logo, designed by a current LTNS parent. The Parent Association will once again provide tote bags for each student in September featuring the new logo.

Buddy Program: Prior to the start of the school year, every new family entering the Nursery School community received a phone call from a Parent Association member to welcome them and to answer any questions they might have. The new families always appreciate the chance to have their questions or concerns addressed and the opportunity to make a personal connection

before the school year begins. We hope to coordinate with the new Ambassador program spearheaded by Cantor Scher in which current temple members are paired with new families.

Caring Community: In its ninth year, the Caring Community program sends dinners to families with new babies, provides a meal for families who are mourning the loss of a loved one and puts together care baskets for children who are ill or injured. We feel like this effort strengthens our community.

Donations to Nursery School: The Parent Association has gifted funds to each classroom so that the teachers can purchase additional materials, toys and supplies. We are also able to use funds to upgrade the storage furniture in some of the classrooms.

Newsletter: The Parent Association published two incredible newsletters this year. Each contained updates on school activities, photographs, community information and relevant articles on topics such as child discipline, the Mitzvah and Garden curriculums, and resources for seeking outside support through Early Intervention and CPSE.

Four's Tiles: As in previous years, we organized a program for all of our graduating 4's students to decorate ceramic tiles which will be hung on the wall outside the 4's classrooms.

Yearbooks: For the ninth year in a row, the Parent Association published the LTNS's annual yearbook. The yearbook includes class pictures, "interviews" with the 4's and candid photos from all of our various events and activities. The yearbook documents the school year in a visually creative way as a keepsake for our children and families. The teachers will receive a copy of the yearbook as one of their gifts and a copy will be available to view in the Temple Library.

Events:

Opening Picnic: Our opening picnic in September was extremely well attended by both new and returning Nursery School families. The children and parents got a chance to know one another and the Parent Association members as they were welcomed back to the new school year. This year, each class was able to spend some quality time together while decorating a "Welcome" sign that was proudly displayed outside each classroom on the first day of school. Once again, the Parent Association purchased tote bags for all students to bring their belongings to and from school.

Class Get Togethers: For the ninth year, we had a family from each class either host or arrange an evening for all of the parents in their class. Most were held at family homes and all were well attended. This was a wonderful opportunity for class-bonding early in the year! Our 2's classes joined forces and had an event for all 2's parents as a way to celebrate the end of the school year.

Family Shabbats: The Parent Association, in coordination with Lisa, Mia, Rabbi Miller and Adam, organized monthly family Shabbats for LT's young families. We implemented the format piloted last year: a short service in the sanctuary, followed by dinner, a light projection and story,

and finally, an art project. This new format was very successful and we are currently exploring ways to include older siblings and LTNS alumni.

Cocktail Party: Our annual fall parents-only cocktail party/fundraiser was again a huge success! We had a great turnout and the event raised more funds than any previous event! Most importantly, it helped foster community.

Art Fundraiser: This year the Parent Association hosted the second annual Art & Wine fundraiser, based on the success of the first event held last year. Mia Kargen and Romina Robinson worked closely with the classes to produce two collaborative pieces of art per class for the auction. The event was a great success and will be repeated next year!

Guest Speakers/Presentations: Jen Spitz from Project Seed led a series of conversation on child development where parents were able to ask specific questions in small group settings.

Concert: Matty Roxx, our new Nursery School music teacher, performed a winter concert. Many families enjoyed the music and we look forward to hosting more musical events next year.

Teacher Appreciation Potluck Luncheon: In one effort to thank our much appreciated teachers, the Parent Association hosted a Potluck Luncheon during their Wednesday Staff meeting. This provided the opportunity for the members of the Parent Association and school community to put some heart and soul into making dishes for our wonderful teachers to enjoy. The Parent Association also hosted a more formal luncheon for the teachers and staff at Augie's restaurant.

End of Year Celebration: To celebrate the conclusion of another successful year, the families met for a picnic after the 4's moving up ceremony on Friday, June 9th. This final event of the school year brings our year of growth and community spirit full circle.

Report of Social Action Committee for 2016-2017
From Co-Chairs Jennifer Perkins and Vicki Ehrlich and Treasurer Linda Riefberg

The Coachmen Family Center

The Social Action Committee continued to work closely with the residents of the Coachman Family Shelter in White Plains as one of our primary activities. We worked with the children from The Coachmen aged 3 to 18. We did four activities at Larchmont Temple with focus on arts and crafts, cooking, nature, and games. We also took the children on a field trip to miniature golf in White Plains. Ari Perkins and his LT Small Group on Healthy eating conducted a program with the children of the Coachman on healthy snacking and cooking, which was a huge hit among the residents and volunteers. There is another outing planned for June 11th to do a hike at the Reservoir with a naturalist leading the Coachman kids, and treats to follow.

Hope Soup Kitchen

We cooked for Hope Soup Kitchen. LT congregants of all ages donated food and helped to prepare a home-cooked meal in the Larchmont Temple kitchen, which included a salad, entree, side vegetable and dessert, and which was served the following day at Hope Soup Kitchen on Washington Avenue in New Rochelle for over 150 people. The menu varied from beef stew and apple crisp to chicken stew and strawberry cobbler. Because of the generosity of our congregants, seconds were offered and a take home meal was available!

Larchmont Temple and our Hope Soup Kitchen chair, Debbie Schleien were recognized as Honorees by the Hope Community Services at this year's gala for the work we have contributed to Hope Community Services.

Midnight Run

We were out doing Midnight Run eight times during this past year, about once every six weeks. We work with Larchmont Avenue Church on this project. We also work with local Girl Scouts and Murray Avenue students in having lunches and blessing bags made. The success of the Midnight Run is due to a steady stream of donations of soup, lunches and clothes items by many congregants, including children and young adults. At each run, we provide an average of 100 people with food clothes, blankets and conversation.

Pleasantville Cottages

We visited the residents of Pleasantville residential school on two separate occasions. Each time, we did arts and crafts, had pizza and snacks and played Bingo with the residents, who range in age from 12 to 18. On nice days, we play soccer or basketball outside. We always have fun prizes for Bingo and the Pleasantville children really enjoy spending a few hours with the Larchmont children.

Holiday Gift Giving

Once again, we continued the tradition of having LT families donate gift cards and presents (some designated for specific children and some based on specific requests to make it more personal for the volunteers) to families and children in need, as selected by the different groups we work with (Hope Community Services, Pleasantville Cottages, Mamaroneck District Pre-K, Coachman). We have many congregants who donate to make sure everyone can get a bit of holiday spirit in December. We also collected toiletries, robes and slippers for My Sister's Place, and children's slippers for the Head Start program. Dozens of local families were the recipients of the holiday cheer from Larchmont Temple members this year.

Coat Drive

We organized a coat drive among the temple congregants, and we received well over 100 coats. These coats were given to the Midnight Run (Men) My Sister's Place (Women) and Sharing Shelf (Children). We also received many hats, gloves and scarves which were distributed as well.

DOROT

This year we journeyed into NYC with a small group of volunteers to cook and serve dinner to about two dozen local residents who rely on Dorot for a meal and companionship, which we provided as we joined at the table and shared stories as we dined together.

Sarah Newman

The Social Action Committee led a group of volunteers for a Sunday afternoon of arts and crafts and Bingo at this local nursing home. We decorated vases with artificial flowers that the residents could bring back to their rooms. Not only did we enjoy spending some quality time with the residents, but we stayed and watched our junior and adult choirs as they entertained under the leadership of Cantor Scher.

Tzedakah Fund

As the congregation is aware, members have the option of donating to the Social Action fund in a check off that is in addition to their temple dues. When those funds are collected from volunteer participants, the money is allocated to community and national groups. This year, we are donating approximately \$24,000 to a variety of different groups, all of which were vetted and many that have connections to congregants or Social Action projects. Some funds are also used to help ongoing projects such as Midnight Run and Pleasantville Cottages. Overall, we believe the tzedakah funds are a worthwhile way to have meaningful outreach and help an assortment of not-for-profit groups that appreciate our financial support. Anyone interested in seeing the full list of groups that received contributions can contact Linda Riefberg (SAC Treasurer) or the Co-Chairs of the committee, Jennifer Perkins or Vick Ehrlich for that spreadsheet.

Ritual Committee Report: Yvette Goorevitch, Ritual Chair

The Ritual Committee met monthly with Rabbi Sirkman and Cantor Scher to discuss planning for Shabbat services, Festivals and Holidays. Discussions of how the Ritual Committee can assist during Life Cycle events, specifically offering training for lay leadership to assist with support during times of Shiva and Shloshim. Shabbat Services schedules were reviewed as well as planning leadership coverage for the Minyon Services and Saturday morning. A small group led by Andi Rosenthal arranged visits to Shabbat Services in our neighboring communities to bring back highlights of services or ritual practices that might enhance our worship experiences. This will continue next year. Rabbi Sirkman led us in study each month, frequently including a teaching from our yearlong Mussar theme.

We focused on issues including aleyah scheduling for the High Holiday Services (special thank you to Carol Scharff), organization of the daily posts using Social Media for Elul and Counting the Omer (special thank you all who contributed and to Mia Shapiro and Cynthia Weissman) and preparing the schedule for summer Shabbat services and organizing a training session for lay leaders. In addition, members of the committee periodically inspect the pray books in the sanctuary to pull those for “retirement” because of poor physical condition and working with Jane Sable-Friedman arranged for replacement copies. We pay attention to those small details including arranging for a lit candle on the bimah for Friday night services. This served a practical and ritual purpose. (Thank you to Adrienne Weiss for her attention to this detail). Ritual Committee members serve as greeters for Shabbat Services on Friday nights and on Saturday mornings and are typically assigned the mitzvah of “lead greeter” at High Holiday services.

Your Ritual Committee encourages new members and has participated with Cornerstone and Shalom Corps.