

The New Emanuel Campaign... Some Questions and Answers

What is the mission?

Our mission is to bring new life to Temple Emanuel's sacred spaces in the form of light, innovative technologies, and flexible organization of space while restoring and enhancing some of the original features of Sidney Eisenshtat's historically important design. At the core of the New Emanuel Campaign is the recognition that the future growth of our synagogue is largely dependent on the ability to welcome new families into our community, provide continuing learning opportunities for our adult learners, create powerful worship experiences, and be large enough to serve, yet small enough to care. The time has come for us to move our vision of Temple Emanuel's future forward... a vision that connects us to our past and is the foundation for our future.

What makes a space sacred?

This was the question posed by our project architect Mark Rios, of Rios Clementi Hale Studios, during his presentation at High Holy Days in September 2008. Rios (who is responsible for the Mark Taper Forum and Westfield Century City Mall renovations and is working on the Bunker Hill project) had, at that time, just been hired for our restoration project and suggested the following answer: the threshold that allows us to leave the everyday behind, a sense of awe, and a place that promotes reflection.

When our buildings were designed in 1951, by the remarkable and visionary architect, Sidney Eisenshtat, creating sacredness was at the forefront of Eisenshtat's practice. His work was founded on a series of traditional and modern forms representing stories and symbols of Judaism. Spectacular works of art, each by leading artists in their field, were commissioned for our synagogue to illustrate scenes and iconography from the Torah. Perhaps the most famous of these works is the mosaic panel in the lobby, by Joseph Young, titled "Temple: Study, Assembly, Prayer," illustrating the three functions of the synagogue. The House of Study shows the continuity of learning from childhood through adulthood as it occurs in our schools. The House of Assembly depicts celebrations and family events like those that take place in our Social Hall. The House of Prayer shows eyes looking up towards the heavens symbolizing our worship services in the Sanctuary.

Temple Emanuel is a synagogue that makes a difference in people's lives; however, this sacred message is not reflected in our buildings' physical appearance anymore. Our Houses have been neglected for over a generation and are in desperate need of restoration to respectfully extend the timeless function of our already magnificent synagogue that so beautifully integrates study, assembly and prayer, far into the future.

Nu, why is the campaign taking so long?

Rome was not built in a day, as the saying goes, and neither was Disney Hall. The short answer is that capital projects take time. The longer answer has to do with our synagogue's history and careful approach to such an endeavor. Since the dedication of the Clark Drive building in 1954 and the Steinbaum building in 1964, there has only been one additional time when we have focused our energies on significant capital improvements: in the mid- to late 1980's when we redecorated the Sanctuary and Hoffman Hall, and enclosed Maltz. In the generation following this last capital project, we have fallen out of the practice of supporting our Temple's infrastructure in the significant and long-term ways that a capital gift invites.

The discipline of a capital campaign involves not only an inspiring architectural vision, but also a sound fiscal plan and a strong leadership team. Since engaging Mark Rios and his firm, our Building Committee, led by Scott Stone's watchful eye, has been working closely with Rios to refine our architectural plan and ensure that the scope falls within our budget. We have completed work on several smaller aspects of our project as resources have allowed and necessity has guided: replacing the decrepit HVAC system in the Sanctuary and Hoffman Hall, repairing the roof, and refreshing the landscaping of the Clark Drive building.

Scott Shlechter has led an applaudable effort to secure a bank-approved financing plan that will allow us to leverage the funds we have raised to date to cover the short-term construction costs. This plan will enable us to conclude our Sanctuary construction between the span of two High Holy Days, minimizing the impact on our congregation. During this time frame, we will continue to ask our members to consider making extraordinary leadership gifts, gifts that are not tied to the timeline of our construction, but rather can be paid off over a comfortable period for each family.

Finally, under Sue Brucker's enthusiastic chairmanship, the clergy have forged partnerships with more than 70 families (60 of whom have given a gift of five-figures or more) who have been inspired to contribute more than \$6 million towards our ultimate \$15 million goal. We have now convened a Major Gifts Committee to augment the fundraising efforts of our clergy who have worked tirelessly on this project. The committee is comprised of lay leaders who will be reaching out to more families in our congregation to ask for their support in the next phase of the campaign. Our goal is to have 100% participation from every family in the congregation.

For more information, contact Tova Larsen at 310.288.3742 x508 or Tova@tebh.org.