

# Congregation Agudat Achim

120 years of commitment to Conservative Judaism

Lay Leaders 2012 - 2013

### **Board of Trustees**

Mery Gross	President
Andy Gavens	First Vice President
Susan Braiman	Education Vice President
Jeffrey Ellenbogen	Treasurer
Sara Gavens	Recording Secretary
Hillary Fink	Ways and Means
Gary Adelson	Education Endowment
Howard Axelrod	Ritual Committee
	Youth Commission
Steve Cohen	House and Grounds
Robert Feinberg	Cemetery
Jill Bucinell	Catering
Judy Ben-Ami	Women's Network
Jessica Friedman	School Board
Randy Fox	Social Action Co-chair
Linda Shapiro	Social Action Co-chair
Rob Fox	Programming Co-chair
Stephen Schmidt	Programming Co-chair
Mitch Kessler	Men's Club
Jackie Rowen	Membership
Steve Lam	Member at Large
	Member at Large
Cynthia Tepper	Member at Large

### **Executive Committee**

Susan Axelrod
Susan Clouthier-Braiman
Jeffrey Ellenbogen
Katherine Englebardt
Andrew Gavens
Sara Gavens
Mery Gross
Jeffrey Handelman
Jay Yablon



## The Agudat Achim Chronicle

### Ad Mayah Ve-essrim Shana.

"May you live to be 120" references the age at which Moses died. It is meant to denote a long and healthy life. Congregation Agudat Achim has now reached that milestone and we're still going strong.

The Congregation Agudat Achim history is rich with stories of hardworking people determined to carry forward their Jewish heritage and traditions, but before there were enough Jewish families in Schenectady to even consider establishing a synagogue, Jews were trying to survive across the seas.

URING the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a period coinciding with the industrial revolution, there were clues that foretold of an impending change for

European Jews. It is true that life for people in North America, including Jews, was improving, but across the globe, especially in Russia, a land fertile with Jewish scholars, artists, and scientists, pogroms and repressive legislation toward Jews created a mood of fear.

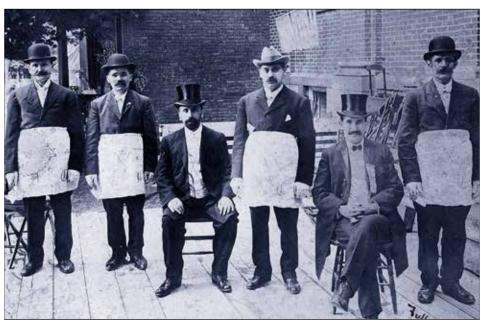
The time had come to seek safe haven. Jews from Russia and surrounding nations began to emigrate, some to Palestine.

some to Europe, others to the Americas. In a few short years millions found their way to new lands. Many families settled in New York City. A few even found

their way northward to Schenectady where our story begins.

It was 1888 and Schenectady was gaining

a reputation as a place for American innovation. Thomas Edison's Light Company, which became General Electric, was growing and hiring people. Jewish scholars, scientists and laborers found their way to this burgeoning industrial market. As the High Holy Days were approaching, five of these Jewish families, newly arrived immigrants from Russia and Lithuania, negotiated to bring a chazzan from New



June 1908, laying of the Cornerstone, from left: David Cohen, Morris Baker, Rev. Solomon Hinder, Jacob Cohen, Abraham Seaman, Israel Cohen



June 1908, Daughters of Rebecca, Bottom Row from left: Mrs. Philip Gould, Mrs. Udel Cassler, Mrs. Dora Segal, Mrs. Jacob Cohen, Mrs. David Cohen, Top Row: Mrs. Aaron Berrent, Mrs. Sol Morris, Mrs. Rickman, Mrs. Edward Levine

York City to Schenectady to conduct services. The *minyan* was held at 321 State Street, the home of Abe Morris.

In 1892, Abe along with his brother Sol, Jacob Vinick, Dr. Jacob Katz and his brother, attended a meeting at the home of Reuben and Itsche (Isaac) Cohen. This was the first meeting of what became a newly organized congregation, Agudas Achim, a Hebrew name meaning a gathering of brothers. It was to be an orthodox congregation and Abe Morris was its first president.

In January, 1896 the Agudas Achim Cemetery Association was incorporated. The first burial was that of Abraham Schaffer, a learned man from Poland, who had come to Schenectady just one year shy of becoming a Rabbi. He was the first spiritual leader of the new congregation, although he could not perform marriage ceremonies. The congregation could not afford to pay much of a salary, so Reverend Schaffer and his family opened a grocery store. Henry Schaffer, one of Reverend Schaffer's six sons, successfully grew the business into a small chain of Schaffer Stores in the region.

FTER the turn of the century, increasing numbers of Jews were arriving from Russia, Hungary and the rest of Europe. On October 13, 1902, Congregation Agudas Achim was officially incorporated and granted its charter. In 1903, the year the Wright Brothers took flight, Congregation Agudas Achim purchased a site on Nott Terrace. For

\$6,000 the congregation had a place to call home, albeit a fire-damaged brewery and a bottling warehouse. Reverend Solomon Hindon was the Rabbi.

Our next Rabbi, Elias Inselbuch, served the congregation from 1906 to 1912. He was an energetic man who organized the Vaad Hakashruth and the Talmud Torah. During his tenure, a building campaign, in which 180 congregants raised \$45,000, resulted in the 1908 construction of a new synagogue edifice, often titled the Nott Terrace Synagogue. Abraham Seaman was the president.

From 1923 to 1927, Rabbi Issacher Levin presided on the pulpit. By 1927 Schenectady was an important industrial center. The congregation had



Cornerstone, Agudas Achim Nott Terrace Synagogue

grown to over 200 families and the diversity among its members was spiriting an evolutionary change away from traditional orthodoxy. In 1929, as Wall Street fortunes were fading, Congregation Agudas Achim affiliated with the Conservative Movement. Some members left for Orthodox congregations, others moved to Reform congregations.

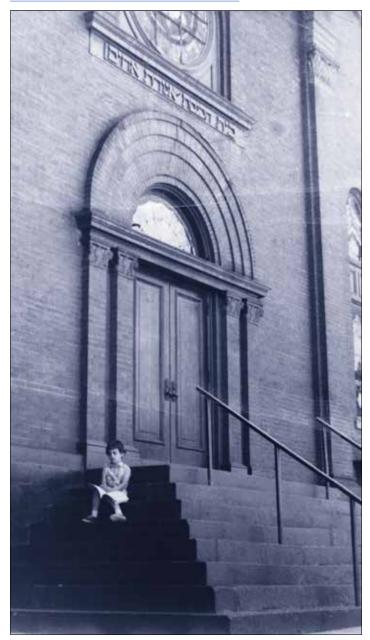
Under the presidency of Joseph E. Grossberg and true to new ideas generated by the Conservative Movement, physical changes took place in the synagogue. The

Bema was moved forward, in front of the Aron Hakodesh, the Holy Ark. Women, once relegated to the balcony, now sat alongside their husbands on new benches. The sanctuary was illuminated with new light fixtures, and

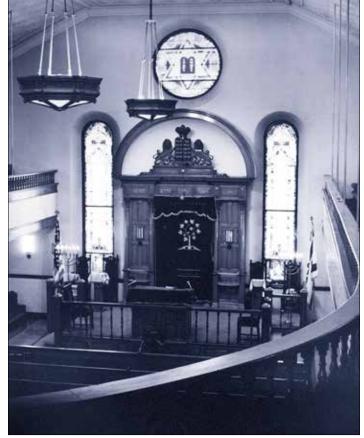
Board minutes began to be written in English, rather than Yiddish. The congregation celebrated the rededication of the renovated synagogue on June 16, 1929.

In 1931, Rabbi Abba Abrams, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary, became our first Conservative Rabbi. Rabbi Samuel Sherman succeeded him in 1933. A renewed spirit took hold in the membership. *Kipot* replaced hats as the traditional head covering for men. Sisterhood was established, and within a year the first Confirmation class of nine girls was celebrated. The year 1931 also saw the start of Adult Education, Junior Congregation and Family Night Services.

During the 1930s, the years of the economic depression, Joseph Grossberg, Abe Cohen and Max Cohen held the board presidency, successively. World War II followed the Depression, and, although the synagogue found itself in financial difficulties, the congregation continued to grow. President Mayer



Exterior, Agudas Achim Nott Terrace Synagogue



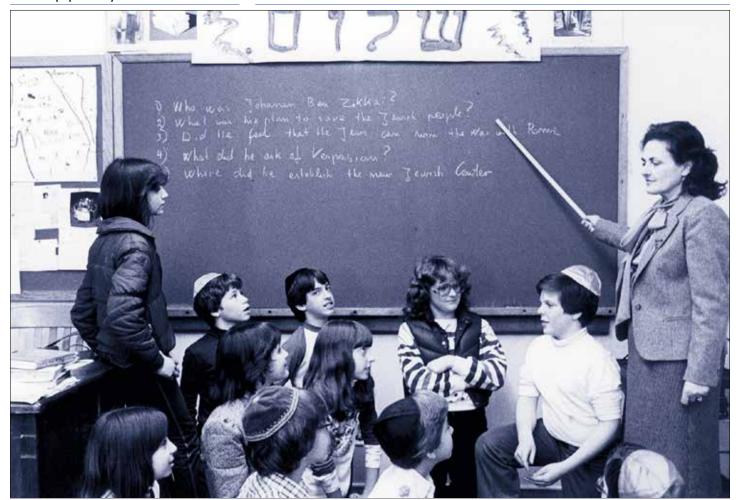
Interior, Agudas Achim Nott Terrace Synagogue



Rabbi Wise prepares a boy for Bar Mitzvah



Rabbi Sherman with 1937 Confirmation Class



Pola Metzger teaches history class, circa 1980s

Cramer acquired the school building and donated its down payment.

On June 8, 1941, Agudas Achim celebrated its Golden Jubilee with a gala dinner. In 1943, the mortgage on the Nott Terrace Synagogue was ceremoniously burned, and in 1946, the synagogue affiliated with the newly formed Bureau of Jewish Education. During this time, Reverend Samuel Rosenberg and his family became part of the Agudas Achim family, and, starting in 1938, Rabbi Aaron Wise served the congregation until 1947.

Y 1949, the Nott Terrace building was in need of renovation. Dr. Donald Binder, newly elected as president of a congregation now numbering 320 families, began a fundraising campaign that eventually raised over \$40,000 to renovate the social hall. Rabbi Solomon Bernards began his long tenure that continued to 1961, working notably with the congregation youth, building up Leadership Training Fellowship, USY and Junior Congregation.

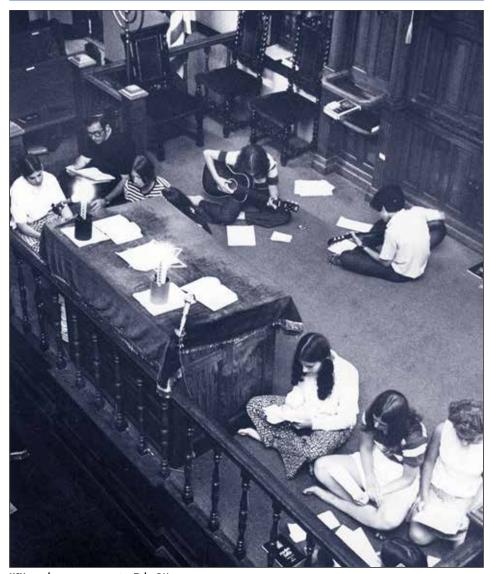
Although Senator Joe McCarthy's proceedings against Communism and the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee were creating a fear among Jewish groups of rising anti-Semitism in the country, the 1950s was an exciting period for Congregation Agudas Achim. There was a renewed interest in family Sabbaths, Friday night services and children's services. A synagogue choir was established, but was short-lived. From this period comes our tradition of being a singing congregation. In addition, a Couple's Club and a Young Adult Study Group reached across our membership.

Joseph (Joe) Cohen, president in 1954, and again in 1962, instituted the engaging procession of children marching around the sanctuary with the silver Torah ornaments, following Sabbath Torah reading. During Joe's tenure, the first Bat Mitzvah was held on a Friday evening in 1956.

Between Joe Cohen's two elections to the presidency, Jacob Friedman, Nathan



Mr. Dinsky teaches a Schenectady Bureau of Education class, circa 1953



USY members commemorating Tisha B'Av



Rabbi and Ruth Bernards celebrate Purim with Congregation, circa 1960s

Silver and Leonard Drooz, successively, served as Board President.



Fred Schneider, Board President, 1968

In 1957, the custom of holding a public memorial service at a cemetery on the day of *Slichot* was begun. A few months later in March of 1958, the Congregation Board voted to create a School Board, reestablishing the synagogue's Hebrew School. The School Board consisted of five members, to be autonomous in all matters except financial ones.

During the presidency of Leonard Drooz, a larger, modern facility to house our sanctuary, social hall and offices was the chatter of the congregation. In June 1960, Agudas Achim, now known as Agudat Achim, following the modern Israeli Hebrew pronunciation of the letter "taf," purchased property on Troy Road. The existing house on the property was used immediately for the Hebrew School, and plans were underway for the construction

of a new synagogue edifice. A little known story at the time had Len Drooz completing the negotiation of the purchase of the property when a tornado swept through the area, causing serious tree damage on the Troy Road property. The property owner wanted to back out of the deal for she felt the land was worth less without the lovely trees. An agreement was reached to reduce the price by \$25,000, which was fortunate for us since the trees would have needed to be removed anyway.

Two years after Rabbi Bernards' departure, Rabbi Raymond Leiman took over the duties of the pulpit. Over the next year, during the rabbinical search, Joe Cohen provided religious guidance and leadership, and, in the spring of 1964, the congregation welcomed Rabbi Norman Mussman as the new religious leader.

In the spring of 1965 Sherwin Tanner was elected president. During his term, planning for the new synagogue building began. In a year that saw the reunification of Jerusalem following the 1967 War in Israel, Agudat Achim celebrated its 75th anniversary.

HE late sixties was a tumultuous period in the country's history with the assassinations of President John Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, and Senator Robert Kennedy. At Agudat Achim, Fred Schneider, serving as president for three years starting in 1968, was instrumental in planning and successful in fundraising for the current synagogue building at Union Street and Route 7. Fred and his energetic wife, Sadie, were



Children gaze at Torahs in Holy Ark, Nott Terrace, 1947



Rabbi Bernards with Confirmation Class, circa 1960





Left and right photos above, Torah Procession from the Nott Terrace Synagogue to the new Agudat Achim Synagogue, Union Street

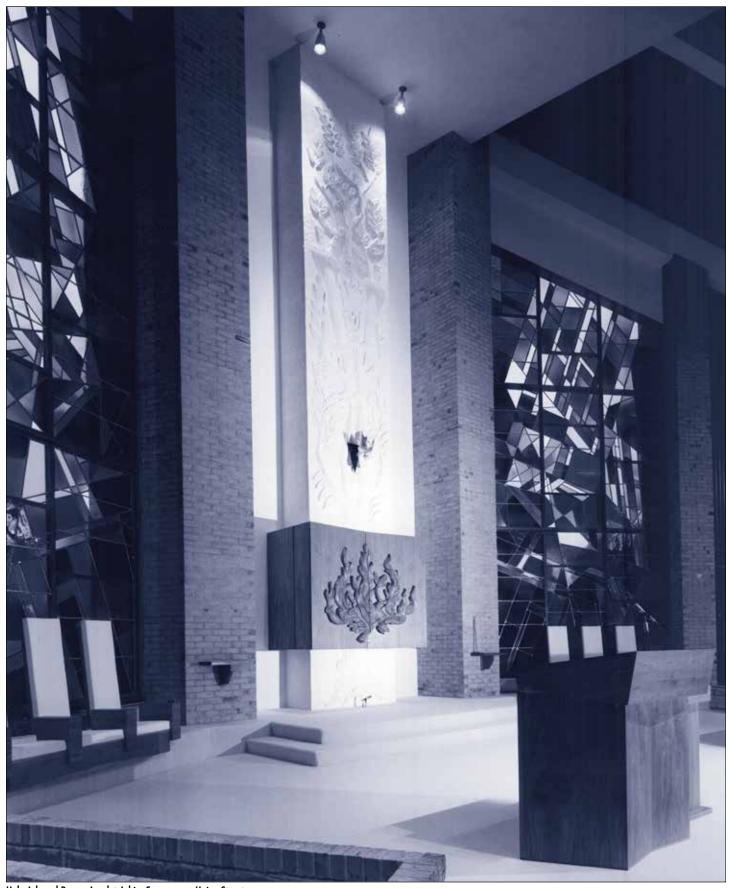
influential in creating a spirited congregation, looking to the future, but remembering its past. Several months following Fred's election to the presidency, Rabbi Sidney Zimmelman was installed as our spiritual leader.

A committee of the congregation, cochaired by Dr. Leon Levine and Irving Handelman, worked determinedly alongside Fred Schneider to raise the necessary funds to construct the new synagogue building. Agudat Achim congregants decided to participate in the game show WRGB's *Answers Please*, and ended up becoming the undefeated champions of the local television quiz show. The prize money was donated to

the building fund. On October 18, 1970, a groundbreaking ceremony was held, and on November 21, the Torah scrolls were transported to the new sanctuary in a moving procession from the Nott Street building to Agudat Achim's new home.



Exterior of Agudat Achim Synagogue, Union Street, circa 1970s



Holy Ark and Bema, Agudat Achim Synagogue, Union Street

HE architecturally impressive structure, gleaming with its enormous stained glass windows, proudly took its place as an important religious building along Route 7. The ark, the beautiful stained glass windows and other fixtures from the Nott Terrace Synagogue were brought to the new building to adorn the chapel and main entrance.

With the new synagogue building came a renewed energy in the congregation. Membership grew to over 400 families, with the Religious School enrollment exceeding 200 children. A new dues structure now included High Holy Day seats and all Religious School fees.

In 1969, after 25 years of service to Agudat Achim, Reverend and Mrs. Rosenberg retired. Reverend Jacob Waid,

continuing the tradition of mentoring, tutoring, training, inspiring and comforting members of the congregation, succeeded Reverend Rosenberg.

During the 1970s, Gerald Praskin, Marvin Lubert, Murray Jaros and Natalie Oshins held the Board presidency. One of our congregants Murry Prager, an expert in Jewish liturgy and possessing a charming voice, served as our cantor for the High Holy Days in many of the decade's years.

In 1973 the spiritual and caring Reverend Shimon Paktor began his long tenure as Ritual Director of Agudat Achim. The social tumult that grabbed the country during the 1960s was reflected a decade later in our congregation. Beginning in 1976, President Marvin Lubert, along with our Religious

Committee headed by Joseph Cohen, fought for and presided over the creation of an egalitarian congregation. Women were now recognized as equal participants in all synagogue services and rituals, and Ruth Fraster initiated our first Adult *B'not Mitzvah* class.

Murray Jaros became president in 1977. During his term Murray initiated a capital fund for major repairs, Natalie Oshins organized the Creative Worship Group, our first chavurah, and source of four of our future presidents. Natalie helped found the Agudat Achim Catering Service, a steadfast fundraising entity for the congregation. Natalie continued her dedicated work for the congregation by becoming our first female president, and, with the help of Men's Club, she instituted a Hebrew literacy campaign. In 1979, Natalie's husband, Bob, along with Rose and Paul Westheimer, created our unique and evergrowing community celebration, the Carrot Festival, the same year we welcomed Sam Kieffer as our Rabbi.

To celebrate Agudat Achim's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a new sign, using one of the two circular stained glass windows from the Nott Terrace Synagogue, was erected on the front lawn. The new sign was a gift from Bob and Natalie Oshins.

In the early 1980s, as Bill Rowen began his presidency, our *Reyut* program was established, reaching out to members in need of support in times of crisis. The synagogue became fully accessible, including exterior wheelchair access into the building, and interior access to the *bima*, using a portable ramp. In 1984, as Israel airlifted Ethiopian Jews in Operation Moses, Bob Woll was elected our next president.

HE decade of the 1980s was one of growth and change. Sisterhood was renamed Women's Network to be more responsive to the expanding role of women in the synagogue and in the greater community. During this exciting period in our history, the Long Range Planning Committee was established, the education wing, following a cam-



Hebrew School Class, Nott Terrace Synagogue, circa 1960s



Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Agudat Achim Education Center, September, 1983

paign that raised half a million dollars, was built, and the tapestry that graces our vestibule was completed.

In 1986, the Albany and Schenectady Jewish Federations merged. It was the beginning of a consolidation of Jewish community activities and outstanding services across the Capital Region. That same year, Henry Skoburn began a three-year presidency, during which time the Education Endowment Fund was formalized, and the Hebrew High School was started. 1987 was the first year of Jayne Architzel's 15-year term as principal of our Hebrew School. Meanwhile, adult men and women initiated their studies as part of the newly reorganized B'nai/B'not Mitzvah program.

The centennial planning committee started its work in 1988 with initiatives from Fred and Sadie Schneider. Don Steiner was elected as Board President in 1989, bringing his sense of *ruach* to the office. During his term, more than two-dozen families became new members of Agudat Achim.

Steve Greenfield took the reins as President in 1991, ushering in our centennial year. During this time, Russian Jews began an exodus from the Soviet Union, many emigrating from Russia to Israel, others settling in North America. A new Jewish Community Resettlement Committee, chaired by Murray Jaros and then Josie Kivort, offered much needed assistance. Josie also spearheaded an annual Shabbat celebrating our Russian community. The

Spigel family was the first of many new immigrant families to settle in our region and join Congregation Agudat Achim.

E grew to a synagogue membership of more than 450 families. We formed a Social Action Committee and our congregation became a sponsor of *Mazon*, a Jewish response to hunger in our community. We instituted a fundraising campaign we titled AA Foods, in cooperation with Price Chopper Super Markets, in which we raised funds by taking a small percentage of profit from all the items members purchased at the market. This program lasted for eight years.

We devoted all of 1992 to our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with many celebrations in-



USY encampment, Lake George, circa 1988

cluding: a Russian cabaret, a musical play *Into The Shul*, tracing our roots, and numerous scholarly events.

To preserve our legacy, and thanks to the efforts of Sadie Schneider, Marsha Jaros and many others, we established an

Archives and Historical Committee. We completed our beautiful *chupah*, placing it on display just outside the sanctuary.

Shimon Pactor retired in 1993. Soonafter, Reverend Yanoun Bitan was hired as our ritual director and cantor. After a decade of spiritual leadership, Rabbi Kieffer sought the warmer climate of Florida, and the search for a religious leader began once again.

In 1993, the Farber Family's gift of the *Tree of Life* was dedicated in our foyer, and, as the synagogue continued the search for our next Rabbi, Susan Farber took her place as Congregation Board President. That same year Jon Konheim was welcomed as our Rabbi, getting off to an exciting start with our first interfaith program with the Islamic community. Don Steiner introduced a series of meditation classes, known as Healing Services, to the congregation.

In 1995, the dynamic Anita Merims, an extraordinary volunteer for synagogue

occasions and community events, started her term as the Board President. A series of alternative services, held concurrently with ongoing services, were established for congregants seeking a more contemplative and introspective approach to traditional Sabbath and High Holy Day services.

We held our first annual garage sale in 1996; our gift shop was expanded and renamed *Leora Judaica*; our kosher catering service was renamed *As You Like It Catering*; the social hall received a long awaited renovation, under the direction of a distinguished interior designer, our *Rebbitsn*, Rena Konheim; and our *Elul* project won the Solomon Schechter Gold Award.

HE remarkable people of Agudat Achim continued to be active participants in educating, comforting and participating in Jewish life. One example is the many leaders in the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York who came from the ranks of Agudat Achim leader-



Into the Shul, musical celebrating Agudat Achim's 100th Anniversary, November, 1991



Natalie and Bob Oshins testimonial, June, 1990

ship. Another example can be found in the work of the Adult Education Committee. Always at the forefront, the committee members developed and provided congregants and the community at large far reaching educational and informational programming, including, to name but a few, the Scholar-in-Residence Program, featuring Dr. Stephen Berk, the Joseph Cohen Memorial lectures, the *Kallah* weekends, and Interfaith gatherings with churches and mosques in the community.

Another example of people coming together was the formation of *Reyut*, first established in 1982. This group of passionate individuals continues today to provide other congregants and people in the community with care and comfort during difficult times.

Since charitable giving is one of the means of survival for a synagogue, many funds were established during this period, initiated by the Sara and Irving Handelman Education Fund. The Philip Stark Memorial Arts Fund has helped us maintain our historical perspective. The Eric Bilgore Gold Youth Fund and the Kathryn and Barry Gold Capital Improvement Fund were established in memory of these three wonderful individuals who lost their lives in a tragic automobile accident. The Paul

Doigan Memorial Fund and the Religious School Discretionary Fund were established. The Prager Jewish Music Fund, established by friends of Gert and the late Murry Prager, to promote liturgical music, ensures that beautiful musical concerts be performed in our sanctuary. And two endowment funds were established: The Sonya and George Young Fund and the Fred Schneider Fund in memory of one our great synagogue leaders.

At the June 1997 Board meeting, we welcomed Paul Zonderman as incoming Board President. During his tenure, Schenectady celebrated its bicentennial, Israel celebrated its 50th anniversary and the Board voted to accept the Jewish Federation's Inclusion Committee request that Agudat Achim be a "welcoming" congregation without regard to sexual orientation. Growing our synagogue's foundation, the Irving and Sylvia Yulman Fund was created with a major donation to the Education Endowment Fund and the Israel Experience Fund was renamed the Dorothy Spira Israel Experience Fund after a generous donation was made on behalf of our Agudat Achim Hebrew School students in support of summer trips to Israel.

The spiritual, cheerful exuberance of Kathy Englebardt greeted the Board as she took her position as our Board President in 1999, the same year we greeted Alan Bell as our new ritual director. We continued to be in good hands as we trained our young boys and girls to become *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah*.

As Kathy Englebardt completed her Presidency in 2001, Susan Axelrod was elected to that office. Susan's husband, Howard Axelrod, possessing a beautiful



Elyse Wohl talks to the Pre-K about Sadie Schneider Mitzvah Day, 2012



Sadie Schneider, Barry Handelman, Judy Brown and Bobby Moses volunteering at 2009 Carrot Festival

voice and liturgical expertise, began a long-term tenure as the congregation's High Holy Days Cantor. That same year, Agudat Achim began its yearlong 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, with the major event of the year chaired by Mark and Barrie Handelman.

E said goodbye to Rabbi Jon Konheim as he headed to Baltimore and we welcomed Rabbi Robert Kasman to the pulpit, where standing at the center of the *bima*, he offered illustrative sermons. Rabbi Kasman took an active role in our children's Jewish education.

In 2003, we congratulated Gary Dater for reaching his 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the synagogue's caretaker. That same year Ron Scharf was elected Board President and Jack Mintzer became the director of our Religious School. As You Like It Catering, under the leadership of Risé Routenberg and Barbara Wasser, received the Solomon Schechter Gold Award.

In 2005, as Risé and Barbara continued to dedicate their time and skills in the kitchen, they, in collaboration with more than 140 other volunteers, developed the acclaimed cookbook, *Divine Kosher Cuisine*, a major fundraising source for Agudat Achim, that cele-

brates the joy of kosher cooking. The book won multiple awards, including the Solomon Schechter Gold Award and the Mid-Atlantic Region Tabasco/McIlhenny Award.

In 2005, a year that saw the growth of *Masorti* in Israel and "J-Date" through-

out the Word Wide Web, we also inducted Jay Yablon as Board President. To create an enduring educational base for our future generations, the *Akiva* Society was established for bequests of \$5000 or more to the Education Endowment Fund.

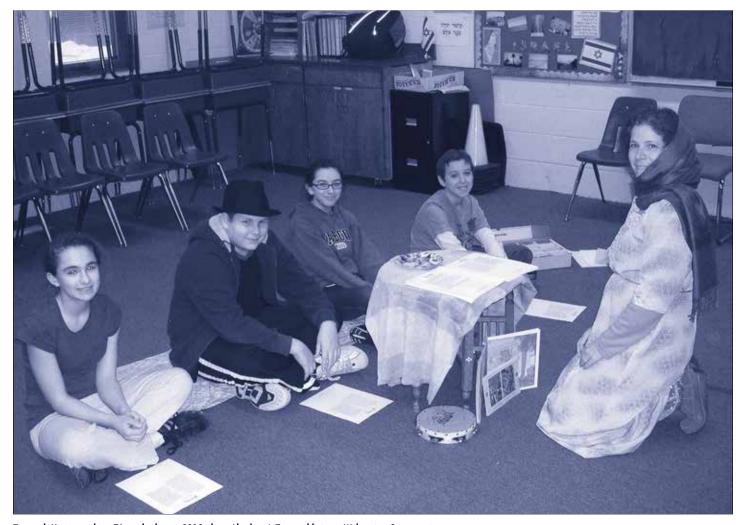
Rob Fox, newly inducted as president in July 2007, initiated a committee to study interfaith burial in our cemetery, an issue growing out of the increasing number of interfaith marriages. Under a new Adult Education initiative, *Divine Kosher Cuisine* initiated a series of cooking classes to the delight of congregants and Capital Region cooks, and Sukkot was celebrated with Pizza in the Hut.

As Israel prepared to celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008, Congregation Agudat Achim inducted Rabbi Ted Lichtenfeld to our pulpit. Rabbi Ted, as he prefers to be called, settled into the synagogue's home on Hickory Road with his wife, Rabbi Miriam, and their children.

Jeff Handelman took on the Board presidency in July, 2009, welcoming new traditions. The soulful sound of stringed



Jack Mintzer and Rabbi Ted Lichtenfeld with the 2010 10th Grade Confirmation Class



Zipporah Harris teaching 7th grade class in 2010 about Abraham's Tent and being a Welcoming Congregation

instruments prior to the cantor's chanting of *Kol Nidre* greeted our congregation at the start of Yom Kippur, and a fundraising appeal was held to raise awareness of our cemetery's needs.

After 56 years as an active member of Agudat Achim, Gert Prager moved to Rochester to live with her children. Gert was honored by the congregation for her many accomplishments, among them having spearheaded the Adult Education Committee. Her late Husband Murry brought *ruach* and *simcha* to every service he led and every music event in which he sang.

In 2010, Agudat Achim received the Solomon Schechter Award for Worship and Ritual for a Pre-Passover barbeque and outdoor service. And for the first time in many years, we held a Passover

Seder in the synagogue, delighting families who also enjoyed the unique cooking skills of our *As You Like It* Catering. In 2011, after much discussion, the Board approved the creation of a section in the Agudat Achim cemetery for burial of intermarried couples that are members of Agudat Achim.

As Agudat Achim approached its 120<sup>th</sup> year, Mery Gross assumed the Board presidency in July 2011 with her characteristic verve and direction. Plans to celebrate our 120<sup>th</sup> started early, with numerous ideas for commemorative celebrations of our 12 decades of Jewish life and experience in Schenectady.

During the year, we were recognized with yet another Solomon Schechter Gold Award, our first in the Adult Education category, for organizing the first



Rabbi Ted Lichtenfeld

Community of Jewish Writers event in the Capital Region, giving a voice to Jewish poets and short-story writers.

As planning for celebrating our 120<sup>th</sup> got underway, spearheaded by our beloved Sadie Schneider, we lost her to the consequences of age. The 120<sup>th</sup> celebration is dedicated in her memory, to her effervescent caring, her infinite ideas and boundless love of Agudat Achim. On May 6, 2012, close to 100 members of



Sadie Schneider wrapping Shalot Manot packages for college students, a program of Women's Network, 2009



Pre-K children planting flowers on Sadie Schneider Mitzvah Day, 2012

the congregation and Religious School participated in a multi-generational *Mitzvah* Day in memory of Sadie. Every arm of the synagogue and congregants of all ages participated in events through-

out the community. Some planted flowers, while others cleaned monuments at the cemetery, helped at the Regional Food Bank, and wrote cards to soldiers. We completed our celebratory year with a festive Chanukah dinner and an exhilarating concert by Terra Naomi Englebardt and Jon Sandler, inspired singers who grew up at Agudat Achim.

For 120 years we continue to be a synagogue community offering friendship and prayer, education and activities for young and old, social action *and Tikkun Olam*, and outstanding kosher catering to the Capital Region community. We are a house of prayer, a house of reverence and celebration, and a house of achievements. As generation follows generation, we affirm:

#### עד מאה ועשרים שנה Ad Mayah Ve-essrim Shana.

With the memories of past accomplishments, and a renewed vigor for the future, Congregation Agudat Achim looks forward to the next 120 years!



Religious School students, circa 2011, learning to put on tefillin



