

Welcome to Temple Sinai

WELLINGTON'S PROGRESSIVE
JEWISH CONGREGATION



WELCOME TO OUR CONGREGATION!



Temple Sinai is one of the world's southernmost Progressive Jewish congregations, and one of three Progressive congregations in New Zealand.

Founded in 1959, we are a membership of around 150 families. We offer regular services on all Shabbatot and festivals, children's and adult education classes, an established bar/bat mitzvah programme, a wide range of social and community activities and much more.

We educate our children honestly and openly, to encourage them to feel pride in their Judaism, their place in the worldwide Jewish community and their contributions to New Zealand and the world.

We often refer to our congregation as the 'Temple family'.

Temple Sinai is affiliated to the Union for Progressive Judaism of Australia, Asia and New Zealand (UPJ) and to the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), the international umbrella organisation for Progressive Jewish congregations.

WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM?

Progressive Judaism embraces tradition and works to make it meaningful in contemporary life.

Called Reform or Liberal Judaism in some countries, the Progressive movement represents a creative Jewish response to the challenges of the modern world.

Progressive Judaism understands the Torah and sacred Jewish texts to be an ongoing discourse, exploring the relationship between humanity and God and the purpose of our being. Each individual is encouraged to make informed choices about personal belief and practice.

In keeping with Jewish tradition, we stress that it is what one does, rather than what one believes, that is important. Progressive Judaism invites people to look carefully at Jewish tradition and to take on those observances and actions they find personally meaningful.

This means that there is a wide diversity of ideas and practices among Progressive Jews, firmly based on a careful study of Jewish tradition and their own experience. For Temple Sinai, the synagogue is our 'home' and our services and practices reflect tradition as well as our own times.

OUR BELIEFS AND VALUES

Our basic values are those that the Jewish people have held for thousands of years, expressed in a modern way. We believe the practice of Judaism to be both relevant and central to Jewish life.

Temple Sinai is committed to the core principles and practices of Progressive Judaism in which we assert:

- the belief in one God
- the unity of the Jewish people, and
- the vital role of the State of Israel in modern Jewish life.

We are also committed to:

- inclusiveness
- equal gender roles in worship and leadership
- Jewish education as a life-long process
- using meaningful ritual to infuse the seasons of the year and stages of our lives
- the value and dignity of other forms of Judaism, and other religions, ethnic groups, cultures and beliefs.

We believe that all Jews have a place within Judaism and should have an opportunity to study and carry out its precepts in their own lives. Our common origin, history and faith bind us together, regardless of how many nations we live in, or the different approaches we may take to religion and politics.

SERVICES

Services are held weekly, on Saturday mornings. We also hold a Kabbalat Shabbat service on the last Friday evening of every month, followed by a pot-luck dairy meal and a discussion or entertainment in which everyone can participate. Visitors – Jewish and non-Jewish – are always welcome.

We are a Progressive congregation; men and women sit together and lead or take part in services equally.

It is customary for males to wear a kippah (small head covering). Some men and women wear prayer shawls (tallit), especially when leading a service or reading from the Torah. Kippot and tallitot are available for visitors to wear during services.

Most prayers are in Hebrew and English and many are transliterated.

WHO CAN BE A MEMBER?

Membership is open to all Jews who support the philosophy of our congregation.

Our criteria for Jewish status is that we recognise as Jewish those people who have one or more Jewish parent, or who have evidence of having converted to Judaism through a recognised process, when those people profess to no other religion and support the aims and objectives of our congregation.

Our website has more information about Temple Sinai membership and activities, with contact details for enquiries.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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