

Ceremonies led by Rabbi Jennifer brought together over 100 KH members and invited guests, on March 23, for the dedication of our new Sanctuary on the campus of St. Wilfred Episcopal Church.

Toby Deutsch and Richard Belle, co-chairs of the KH Transition Committee, served as masters of ceremony. Richard set the tone for an emotionally charged event with his inspirational opening remarks.

The evening featured formal dedication of Kol HaNeshama's new Ark and Ner Tamid, crafted by artisans at Studio Gross in Brooklyn, and a Torah recently donated to the synagogue by Garry Grossman. The Ner Tamid was a gift to KH from Toby, in honor of her husband Larry z"l.

A procession of KH members, many of them past presidents, accompanied the congregation's Torahs to the new Ark. They walked under a chuppah created by Larry Deutsch's tallit.

One dedication highlight was Rabbi Jennifer's blessing of the two Mezuzot that were affixed to doorways prior to the event. One Mezuzah, carved by Ron Weismehl z"l, was donated by his wife Sonia. The other was a gift from David and Linda Milberg and Toby.

Judy May spoke about the work of the Sacred Space Committee in transforming an ordinary room into a Sanctuary. Joan Paru focused on the handsome Mizrach she and her husband Marden z"l donated to KH. Joan Davidson presented two beautiful and meaningful wall hangings, consisting of 32 individual blocks created by 13 talented congregants and stitched together by Susan Salzman.

Joel Swallow, a lay leader of St. Wilfred, warmly welcomed KH and expressed a hope that future collaboration between church and synagogue could benefit the entire Sarasota community.

A wine and cheese reception, provided generously by Judie Biderman and Ari Delevie, followed the dedication.

The evening concluded with a light dinner sponsored by Robert Toale and Sons Funeral Homes and their Jewish Community liaison, Gerry Ronkin, and the annual congregational meeting.

President Donald Baum, on behalf of the congregation, expressed deep gratitude to Rabbi Jennifer Singer for her extraordinary efforts during the transition and through the worst of the pandemic. He also thanked outgoing officers, board members and committee chairs for their service, singling out immediate past treasurer Joe Rosenthal for his important input.

Installed as new officers and board members were Prof. Baum for a second term as President; Ellen Honig, Vice President; Marcia Braff, Treasurer; Ranita Gomez, Secretary; and board members Glenda Auerbach, Richard Belle, Jeffrey Borenstein, Ruth Brandwein, Gail Buchman, Adrienne Friedman, Jay Leonard and Naomi Schwartz.



Photo by Lynn Levine

Joan Paru at the Mizrach she and her husband Marden Z"l gifted KH



Photo by Lynn Levine

Thirteen artists created the beautiful wall hangings, from left: Naomi Schwartz, Anne Schimberg, Anita Sarno, Susan Salzman, Linda Milberg, Amy Meyer, Judith May, Melanie Marcus, Joan Davidson, Toby Deutsch, Rabbi Jennifer Singer (not pictured, Michelle Rosenthal and Helen Abramowicz



Photo by Lynn Levine

Rabbi Jennifer blesses the Mezuzah at the outside door



Photo by Lynn Levine

Joel Swallow, a lay leader of St. Wilfred, warmly welcomes KH to his church