



Monmouth Reform Temple

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PRESS RELEASE

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Monmouth Reform Temple Celebrates 60 Years Serving its Congregants and the Greater Community

Tinton Falls: In this new year, Monmouth Reform Temple (MRT) celebrates its 60th anniversary as a vital and spiritual force for its congregants and the greater community. The celebration kick-offs with a special Shabbat service on Friday, November 15, at 7:00 pm which will honor the temple's former spiritual leaders. A Gala Dinner Dance is planned for Saturday, November 16, at the Sheraton in Eatontown beginning at 6 pm till 10:00 pm. Tickets are \$50 per person. The featured speaker will be Rabbi Rick Jacobs, the president of the Union for Reform Judaism. All proceeds for the event will benefit the MRT Religious Education Endowment Fund. [Donations to the fund are appreciated.](#) For more information on the celebration contact the MRT office at info@monmouthreformtemple.org.

MRT Board President Marjorie Wold states, "Working alongside our Rabbi Marc Kline and Cantor Gabrielle Clissold is an honor and a privilege. I look forward to celebrating our 60th anniversary with all the festivities we have planned for the November 15 weekend, as well as all year long. All in the community are welcome to join us in the celebration."

Sixty years ago, a group of 29 families in the Red Bank area came together to begin MRT, a Reform Jewish congregation. MRT has grown to over 325 families and maintains a packed calendar of programs and activities for its members' worship, education and socialization. This includes its important tradition of "tikkun olam"-- community service to "repair the world" in making it a better place.

MRT partners with other community organizations such as Interfaith Neighbors, the Center at Asbury Park, the JBJ Soul Foundation and the YMCA. MRT's vegetable garden, Gan Mazon (Garden of Plenty) has grown and delivered an estimated 8,000 lbs. of food for local non-sectarian pantries in Asbury Park and Freehold. Every year, the entire MRT family comes together to perform many community service events on Mitzvah Day.

MRT's longest serving Rabbi, Sally J. Priesand, is a historical Jewish figure, as she was ordained in 1972 as America's first female rabbi. After serving as MRT's spiritual leader from 1981 through 2006, she remains today its Rabbi Emerita.

The synagogue includes a large proportion of interfaith families, and is active in partnering with other religious houses of worship including Christians and Muslims. Perhaps this was always part of MRT's DNA as in its early years, while its building was under construction; the synagogue worshipped and educated its children at the Presbyterian Church at Shrewsbury. It still maintains a strong relationship with that church alternating Thanksgiving services each year with each other's congregations.

Rabbi Marc Kline states, "Every day, I am blessed to serve this congregation. One of the most amazing things about MRT is how the people step up. We help people live their Judaism in the context of the real world." Regarding the 60th anniversary he adds, "Moses lived to 120; that is only our half-life. We are still young and still growing and our mission is before us."

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Pictures and captions on next page.



(left) MRT leaders, Cantor Gabrielle Clissold, MRT Board President Margie Wold, Rabbi Marc Kline and long-time board member and community leader Dean Ross

(Right) MRT master gardeners and volunteers harvesting their bounty in the Gan Mazon "Garden of Plenty" destined for Monmouth County food pantries.



(left) Newspaper clipping from Ground-breaking for the MRT temple building in 1960s.