

I was born in Chicago, a while ago.

First home I remember was a small apartment on the corner of Stratford and Broadway. Down the street from Temple Sholom and across the street from what was to become Treasure Island in 1963. Many years later, I had my job with that chain, which lasted for over 5 years. Linda will confirm that I still arrange the cans while I walk down the aisles of the grocery store.

The first car I remember was our 1959 Plymouth station wagon. Push button automatic, V8, and no carpeting. I now need to drive a station wagon too, except mine has carpeting.

My dad was a teacher in the neighborhood at Nettelhorst School, where he would preside in Room 305 for 40 years.

I attended Nettelhorst from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

On Sundays he taught at Temple Sholom. All our classes, including Hebrew were taught on Sundays. I attended through Bar Mitzvah and Confirmation.

Our family was my mom, dad, brother, me, and our standard French Poodle, Suzette.

Suzette, who rejected by a breeder for imperfections, was the life of any party and lived up to her name as the consummate flirt. She was with us for over 16 years.

After confirmation, I drifted away from attending services and became the person that comes on only on High Holidays.

A few years ago Linda and I were married, that changed. Linda had little exposure to her own tradition and was hungry for it. So we started attending Friday night services regularly at Temple Sholom. We made friends and I reconnected with our traditions. Pretending to be a scholar, I told Linda, the Sh'ma was the only prayer she ever needed to know. And it was the first prayer she learned, as an adult.

Linda made her Bat Mitzvah as an adult, while barely pregnant with Danielle, our first child.

Driving into the city Friday nights with a baby became an obstacle to attending services. In contemplating other options (that's what they call Temple shopping today), we attended a service at TBI on Howard Street. We really liked the new young Rabbi and eventually joined.

Our son Jonathan was born a couple of years later. Rabbi Weinberg presided along with the Moil at the Bris.

Jonathan and Danielle both attended TBI through Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and Confirmations. We believe this gave them a lasting appreciation for their traditions. Both of them regularly attended Shabbat services at Champaign. Of course the free food and adult beverages didn't hurt. We were especially pleased when Jonathan, after only moderate prodding, attended Kol Nidre services in his new home of Santa Barbara.

Nowadays, I like to attend Kabalat services. First, I get to eat. The service is short and it is mostly music. No one cares how bad I sing, as long as it's not too loud.

I have always liked the outdoors. Maybe I was attracted to the idea of being somewhere very different from the city. Perhaps it was looking at used National Geographic's bought at the Brandeis sale, and wanting to experience the amazing places in the photographs. It's the beauty I find in nature that helps connect me to my tradition and to God. Many summers we visited national parks with our own children, creating experiences that were new for us, as well as for them. These experiences seem to have imparted a lasting appreciation for nature, which they continue to explore.

Speaking of exploring, in 2010, at Jonathan's urging against my initial reluctance, and after about 8 months of planning, the 2 of us backpacked across the Grand Canyon over 3 days. It was the experience of a lifetime. I was so happy to be able to capture the experience with photographs.

Again, in 2016, as a designated celebration of a special birthday, Jonathan and I spent 5 days kayaking in the remote parts of Glacier Bay, Alaska with a small group. There were many amazing moments that I was so happy to capture with photographs.

My favorite subject to photograph these days is our first Grandchild, Eli.

Photography is one of the best hobbies a person can pick for spending money. Photographs help restore our memories of events, places, and people. It's sort of magical because in its highest form, it allows us to re-experience emotions. The beauty of a scene or a person's expression is not only preserved by the photograph, but sometimes it is only apparent when later contemplating it. It has been a privilege for me to be able to document Temple life during Linda's reign as president and then to continue through the Centennial year up to today.

Through happy Simcha's, like Eli's naming and sad ones, like the overwhelming support we received through the passing of 3 parents, and the community we share through Holidays and Celebrations, I very grateful for what our Temple Community has meant in our lives. I hope to continue documenting Temple life and expect I will do an even better job with the new lens I just bought.

Story of the famous Rabbi of Tzvat, centuries ago, who counseled arguing couples and brewed magic water as part of his therapy. After traveling for days a man arrived. After receiving counseling, the man asked the Rabbi for his bottle of magic water. The Rabbi said he needed to give him instructions first. "When you feel an argument coming on, take a big sip of the water, but don't swallow it. Hold it in your mouth while you count to 10. Then swallow it. Like magic, the argument will never happen!"