



## **Media Contact**

Vicki Sitron, Program Coordinator  
Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue  
313-962-4047  
vsitron@downtownsynagogue.org

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Downtown Synagogue Programs Explore Detroit's Jewish History**

Detroit, MI, June 1, 2016 – The Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue, 1457 Griswold in Detroit, will host three upcoming activities pertaining to the ongoing narrative of the Detroit Jewish community:

- The "Creating a Jewish Community" panels explore Jewish residential patterns in Metropolitan Detroit. The Downtown Synagogue's exhibit is titled "Neighborhoods." The Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives developed the installation, and it will be displayed at the synagogue during the month of June.

- The synagogue's monthly Lunch & Learn is "Creating Opportunities: Settlers to Citizens: An Introduction to Detroit's Jewish History." The beginnings and growth of Metro Detroit's Jewish community will be discussed. The event will take place at the synagogue on June 6 from 12 p.m. - 1 p.m. A kosher, vegetarian lunch will be provided free of charge.

- Marsha Music, a Detroit-based writer, poet, speaker, and storyteller, will discuss her essay "The Kidnapped Children of Detroit." The piece explores the "white flight" she experienced as a child, and the Jewish community's departure from the city is mentioned. Music will appear at the synagogue on June 29 from 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

The Downtown Synagogue is one of several locations in the Detroit area where the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives installations will appear in 2016. Each display showcases a different aspect of Jewish life in Detroit during the past century through photos, text, and graphics. The Downtown Synagogue's exhibit, "Neighborhoods," explores the Jewish community's migration from the City of Detroit to Southeast Michigan's northern suburbs. This shift impacted various aspects of society, including businesses, synagogues, and schools.

**-MORE-**

## DOWNTOWN SYNAGOGUE – PAGE 2

“Creating Opportunities: Settlers to Citizens: An Introduction to Detroit’s Jewish History,” follows the growth of the Jewish community from the arrival of its first settlers in 1760 through the 1950s. A docent trained by the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan will share stories of the area’s first synagogues and Jewish institutions, former Jewish neighborhoods, and prominent Jewish Detroiters.

Marsha Music has life-long roots in Detroit and Highland Park, where she was an activist and labor leader. She is a writer and poet, and she reflects on Detroit and its musical legacy in literary anthologies and on her eponymous blog. She is a noted speaker, storyteller and a contributor to numerous oral history projects and films. She has received acclaim for her essays “The Kidnapped Children of Detroit” and her epic poem, “Just Say Hi.” She is a 2012 Kresge Literary Arts Fellow, a 2015 Knight Arts Challenge awardee, and a 2016 Ideas City Detroit Fellow. In 2015, she was commissioned to create a poem for the celebrated “Symphony in D,” which she read in performances with the DSO. She lives in historic Lafayette Park and is married to artist David Philpot.

### DOWNTOWN SYNAGOGUE MISSION

*The principal mission of the Downtown Synagogue is to serve as a beacon for the entire Jewish community of Metropolitan Detroit by maintaining an egalitarian synagogue, rooted in Jewish tradition and affirming of pluralistic practice, in downtown Detroit. It encourages inter-generational engagement and promotes broad-based participation by offering a wide range of programming and acting as a conduit for Jewish activity in the city. It is committed to supporting the revitalization of Detroit; and assuring accessibility to all.*

For more information, go to: [downtownsynagogue.org](http://downtownsynagogue.org)

###



## **Media Contact**

Arlene Frank

Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue

313-962-4047

[ajfrank@downtownsynagogue.org](mailto:ajfrank@downtownsynagogue.org)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Downtown Synagogue Hires Vicki Sitron as Program Coordinator**

Detroit, MI, April 26, 2016 – The Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue announces Vicki Sitron has been hired as the congregation’s program coordinator. Sitron’s responsibilities will include developing, managing, marketing, and implementing synagogue programming, as well as directing program volunteers and supporting the development and growth of lay-leaders. She will begin in May 2016.

Ongoing synagogue activities include a monthly Lunch & Learn and a partnership with Eden Gardens Block Club in Detroit. In addition, the congregation hosts holiday programs throughout the year, such as a Megillah reading on Purim, a Passover seder, and a Chanukah party.

Sitron has worked in programming roles for various Jewish organizations, including Jewish Family Service of Metropolitan Detroit, the Washington DC JCC, and Young Judeaea. She has a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Michigan.

“I’m honored to join the Downtown Synagogue family,” Sitron added. “The energy and commitment of the staff and congregants is motivating, and I can’t wait to dive right in and be part of something so unique and special.”

Arlene Frank, the synagogue’s executive director, explained she and Sitron will work together to expand the congregation’s unique position in Jewish life in Detroit in an organic and determined manner.

**-MORE-**

## DOWNTOWN SYNAGOGUE – PAGE 2

"The hiring of Vicki as our new program coordinator will allow us to further develop synagogue programs and increase our outreach to the community for collaborative programming. We will engage both established Detroiters and new residents, those who work in Detroit, and Jews across the Metropolitan Detroit landscape," Frank said. "Vicki's deep commitment to the Detroit Jewish community, paired with her enthusiasm and experience, will help the Downtown Synagogue grow our hub of Jewish life in Detroit."

### DOWNTOWN SYNAGOGUE MISSION

*The principal mission of the Downtown Synagogue is to serve as a beacon for the entire Jewish community of Metropolitan Detroit by maintaining an egalitarian synagogue, rooted in Jewish tradition and affirming of pluralistic practice, in downtown Detroit. It encourages inter-generational engagement and promotes broad-based participation by offering a wide range of programming and acting as a conduit for Jewish activity in the city. It is committed to supporting the revitalization of Detroit; and assuring accessibility to all.*

For more information, go to: [downtownsynagogue.org](http://downtownsynagogue.org)

###



## **Media Contact**

Arlene Frank  
Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue  
313-962-4047  
ajfrank@downtownsynagogue.org

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Downtown Synagogue Hires Arlene J. Frank as Executive Director**

Detroit, MI, January 11, 2016 – The Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue announces Arlene J. Frank has been appointed its first full-time executive director. Frank manages daily operations and oversees the further development of membership, programming, ritual, growth and development, and community support.

“I’m excited to start a new challenge at the Downtown Synagogue, and I’m fortunate to join the congregation as it continues to grow Jewish life in Detroit,” said Frank. “As a lifelong Detroit, I have a compelling connection to both the synagogue and the city. I embrace the congregation’s commitment to revitalize Detroit, as well as its dedication to tikkun olam, a Jewish concept of acts of kindness to perfect or repair the world.”

Frank arrives with a wealth of experience having spent the past 23 years as director of the Womencenter at Oakland Community College. Frank successfully guided the department by increasing scholarship funds, engaging corporate and community organizations, collaborating with community organizations, and creating more awareness of its programs and services.

She has been a member and/or chair of numerous nonprofit and organizational boards, including Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring, Detroit Women’s Forum, Birmingham Maple Clinic, and National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Detroit Section.

“The Downtown Synagogue’s impressive growth was elevated when we hired full-time staff in 2012, and we will continue to reach new heights with Arlene as our executive director,” - said Leor Barak, the Downtown Synagogue board's immediate past president. “She is a formidable community leader with a host of experience in nonprofit management, and she brings a positive and professional approach to our congregation.”

**-MORE-**

## DOWNTOWN SYNAGOGUE – PAGE 2

### DOWNTOWN SYNAGOGUE MISSION

*The principal mission of the Downtown Synagogue is to serve as a beacon for the entire Jewish community of Metropolitan Detroit by maintaining an egalitarian synagogue, rooted in Jewish tradition and affirming of pluralistic practice, in downtown Detroit. It encourages inter-generational engagement and promotes broad-based participation by offering a wide range of programming and acting as a conduit for Jewish activity in the city. It is committed to supporting the revitalization of Detroit; and assuring accessibility to all.*

For more information, go to: [downtownsynagogue.org](http://downtownsynagogue.org)

###