

President Board Report: December 14, 2017

Revisiting our Board Goals:

At our May 7 Board Training, we took the day to do some needed self-reflection through engaging in a variety of activities and discussions. We established important goals and an action plan for this coming year. At the training, we committed to accomplish the following:

1. Temple administrative task force—Jeff Brown, Jeff Lewis, Sue Brown, and Diane Fleishman
2. We are sharing personal stories and Board profiles in the *Adelante* that we hope will encourage congregants to become involved in leadership roles—Pearie will write one for January. We need volunteers for February, March, and April.
3. We have established a leadership development training program to encourage congregants to become more involved in leadership opportunities. Under the facilitation of Jim Rosenthal, we are in the process of working together to develop a program that will reach out to the Temple community and encourage members to value becoming a TBE leader. This group is an ad hoc part of the Nominating Committee, and will help develop and support leaders for TBE now and in the future. Several Board members have stepped up to join this program—Pearie Bruder, Michael Mandel, Sue Brown, Jeff Brown, the Rabbi, and me. We have met three times. This group will set the tone for leadership and governance into the future. Our next meeting is on Sunday, December 17, at 5:00 pm, at my house, after the Six-Day War Film here at Temple.
4. We made calls to recognize and thank our Temple volunteers and our members in general (in addition to the congregational dinner). I also encourage us to recognize new members again at the January 2018 dinner, like we did last year. It was well-received and helped appreciate our new members.
5. We have not yet established focus groups to discuss people's concerns, but I have contacted Renee Frank about her ideas for the Strategic Planning Committee, the umbrella under which the focus groups could live, as she said she would work on this. She will be meeting with her committee soon.
6. Our Norms, which we've written at the beginning of the past two fiscal years, represent a Board Covenant or Brit Avodah to clarify expectations and responsibilities of Board members.

2017 URJ BIENNIAL

Who is wise? The one who learns from everyone, as it is said, "From all who would teach me, have I gained understanding." Pirkei Avot 4:1

As you know, I attended the URJ Biennial in Boston for the first time, and it was an amazing experience. With 6,000 other Jews from all over North America in attendance, I have to say it was the most audacious Jewish experience I have ever participated in. I attended multiple plenary sessions with outstanding keynote speakers—Reverend William Barber and Senator Elizabeth Warren were especially charismatic. Their talks brought me to tears as they reminded us over and over again of our responsibility to the poor in our country, to those who need us the most, to our responsibility to support the progressive arm of our political process. I attended numerous Learning Sessions focusing on the Strengthening Congregations arm of the URJ, and particularly the Emerging Leadership trainings. These sessions included: The Why and What of Today's Governance, Volunteers and How to Get Them and Keep Them, Consensus Decision-Making: How to Avoid the Meeting After the Meeting, Making Sense of the Future, and The Emerging Leaders Lunch Meeting

with URJ's Debbie Niederman and Lisa Barzilai who wrote the leadership modules. I also attended the Scheidt Alumni Breakfast Discussion. Then, the ultimate experience was attending the Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services. They were beautiful, commanding, amazing, spiritual wonders. This is an experience that I highly recommend others attend, if they haven't attended a URJ Biennial before. I spent time with other Temple Presidents whom I met at the Scheidt conference, along with the people they brought with them from their congregations. We attended song sessions, dinners, and explored the Copley Place in Boston, which was connected to our hotel and the convention center. I met someone who I attended college with who now lives in the Boston area, and I got to meet Adam, Juli, and baby Josh. Overall, the Biennial was an amazing experience that will remain with me for years to come.