

Rabbi's Report –Board Meeting

November 16, 2017

- Religious School students enjoyed their time with Tina Wasserman on Sunday, November 12. Each student present made a small 6-braided challah that was taken home and baked. They were told that, if they took a photo of themselves holding their challah before it was put into the oven or after it was done, they would get a gift certificate. Almost all the students who baked received a gift certificate based on the nice collection of photos I received! We were grateful for the opportunity to work with and learn from Tina.
- We have two Bar Mitzvahs coming up in December: Michael Bruder, son of Ron and Pearie Bruder; and Joshua Rosenberg, son of Julie Rosenberg and Aaron Flores. Dates have been set for Kaila Brown (May 26) and Hannah Saltman (June 30).
- Our annual Interfaith conversation program, “People of Character: What does it take to be a mensch?” will be held on Sunday, November 19 at 1:30 pm at Temple in the Social Hall. The event is sponsored by the Social Action and Adult Education Committees. The list of panelists and the theme of their brief talks are:
 - Pastor Jared Carson (Peace Lutheran Church) - Persistence
 - Deb Rodgers (Baha’i) - Kindness
 - The Rev. Carol Tuck (United Methodist) -Truth
 - Rabbi Larry Karol – Compassion
 - Micki Pittsenbarger(Islamic Center of Las Cruces) - Justice
 - Pastor Rob Reed (Sonoma Springs Covenant Church) - Perspective

Each speaker will lead a small group discussion after the presentations guided by a set of standard questions. I will be going on Susan Fitzgerald’s radio program at KTAL tomorrow morning to talk about this event.

- Judaism: Roots and Rituals, my Introduction to Judaism course, is meeting weekly with six students. I meet with another student twice a month out in the community who is unable to come in the evening. I am getting 7-9 at Tanakh Study on Wednesdays, including Father Gabriel Rochelle of the St. Anthony of the Desert Orthodox Church.
- I participated in the community panel during the interview process for a new chief of police for Las Cruces on October 27, 2017. We met with all five candidates for 45 minutes each. Patrick Gallagher, current chief of police in Santa Fe, NM, was hired to be the new chief in Las Cruces.
- I performed a set of 10 original songs for the “Harmony in Unison” Facebook on Monday, October 23.
- I attended Shabbat Shira, the fall worship and music workshop, at Olin-Sang-Ruby camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin on November 2-5. There were about 70 participants from around the country. I wrote a blog post about the event. One of the main things that I learned is that anything we do in worship, and any innovations we make, should be considered based on whether or not it will increase partnership and participation. I heard many new melodies, a few of which I will share in the coming weeks. I also chanted Torah to mark the 50th anniversary of becoming Bar Mitzvah (it was the week of my Torah portion). The photo shows me reading Torah on Saturday, November 4.
- Rhonda and I are registered for the URJ Biennial in Boston on December 6-10. I am in the process of arranging for service leaders for that weekend.
- I plan to attend the Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis convention in Palm Springs on January 7-11.
- I continue to keep in touch with congregants in the process of treatment, recuperation and healing.
- I continue to coordinate a monthly clergy breakfast on the third Thursday of the month. I am serving as Executive Advisor on the NMSU Interfaith Council this year. I attend a noon interreligious study group on Fridays that is discussion the book *Constantine’s Sword*, by James Carroll.
- I met with Rachel Slaton, assistant director of the URJ Six Points Academy Sports Camp in California, on November 10 to talk about making URJ camp opportunities available for our children. I will be sending an email to parents soon about the camps and how they can access scholarships through our community and through the URJ camps.

