

Rabbi Lewis' Message for Summer 2009

This time of year always feels bittersweet. It is filled with endings. Another school year has come and gone. Watching our eight confirmands conclude their formal Jewish education filled me with pride at the same time that it left me with the sadness that accompanies their moving on. Fortunately for us, many of our high school students continue to come on Sunday mornings and assist in our classrooms. Our teacher of the 4th and 5th grades, Mike Weiner, refers to them not as aides but as colleagues. They were once our students; now they have become our teachers.

And speaking of teachers, Robin Hall has taught Hebrew in our school for the past twelve years and has decided after much thought that her teaching time is done. Think about how many students she has influenced over the years and how many b'nai mitzvah students she has tutored. We can't even begin to consider how we will replace her. We owe her so much. Robin started teaching when she responded to a plea made at a congregational meeting. Now we need someone to follow in her footsteps. If you are interested in teaching prayer book Hebrew to our 6th and 7th graders on Sunday mornings, please speak to me, Marsha Gross or Karen Finkelstein.

There will be a changing of the guard at the PTO as Susan McNamara turns over the reins to Debbie Fesinstine. Under Susan's leadership, the PTO has expanded its already significant contribution to our school and our temple community. We just couldn't run the school without their support and inspiration.

This year also marks the end of Jim Arvesen's term as president of our congregation. No one (except for other past-presidents) knows how much time, effort and love goes into this position. You see them on the pulpit on Shabbat; you don't see them working behind the scenes. Jim has also shown up on Sunday mornings while school is in session and has been active in the larger Jewish community of our [local Jewish Federation](#) and the regional [Union for Reform Judaism](#). He is always asking what he can do to help and will still be available as an adviser to us. His experience will be invaluable. We are so lucky that Howie Hirsch has agreed to step in and do a reprise of his presidential role. Howie always makes it easier for me to do my job as rabbi.

There will also be some additional changes on the [Board of Trustees](#). We are grateful to the six dedicated people who are going off the Board - Jane Kunzman, Gwen Nagorsky, Debbie Knobelman, Sharon Herson, Risa Smith, and Lynne Kowski. In turn, we welcome to the Board Bob Margolis as Vice-President, Kimberly Peckman-Greenwald as Secretary, Tracey Bauer and Lois Goldberg as the co-chairs of Religious Practices, and Jennifer Rosenblum as an at-large member. Mike Weiner is moving from Vice-President to an at-large position. Lisa Bauch, our devoted and

patient newsletter editor, is passing the newsletter to Tracey and Abby Bauer. I look forward to working with all these new board members as well as continuing to work with those members whose terms have not expired.

This year, we also say good-bye to Cantor (yes, it is finally official) Marcy Kadin. We have been blessed to have her with us for the past three years. We have gained from her voice, her spirit and her presence. During our Confirmation service and closing school ceremony, she thanked us for having taught her how to be a real Cantor; we, in turn, thank her for all that she has brought to us. We shall miss her. Her gifts will remain with us even when she has moved on to her first "real" job. She has been so gracious in helping make a match between us and our new student cantor, Tifani Coyot, who will join us at our September 11 service.

To those who are stepping down, we say good-bye and thank you for your service. To those who are stepping up, we say the same thing. Our tradition teaches us that there are no endings without beginnings. We look back with pride as we look forward with hope.

Don't forget to join us for our June and one July services. May you find rest and restoration in these summer months, so that you return renewed for the coming year.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis