

President's Message February 2013

This month I would like to speak with you regarding change. In the next few months, Rabbi Lewis will be retiring and we will find a new rabbi to lead our congregation. We have established a search committee, and the committee is doing its job of interviewing candidates. We have interviewed 6 potential rabbis so far and have a few more who are also interested in the position. We have been working diligently and seriously in this endeavor, and we will let you know when we have come to an agreement with a successor rabbi.

I use the term “successor” with a lot of thought behind it. Whoever we hire to be our next rabbi, the one thing I can assure you is that it will not be Rabbi Lewis. The new rabbi will have their own style, manners, sermons, new ideas of how to do the things that we feel are the most important to our congregation. But we will also let the new rabbi lead us into the future with their thoughts and most of all, their passion for leading a congregation.

Someone once said that those who can not embrace change will be swept away by it. If you look back to when Rabbi Lewis was hired in 1994, the world was a very different place. When we wanted to notify the congregation of a death or important information, we had a phone chain that started with the president, and the board members would have a list of people to call and let them know something was happening. There really was no internet, almost no one had personal email accounts, Facebook was not even a dream in Mark Zuckerberg's head. In the 19 years since Rabbi Lewis came to our temple, the world of information has exploded.

As for me, I still prefer to get my news directly from people and not find out things from Facebook. But I am not of the generation that if I left my house for a few hours without my Star Trek communicator, I mean my cell phone, I am capable of living my life and going about my business without the phone. For my children, this is not an option. The world is changing faster every day, and with all these new ways of communicating, I urge you to not lose sight of the benefits of people-to-people contact. Call someone up to see if they are OK if you haven't heard or seen them in a while. Hug people when you see them. Embrace the opportunities to engage in conversations with people. One of my biggest fears for my children's generation is that with so many ways to communicate with each other, they do not lose the personal touch of speaking with another human being.

I have made my career in the computer field and understand how fast things move in the digital age. I embrace most of the change, but I truly feel the personal touch is fading into the history books.

Do what you can to keep that from happening.
Love, Howie

