



Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting

May 28, 2015

TBC Finance Committee Report

See separate document "Treasurer's Report Congregational Meeting May 28, 2015"

Ritual Committee Report

The Ritual Committee is pleased to report that the past year has been one of innovation and renewed tradition at TBC. The congregation successfully returned to our building for High Holy Day services last fall. Led by Cantor Sobel and Rabbi Bearman, the services accommodated and included our entire community, with additional parking nearby and a shuttle bus service in effect. After the Holy Days, we had a record attendance of helpers to build our beautiful Sukkah.

We partnered with the Installation Committee to host a study brunch for Rabbi Bearman's installation week-end in December, which attracted forty people. We also helped host the TBC family Havdallah during the Installation week-end, providing "goodie bags" with essentials such as braided candles and spice bags.

We were pleased to assist with the TBC community Chanukah celebration in December, and with the introduction of a fun and festive adult Megillah-reading and Purim oneg. We successfully partnered with Sisterhood and with the Membership Committee to introduce a new TBC Community Seder, which was attended by 150 people. May 2015 saw the Ritual Committee partnering with Adult Education to host a breakfast discussion of the Book of Ruth, in honor of Shavuot.

We have also worked with Rabbi Bearman and the TBC Board to introduce an enhanced social hall food policy, in furtherance of the Congregation's "Respectful Kitchen" policy. We are looking forward to a summer of beautiful Shabbat services and perhaps a special commemoration of the traditional Jewish day of mourning, Tisha B'Av.

We also look forward to the commencement of planning for our second High Holy Days in our building. An exciting highlight will be the introductory use of the Reform Movement's new Machzor, Mishkan Ha-Nefesh, made available for our entire congregation through a very generous donation.

We will need, and will certainly welcome, volunteers who would like to be part of the High Holy Day season in the fall. Please be on the look-out for more information on ways in which to get involved in what promises to be a wonderful and fulfilling new year!

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Scruton on behalf of the TBC Ritual Committee

Membership Committee Report

Since the November Congregational meeting, we have had two families join the congregation. We also have 6 - 8 prospective families that are in various stages of engagement. Many of the families interested in the congregation have preschool age children and we are working with the Education Committee and Rabbi to identify programming for this age group.

A new trifold brochure is in process and the summer schedule for new member events is being created.

There have been a number of activities to support retention; in particular the Passover Seder. Clarification of policies and programming around b'nai mitzvah and on-going curriculum building should continue to support retention of families with children in these age groups. In addition, the plan to simplify dues, which is being voted on at this congregational meeting, should also support membership retention.

In total, we have 175 member families as of May 22, 2015.

Respectfully submitted:
Membership Co-chairs
Susan Farber and Deborah List

Religious School Committee Report

Plans for next year:

- Curriculum –We'll be using the Chai Curriculum from the URJ. It comes with lesson plans, activities and family programming. It is based on three basic elements of Jewish religious life: Torah (Study), Avodah (Work) G'milut Chasadim (Deeds of Loving-kindness). The Religious School Director will be meeting with the teachers throughout the summer to finalize details to implement the new curriculum.
- After a successful pilot program this year, we will continue with the online learning center for Hebrew School next year.
- Seventh grade program will become more integrated with the B'nai Mitzvah program and will include working with students on their mitzvah projects as well as their prayers. The curriculum will run the full year so students will not want to stop once they become a bar or bat mitzvah. The focus will be on community and inclusion as the students will not only be engaged in their individual and family journeys, but also experience it as a class, helping, learning, and sharing in each other's journeys.
- Introduce chanting into the 6th grade curriculum
- Developing cohesive threads which will integrate classwork, special events and family programs throughout the year.
- Integrate special programs throughout the year including music, services, and emissary.

Holiday Celebrations:

- Hanukkah: collaborated with Social Action to do the Ner Shel Tzedekkah project, sang songs, and joined Sisterhood for latkes and applesauce
- Tu B'Shvat: celebrated with class Seders
- Purim celebration: Purim Spiel, songs, carnival booths and hamentashen
- Passover Program: each grade did a project based on the story of Exodus, and videotaped students acting out story
- Israeli Day: sang songs, trivia games, relay race, and Israeli food

Special Programs:

- Grade level dinner and services
- Mid-week Hebrew services
- Emissary program: Students learned about daily life in Israel, celebrating the holidays and Israeli innovations.
- Fifth grade program (Laev Tov- a good heart) to kick off their b'nai mitzvah journeys
- Fifth and Sixth-grade b'nai mitzvah meetings with clergy and b'nai mitzvah coordinator
- Seventh graders did a Q & A about b'nai mitzvah experiences with the sixth graders
- Madrichim met with seventh graders about the program
- Confirmation lifecycle service

Learning outside classroom/Trips:

- Tenth grade class trip to D. C. for the L'taken Social Action seminars
- Seventh grade trip to Wilton Meadows Rehab. Center; Learning about g'milut chasadim and middot.
- Sixth grade trip to the Eldridge Street Synagogue and the Tenement Museum in NYC; Learning Jewish history
- First/Second grade trip to The Greens Assisted Living; learning about mitzvot.

Administrative Tasks:

- Religious school registration - ongoing
- Religious School Fire Drill
- Teacher Evaluations
- Hebrew assessment testing –end of year learning assessment for 4 & 5 grade.
- Report cards reformatted - includes prayer benchmark accomplishments and Hebrew assessment

B'nai Mitzvah Program Updates

The B'nai Mitzvah Program – Starting Early

The b'nai mitzvah experience will have some enhancements to ensure a smooth passage from the fall of 5th grade until the conclusion of the fall of 8th grade when most, if not all, students will have become a b'nai mitzvah.

This will involve at least yearly meetings with the entire class, parents and students, and the Rabbi/Cantor to discuss appropriate themes to prepare families for their spiritual journeys.

There will be opportunities for families to get a preview of the b'nai mitzvah service and become excited about the process at an earlier age:

- 7th grade students share their mitzvah projects with the younger grades (perhaps at weekday services)
- 6th grade families usher for b'nai mitzvahs
- service attendance requirements start in earlier years.

Date Assignments

In the fall of 5th grade, the b'nai mitzvah coordinator will be asking for input from families regarding date assignments. For example, if a student has a summer birthday, TBC will ask if the family prefers having the service in the spring or the fall. TBC will attempt to accommodate as many requests as possible.

Where possible, if a class size is 20 or fewer, TBC will make every effort to only have one b'nai mitzvah each Saturday at 11:15am. If additional students need date assignments, they will be assigned a 9am time and back to back services may need to be held.

Integration of B'nai Mitzvah Program and Coaching with Religious School

The b'nai mitzvah program will be more closely integrated with the Religious School curriculum, particularly in 7th grade, making for a smooth transition from teachers to coaches so that the coaches are aware of the student's abilities and to allow for a more enriching discussion about mitzvah projects.

The Rabbi will supervise coaches and any changes to torah portions will be made only after discussion with her. The amount of time each student has with his/her coach will be expanded. Any changes in the number of sessions need to have approval from the Rabbi.

The B'nai Mitzvah Service –Flexibility with a shared experience

With the advantage of the new single session of Religious School there is a greater opportunity to build a strong community with all students studying in the same way and with the same format for their b'nai mitzvah. The launch of a new curriculum, coupled with the single session, allows for the students to have a shared experience as they prepare for their b'nai mitzvah. What is commonly referred to as a "Havdalah Bar Mitzvah" is actually a minchah (afternoon) service which ends with a Havdalah ceremony. There are many differences between the shacharit (morning) and minchah services. These differences (which include everything from additional prayers to the omission of a haftarah reading) would create a bifurcated experience where our students would have obviously and meaningfully different experiences. Rather than pursue this model, TBC has chosen to focus on helping each child and family shine within the setting of the shacharit service.

In response to congregants not wanting a "cookie cutter" service, a program will be piloted whereby the Rabbi will have optional readings/blessings available in Mishkan Tefillah. There will be flexibility for a family to select from these passages in English or in Hebrew. Additionally, there will be opportunities for the Rabbi to work with each family to fine-tune the number of lines of torah read by the student.

Greater Sense of Community

To foster a greater sense of community among each class we will create more opportunities for interaction among the students during the school year. TBC will work to ensure the students are not only engaged in their individual and family journeys, but also experience it as a class, helping each other, learning from each other, perhaps doing joint mitzvah projects, sharing in each other's simchas. We will strongly encourage every 7th grader to attend all of their fellow 7th grade b'nai mitzvah services. The entire TBC community is welcome and encouraged to attend these worship events as well.

Throughout the experience we will communicate with and encourage family involvement, whether by accompanying the children to services, working with the student to choose a meaningful mitzvah project, supporting their child's engagement with their torah portion, or simply being an audience while they rehearse their parsha.

The b'nai mitzvah experience at TBC is a celebration not only for each family but also for the community. It is an enriching experience for all.

Governance Committee Report

Chair: David Sklar

Purpose & Responsibilities

The governance committee is responsible for ongoing review and recommendations to enhance the quality and future viability of the board of directors. The work of the committee revolves around the following major areas:

1. Board Role and Responsibilities

- Leads the board in regularly reviewing and updating the board's statement of its roles and areas of responsibility, and what is expected of individual board members including the by-laws.

2. Board Composition

- Leads in assessing current and anticipated needs related to board composition, determining the knowledge, attributes, skills, abilities, influence, and access to resources the board will need to consider in order to accomplish future work of the board.
- Develops a profile of the board, as it should evolve over time.
- Identifies potential board member candidates and explores their interest and availability for board service.
- Nominates individuals to be elected as members of the board.
- In cooperation with the board chair, contacts each board member to assess his or her continuing interest in board membership and term of service and works with each board member to identify the appropriate role he or she might assume on behalf of the organization.

3. Board Leadership

- Takes the lead in succession planning, taking steps to recruit and prepare future board members.
- Nominates board members for election as board officers.

4. Governance Committee Accomplishments

The Governance Committee formed a Nominating Committee comprised of David Sklar, Susan Farber, Jem Sollinger. The committee was charged with filling open board positions including officers and trustees at large.

We welcome the suggestions of our members to assist us in this regard.

House Committee Report

Chair: Mac Nadel. (After 4 years in this position, will be stepping down as of June 30th. Seeking interested individuals to become new House Chair.)

Committee Members: Jeffrey Busch. Seeking additional volunteers.

Responsibilities: Building, Grounds and Facilities Maintenance and Upkeep

Report:

- Building Cleaning/Maintenance:
 - Completing first year of new contracted cleaning services for Temple. Has resulted in 30% savings over previous provider
 - Landscaping:
 - Large sugar maple on right side of driveway as one approaches the synagogue is dead. In process of scheduling removal.
 - Spring clean-up of grounds completed. New mulch put down.
 - Electrical:
 - In preliminary stages of investigating both economic and ecological pros and cons of having solar panels installed upon roof of TBC. Goal is to be able to meet or exceed the annual electrical needs of TBC, provide cost certainty for generation portion of our electrical needs and reduce the carbon footprint of TBC
 - Snow removal :
 - Survived the winter season. Benefited from entering into a fixed contract with Performance (incumbent provider) of \$10,000 for the 2014 – 15 season.
 - HVAC:
 - Condenser/air handler servicing portion of old sanctuary developed a leak and is not working. Due to age of unit, recommendation is to replace. In process of receiving proposals to do so.
 - Inspections/Testing:
 - In compliance with regular testing/servicing of alarm systems and fire sprinkler system.
 - Completed work noted in Fire Marshal Inspector's report from winter of 2014.
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Adult Education Committee Report

Adult Education had a successful run at TBC in 2014-2015, based on attendance and feedback.

Events included:

- a thought provoking movie (The Other Son) which is available in the TBC library.
- an enlightening discussion of Jewish social services in the late 19th century.
- a discussion of Shakespeare's attitude towards Jews.
- a presentation of one hypothesis on Who Wrote The Bible.
- two study sessions, one on Purim and one on Shavuot, jointly sponsored by Adult Education and the Ritual committee.

Anyone interested in joining the Adult Education Committee to help plan and execute next year's Adult Education programs should email adulthood@templebnaichaim.org or phone Barbara Dobbin at 203 948 7352.