

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As a small group of OZers—thanks to our Rabbi Amy—shared the opportunity to informally dialogue with her “dear friend” Imam Abdullah Antepli at OZ, we were mesmerized both by his heartfelt decency and humanity as well as his unwavering hope and optimism. In describing his extraordinary life’s work building Islamic-Jewish relations, he observed “it is not simply to be against something. We must be open to learning.” Very simply, we must face the uncertainties of the future with open minds and hearts filled with love.

As we strive to grow our community, through the Imagine 2025 vision of “**Belonging Through Welcoming, Meaningful and Joyous Jewish Experiences**,” we, too, must do so with both heads and hearts. We must have confidence that we can together see opportunities where others see only challenges. And we must be willing to act.

I believe we are doing that. Consider a number of meaningful undertakings in which the board, staff, lay leadership and congregants are engaged:

(1) Clergy Listening Sessions

The board is continuing its “Listening Sessions” to bring congregants together to talk about its proposal to elevate Cantor Steve to the position of senior clergy and to find ways to support and bolster his heartfelt style of leadership. Everyone is encouraged to join and share their ideas. Sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4fa8a728a4fce9-focus>. And if you prefer to do so privately, feel free to e-mail me at president@ohavizedek.org

(2) Sanctuary Renewal

We are also asking congregants to look at plans for “renewing” our two sanctuaries, for rededicating ourselves to having a contemporary, modern sanctuary that meets diverse spiritual and other needs, while insuring that our small sanctuary provides our traditional and minyan service-goers with a space that honors their needs.

(3) 2022 – 23 Budget

As you know, the budget we present to the congregation this June will contain a deficit. The board is on track for fiscal 2023-24 to produce a balanced budget that, in part, relies on cutting expenditures while striving to grow existing income in addition to new income streams (based on expanding profitable OZ ventures and exploring ways to generate income from our property – this is not going to impact that budget).

(4) Welcoming Community

And, most importantly, we are dedicated to finding new and better ways to build our welcoming community. As I reflect on the past few weeks, during which we have seen dozens of OZers participate in traditional as well as in new religious/spiritual experiences (Musical Kabbalat, Family Shabbat, Hallelu), in joyful community gatherings for Purim and Passover, and in our advocacy for Social Justice (as with the Imam), I am both witness and activist in our efforts to secure OZ’s future for generations to come.

It remains a privilege to serve this community with a richness of mind and fullness of heart.

To each and every one of you, I offer my deepest thanks.

~Jeff Potash
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