



February 4, 2011

As we approach the 6-month anniversary of Temple Beth El welcoming members of Congregation Eilat, we (the members of the steering committee charged with overseeing the transition) wanted to provide you with this update on the progress that has been made. We believe that the process has gone remarkably well, with surprisingly few bumps in the road. About 95 members have joined Temple Beth El, well above projections, and they have become involved in all aspects of the Temple Beth El community.

Clergy Search

Jeff Greer, Executive Vice

President of Temple Beth El, is the chair of this 11-person team, which includes board members and congregants. Members of the Conservative community serving on this committee are Steve Birch, Max DeLiema, Wendy Lupul, Leslie Tatel, and Evan Wohl. The team has met several times to date.

In brief, the position calls for a full-time Conservative Rabbi or Cantor to serve the entire Temple Beth El community with the following specific responsibilities:

1. Advocating for our Conservative members and leading our Conservative services including chanting, leyning and training lay service leaders
2. Supervising our post-b'nai mitzvah youth programming
3. Assisting in general pastoral needs of the entire Temple Beth El community

Select candidates will be making visits to Temple Beth El in the near future; look for information on those visits as the dates approach.

We hope that this full-time position will be filled soon, but recognize that it might take until mid year for this to happen. Rabbi Hanien will continue leading Conservative Shabbat services through early June of 2011 unless the full-time position is filled sooner.

Chapel Design

We have accomplished much of the planning work for enhancing the chapel. So far we have:

- Agreed to a design for the new ark and podium
- Selected new chairs that have book storage under the seat
- Selected new lighting fixtures
- Developed a plan for displaying the memorial boards and the ark stained-glass doors from the Eilat facility on Hidalgo

We will soon begin to address storage (for books, tallitot, and other artifacts), the sound system, ventilation, and whether to incorporate the Tree of Life into Temple Beth El's existing one or maintain it separately.

CLERGY

Rabbi
Peter S. Levi
Rabbi – Director of Jewish
Engagement
Rachel Kort
Cantor
Shula Kalir-Merton
Rabbi Emeritus
Allen Krause

EDUCATION

Director of Education
Linda R. Kirsch, RJE
Director of Education,
Early Childhood Center
Terry Fierle

ADMINISTRATION

Executive Director
Al Welland

OFFICERS

President
Alan Fenning
Executive Vice President
Jeff Greer
Vice President, Governance
Adam Traub
Vice President, Development &
Finance
Bonnie Kehe
Vice President, Judaism in
Action
Brian Selvan
Vice President, Membership &
Communications
Miriam Hillburn
Vice President, Education
Sheri Saladow
Treasurer
Michael Goldfader
Secretary
William Spector

TRUSTEES AT LARGE

Bobbi Cherry
Carolyn Kappes
David Krinsky
Steven Olitsky
Gary Rubel
Lucille Sacks
Polly Sloan
Charlene Zuckerman
Men's Club President
Pete Moss
Sisterhood President
Amy Packer
BESTY President
Jessica Rubenstein

The Board approved the budget for this work at their meeting on January 24. The work is anticipated to begin in February and is expected to be complete by late March 2011.

Youth Group

The teens are working together to create one combined Youth Group with activities that each group has brought into this integrated youth community.

- Members of the BESTY Board and the USY Board have been working with their counterpart Board member to coordinate events.
 - Activities that the groups have enjoyed in the past have continued, including cosmic bowling, a Chanukah party, and a trip to Knott's Berry Farm.
 - USYers have introduced some USY traditions, including a full Kiddush, Motzi and Birkhat Ha'mazon for Shabbat dinners, lounge nights, and Shabbat Club dinners at members' homes
- In addition, the BESTY youth group board is recognized as a chapter by the Far West Region of USY, and USYers continue to participate in regional activities, including attending Far West USY LEAD in November and USY International Convention during winter break.

Education

The Temple Beth El education program has been changed to meet the needs of Conservative and Reform community members.

- Rabbi Kort has worked to adapt the Judaica and Hebrew curriculum to reflect both Conservative and Reform practices.
- At a recent professional development session, teachers were trained and given resources to teach both Reform and Conservative approaches to Jewish practice. The new pluralistic nature of the TBE community was emphasized to faculty. Just as the Temple community embraces a spectrum of Jewish practice, both Conservative and Reform approaches to Jewish life are taught in the Religious School, giving precedence to neither.
- A pull-out program has been created to help teach Conservative *nusach* to b'nei mitzvah candidates (6th and 7th grades) as part of the midweek Hebrew program.
- The clergy team has set liturgical requirements for B'nei Mitzvah in the Conservative service, and Cantor Susan Deutsch has been brought onto the Temple's team of B'Nei Mitzvah tutors to help train our B'Nei Mitzvah candidates.

Kiddush

We have established a Kiddush luncheon plan for regular services and special events. A price list of options is available for anyone who wants to sponsor a Kiddush. Contact Fay Zeramby for details on the packages available. A dedicated fund has also been established, to which people can contribute. The kitchen located near the chapel has been maintained as a kosher dairy kitchen since September. Only purchased food that is *parev* or dairy (as identified by the ingredient labels) or food purchased from a kosher caterer is allowed. Rabbi Hanien has provided guidance about how to keep appropriate levels of *kashrut*, including limitations on oven use during Shabbat.

Marketing

In December 2010, a letter was sent to former Congregation Eilat members of record as of June 2007. The contents of the letter:

- Described that the Eilat community moved to Temple Beth El and is alive and well in South Orange County
- Summarized some elements of our progress
- Offered to keep in touch with future communications
- Informed that there is a financial incentive available to them through March 2011 for joining TBE

In response to this letter, we already have six new members at Beth El.

USCJ Affiliation

The process is underway for Temple Beth El to affiliate with United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism (USCJ). A positive, energetic meeting was held between representatives of TBE and USCJ, and no barriers to affiliation were identified.

Upcoming Events

Plans are underway to coordinate a number of events coming in the next several months.

- Lunch & Learns with Rabbi Hanien are planned monthly, with the next one scheduled for February 19th.
- Following Shabbat services and Kiddush on February 12, TBE will have a visiting scholar - Professor Stephen Berk - who will speak to the entire Beth El community. Dr. Berk is widely known for his expertise on the Holocaust, Russia, the Middle East, and a variety of Jewish subjects. His talk is titled "Understanding the Middle East: 1948 - A Year of Decision." This exciting event is co-sponsored by Temple Beth El and Community Scholar Program.
- Purim - There will be a Megillah reading and adult celebration in the evening on March 19, and a Megillah reading, shpiel and carnival on Sunday, March 20. Look for more information coming soon.
- Scholar In Residence Program - Rabbi Brad Artson will join the Temple Beth El community as Rabbi Alan Krause Scholar for a special Shabbat, on March 25 and 26. During this special event, Rabbi Artson will
 - Speak following the Friday night service and Shabbat dinner
 - Lead text study preceding the Shabbat morning service
 - Participate in the Conservative morning worship service
 - And lead a discussion session following a Kiddush luncheon
- Passover - A Conservative service will be offered for Pesach Days 1, 2 and 7, in conjunction with Heritage Pointe at their location. A Conservative/Yizkor service will be held at Temple Beth El on Day 8. Plans are underway for a Community 2nd night seder as well.
- Yom HaShoah - Plans are underway to create a special event to commemorate this, which will include our survivors and teens. Look for more information coming soon.
- Morning Minyan - Each Monday and Thursday, 7:00 am - 8:00 am, in the Sidney Eisenberg Chapel.

The steering committee continues to meet regularly to address these and other issues related to the transition. Should you have any questions or concerns about something addressed in this letter, or another issue related to the transition, please feel free to contact one of the members of the Steering Committee; contact information is available on the website, or you can call the Temple at 949-362-3999.

L'Shalom,

Temple Beth El Steering Committee

Alan Fenning, President
Jeff Greer, Executive Vice President
Charlie Lupul, Trustee at Large
Leslie Tatel, Trustee at Large
Al Welland, Executive Director