

President's Message 2025

It seems like the other day when I wrote my end of the fiscal year message for 2024, a phenomenon that my peers understand. Some things in our Jewish world have not changed: Israel and Hamas continue the war, hostages and bodies of hostages remain deep in the tunnels of Gaza, and antisemitic episodes continue on our college campuses with ADL reporting the highest number of incidents since they began reporting decades ago. However, a truism about Temple Isaiah is that this sacred community does not remain focused on the darkness but turns to the light; when we live through some bad news, we celebrate the good news.

As we end the 2024-2025 fiscal year, I celebrate and appreciate each and every one of you who contributed to our community as you worked individually, in committees, on the Board of Trustees, as officers, and participated in or led programs. You answered the call of Hineini/Hinenu.

I am so proud of the work of the Executive Committee and their committees which are made up of Board and community members. Here are a few highlights:

- **Bylaws:** Our Executive Vice President, Debra Silverman, worked with the Nominating Committee, the Executive Committee and the Board to update the Bylaws to reflect our values of inclusivity and our ability to bring in new leaders.
- **Communications:** Our VP of Communications, Idelle Davidson, put all Board documents into SharePoint, managed the mid-year and annual reports, and spotlighted Temple members.
- **Development:** Earlier this year, the VP of Development, Jeffrey Glaser, and the Board launched a foundational major gift campaign for which we have already secured some lead gifts, and, thanks to the community members, we exceeded our Annual Giving goal.
- **Education:** Our search for a rabbi educator to serve as Director of K-12 Education and Engagement resulted in the hiring of Rabbi Adam Allenberg who will start July 1; the search committee was led by our VP of Education, Jami Messinger.
- **Facilities:** The completion of the phase 1 renovation project under the direction of Deb Moses and Beth Raanan was showcased in two open houses.
- **Finances:** Our Treasurer, Harris Smith, has worked with care and precision in developing our budgets and overseeing our investments.
- **Membership:** We met our membership goals (and then some) and launched a Gift Membership Program sponsored by Robbin Steif and under the leadership of our Director of Membership, David Sabel, and VP of Membership, Melissa Lustgarten.
- **Personnel:** Two clergy contracts and two directors of education contracts were finalized by our VP of Personnel, Jerry Witkow.
- **Slate of Officers and Board of Trustees:** Co-Chairs of the Nominating Committee, Rachel Kallick and Allie Samek (Immediate Past President) with their committee filled the open positions with talented and skilled leaders.
- **Social Justice:** Our robust justice advocacy under the leadership of our VP of Social Justice, David Chiu, saw opportunities for postcard writing to encourage voter registration, identifying issues around housing affordability, bridging interfaith

communities to combat antisemitism, and providing time to discuss Israel with Rabbi Zoe before shabbat services.

Of course, the strength of our Temple lies not just in our programs and initiatives, but in the bonds we share. As we move forward, let us continue to cultivate a community where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued. Let us embrace the diversity of our backgrounds and perspectives as we work together to create an even more vibrant future for Temple Isaiah.

Thank you again for being a part of the Isaiah family. It has been an honor to serve as your President.

Suzanne