



May 14, 2021/ 3 Sivan 5781

Dear JRC members,

As you know, on **May 23rd at 10:30 AM** we will hold Judea Reform's Annual Meeting of the Congregation. Documents were shared earlier this week on our [website here](#). We will be voting on the newest Officers, new at-large Board of Trustees, and the 2021-22 budget which lays out exciting plans for our future. We will celebrate our Volunteers of the Year and give much-deserved appreciation to our incredible, hard-working JRC Staff. And, there may be some surprises too.

According to the Judea Reform Congregation Constitution, **we need 10% of the member units, about 60 households to be present to conduct business**. So, please mark your calendars and plan to join us on Zoom. Ballot links will be sent prior to the meeting, as we did last year.

It sounds cliché to say that this past year has been unprecedented. Every week has felt like a month and every month like a year. The leadership of this congregation - lay and staff - have reinvented EVERYTHING we do. We have found creative solutions to honor our traditions, fulfill our mission and create community. We have been thrilled by the response to our virtual opportunities to be in community together. This global pandemic has had significant impacts on our community and our world. It has deeply affected our Rabbi, our congregation, and our Movement. We are grateful to our committed Board of Trustees who continue to lead with compassion and strength. With our steadfast commitment to safety and *pikuach nefesh* (preserving life), I look forward to sharing more at the Annual Meeting about our next steps in using our outdoor spaces and our building as we work through our reopening plan.

The Finance Committee, led by Treasurer Shawn dos Santos, and our professional team have worked hard to develop the financial plans we put before you. For the next fiscal year (21/22), we are proposing a budget that remains true to our priorities and optimism in preparing to meet the needs of members and the anticipated growth in our community. The FY21-22 budget has some important investments in our congregation, including our congregational commitment to hire a second rabbi.

Here are some highlights from FY21:

- We were able to make a full transition to virtual engagement with the incredible talents of staff and volunteers while keeping our membership strong throughout.
- We were able to retain, at full salary, our entire staff.

- We created new ways to engage you, our members, through drive-thru and delivery touchpoints
- We committed to reopening our building in the safest way possible and engaged a firm to conduct an environmental assessment of our buildings. The results of that assessment will also impact some spending from our Capital Maintenance Fund, as there are additional updates required that protect our members and staff.
- Youth engagement was reimagined and students continued their Jewish learning.

We accomplished all of these things, and more, while maintaining approximately 5 months of operating expenses in our unrestricted reserves, which is well within the industry best practice.

- Our PPP loan was converted to a grant! This grant allowed us to keep our hard-working staff as we rebuild for our new reality and protect our unrestricted reserve for the needs we anticipate in the coming year(s). We have also been approved for a 2nd PPP loan, which we will hold in reserve until it is either needed or it is converted to a grant, as with the first PPP loan.
- We kept our expenses lower due to delayed new staffing, programming savings, and decreased security costs which enabled us to reduce our projected draw down from the unrestricted reserve for the current year (FY21) to \$40,000.
- For the 6th year in a row, we did not increase membership support levels.

Looking ahead to FY22 Budget:

- We will be sharing some exciting plans for expanded clergy engagement in the coming year.
- We are excited about the plans for some critical investment in our staff. Our careful and practical approach will be focused on the needs of our members and the growth we see ahead.
- You may recall that we have carefully and responsibly postponed the expense of replacing our HVAC units by repairing specific units over the last few years. The time has come, and is in fact past due, that we replace our HVAC units which are original to the construction of the building. Additionally, our Environmental assessment consultant agrees that replacing our HVACs is a crucial step in safely reopening. The good news is that we have the ability to pay for this with the funds in the Capital Maintenance Fund. Many thanks to our Building & Ground Committee, led by Mark Hainline and Ray Jones, Building & Grounds Manager, for their due diligence throughout this process. Our HVACs will be replaced over the summer.
- For many years, the board has struggled with the limited funds available to care for our Building. The Capital Maintenance Fee has not addressed the needs outlined by the capital study conducted several years ago. Recognizing that it is the responsibility of all of us to care for this sacred space that we love so dearly, and can't wait to be in, we will be replacing the Capital Maintenance Fee with something more fit for purpose that applies to all members. The Sacred Spaces Fee will ensure that the repairs and replacement needs of our building will be met now and in the future. The current Capital Maintenance Fee will be eliminated.

- As we've shared in recent months, the Prosnitz Patio and the foundation in the rear of our building are in need of repair. The board, with the help of our Building & Grounds Committee and Finance Committee, has spent much of this year understanding the scope of capital improvements to our sacred space, as well as the specifics of this major repair and how to fund it. The board has made a commitment to ensure the work of repairing the foundation and Prosnitz Patio is a priority and is complete by the end of FY23. As such, in the coming year we are expecting to take out a loan to cover the bulk of that major expense. At the annual meeting, you will hear specifics of the payback plan developed to ensure we pay the lowest amount possible on a loan, we have a plan in place to pay what is taken out, and future building needs are responsibly addressed.

Last year we articulated our intention that it would be a few years of investment budgets, relying on our unrestricted reserve, to meet the needs of our congregation. It should be no surprise that this will continue this year, particularly following the year we have all just experienced. This investment budget is safely balanced with the resources in our unrestricted reserve, as needed. With a strong development committee, ably led by Carrie Norry, there is a great plan to increase revenue in strategic and sustainable ways.

We are grateful to our Executive Director, Emily Young; Business Manager, Liz Gibbons; the members of our Finance Committee; and the members of your Board of Trustees for their thoughtful engagement and many extra hours in Zoom meetings to help plan for the future of Judea Reform Congregation.

An important part of the Annual Meeting is the Judea Reform Cemetery Corporation meeting. Every member of Judea Reform Congregation is also a member of the Cemetery Corporation. We hope you will stay and hear from our Cemetery Board.

We will do our best to conclude by 12:00 PM.

Thank you for allowing us to represent you,

Ziva Raney, *President*

Shawn dos Santos, *Treasurer*