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# HIGH HOLIDAY PRESIDENTIAL APPEAL

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Good Morning. I am Lynn Landesman, President of Or Atid. As many of you know, the last half of this year has been a challenging time for me.

As I sat down to write these words, I began thinking what does Or Atid mean to me? My answer today is completely different than what it would have been prior to April 13 when my mother passed away unexpectedly. I've been truly blessed to be a member of this family, as I look around this room today, I see faces of people that did so many things to get me through one of the worst periods of my life.

However, my journey to this family was not a traditional one. I was raised Jewish, but after my Bat Mitzvah, I didn't embrace my heritage. In fact, I did things like holiday dinners with my family, because I enjoyed the company but I was not really looking for that religious connection. Never did I think I would be President of a synagogue one day. Page 1 of 5

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In 2011, I lost my dad. I began looking for something, anything that would help me make sense of what I was feeling, and I found Or Atid.

I wasn't sure I was going to stay. I wasn't sure what I wanted or what I could give.

Well, as you can see, I stayed. I got married in this building. I made friends in and out of this building. This is my community. This is my family. This is my spiritual home. Without this family, April 13 and the weeks after would have been much more difficult for me. All of us have our own stories and all of us are in this room for a reason. You might only come a few times a year, you might come every week, but you are part of our family and we will be here for you in every chapter of your story to whatever capacity you need us. With that being said, I wanted to give you a glimpse of the road map we are planning for our future.

Every congregation has three components to their membership, and we are no different. There are Doers, Donors, and Daveners. The Doers connect to our community through their volunteerism, by giving of their time to maintain our daily operations, as well as plan and run the various events that we have throughout the year. The Donors connect to our community through financial contributions which help to underwrite our

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events, bolster our current operating budget, and build our endowment so that we are sustainable for the future. Daveners connect to our community through their weekly presence at Shabbat services. We cannot exist without these groups, and it is my goal to ensure that each one of us serves the congregation in one or more of these roles.”

The lay leadership and many congregants are in the process of working on our strategic plan. We will be focusing on Financial Stability, Developing and Encouraging a Sense of Community at Or Atid, and becoming a meaningful part of our external community by creating relationships with Jewish Richmond and Non- Jewish Richmond. Today we are a growing congregation of 140 families. We have added 5 new families in the last few months. Our golden number continues to be 160. You are the most important member of our Membership Committee. Talk us up, invite people to services or events. We are also looking for new sources of revenue, both passive and active. It’s been proven that Sustaining Share is working. This is a large portion of our income, but it does not meet all our needs.

There are 3 different types of financial contributors in our congregation. Those who want to contribute to our future by growing our endowments, those who want to contribute to the here

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and now by contributing to the general funds, and those who want to contribute to a specific event. Everyone single one of these financial contributors is important. How you choose to contribute to this family is your choice, but we do ask that you contribute when you can.

In our efforts to develop and encourage a sense of community at Or Atid, we are currently working on events that meet everyone's needs to the best of our abilities, whether they are spiritual, educational, or social. Please let me or members of the Board know what interests you. Keep your eye on the upcoming events on the calendar as we work to improve our marketing plan to ensure that everyone is aware of events that are happening.

We are working to strengthen our relationships/partnerships with Jewish Richmond and Non-Jewish Richmond. There is a large push in the community to be more collaborative and we are seeing that with our school, with events in the community being held here as well as organizations promoting each other's events. We are also reaching out to Non-Jewish Richmond. We have held lunch and learn's with our Muslim friends and events with River Road Church, Baptist.

Many modern Jews define themselves as “spiritual, but not religious”, as I did. But as I quickly learned, “spiritual but not religious” does not get you very far when a parent passes away, or when you want a child to have a Jewish education, or when you want to go somewhere for a Passover Seder. All of these things and more require a Jewish community to support you in times of need, celebrate with you in times of joy, and provide grounding in the rituals of the Jewish tradition that bind us all to our people.

All of us have our own stories and all of us have our own needs. We have come here today to be together in the same room for a reason

As we are beginning a new year together, I look forward to working with you to make Or Atid the best that it can be.

Shanah Tovah!