

Dear Friends,

I am so grateful to lead this caring community as we enter this season of Thanksgiving. Over the past year, we have seen an increase in membership, with young families joining so their children can attend our Religious and Hebrew Schools. We have seen an uptick in in-person attendance at services, programs, and events. Our LIFE & LEGACY program, which encourages congregants to provide for our future with after lifetime gifts, has secured 60 Letters of Intent. These are all indications of a strong, vibrant congregation.

Still, as Rabbi Whinston said at our Annual Meeting last June and again on Yom Kippur, we must continue our work to ensure that TBE remains a safe, warm, and welcoming community for all. Temple Beth Emeth is our religious home; we each must do what we can to care for the people who pray in, visit, and work in our building.

TBE's Security Committee has worked extensively with experts to identify ways to improve our security. Together with our St. Clare's partners, we have developed a plan for capital improvements, beginning with adding bollards around the circle drive, upgrading our windows and doors, and installing a public address system for announcements.

In September, we hired a security service to continually advise on our needs and to provide a guard on Saturday mornings, when the building is bustling with Torah study, Shabbat services, B'nai Mitzvah services, and Religious School. We have now expanded the security guard coverage to all Temple services, Religious School, Hebrew school, and special events.

We are asking for your support for these security measures to help our clergy, staff, and community feel safe and secure in our building. To help with the ongoing costs associated with these changes, TBE's Security Committee has been looking into opportunities to apply for grant funding. The Security Committee has also recommended that the congregation consider adopting a security assessment, which the majority of URJ congregations of our size have as part of their membership commitment. While we will likely consider the proposal for a security assessment when the congregation votes on next year's budget at our annual meeting in June, we anticipate expenses greater than what we budgeted for this fiscal year.

Some of these necessary security improvements are covered by capital funds, but not all. We need your support for security, now, to raise \$36,000 to help cover these costs. If every member family donated at least \$100, we would exceed our goal. As Rabbi Whinston said at the end of his Yom Kippur sermon, quoting Hillel, If not now, when?

B'shalom,

Margaret Hannon

TBE President