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THOMAS ALPERT ☆ RABBI  
ANDREW RUBENSTEIN ☆ PRESIDENT  
HANA BERMAN ☆ DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

## TEMPLE ETZ CHAIM

Dear Friends:

We are pleased to report that the Rabbinic Transition Committee has successfully submitted our search application to the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR). The application to search for a rabbi is now accessible on a password-protected site to rabbis who are members of CCAR.

In addition to describing the qualities we are seeking in our next rabbi, the 36-page application contains information about the temple and its strengths and challenges, including membership numbers, religious school and other educational programs, temple history, budget, remuneration, and facilities.

Based upon the information we received from you in survey responses and focus groups, here are highlights that identify the key points from our narrative (organized in response to specific prompts in the CCAR application) with some phrases in parentheses to elaborate where necessary:

- Qualities important to us in our next rabbi: Interpersonal Skills (approachable, empathic, open, and welcoming to all), Pastoral Skills (strong worship leader addressing contemporary social and cultural issues and connecting these to our Jewish values.), Leadership Skills (engage in a proactive and collaborative process to explore changes to ensure the congregation's future).
- Three most important priorities for our next rabbi: Partnering in a Successful Transition (developing and nurturing the relationship between the rabbi and congregation), Building and Expanding Relationships (membership and engagement), and Developing Collaborative Leadership (work with lay leadership to maintain organizational, financial, and congregational matters).
- We identified the three primary goals of the congregation as being: Connecting to Each Other and Judaism (build community), Restoring and Building our Physical Home, and Sustaining and Expanding Membership (strengthen existing forms of engagement and create new ones to reinforce our members' connections and encourage others to join our community).

עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה

... IT IS A TREE OF LIFE TO THOSE WHO HOLD IT FAST...

Margot Rivelis, 1st Vice President ☆ Stacy Bushey, 2nd Vice President ☆ Owen Folsom, Treasurer ☆ Jodi Rutkowski, Asst. Treasurer

Rosemary Buja, Executive Secretary ☆ Jim Buja, Clerk

Directors: Isaac Chartoff ☆ Cynthia Cheetham ☆ Cindy Heilweil ☆ Robert Martin ☆ Mike Rubin

Ex-officio: Karen Dauer, Sisterhood President



- Three congregational strengths: Inclusiveness and Welcoming (home to people from a wide variety of backgrounds welcoming all who are interested in a connection to Jewish life), Hub of Congregants' Lives (our temple plays a central role in the lives of many of our members), and Collaborative Rabbinic and Lay Leadership (our congregation has a strong history of collaborative, committed leadership with the rabbis who have served the temple).
- Three congregational challenges: Attracting New Members in All Age Demographics, Moving Forward with Our Physical Facility, Developing Leadership Succession

We are now preparing for the next steps in the process which will involve the initial review of applications we receive. Members of the RTC attended a workshop on Implicit Bias so that we are aware of and sensitive to the values and biases that may influence how we respond to candidates. We have also developed a tentative set of initial interview questions and a set of rubrics by which to evaluate candidates.

We are also paying attention to the “face” we present to the world and that candidates will see, trying to ensure that this is consistent and reflects our temple’s values. Thus, we are examining our web site and social media presence as well as the temple’s building. You can help in this regard: if you know of or see something that is not accurate or does not reflect our congregation properly, please let someone on the RTC know.

We look forward to the next stages of the search and will continue to keep you informed.

Sincerely,

Andrew Rubenstein, President, and  
Rabbinic Transition Committee  
Bill Ferstenfeld and Robert Martin (co-chairs)  
Wendy Bierman,  
Margaret Black  
Stacy Bushey  
Stacey Field  
Howard Heilweil  
Ellen Keith

Alyson Lajeunesse  
Candace Lyons  
Mike Rubin  
Jamie Sharrow  
Richard Shulman  
Jayme Solomon-Zissu