

Dear Friends,

We hope you had an enjoyable and meaningful Pesach. Before the holiday you received an important letter from our President, Bruce Brafman, regarding the Rabbinic Transition Committee (RTC) which has been established to engage our congregation to gather data and feedback on how we collectively view the future of our community and the structure of its Rabbinic leadership. This information will be utilized to construct the next steps in the transition process. We are working diligently on our mandate and wanted to clarify a few important issues and explain the process over the coming months. Please note:

- 1) The RTC has begun to meet regularly and is hard at work mapping an appropriate path for our community at this critical juncture. As a first step in the process, we are organizing focus groups to identify the core leadership issues and priorities we would want reflected in our Rabbinic staff, and the needs with which we, as a congregation, are most concerned as our community moves forward. The focus groups will take place in May and/or June. We encourage you to participate in these groups.
- 2) In this step and throughout the process, we are working closely with our consultant, Rabbi Ronald Schwarzberg, Director of The Morris and Gertrude Bienenfeld Department of Jewish Career Development and Placement at Yeshiva University. Rabbi Schwarzberg is an expert in Rabbinic transitions and has a special connection to CAT having served as Youth Director in the 1980s. It is important to note that, should a search process occur, CAT will not be limited to only candidates with a YU ordination.
- 3) After completion of the focus groups and based on what we learn from you, a survey will be developed and sent to the entire congregation. The survey will be sent in early summer and replies must be completed and returned before early August or possibly sooner.
- 4) Focus groups and the survey will be restricted to Members in Good Standing.
- 5) No decision has been made regarding a "Search Committee" or search process. All decisions concerning the need for, and the parameters of, a potential search will be made only after completion of the focus groups and survey.
- 6) Members have written to the RTC and the synagogue leadership expressing support for Rabbi Poupko. We too appreciate Rabbi Poupko's rabbinic leadership and commitment to our synagogue. Rabbi Poupko has expressed strong interest in succeeding Rabbi Goldin and, as a long-time member of our Rabbinic staff, he will be considered as a candidate for the Senior Rabbi position.
- 7) A decision as to who will be CAT's next Senior Rabbi is premature. Like many other congregations, we are following a meticulous process. Thus, as outlined above, the primary way for our members to make their views known, in the near future, will be through the planned focus groups and the survey. Additionally, we have established an email address where our members can communicate with the RTC directly (rtc@ahavathtorah.org). Please include your full name when emailing comments to the RTC.
- 8) The RTC is also working on recommending meaningful ways to acknowledge and celebrate Rabbi Goldin's 35 years as leader of CAT and any potential future role for Rabbi Goldin.
- 9) Based on the detailed process above the RTC will make a recommendation to the Officers and Board of Trustees by early Fall.

The RTC recognizes the critical nature of our task and will be working hard to keep the community informed as this process evolves. We seek to operate with sensitivity, transparency, respect, and in the best interests of the entire Congregation.

Very truly yours,

LL/DH/JF, RTC Co-Chairs & RTC