

**The Clergy Search Subcommittee** met on Sunday, May 2, 2021. The first topic of discussion was the Subcommittee's methodology for the search. The chair people have received feedback from committee members stating that the meetings have been inefficient in the use of the Subcommittee's time. The recommendation was that the members should communicate by e-mail, stating their ideas, which could then be collected, synthesized, and voted upon. In response, it was explained why the chairpeople believe that the process would be best served by extensive discussion in a committee format, rather than communication by e-mail. There are two main reasons that we feel this is the best path. We are entering uncharted territory with the consolidation. Each member of the committee (and by extension, the members of their Congregations) has their own idea as to how the new Congregation will look and what the ideal Rabbi for that Congregation might be like. It is therefore important that the Committee not make any assumptions (no matter how basic it may seem) and take the time to identify the Congregation's priorities in what they are looking for in a Rabbi. We need to determine what skill set is required to serve these priorities and what personal traits the ideal candidate will possess. Because we come to the process from so many different directions, this determination is more readily accomplished in a group setting. Secondly, and every bit as importantly, the overarching goal of the Consolidation Committee is to begin the process of creating a community. The way this is done is to introduce people that heretofore possibly did not know one another, to facilitate their communication, and show them the many areas of common ground. This cannot be done as easily by e-mail.

The Subcommittee was given the opportunity to respond to the feedback and it was agreed to continue with our previous direction.

We have identified five areas of responsibility for the Rabbi: Ritual, Interpersonal, Education, Community Outreach, and Social Action. We agreed to define the parameters of each area and then to identify the skill set and personality traits needed. Ritual was discussed first. The specific expectations will be defined by the new Congregation's Ritual Committee as time goes on, but the basic requirements were discussed. The primary concern is that the new Rabbi be able to accommodate the spiritual needs of the entire community despite the fact that he/she will be from the Reform movement. To do so, at various times the Rabbi must be able to lead services (both Shabbat and Holidays) that are reflective of both the Reform and Conservative traditions. The Rabbi must also be able to deliver interesting and inspiring Sermons and D'var Torah's and do so in a manner that is current and relevant to the Congregation's lives. Most importantly, the Rabbi must be open to new ideas as to the liturgy and listen to the input from the Congregation.

The Social Action aspect was discussed at some length. There are differing opinions on how far the Rabbi should go in advocating any given issue of social justice. It was agreed that the Congregation cannot put constraints on the Rabbi as to what he/she can say; however, the Rabbi must be keenly aware of the divergence of opinion on any given subject and care should be taken to avoid giving offense wherever possible. The most important skill in this regard is the ability to communicate - both when discussing whatever the issue is at hand but, also, to maintain a fruitful dialogue with whichever community members may have a different stance on the issue.

Thus far, a few skills repeatedly surface in each of our discussions. There is significant uncertainty as to how the process will evolve and what the nature and identity of the future Congregation will be and this will continue for some time as the process unfolds. The new Rabbi will have to be able to communicate well, maintain a significant level of flexibility, and, above all, be able to listen and respond to the needs and concerns of the Congregation.