

Annual Report, President, May 7, 1017

Welcome Friends, this has been an unusually busy year and yet a very productive and fulfilling one. However, take a deep breath, I will not be giving you a day to day breakdown.

My initial impression in reviewing the past year is to honor those who give of their time and talents in making a difference in the lives of our congregation. Yes, I know that you do not require a thank you but some recognition is so very appropriate. As impossible as it is to call out each name I would like to mention a few. Thank you, Karen Newborn, for your work in Chairing both the Interim Rabbi Search and Adult Education Committees. Thank you, Fred Feldman, for all that you do in too many areas to mention. Thank you Robin Zaremba for your incredible work on our Bulletin and the Rabbi's Retirement Gala, along with Jenn Lampron and Larry Cowan. Please take the time to look at the committee member lists included in your packets.

Lastly, thank you to our staff, both administrative and clergy, and our wonderful teachers for all that you do, Nancy, Debbi, Cheryl, Don, Cantor Vera and Rabbi Korinow.

We are all cognizant of our holidays and the life-time events we follow each year. None of this just happens. Hundreds of hours of planning and committee meetings in addition to Board and Executive Board meetings, take place throughout the year. So many details!

But beyond the anticipated this past year has been extraordinary. It was necessary to call upon already busy people to actively participate in Committees to find a worthy Interim Rabbi and to organize an appropriate good-bye to our Rabbi of the past 36 years. In addition, we re-activated our Social Action and Religious Practice Committees. We are very excited about these renewed efforts to bring fresh ideas to our shul and to enlarge our community presence. The later initiative includes positive connections made with the Armenian Church, Calvary Baptist and local mosques. We treasure our own traditions but reach out for better understanding and friendship. Regarding Calvary Baptist, we will continue the decades-long association and mutual celebration of Martin Luther King. This past year produced the largest gathering yet and we hope to improve on this next year. We continue the commitments to our congregational family with the Chesed program while providing Tikkun Olam to community support systems such as Emmaus House.

In an effort to increase transparency and communication with our entire congregation we arranged two Open Meetings with our congregation and will continue this next year. Of course, the Bulletin and email messages will continue as usual.

At the beginning of this year we welcomed Cantor Vera Broekhuysen to our Temple. Vera is an ordained cantor and beyond the enjoyment of her beautiful voice we have benefited from her talents in teaching and leading our Shabbat and other services. In particular, Vera has been providing a more reformed-minded Shabbat service once-monthly or when the Rabbi is on sabbatical. The Religious Practice Committee will evaluate congregational response to this innovation and decide whether we should continue this in the future.

One of the most significant changes at our Temple home is the agreement between the Bradford Christian Academy and ourselves last summer. Nancy LaFleur, Debbi Levasseur, Larry Cowan and our teachers worked tirelessly to create an agreement that works for both parties. The entire Board appreciates the sacrifices made by our teachers in arranging space utilization to accommodate 135 students, teachers and staff in this arrangement. The process included a much-needed Temple clean-up and discarding of things we no longer needed. The Haverhill authorities were required to certify the safety of the new students, teachers and staff as well as our own. It should be mentioned that that BCA paid for substantial improvements in our physical plant.

The BCA needed a home and the Temple had the space. While the rental agreement was a boost for Temple finances it has been a joy to see these high school, students learning and feeling welcomed and at home at Emanu-El. The Academy was invited to participate in our annual Martin Luther King service and our Yom HaShoah Essay and Art Challenge for students and was involved in both. Rabbi Korinow has been invited to speak about Judaism in the school and has done so. It is difficult to believe that a school year has nearly passed.

On the business side, I will keep my comments brief. The rental agreement with the BCA has been most beneficial to our bottom line. We also have been blessed with the generosity of congregants who wish to remain anonymous. But unfortunately, as we lose older members, blessed be their memory, our deficit is significant and the Endowment must take up the slack. We have hopes that as we enter a new era this dynamic will have a change in direction.

Looking forward, we are excited about the Retirement Party on May 21 as we thank our Rabbi for his long service and wish him all the best in the years ahead. As well, we are anticipating the arrival of Rabbi Bogosian on July 1. I know you will be pleased with her openness and religious leadership during the next year as we also work towards the selection of a settled rabbi.

I want to finish by saying that it is our Board's goal to listen to our congregation for input, ideas and inspiration. We also hope that you will also collaborate with us to make these wishes a reality. On our part, we will continue to provide as much information as possible through all means possible.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Larry R. Cann
President