

Congregation Beth Yam
Acceptance Comments
June 13, 2010

By
Ted David

Thank you so very much for your confidence in me and for allowing me to serve as the President of CBY. I am honored and humbled by your confidence and look forward to performing this Mitzvah for all that Judaism and CBY have provided to me and my family.

We should be proud of what we have accomplished to fulfill CBY's mission and purpose. We have a beautiful new house of worship, of learning, of caring, of social action and of sociability. We have a physical structure and a culture:

- where all members can pursue their growth as Jews in the Lowcountry,
- where our "more experienced" members share their heritage and wisdom with our young members,
- where we educate both our children and adults,
- where we celebrate the spirituality of Judaism,
- where we welcome visitors with warmth and hospitality,
- where our "tent" is open to the broad spectrum of beliefs,
- where we care for those among us who are in frail health and
- where we reach out to our brothers and sisters in their time of need.

We also have new spiritual vitality and leadership brought to us by Rabbi and Linda Bloom. With the Rabbi's leadership, we have initiated new programs. And, Rabbi Bloom has become an integral part of the synagogue leadership, working in close partnership with the lay leaders of CBY. Rabbi, Linda we are delighted you are with us.

The most important ingredient in the success of CBY is you, our members, our volunteers, and our leaders. When you can, thank the person next to you for his or her contributions to CBY. We have warm and welcoming members who seek out others in the community. In fact, Jeri and I may not have discovered CBY had not Stan and Judy Bluestone reached out and invited us into the CBY family. Stan, Judy for that we thank you.

We also collectively owe thanks to all of our prior leaders – from those who founded CBY back in the 1980's to our most recent President, Jack Resnick. I look forward to Jack's advice and counsel as the immediate past president. These men and women, and those who worked closely with them, had the foresight, devotion and vision to make us what we are today. I also want to recognize and thank our retiring Board members – Stan Bluestone, Myron Meister and Elaine Lust who have been stalwarts on the Board for the last several years.

I'd like now to share what I believe are key priorities for CBY. My vision for CBY is very straightforward – to accomplish our purpose as spelled out in our By-Laws –

“... to promote the fundamental and enduring principles of Judaism and to ensure the continuity of the Jewish people; to enable its members to develop a relationship with God through communal worship, study of Torah, and assembly; and to apply the principles of Reform Judaism to the values and conduct of the individual, the family and the society in which we live.”

That mission and our obligations to past and future generations have shaped my major priorities for CBY:

- to maintain and enhance our commitment to Reform Judaism and to Jewish worship and
- To maintain and enhance our programs and services for members and the community,

These are the reasons for CBY’s existence – to celebrate Judaism and to provide services, programs and activities for our members.

- to ensure CBY’s current and future financial stability and
- to build new CBY leadership for the future.

In this year just ending, thanks to Rabbi Bloom and Jack Resnick, we initiated several new worship, spiritual, education, social action, caring, and social programs and activities, many taking advantage of our new structure and space. This will be a year to solidify these programs and make them traditions. We will initiate a few new programs – such as our program to reach out to interfaith families and the congregational trip to Israel (don’t forget the briefing for the trip on June 30) and will have modest growth in other programs, such as our caring program. However, to provide these programs we must have money, volunteers, and leaders. Thus, major priorities for next year relate to ensuring financial stability and building future leadership.

As Mike Werner has reported, we have planned a balanced budget for 2010/2011 with only a modest increase in dues. To achieve this balanced budget the Board made difficult decisions on program deferrals and reductions and we have utilized money from our restricted funds for specific targeted needs.

I’ll just share one more statistic with you. For 2010/2011 our anticipated operating costs per resident member unit is \$1753. Our average dues and Friends’ contribution (after abatements and averaging families and singles) will be \$1312 per family unit. Future costs will only go up. To make up the difference between revenues and expenses we have limited options – cut programs or raise more money: I opt to raise more money. We can increase revenues by focusing on several initiatives:

- We must increase our membership. New members add to our dues revenue and provide a source of volunteers. This year we had a net growth of 11 resident members. That’s great but I would like to see net resident member growth of 10% or 18 to 20 resident members each year – until we reach a steady state of 225 members. CBY has a Membership Committee and a new Recruiting Chair. To me however, every member of CBY is a recruiter. Let your friends know what a warm, friendly environment we provide and let them know about our Voluntary Dues Program (VDP) – a way for

prospective new members to learn about CBY before they make the full financial commitment to CBY. And don't forget our dinner for prospective members on Aug 4.

- We must revitalize the Friends program and communicate to you, the members, the importance of contributions to the Friends campaign.
- We must increase our fund-raising from both congregants and the general community. For example, as we discussed earlier today, "Earn for CBY While You Shop" programs earn money for CBY while you shop for goods and services you buy anyway. These programs cost nothing, except a few minutes to set up, but they provide free money for CBY.
- This year we are also initiating our Endowment program to contribute to CBY's long term financial stability. .

Money, however, is not enough. We need volunteers to plan and run our programs and to provide future leadership. We do "a lot" with a small staff and with volunteers – committee members, committee chairs, Board members, and officers. Did you know that we have over 100 congregants (nearly 1/3 of our total resident membership) participating on committees? Even with that, several members lead or are on 6, 7, 8 committees. They love to do it, but, quite frankly, some are getting tired. We cannot continue to rely on a relatively few members, particularly if we want to expand our activities.

It is important that current and new members participate in synagogue activities. And, we must prepare new leaders to join the Board of Directors and become officers of CBY. Toward that end, this year we are initiating our Leadership Growth Program -- *Hay'Ahtid* – The Future. This program, based on successful programs at other synagogues, will provide a foundation for CBY leadership. If you have not signed up, I encourage you to do so; it's not too late. Even if you do not want to participate in the Leadership Growth program, I encourage you to volunteer for one or two activities. As the old commercial went "try it, you'll like it."

I look forward to working in close partnership with Rabbi Bloom and our very capable Board of Directors and committee chairs to build on the team spirit of CBY. I mostly look forward to working with each congregant. I'd like to hear from you about compliments (preferred) or concerns and complaints. If we can fix problems we will. If we can't do anything right now, I'll tell you that also. I commit to you that I will do all I am capable of to lead CBY to fulfill our purpose and mission and to accomplish our priority goals. I will also be upfront, honest, and work cooperatively with each member.

Before I conclude, I must give a big Thank You to my wife, Jeri, who supports my labor of love at CBY and puts up with the many meetings and late dinners with amazing good grace.

I hope you will join me as we proceed on the journey to our next accomplishments. Thank you again for your confidence. I will work hard to earn your trust.