

From the Rabbi's Desk

February 2018

I'm not the best at asking for help. As I write this article, I'm just getting over the flu. It's probably the worst case I've had in ten years. It hit me hard on a Wednesday morning and I immediately knew that I was in for a rough time. I turned to my pulpit partner Sherry. Sherry and I both just got over colds so both of us were a little leery getting sick again. I stood outside Sherry's office as I asked her to take my religious school class. I wasn't feeling too bad, just a stubborn cough, but I had that feeling something more serious was coming. I picked up the kids from preschool early, and by the time I got home it was very apparent I had the flu. The body aches and chills set in but I got a flu shot so I was hopeful it would be over soon. By Thursday evening, with no improvement, it became evident that I needed more help. Sherry and I had worked hard with SSA to plan Friday evening's service. I desperately wanted to believe I was feeling better so I could be there to see it through. Polly helped me see that I needed to call Rabbi Rosenberg for help. I made the call and Aaron jumped in without hesitation. I hear that Friday night went well, and our Saturday evening program with SSA and Beth El went wonderfully too. It was disappointing to me to not be part of these communal milestones. But, what I am thankful for is that Aaron, Sherry, and many others were there to help when I called on them.

We all need help from time to time. Some like me have a hard time asking, but the asking should be the hardest part. One of the primary functions of our spiritual community is to take care of one another. Year ago, the social action committee started the Mitzvah Corp. This group of people were organized to be ready when the call came in from anyone in our community who needed help. Over the years, this help has included preparing and delivering meals, home visits, rides, assistance shopping, light housework or yard work and similar things. Naturally as a spiritual community matures, the baton must be passed from one cohort to another. Sometimes the baton handoff isn't so smooth and we stumble a bit before starting to run again. This is where we are with the Mitzvah Corp.

Marty Zeldis, Sybil Nassau and I have been talking about what we need to revitalize the Mitzvah Corp. At this point, we need two things. We need to identify volunteers willing to help. We also need help identifying those who could use a helping hand. In the coming weeks, you will see an electronic survey in your email box asking how you can contribute to the Mitzvah Corp or how the Mitzvah Corp can help you. Please respond, the Mitzvah Corp needs you and the Mitzvah Corp wants to be there for you. In addition to the electronic survey, there will be new Mitzvah Corp flyers you will see in the foyer or atrium at the Temple. If you'd rather connect on paper than by electronic survey, please fill out the short questionnaire and return it to the office.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Marc