

Presidential Message

September 2019

I just looked in my inbox to see when my first email was sent to our Treasurer, Tom Smith. It was the summer of 2012. I think we first met during my first time as President of Emanu-El in 2011. In that email, I asked him to participate in a summer service that my wife and I were leading. Tom read the prayer for peace.

This summer Tom and I grew our first crop of hops. In the seven plus years of our friendship, enabled by Emanuel-El and our Jewish faith, we shared dreams of starting a hops farm. Stupid us started with a wooded lot, not even a cleared lot. We toiled, sweat, made mistakes, paid a lot of people, bruised, bled and never gave up. We weren't always alone with our dreams. Many in our congregation, and their children, joined us at times to plant, cut down trees, dig holes, run machinery, and of course, cook meat and drink beer. I felt like we had a kibbutz. It was a community. How did this all come together? Was it God's doing? Does God like beer? Are hops just hopes without an "e"?

We all have hopes, dreams and goals. To achieve them, we often need family, friends, equally crazy idea partners and community. Temple Emanuel-El brought me those and brought Tom those. Do you have a story like this from your time as a congregant? Maybe Geoff Hausmann got you your first house (Hi Geoff).

The High Holidays are approaching. Reflecting on last year, did you spend time fulfilling your hopes or trying to reach a goal or a dream? Did you think about how our congregation could support you along your journey? We are full of family, friends, community and yes, potentially equally crazy idea partners.

As for the business of Temple Emanuel-El, at the time of my writing this article, the Board was finalizing Rabbi Marc's contract extension, working on securing funding for building security, and beginning to realize that the 60th anniversary of the congregation is in 2020, so we should do something about that, including recognizing Sherry for her upcoming 20 years of service (I just blew that surprise).

Financially, the mortgage is now paid off. Our gratitude for that milestone goes to our benefactors. However, please realize that we still need the expected amount of revenue to come in, in order to move from a "paycheck to paycheck" existence, to a central beacon of Reform Judaism.

All the best!

Jonathan Rowe