

June 2007

Dear Friends,

Many of you are familiar with the history of Temple Jeremiah. Founded in 1959, the congregation was created as a Classical Reform congregation. What this meant in terms of worship was that Hebrew did not have a real role in the prayer service; Friday evening was the time for Sabbath worship and Sunday morning would be the major congregational service.

Over the years, Temple Jeremiah has moved closer to the center of current Reform Jewish worship. While Friday evening is still the main congregational Sabbath observance, we now celebrate with our Bar and Bat Mitzvah students on Saturday morning with a full worship service that includes readings from scripture. Sunday morning services are now a part of our Religious School program and serve educational as well as spiritual purposes for our young people, and when appropriate, their families.

When we do not have a student called to the Torah as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, we do not have a service on Saturday morning. In our long range plan for the congregation, the stated goal is to have a regular Shabbat morning worship service. More and more people are looking for such an opportunity. I proposed that we institute a service on Shabbat morning when there otherwise would not be one.

A survey was sent to 100 people, a combination of members of the Spiritual Life Committee, Temple Jeremiah Board of Directors and members of Torah Study to get feedback.

It is clear that there is overwhelming support for implementing a new service and that many will volunteer to help us create a minyan both for the Torah reading and for recitation of Kaddish.

On April 22, the Committee of Spiritual Life met to discuss the responses and to plan for the future. The Committee proposes that we begin a new schedule of worship on Shabbat morning this summer commencing on June 23, continuing through June 30, July 7, 14, 21, 28 and August 11. The service will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the Torah reading at 9:00 a.m., Torah Study from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m., Aleinu and Kaddish at 10:00 until 10:05 a.m.

(over)

We will meet in the Sanctuary for services and Torah Study configuring the space to accommodate tables and chairs to mirror what we have in Room 7. The Bagels and Nosh we share at Torah Study will now be, on these mornings, part of the Kiddush that we will enjoy following the conclusion of our worship at 10:05 a.m.

This schedule allows for Torah Study regulars who do not wish to participate in the service at 8:30 a.m. to come for Torah Study at 9:00 a.m. It will also accommodate those who wish to attend the service, study and have the opportunity to recite Kaddish on a recent loss or a yahrzeit as well as provide a social gathering at the conclusion.

Ernie Frankl and others have generously offered to help coordinate participation. Those who indicated they would be available to help us make a minyan, can expect a call prior to the service. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to call me at the Temple.

Shalom,

Rabbi Paul F. Cohen, D.Min.

PFC:pb