

PRESIDENTIAL MATTERS

By Steve Aronowitz



Not very many congregants may be familiar with one of the important resources available to us, METNY, the Metropolitan New York Chapter of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. There is no question, however, that many of our temple's leaders, including every president, have benefitted from the organization's support. While you may not be aware of the invaluable assistance provided to our leadership, I know you are familiar with both USY and KADIMA programs. These METNY – USCJ sponsored youth organizations have chapters at our synagogue and many of our children are presently participating and enjoying wonderful social and educational activities. Through USCJ, some of our adolescents have traveled cross-country as part of the USCJ – USY on WHEELS summer program.

Because we have received so much support through our shul's proud history, I am delighted to announce that Little Neck Jewish Center will host an upcoming METNY conference, *Congregational Culture and Facilitating Joint Programming: Understanding how leaders manage the challenge of change and survive the struggle AND Joint Programming: Not without your Rabbi!* Leaders of area synagogues have been invited to discuss strategies to meet the challenges we face. The conference will be held on Sunday, February 12, beginning with the first session starting promptly at 9 a.m. Minyan will be at 8:00 a.m., followed by a light breakfast and registration.

It is particularly appropriate that we are hosting a program of this nature. It is quite clear that the Jewish population in our area continues to decrease and demographics do not project a change in that direction. Neighboring synagogues have worked to provide joint programming. Little Neck Jewish Center has demonstrated its awareness of the issues by organizing programs with neighboring synagogues. These activities have been well-attended. Our discussions with Oakland Jewish Center point out that the leaders of both synagogues recognize the need to come together for the future of the Jewish community.

On a personal note, I have reached out to the METNY – USCJ leaders in the past, and attended their dinners and conferences. Their support is genuine. As another example, it was through our USCJ affiliation that we secured the services of Rabbi Yaffe! So you see the connection has been invaluable. I am expecting a significant turnout of our Board members to join me at this conference. If you are interested in attending, please contact me as I welcome your participation.