

Presidential Matters
by Steve Aronowitz



If 2022 has taught us anything, it's that things can change in a minute. The way we've always done things can be upended due to circumstances outside our control. Resolutions, by their very nature, are the things of which we have an incredible amount of control. They are the things that, if we allow them to, can take priority in our lives. They're what we probably should have focused on beyond the first month of the year.

Our worries about getting, spreading, or becoming ill from COVID – 19 continue to lead to increased anxiety, restrictions of routines, and disruption to our clocks. Pandemics, climate change, wars, inflation, mass shootings, racism bombard on a daily basis that can make us (or at least me) feel that, at times, the world and our society are falling apart and there is nothing we can do about it. I have learned that we can all play a role in pushing back against this narrative.

The trick is to maintain focus and belief that the possibilities moving forward are exciting. I do!

Our synagogue has taught me that working together can bring about positive change. Rabbi Yaffe and Cantor Shron consistently advocate reaching out to those less fortunate through various programs. Tracy Berlinsky, Hope Altheim and Julie Aronowitz help those in need through programs such as Operation Isaiah. Ellen Charlop and Carrie Yaffe have been the leaders of the Bikur Cholim committee, expressing our support to members and their families. Karen Popowsky led the effort to distribute Shabbat bags to members. Of course, there are others and space does not permit me to include each. All have been role models relentless in their efforts to energize our congregation to respond to calls for help.

And, as the High Holidays approach, I ask you to help out. Our programs are based on the collective efforts of me and you. Neville Grusd authored the "Charity Begins At Home" drive and a significant portion of the congregation has continued to contribute under that heading. For the upcoming holidays, we are kicking off a continuation of that effort, ***"Welcome Home at L'Dor V'Dor campaign."*** We are hoping that in the next few months, we will be able to open our doors **wide** so that all can feel at home – in the House! We recognize that the Zoom access has been invaluable in connecting members to the synagogue and we know it's here to stay in some form, but we also know that the synagogue is the place to be!

Preparations for the High Holidays are in full gear. Our clergy have been hard at work to ensure that all of our holiday offerings are not only complete, but meaningful.

When we wish someone a Shanah Tovah, we are not only wishing them a good new year, but also "a good change." Inherent in our Hebrew greeting is the understanding that change is a natural part of life. Both in spite of and because of our hopes, we will all see change in the coming year. This year, like all others, will be full of changes – some good, some not so good. In wishing someone a Shanah Tovah, our hope is that they will be able to find or create something good in all the challenges and changes that await them.

From the Aronowitz and Stein families, Shanah Tovah – let us embrace this new year with hope for good health and happiness.