

TBE Strategic Plan 2023

Congregational meetings: October 2023

A bit of history

Last strategic plan, completed in 2010, presented five objectives:

- Create a community that inspires our members to experience a greater sense of ownership, connection and engagement.
- Generate and/or enhance feelings of spirituality and personal belonging in all who participate in our services and religious experiences.
- Provide high quality, lifelong education and programming that engages our members and the community.
- Fully embrace “best practices” in governance and open, effective, timely communications, with particular focus on achieving greater transparency.
- Provide a strong financial framework and a safe and appealing physical structure for the current and future membership.

What's changed since then?

- Synagogue demographics
- Rochester Jewish Community demographics
- The impact of COVID-19 pandemic
- Combining of synagogues and other Jewish institutions
- Changes in clergy: No permanent, full-time Hazzan, expectations that Rabbi Bitran will step aside in three years
- Challenges of attracting new leadership

Conclusion: We need a different type of strategic plan

To be successful, and lay a better groundwork for our future, the 2023 Temple Beth EI Strategic Plan should have three main goals:

- Addressing the demographic, social and economic pressures on synagogues in Rochester
- Focusing on ensuring TBE has the appropriate personnel, structures and strategies to implement its goals
- Keep all goals focused on the proposals that won TBE a \$1M grant from the Farash Foundation

How we came to this conclusion

We analyzed the research conducted by a committee led by congregant Leah Goldman in consultation with national expert Bob Leaventhal.

That research included:

- Focus groups
- A survey of congregants
- SWOT analyses by officers, board members, staff and congregants

What that research found

- Congregants want to be better connected to each other, to leadership, and to clergy
- People are seeking more and varied opportunities to engage in synagogue life. They want to do more than simply attend services.
- Congregants are **demanding** better, more transparent communication from synagogue leadership about what is happening at TBE.

The basics of the 2023 Strategic Plan

- Stay true to TBE's mission, vision and values
- Establish a structure that sets TBE up for future success
- Engage the congregation to help us move ahead

Step One: Stay true to the mission, vision and values

Mission: Temple Beth El is a vibrant and inclusive community of Jews who join together for prayer, education, celebration, mutual support and comfort, tikkun olam and acts of loving kindness. We are guided by Torah and the principles of the Conservative movement. We are committed to our community, the State of Israel, and Jews around the world.

Vision: Our vision is that Temple Beth El will be an inspiring center of Conservative Judaism in which meaningful experiences and memories take root and grow.

Values: We are a welcoming and inclusive congregation. We value and respect each congregant and his or her personal journey in Judaism. We foster a sense of connectedness with our community. We value participation in all aspects of synagogue and Jewish life. Our congregation will be here for the entire Temple family now and for future generations.

Step Two: Set the structure

- Establish four new task forces, each led by a board member, comprised of half board members and half volunteer congregants, plus a staff member. Size of task force will be determined by the scope of its work.
- Establish a steering implementation commission, led by a board officer, comprised of the chairs of the three task forces, synagogue executive director, to ensure work is progressing and advancing in a way that supports other committees and overall goals of TBE.

How the task forces work

For each task force, the strategic plan includes:

- set goals and timeline
- recommended meeting schedule
- draft proposal deadlines for each committee, developed in accordance with its mission and the most urgent goals of the plan.

The Task Forces

Welcoming and Engaging

Co-chairs: Taylor Futerman and Elyse Gilman

The mission:

- Create and implement a plan for approval by the board aimed at creating an environment that ensures congregants and newcomers both feel unconditionally welcomed at TBE and want to engage in synagogue life. This includes a mix of programming, educational offerings, social events and religious observations, some for general congregation, others targeted at specific groups (20s and 30s, young families, b'nei mitzvah, empty nesters, etc.);
- Address congregational request for better engagement with clergy;
- Help identify ways to collaborate with congregations sharing Beth El building now and in the future.

The Task Forces

Identifying Key Staffing

Chair: Martin Spokony

The mission:

- Work with executive director to identify the key full- and part-time managerial and clerical needs of TBE, all to be supported within budget or through philanthropy
- Create necessary job descriptions to be used in hiring
- Develop measurable goals for these positions
- Collaborate with any congregational search committees to ensure consistency around job descriptions and strategic goals
- Develop a database of members interested in volunteering in various aspects of synagogue life to augment and support professional staff.

The Task Forces

Communications

Chair: Ellen Konar

The mission:

- Establish guidelines to improve transparency and enhance two-way communication between leadership and congregants
- Use communication to help increase engagement and philanthropy
- Advise full-time staff person responsible for communications

The Task Forces

Preserving and Advancing Conservative Judaism in Rochester

Chair: Ron Yaar

The mission:

- Create and sustain an environment where Conservative Judaism is celebrated and shared among a diverse, inclusive and engage community
- Learn how congregants want to observe, celebrate and embrace our faith
- Carry out the promise of the Farash Foundation grant by working to engage congregations sharing TBE building space, including clergy and leadership
- Honor the history of all congregations sharing TBE building space now and in the future.

The Strategic Plan Implementation Commission

Led by TBE Vice President Roberta Feldman, this group is comprised of the chairs of the four task forces and TBE Executive Director Deborah Zeger

Its function is to ensure work is progressing, task forces have the necessary resources and work is being coordinated to reinforce the overall goals of the strategic plan

This commission will report to the board of directors at each meeting and present an annual report detailing progress made on measurable goals

Where do we stand now

- Plan was presented to TBE officers and advanced to the full board
- Board approved the plan unanimously in August.
- Plan posted to the website and copies made available to congregants
- Plan presented at congregational meetings - Oct. 22 and 25

What does this mean for you?

This strategic plan is all about engaging you - the congregant - however, whenever and however often - you choose.

- Do you want to serve on a task force?
- Do you want to be in the volunteer list?
- Do you want to be considered for a standing committee or board seat in the future?
 - Education
 - Ritual
 - Youth Activities

Think about it... and reach out to the appropriate people.

Questions?

Discussion?