



An Ever-widening Circle

Congregation Kehillath Israel

Dear Friends:

As we look ahead to the start of KI's one hundredth anniversary in 2017, the Board of Trustees has focused on four goals we believe we must achieve to meet the challenge of our next century:

- Financial stability
- A strong & stable building
- Clear and motivated leadership
- An empowered congregation.

Over the past few years, we have made great strides in moving towards these goals. We have restructured the Board of Trustees, creating more effective leadership. We have added two wonderful new rabbis who are enriching our religious and educational programming. We have moved to a more participatory Shabbat morning service, with the rabbis off the bimah and among the congregation, and a growing number of volunteer Torah readers. We are just finishing a full architectural review of what needs to be done to stabilize and renew our building.

Two and a half years ago, we took another great step toward reaching our goals by hiring Scott Allen as Executive Director. While handling day-to-day tasks, he worked to re-structure KI's management, handled complex maintenance projects and started the architectural review of the building. Most important of all, in partnership with the Board of Trustees, he worked to define exactly where KI is financially, what challenges we face, and what options we have to move forward towards our goals.

As we prepare for the start of our next hundred years, our first responsibility is to create a sustainable long term financial model that both supports the congregation and is a reflection of the values we share. Especially in these difficult economic times, the Board must take its fiduciary obligation seriously and act responsibly for our immediate and long-term future. As we studied and discussed our options, one choice became clear. By re-organizing the main office, replacing the position of Executive Director with an Office Manager, and assigning some board members additional responsibilities, we could both realize significant cost savings and increase congregational and leadership engagement in the daily management of the synagogue.

Scott was offered the Office Manager position, but as he states in his letter, he is understandably unable to accept.

We will miss Scott and Rae-ann personally, and we are deeply grateful for all that they have done for KI. Scott puts all of his heart and soul into his job, regularly. He is extremely dedicated, and always puts the best interest of the synagogue first. Scott maintains a warmth of personality, compassion, and loyalty to our



community. I know that we will always consider both Scott and Rae-ann as friends and valued members of our community. Please join with me in thanking Scott for his tremendous contribution during his time in Brookline and at KI and wish him the very best in his future endeavors after he leaves his post at KI this coming June.

Our community is close and strong. We are not a *kehilla* that just sits back, waiting for staff members to fulfill our needs – instead, we have proven ourselves in recent efforts such as the Hanukkat HaBayit and the 5th annual Gala (to name just two of many) to be a *kehilla* that rolls up our sleeves and digs in to build and create meaningful experiences and rewarding opportunities for worship, learning, and social engagement.

Over the next few months, the Board of Trustees will be reaching out to the whole community for feedback and suggestions as we move forward to meet our goals and prepare for KI's second century.

The Board, clergy, and staff will work together to make this transition as smooth as possible, and I know that our community will support our new office structure and continue to grow our *kehilla* in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Jason Skolnick
President