

Announcing My Forthcoming Retirement



Shortly after Thanksgiving I wrote to the congregation announcing that I would be retiring as Rabbi of Congregation Adath Jeshurun at the end of June 2014. I have been so touched and moved by the many letters and comments which members have shared with me about the meaning of my involvement in their lives as their rabbi. I am so grateful for these kind comments. They elevate my spirit.

Inasmuch as this publication is the official voice of Congregation Adath Jeshurun, I have decided to reprint my letter in its entirety. I do it with no less of a spirit of gratitude or conviction from the initial release, and with continuing love and respect for the history of our congregation and the members of our community who make it so special.

November 28, 2012
14 Kislev 5773

Shalom:

Thirty-four years ago I became the Rabbi of Congregation Adath Jeshurun. It is hard to comprehend that I have now held this position for half my life! It is an honor to be part of this historic congregation.

Several months ago I met with our President Mitchell Russell and expressed my desire to plan for retirement. After forty years in the congregational rabbinate, most of them at AJ, I am ready for a less all-consuming existence, one which will enable me to explore and develop other opportunities and interests. I also believe this is a propitious time for the congregation to have a new rabbinic leader who can look to the future with a fresh set of eyes and different initiatives.

With that in mind, leadership and I have agreed that I will be retiring as Rabbi of Congregation Adath Jeshurun at the end of June 2014, marking thirty-six years in this position, and assume the honorific title of "Distinguished Service Rabbi."

Over the next year and a half, we will have occasions to reflect on the meaning of this time of transition for me and the congregation. At this time, permit me to share a few thoughts.

My years as Rabbi of AJ have held great meaning and fulfillment, personal and professional. This is a remarkable congregation, with a storied history and unique spiritual practices. Since 1911, AJ has had only three rabbis. I am proud to have followed Rabbi Max D. Klein, and Rabbi Yaakov G. Rosenberg.

I have been blessed to work with many distinguished volunteer leaders and synagogue professionals committed to constantly reinvigorating AJ to meet an unfolding future. Our goal has been to create a congregation that is both anchored in tradition, our own and that of our people, and open to contemporary needs and revitalizing change.

Most of all I have appreciated the many good people who are part of the AJ community, with whom I worship and study, who have invited me to share the joyous times in their family's lives, and to whom I have been able to bring the comfort and solace of our tradition when adversity and sadness came their way. In times of happiness and challenge in my own life and that of my family, this congregation has been a source of ongoing strength and encouragement. I am grateful for all of this. You have enriched my life with your openness to my teaching, your friendship and caring.

Cindy and I will continue to be part of this community. But when the new rabbi begins his or her tenure with the congregation, I am committed to insuring that the transition will be sure-footed, that the new rabbi will be AJ's sole rabbinic leader and authoritative voice, and that I will defer to him or her in any matter of congregational life.

AJ faces many challenges, demographic, spiritual, and financial. I believe that we have a strong core of visionary leaders who are determined to meet these challenges creatively. I am encouraged by their enthusiasm and confident that they will be successful, and that AJ will continue to thrive as a leading congregation in our community. I will work unabated with them until my retirement in every way possible.

In the Torah reading of this past *Shabbat*, Jacob has a dream in which he sees a ladder whose base is planted firmly on earth, but whose pinnacle reaches to the highest heavens. When he awakes, he exclaims, "This is none other than the Abode of God, and the Entry-Gate to Heaven."

The mission of our congregation is to be that ladder, planted in the midst of the daily lives of our community, which lifts our eyes upward toward Heaven's Entry-Gate. This has been my goal as your Rabbi. It is my prayer that with new leadership, Congregation Adath Jeshurun will always sweep us up on the wings of Jewish passion toward Heaven's Entry-Gate, and, in turn, make our lives here on earth an Abode of God.

Faithfully yours,

Rabbi Seymour Rosenbloom

CONGREGATION
ADATH JESHURUN



7763 Old York Road
Elkins Park, PA 19027
215.635.6611
www.adathjeshurun.info