

Congregation Or Chadash
25th Annual Meeting
Held Virtually Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
MINUTES
Monday, May 4, 2020, at 7:00 pm

Emily Joseph, Secretary

1. Call to Order Dr. Elaine Jones, President
- Elaine called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
 - Elaine explained the procedures for the meeting, and that the meeting was being recorded and livestreamed. *[Secretary's note: this recording can be viewed at <https://fb.watch/5e7U66pX7y/>]*
 - Elaine announced that the number of absentee ballots received were sufficient to constitute a quorum.
 - Elaine announced that questions submitted via the Facebook comments would be answered over the next few days.

2. Invocation and Remarks Rabbi Thomas A. Louchheim
- “Sovereign of the universe who created us and all living beings with love, be our refuge and help us find the strength in our time of trouble and loneliness. Now more than ever teach us to live with dignity and to honor the dignity of difference, recognizing those who are different are also creatures of the divine and deserve our compassion, kindness and empathy.

We are a community that is suffering terrible losses. Many do not realize this, but our spiritual community of Or Chadash is rising up with resiliency and joy and spirituality to serve and bless others. I maintain a deep sense of faith in our people and that we can find great wisdom and learn deep things and reveal God’s presence even in these terrible times.” Bless us so that we may be a blessing to others. Amen.”

- Rabbi Louchheim thanked the congregation for their support following the death of his father.

3. President’s Welcoming Remarks Dr. Elaine Jones, President
- All voting this year was conducted by mail-in ballot. The returned ballots were checked against the membership list and then independently counted by two Board members who are not up for election this year.
 - Elaine noted that both the usual Sisterhood presentation and the recognition of outgoing board members has been postponed due to COVID-19.
 - The president thanked the Board of Directors for their service this year and acknowledged the departure of board members Lynn Greenberg, Harriet Kronman, and Emily Joseph. Outgoing Board members will be recognized at services on May 22nd, when the new Board will also be installed.
 - The president provided an overview of the activities and accomplishments of Congregation Or Chadash over the past year.
 - Our Bylaws were revised this year under the leadership of Governance Committee chair Harriet Kronman.

- Work continues on considering a shared future with Temple Emanu-El. Task forces were formed to analyze the benefits and barriers to combining congregations in a number of areas, and they presented their findings in fall 2019. Both congregations voted on February 9, 2020 to approve a Memorandum of Understanding to move forward towards merger. The two executive committees are now meeting jointly to begin the next phase of this process.
 - Regardless of the congregational merger, our religious school will combine with Temple Emanu-El's this fall, with Rina Liebeskind as its director.
 - We have hired a consultant, Rabbi David Wolfman, to help us move forward towards merger. His work is being supported by a grant from Arizona Together for Impact.
 - Our Finance Committee meets monthly to oversee our situation and bring recommendations to the Board.
 - The president thanked all of the congregation's clergy, staff, religious school teachers, and volunteers for their work in adjusting to this pandemic. In particular, the Caring Chavurah and its chair, Lynn Rae Lowe, were recognized for their work serving home-bound congregants during isolation.
4. Minutes of 2019 Congregational Meetings Emily Joseph, Secretary
- The minutes of the 24th Annual Meeting and the September 22, 2019 Special Congregational Meeting were distributed in advance and no corrections were received. Therefore, they are accepted as distributed.
5. Presentation of Improved Safety & Security Measures Jim Liebeskind, Facilities Manager
- Additional steps are being taken to secure both our physical spaces and the virtual spaces we are using due to the pandemic.
 - An additional emergency exit has been added to the community room.
 - Volunteers have been trained to assist Jim and his staff in emergency procedures including evacuation, lockdown, and the use of our alarm system's panic buttons.
 - Armed security personnel have been present for many of our on-campus activities.
 - These efforts were made possible through the support of the anonymous Family Foundation.
 - The buildings are cleaned and sanitized according to CDC guidelines.
 - Security in our virtual spaces is being constantly updated and improved.
 - While the property is less populated it is being constantly monitored via closed circuit cameras.
 - There has been an increase in the amount of email scams since the beginning of the pandemic. No one from Or Chadash will ever ask you to buy gift cards via email.
6. Presentation of Slate for Board of Directors..... Dr. Elaine Jones, President
- The Nominating Committee consisted of Gary Kippur, Brooke Hotez, Steve Caine, Bill Berk, Karen Faitelson, Steve Groff, and chair Benjamin Vogel.
 - The committee followed the procedure outlined in the Bylaws, including issuing notice of the provision allowing for congregants to nominate candidates. Input was sought from the Board of Directors, the staff, and the congregation as a whole.
 - In accordance with the Bylaws, the slate was presented to the Board of Directors at its February 24, 2020 meeting and mailed to the membership no less than 20 days before the annual meeting.
- For Treasurer: Mark Ross

For Secretary: Steve Caine
For Director:
Ben Goldberg
Mo Riback

- The slate was passed by the congregation.
7. Results of the Vote on the 2020-2021 Budget Dr. Elaine Jones, President
- COVID-19 precautions precluded our usual in-person Budget Q & A, but congregants were invited to email questions to our treasurer, Mark Ross, which were then addressed in two videos sent to the congregation.
 - The budget presented assumes that Congregation Or Chadash will remain an independent organization. In the case of a merger, a combined finance committee will draft a budget for the new entity.
 - The budget was approved by the congregation.
8. Results of the Vote on Clergy Contact Renewal Dr. Elaine Jones, President
- In keeping with our Bylaws, the congregation was asked to vote on 3-year contracts for both Rabbi Louchheim and Cantor Cohen.
 - These contracts are with Congregation Or Chadash, but contain clauses that address the possibility of merger with Temple Emanu-El. In the case of merger, new contracts will be negotiated by the combined congregation.
 - Both contracts were approved by the congregation.

9. Presentation of the Ruach Award..... Dr. Elaine Jones, President
The annual Ruach Award was presented to Emily Joseph. The text of the recognition follows:
“The Hebrew word, Ruach means “wind,” “breath,” or “spirit.” The word’s first use is found in the Torah, appearing in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis: “The Spirit of God” [Ruach Elohim] was hovering over the waters.” In Genesis 6:17, Ruach is translated “breath of life.”

Often, when we refer to the Ruach Elohim, the “Spirit of God,” the connotation is one of divine inspiration. The rabbis attribute the Ruach Elohim to a person who has insight into the future and the will of God. The term Ruach is also used with our word for holiness. Ruach Ha’Kodesh is attained by those saintly among us who are humble, and who desire to offer themselves in word and deed to God. Finally, when acting in this manner, the person in possession of this spirit does so with ultimate joy and no desire of reward.

It is for this reason that the Ruach Award is given to a person in the congregation who exemplifies this spirit. Emily Joseph, at age 31, is the youngest recipient ever of the Ruach Award. And yet, she already has a record of selfless, devoted service spanning 22 years.

Emily has been part of Congregation Or Chadash since August 1997 when she was just 9 years old and her parents enrolled her in our Religious School. Emily went on to celebrate her Bat Mitzvah at Or Chadash, she served as a Madricha in our Religious School, and she completed her confirmation with us.

Without missing a step, Emily continued serving Or Chadash once she returned from college. The first committee she joined was the Planning Committee for Rabbi’s 25th

Anniversary in the Rabbinate. She began serving on the Ritual Committee at age 23 and joined the Board of Directors at age 25. She was a Director on our Board for six years, four of those years as a Secretary to the Board, working endless hours - evenings, weekends as well, to ensure accurate records, timely notices and the smooth functioning of our Board of Directors. And if that wasn't enough, Emily also participated in two rounds of Bylaws Revisions and continues serving on our Ritual Committee, co-chairing the subcommittee on High Holy Days. She has noted that her least favorite task has been taking minutes at the annual meetings!

Emily is a role model of Jewish values, measuring all decisions against Jewish ethics with compassion and integrity. The Board of Directors will miss Emily's steady voice, flawless memory and most excellent minutes for the Board of Directors. We are very grateful for the years of service she has already given us, and we anticipate that her leadership and service are really just beginning. We know she will find new avenues for serving the Jewish community and we look forward to watching "Our Emily" with great pride, in the coming years. For all these reasons, we are proud to offer the 2020 Ruach Award to Emily Joseph for outstanding leadership and service to our congregation.

We will present Emily with the actual award in person, at a later date, when we can be together at services again."

10. Benediction Cantor Janece E. Cohen

- We have faced much uncertainty this year, in both the pandemic and in considering the possibility of a merger. But we have also been reminded that in the face of uncertainty there can be amazing things, such as the work of our Caring Chavurah and the extra time we are all spending with our families. Abraham also faced uncertainty, leaving his whole life behind to trust in G-d. May we go from strength to strength as we enter the new together.
- Cantor Cohen sang L'chi Lach by Debbie Friedman

11. Adjournment Dr. Elaine Jones, President

- At 7:35 pm Emily Joseph moved for and Jim Liebeskind seconded the adjournment of the 25th Annual Meeting.