



October 17, 2008

Dear Fellow United Hebrew Members:

I am writing to follow up on Rabbi Kaplansky's announcement of his retirement as Senior Rabbi as of June 30, 2010. We wish Rabbi Kaplansky well as he moves toward the next stage of his life and as we make our plans to honor his remarkable service to our congregation. Meanwhile, we need to proceed quickly on the process for finding his replacement.

To that end, the Temple leadership has been planning for this transition for some time. A Search Committee, representing a cross-section of our entire membership, will be formed in the next few days. The Search Committee will be chaired by Paul Flotken. Paul is well-acquainted with transitions in Jewish institutions. He chaired our Building Committee when we built our current home and was our President when we moved from Skinker Blvd. He also recently co-chaired the effort of the Central Agency for Jewish Education to find a new Executive Director. Among other activities in the Jewish community, he is a member of the Board of Overseers of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Jewish Federation Board of Trustees. We have no member more qualified to spearhead our search effort.

Our search process will be governed by procedures set forth by the Rabbinical Placement Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). We have been in contact with both the CCAR and URJ to obtain their advice on how best to conduct our search.

We will begin the process by engaging in a period of reflection, self-evaluation and future planning. We will be engaging in conversations with many of our members to learn what is important to them about our congregation, what Rabbinic qualities they most value and what connects them to the congregation. If you are contacted to take part in one of those discussions, I hope you will agree to do so.

We will then submit a detailed application to the Rabbinic Placement Commission and begin the process of interviewing prospective spiritual leaders. I will keep you informed as our effort continues. I hope to be able to announce our new Senior Rabbi by year-end 2009.

Under any circumstance there is no more important responsibility in the life of a synagogue than choosing a Senior Rabbi, but that responsibility is even greater for our congregation because we have been faced with that task only once a generation. Our next Senior Rabbi will be just our fifth in 130 years. Our forebears obviously made their decisions wisely, and this generation of leadership is determined to do so as well.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard S. Cornfeld". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard S. Cornfeld
President, United Hebrew Congregation