

Welcome from Gregg Fox, Ohav Shalom President

Shabbat Shalom,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you who were able to attend our January Congregational Meeting. I hope that we were able to share and convey to you how much we are doing here at Ohav and how much your connections and support means to us. I thought that it would be nice to share my opening introductory speech with everyone, in case you weren't able to attend, as I think that it bears repeating.

"Good evening and thank you for coming to our January Congregational Meeting. This has been a real whirlwind, these past almost 2 years. We have all dealt with a lot and there has always been a real air of uncertainty to everything. Though we have and will continue to make it through and come out on the other side. I wanted to start with some well-deserved thank yous. Thank you to **Nancy, Pete, Tom, Cecelia, and Michelle** for all their hard and never-ending work with keeping Ohav open and safe for us. Until you are in my position, you can't truly understand how much goes into running Ohav and how much love and care this team has for Ohav. It is a small team, but they are Super Bowl caliber. Thank you also to Sheryl for her amazing leadership with our wonderful Early Childhood program. Next, I want to thank Judy for her past 5 years of service as our President, continued work as Programming Chair, and all her counsel and guidance for me taking the next step as your President, I could not have done this or felt comfortable enough to want to take this step without her, so thank you!!!! I would next like to thank your lay leadership, The Board of Trustees and Officers, for all their time and leadership with helping us continue to remain the Ohav that we are. Second to last, I want to thank all the Committee Chairs and their Committees, from the High Holy Days and Religious Life to Youth to Programming to Safety and Security to Return to Worship...Your work has and continues to be vital to the operations of Ohav. Committee work is what sustains Ohav and if you are not involved in a committee or 2, I implore you to get involved and help us bring Ohav into the future. Finally, and the largest thank you goes to all our members, their families, and the greater "Ohav" community...thank you for sticking with us, for staying connected, for your patience and understanding, and for your generosity.

To finish, I would like to share our solidarity with our brothers and sisters at Temple Beth Israel in Texas. We hope and wish for quick healing, both emotional and spiritual, and are so thankful that there was no loss of life or injuries for any of their Congregation. You will hear more about this later, but we are continuing to review and keep the security of the building at the forefront of all discussions. We have worked hard to secure the building, but we now need all your help with being as aware as possible and comfortable as possible in an emergency. It is unfortunate that we must talk about this, but we must be aware of the reality we live in and do our part. The whole "**we're all in this together**" statement continues to ring strong, but now has multiple connections, and is just as important today as it was 12 months ago.

Thank you for your commitment, connection, and support of Ohav Shalom!