



THE KARAITE JEWS OF AMERICA

Congregation B'nai Israel

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www.karaites.org

ACTING RAVS

Joseph Moussa
Joe Pessah,
Emeritus

September 14, 2017

To: Every Member of our KJA Family

OFFICERS

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David Ovdia

VICE PRESIDENT

Amin Pessah

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2010 - '14

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2005 - '10

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1998 - '05

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1994 - '98

Joseph Moussa

1990 - '94

Joseph Abel

1986 - '90

Jacob Masliah

1982 - '86

L'Shanah Tovah!

As we approach the upcoming High Holidays I am writing to share with our members throughout the United States and beyond, my personal greetings and best wishes for a happy and healthy new year. In doing so, I also want to reflect upon the special significance the phrase L'Shanah Tovah has for us this year – for the phrase, commonly translated as “Happy New Year” has more profound meanings.

The Hebrew word שנה not only translates in English to mean “year” it can also mean “review or repeat” and, most interestingly, “change”. And this juxtaposition of interpretations perfectly reflects this moment of transition in which we find ourselves as we enter the New Year 5778.

5777 was an extraordinarily fruitful year for us. With the contributions and hard work of many we conducted an aggressive fundraising campaign, managed a turbo charged building effort to renovate our Synagogue B'nai Israel and expand it through the addition of a new social hall, and we laid the groundwork to establish the national Karaite Jewish Cultural Center.

Now that we are poised to complete Phase One of the Foundation for the Future Campaign and re-open B'nai Israel this fall, the KJA Board is ready to move forward to Phase Two. With the continuing and dedicated support of the Board, Shawn Lichaa, and others, we will implement a robust vision of enhanced cultural and social programming as well as educational initiatives through the Cultural Center. It will take time, the continuing commitment of many members, and ongoing fundraising to fully establish and sustain the vision for the Cultural Center. But the support we have received thus far provides nothing less than a transformative mandate for our continued work to ensure sustainability and to fully realize the potential of the seeds we planted this year.

When I wrote to you one year ago as we launched our Campaign on September 15, 2016, I said that our overarching objective was to “honor our proud heritage as we look to the future”. **And how does that relate to the various translations of the word Shanah? As we “review or repeat”, we commit to maintaining and honoring our traditions, and as we “change”, we commit to evolving and to being responsive to the next generations.**

So, in the coming months, our goals are to:

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- Test-drive new educational activities focused on young people, fully engaging their families in the development of programs geared to engaging them.
- Continue to more fully develop a scenario of enhanced programming for Karaite Jewish community members of all ages, and for the Jewish community at large.
- Design the funding models required to implement expanded activities, through endowment, grants, gifts, bequests, and income.
- Put in place the policies and procedures that will allow us to operate our expanded facility with efficiency and with attention to the needs of a growing and evolving community.
- Continue to raise funds from our community and elsewhere toward our new Phase Two goal to be established in the near future.
- Engage our community and many more volunteers in order to implement our plans.

We look forward to celebrating our accomplishments of this year and our potential for the future, when we re-consecrate our sanctuary and re-open our new and improved building later this fall. Stay tuned for updates and invitations to the events that will be scheduled before the end of the calendar year. In the meantime, we hope to see many of you at our Yom Teruah (Rosh Hashanah) and Yom Kippur services scheduled at Spinnaker Cove Recreation Hall in Foster City. Full details about the High Holiday services may be found in the regular e-newsletters mailed to all.

In closing, I renew the pledge made by our Board of Directors at the start of our Campaign: to sustain our congregation as a lively place of community and worship, as a symbol of our heritage, and as a link from our past to our future. In doing so, we will continue to “review”, “repeat” and “change” as circumstances demand.

We are proud of what we have already accomplished toward achieving our goals, and we prepare for the New Year with hope for an even brighter future. Don't hesitate to contact me at davidovadia62@gmail.com if you would like to discuss ways to get more involved in support of our initiatives in the days ahead. The High Holidays present an excellent opportunity to make or renew your commitment to our cause. We thank each of you who has already supported our efforts, and we wish every member of our community a happy and healthy New Year 5778.

Shalom and Regards,



David Ovadia
President, KJA Board of Directors