



## FROM RABBI GORDON TUCKER

6 Nisan 5770

Dear Temple Israel Center Friends,

Among the many pleasures that come along with being the spiritual leader of a community as vibrant as this one is being able to combine celebrations with deep and sincere feelings of thanksgiving. We celebrate tonight our participation in another wonderful year in the life of this community, a year in which we have had the extraordinarily unique gifts that Rabbi Tamar and her family have brought to us, and in which we look forward to welcoming a new rabbi who will partner with all of us in the years ahead.

And as for thanksgiving? What a venerable group of honorees we are blessed with this evening! Dottie Roer is one of the very first people I met in this community 16 years ago, and I quickly learned this about her: behind her pointed (and sometimes hilarious) running commentary on community and world events is a constant and loving concern for rightness and goodness, a concern whose "worth is far above that of rubies". It is a badge of honor to any community to be loved and cared for by one such as Dottie, and we recall tonight the matching love and care that also came to us from Ed, of blessed memory. Jonathan Flaxer is a friend, a study partner, a model of integrity at home and at work, a lover of ritual, and a faithful and patient servant of the collective good. His endearing humility -- itself a foundational value in our tradition -- should never eclipse for anyone his prodigious skills and intellect, which are always deployed in perfect accord with his good heart. And Gail Wiesenfeld: what aspect of Jewish education has she not thought deeply about and devotedly promoted in her home and community? What a pleasure it was for many years to engage with her mind and heart at meetings of our Executive Committee, and to witness her tireless dedication of her time, energy, and sophistication to our schools and their students.

A very special tribute goes this evening to Alta Eisenpress, who has with great love furthered the cause of Talmud Torah --the study of Torah in its broadest meaning -- in this community for so many years. Our library earns "oohs and aahs" whenever anyone comes into it, but its real status flows from how much it is used. And that is directly attributable to the unfailing helpfulness and infectious love of scholarship that Alta exudes. We salute her, and remember her beloved partner Harry, of blessed memory, as well.

We are all truly fortunate to have such friends, but none more than I.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Gordon Tucker