

Shanah Tovah! My name is Josh Basseches and this year I have the privilege to serve as President of Temple Emunah's chapter of the United Synagogue Youth (USY).

USY is an incredible social network which is unique in that it takes Conservative Jewish teens from all across this country (and Canada as well) and unites them around their common Jewish faith while respecting their varying Jewish identities. Combining strong Israel and educational components, USY also strives to create the ideal setting for Jewish teens to socialize. Lifelong friendships are created and lives are forever changed by the powerful religious, spiritual, social, and cultural experiences that USY conventions and gatherings are able to provide. I, personally, know many of my closest friends through USY. Countless other teenagers whom I have talked to feel similarly.

I strongly encourage teens in our community who are not yet members of USY to join. I also encourage the majority of our teens who are already members of USY to become active participants. Whether this means getting involved in USY sports, attending more chapter events, taking part in our excellent teen services right here at Temple Emunah, or—perhaps the quickest way to make Jewish friends from all over—attending regional/international events and conventions, you will benefit from a friendly USY community.

Temple Emunah's chapter is part of New England Regional United Synagogue Youth (NERUSY). At the regional and international levels, chapters are evaluated in a wide range of ways. Naturally, my goal is for Temple Emunah's chapter to achieve excellence in as many areas as possible, with the ultimate goal being awarded "Chapter of the Year" at NERUSY's Spring Convention. The more active participants we have, the easier this goal will be.

It is my hope to work with all of our members in order to achieve a common goal: be the best we can be. I welcome input from anyone who is willing to offer it. I plan to hold open board meetings at least once every month or two. At these meetings, any member is invited to join me and our Executive Board to offer their input and assume a leadership role in our chapter.

If you have any questions regarding USY, Jr. USY, or Kadima, feel free to contact the appropriate staff member, all of whom work extremely hard to ensure the success of youth programming at Temple Emunah:

Jodie Parnes, Senior USY advisor
Shoshana Jacob, Junior USY advisor
Adrienne Winton, Kadima advisor

In addition, if you would like a teen's perspective, I, or any other board member would be happy to answer your questions and tell you more about USY. You can contact me anytime via email at jbasseches@rcn.com.

Shanah Tovah U'Metukah. A Good and Sweet New Year.