

What Temple Emunah means to me By Doreen Grossman

Prior to joining Temple Emunah, my husband and I would go to Temple Emanuel in Newton for High Holiday services with our daughters. It was getting a bit far for us so we decided to look for a synagogue closer to home. Also, my oldest daughter was old enough to attend religious school.

My husband and I joined in the fall of 1993 so that our daughters could go to religious School. The following were the only requirements for us:

- The temple needed to be close to my home-Emunah was only 3.5 miles away
- It needed to be Conservative
- It had to have a religious School

Back then I didn't call and ask questions about the temple. There was no internet back then to find out specific information and it met my requirements so it was all good back then and has become even better now.

I recall our meeting with Serene Victor; she asked if I had specific reasons for joining Emunah. My only answers were "it was close to home" and "I wanted a Conservative shul". I was nervous that I wouldn't be accepted as a member for some unknown reasons. Would they be upset that I had a sister who married out of the religion and a brother who converted to Christianity and attended Jews for Jesus meetings and parents who didn't know much about the religion they grew up with?? We were accepted as members of course. Now that I look back on it, why would Emunah not accept me as a member?

I didn't think that I would become involved on different committees at temple but I was on the:

- Green committee a few years ago
- Religious school committee up until my youngest went to Prozdor 13 years ago
- Keruv committee- joined years ago and am still doing
- Disability Inclusion committee- joined a few years ago and am still doing
- And was the manager for the Kosher Meat coop for a few years

I am going to co-chair the Keruv committee with Lori Schnecher this year. In the past I organized the Mischloach Manot fundraiser for the religious school committee for a few years until my youngest daughter went to Prozdor and I left the committee. I am so happy that I chose to become so involved at temple; this makes my Jewish identity more meaningful.

Emunah has awakened my sense of social justice and my commitment to Judaism. I attended the very first Meah class established here at Emunah and had my adult Bat Mitzvah in May 2009. The Meah class served as a substitute for the religious school

education I did not have because according to my mother, “girls don’t have a Bat Mitzvah” because Bat Mitzvahs did not happen at the Conservative synagogue I grew up attending in Revere.

Emunah has provided me to go to Israel twice. The very first time I ever went was in 2006 and then again in 2017. I was surrounded by what felt like a 2nd family to me both times. Being in Israel was an amazing experience to see the sights I’ve only read about prior to visiting. Israel is like a home away from home.

In addition, I love the fact that Emunah is inclusive to people who are LGBTQ, those with disabilities and interfaith families as well people of color. It is important to me that we have a diverse community and don’t push people away from becoming members. I would not be a member who would exclude people based on race, sexual orientation and etc.

Emunah is a 2nd family to me. It is wonderful to know people for so many years. I also like the intergenerational aspect of knowing both young and older people than me.

I am so happy that Temple Emunah has made such a significant impact on my oldest daughter that she also became a member in 2018.

I am so thankful in having this synagogue and its community in my life. I look forward to having many more years of being an active member.