

Jewish + Warm + Relevant= *Jewishly Warm and Relevant*

Being Jewish, being warm, and being relevant, are all interrelated. All three qualities are what Temple Beth David is about, and that's why our temple is *Jewishly Warm and Relevant*. It is inevitable that I say that many times a day, that I teach that several times a week, and that I hear that on countless occasions. I guess that's why our congregation has come to know this as our brand, our moto, our ethos, and, well, that's just us.

Friday afternoons at TBD are a fine example of this reflection. Children, as young as two years of age, together with children as old as fourteen years, and all ages in between, all gather to prepare for Shabbat together. That's Jewish, that's warm, and that's relevant.

Our children prepare the Shabbat meal for the temple's congregation, and for themselves. Kudos. Kudos because where traditionally adults cook for children, at TBD, the roles flip. Our children not only cook, but also set the table. *Lehavdil ben kodesh lechol*, this is no ordinary table, but a Shabbat table, along with its Jewishly warm and relevant rituals.

The sense of accomplishment continues on TBD's Friday afternoons, when our children learn, from our Rabbi, and other professionals, about peers from around the world who may not benefit from a Jewishly Warm and Relevant Shabbat experience because they are not as fortunate as we are. We thus provide food for the hungry before we ourselves eat, we prepare *Mishlochei Manot* for the poor before indulging in our *oneg*, and we plant succulents in plant pots to take to the seniors who may not be as physically or emotionally stable as our youth. That's Jewish. That's warm, and that's relevant.

Once our congregation has chanted *Birkat HaMazon* for appreciation of Shabbat dinner, it is again the children who take the lead. They lead our congregation into the holy sanctuary. It is them who stand on the *bima*, and begin *kabbalat shabbat* by lighting the candles. Again, where traditionally adults (enforce?) their young children to come to temple, here, our children proceed into the sanctuary, with adults following in tow. The conventional roles, yet again, flip.

It is *Jewish* to prepare a Shabbat meal, to set a Shabbat table, to light the candles, and to bless over our rituals to the guidance of our Rabbi. It is *warm* to think about others, like the hungry and elderly who are not as fortunate as us. It is *relevant* to teach children to enter a synagogue, to lead a service, and to form friendships between the youngest and oldest of our youth. That, and more, is *Jewishly Warm and Relevant*, and that, and more, is Temple Beth David.

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