

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On a very cold and wintry day in January while the snow was falling I was staying warm inside my home and looking at various things on the web. I found this story that is basically about fundraising.

How many of you remember the popular comedian Flip Wilson in the 60's? Flip Wilson was a frequent guest on Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In and many television talk shows. His humor avoided political issues during a very tumultuous time in our nation's history. A few years later he had his own variety show on television which quickly shot up to number 1. His most well-known character was Geraldine. Her trademark quips - "The devil made me do it" and "What you see is what you get" - became national catch phrases. Another of his famous characters was Reverend Leroy of the Church of What's Happening Now. Fifty years later the following is the story he told about the Reverend exactly as he told it.

The Reverend opened the service by passing the plate. The plate shot around the room, came back, nothing in it. Reverend said, "Y'all there's nothing in the plate". He said, "I lost money coming down here. So I'm gonna send the plate back out there again and give y'all a chance to clean this up." The plate shot around the room, came back, nothing again. Reverend said, "Now brothers and sisters we can't make it like this. So now I'm sure that everybody here wants this church to progress. If this church is to progress, first it has to crawl. This church has got to crawl." And the congregation yelled, "Let it crawl Rev, let it crawl." Rev said, "And after this church has crawled it's got to stand up and walk." And the members yelled, "Make it walk Rev, make it walk." Rev said, "And after this church has walked it's got to run. This church has got to run." And the members yelled, "Make it run Rev, make it run." Rev said, "For this church to run its goin to take money." And the members yelled, "Let it crawl Rev, let it crawl."

There is much truth to this humorous anecdote. We in the Jewish community must support Jewish causes. It is no secret that Jews are contributing to secular organizations in unequalled numbers such as the arts, health care related charities and the American Red Cross. This is acceptable only if these same Jews are contributing to Jewish causes. It is our fundamental obligation to contribute to our Jewish Federation, to buy Israel Bonds and most importantly to support our beloved Temple B'nai Israel. For it is here, under this roof that we pray together, help each other in times of need and form friendships that last a lifetime. We celebrate both the High Holidays and the minor Holidays together. We are truly a Temple Family.

Synagogues are the glue that holds a community together. Over the past few months we have hosted a Chanukah dinner, a Steeler's party and a movie, and will soon be celebrating Purim. We are enjoying the Stock Game all the way through to its culmination. In fact, YOU may be the winner of the \$1000 prize! Join us for our annual Pasta Dinner on March 11 when the winners will be announced. As you can see we can fill your social needs as well as your spiritual needs. We are here for you.

So when Reverend Leroy talks about passing the plate which turns up empty let's show him that we at Temple B'nai Israel can indeed fill the plate. You have been quite generous in the past, contributing to each and every request. I wish all of you the strength and prosperity to continue to be as generous as possible so that we will remain secure and here to stay. Thank you for understanding the importance of Temple B'nai Israel and your role in keeping us strong.

Kol Tov,

Janice