

Hineni Forward

It was such a delight to gather with so many of you during the High Holiday season: to experience the power of a full sanctuary and social hall on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, to have many hands build the TBI Sukkah (thanks, Brotherhood!) and to dance with scores of people on Simchat Torah.

In the joy of finally gathering in person again, it can be easy to forget those who cannot join us: suffering long-COVID or immune-compromised, stuck at home due to a variety of obligations or challenges. Not all of our community is able to be with us in person, and in fact, some of us are never able to gather in person. And even though it sometimes feels like double the work to simultaneously create community virtually and in person, nothing could be more important.

So how do we remain a community that is open and inviting virtually as well as in person? How do we say *Hineni* (I'm here!) to those possibilities that call to us?

This can mean volunteering: For those who can come in person, can you volunteer to help usher at TBI events, to provide onegs for services, or train to run the livestream for our services and events? (Please contact John in the office if you'd like to volunteer to do any of these things!) Would you like to help staff the gift shop on Sunday mornings? If you're a childless adult, would you like to volunteer with Talmud Torah?

If you are not comfortable or able to come to in person events, would you like to volunteer to help proofread the newsletter (please email Jody in the office), or to make or deliver meals to people during hard times? (Please contact Bev Behrman to join the Tzedakah v'Chesed email list).

If a more individual activity sounds more comfortable, would you consider assisting the Library Committee in organizing and cataloging our collection of books for a grand reopening? Jacob Griffin would appreciate the assistance.

Going forward, each newsletter will contain a section, "Can you say 'hineni'?" highlighting the volunteer opportunities of the season.

But "Hineni" is not just about what you give. It is, as I mentioned on Yom Kippur, also about remembering that this community is here for you, and you don't need to give any particular amount of time or money in order to "deserve" being nourished by community. In fact, just by showing up and connecting with each other, whether virtually in an online class, or in person in the building, you build our community.