

## A trip to Israel is always in order!

The last several weeks have proven that just because we are an “old” congregation does not mean we cannot be an active and vibrant congregation. Thanks to a number of events in close proximity to one another, our services have been busier than usual, some old time members as well as former members have returned to visit and possibly resume some level of activity with our congregation. I think that is exciting news.

Remarkably, there is even more good news. Thanks to a request from some members, we are about to undertake a challenge that I at one time thought was not a possibility for a congregation of our size and demography. I am speaking about a trip to Israel. Several members have expressed an enthusiastic interest in participating and it is very likely that we can put together the requisite number of participants to plan an interesting and appropriate trip to Israel.

The work has just begun but realistically, we should plan for a time frame of late April to early May of this year. Essentially, that will get us to Israel when the weather will be best, not too hot in the Negev and not too cold (in Jerusalem). I was surprised to find that some members of our congregation have never been to Israel and there are many good reasons to go now.

The first reason to go is because if you have never been there you are missing out on one of the most exciting, most emotional and personally rewarding experiences you could possibly have. If you have been there only once there is much to still see and the same is true if you have been there even several times. Second, Israel needs our support. What better and more appropriate place is there to spend our dollars than in Israel? There are others, but do you really need more?

Because it is likely that our trip will be made up of one similar age group we can plan activities, tours and trips that will be scheduled to make sure that we do not wear ourselves out. Taking a packaged tour with a larger group could mean a very hectic schedule that some more mature people might not be able to keep up with. Thus we can make the trip worthwhile and enjoyable without becoming too physically draining.

We are already half way to the necessary number of participants that would enable us to hire a private guide and large passenger van or small bus. If you have an interest in participating, please call the office and let Carla know. Or, call me on my cell at 973-449-9117. In the meantime, I will be busy checking with travel and tour operators and people in Israel to make sure that we can arrange for a quality tour at a reasonable price. As soon as I have more information as to a precise date selection, cost and possible itinerary I will be back with that info. Hopefully, we can put together a small committee to work with me on this project.