

February 16, 2018

Dear BQLI Region Friend,

Judy Garland, as Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz, said, “There’s no place like home.” When you’ve had an exhausting or stressful day or work demands have kept you away, it is true that there is no better place to be. For over thirty years, I’ve worked mindfully and lovingly to make my home our family’s sanctuary, a comforting, joyful, and safe space.

This week’s parashah, Terumah, is about building a sanctuary, a home for God. It is about creating a holy place, a meeting point, between the divine and the human. In Terumah, God’s home is beautiful, made with treasured materials of gold, precious stones and wood. This parashah highlights the fact that the Israelite people donated not only their services, but also their most prized possessions to build the Tabernacle. The construction of the *Mishkan* necessitated a focus on collective, rather than individual action. It taught us, the Jewish people, the lasting lesson of the importance of volunteerism. The values of *tzedakah* (charity) and *gemilut hasidim* (acts of lovingkindness) combined to make volunteerism the communal culture.

The Sisterhoods of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism continue this ethos today. Sisterhoods are attentive to the needs of their synagogues; Sisterhoods are heedful of the hardships in their communities; And, Sisterhood members know the value of a well-established Jewish home. Together we strive to meet these needs through meaningful and engaging programming, volunteering, and generous donations.

So, the next time you feel the need to escape the daily grind, click your heels together three times...maybe you’ll find yourself in the comfort of your own home, maybe you’ll find yourself in your shul’s sanctuary. Either way, God will be there.

B’Shalom,
Grace