

The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
By Rabbi Michael Lotker

If you look at the last page of *the Megillah*, you will see a number of Temple funds to which you can donate. One of them, the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, is an important vehicle that I use frequently. A number of people have asked me to explain what this fund is and how it is used.

As the name implies, the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund is a source of funds that I use to accomplish the goals of our Temple. Even though it is called "Discretionary," it doesn't mean that I have complete freedom to spend these precious funds; they must be used for a valid charitable purpose in connection with the religious role of Temple Ner Ami.

In the years covered by my Quicken Program (2003 to present), more than \$60,000 have been donated to the fund. Uses of these funds have been extremely varied. A large fraction has been donated back to the Temple to meet specific needs. These include specific equipment items (furniture, computers, the sound system, software, new bookcases for the library, etc.), services (guest speakers, moving expenses, Israeli dancing instructors), and all kinds of odds and ends (plastic shofars for our kids on Rosh Hashanah, food for class dinners, scholarships so our students can attend a wide variety of programs, fees for our families to visit the Museum of Tolerance, gifts for students, etc.).

The funds are also used to help specific individuals (both Temple members and members of our community) in times of emergency. Through this Fund, you have helped feed families, provide nights of shelter, transportation funds and more to a wide variety of people during difficult times. The funds are also used to support local agencies such as the Jewish Federation, Jewish Family Services, and others who, in turn, help our community. I also use these funds to buy educational materials such as the pamphlets in the lobby and books for the library, etc.

To ensure that the funds are use properly, I keep receipts for all expenditures and report to the Temple President annually regarding the sources and uses of the funds. Your generosity gives me and the Temple the flexibility to respond to a wide variety of needs quickly and efficiently. I hope you'll continue to be so generous.