

Abbreviated version of the article published in The Naples Press on September 15, 2023

Naples Jewish Congregation celebrates unique “warm, reform” Community.

September 15, 2023



Welcoming is a familiar word.

by Harriet Howard Heithaus

As Naples Jewish Congregation (NJC) prepares to celebrate its 25th year of life, The Naples Press commemorated the special occasion by publishing an article

highlighting its uniqueness, warmth and welcoming atmosphere.

The article remarks on the small size of the congregation vis a vis the large religious organizations that seem to prevail now. It should also be noted that the congregation has always kept affordable dues that adds to the inclusiveness that characterizes it.

Through a series of interviews, Heithaus fathoms the depth and breadth of the

NJC experience, now celebrating its silver anniversary. While the recurring theme seems to be the welcoming atmosphere, there is much more to the essence of the congregation. Charles Flum, current president, notes that NJC is referred to as “The small Congregation with the Big Heart.” Jane Galler, the cantorial soloist, recalls the sense of belonging and comfort that she felt nearly 20 years ago, when she first started her tenure at NJC.

NJC's Rabbi, Howard Herman, recalls starting as an interim Rabbi until he was hired as NJC's spiritual leader some six years ago. He progressively felt the uniqueness of the congregation and recently signed a five year contract. Rabbi Herman reflected how he is constantly impressed with the congregation's blend of a "caring personality and its thirst for spiritual learning."

Harriet interviewed some of the long-standing members, Marilyn and Barry Goldenberg, and Chuck Naumoff, who shared some of their enduring memories along with the pervasive spirit of support and consideration for one another.

The themes of love, mutual support and friendship, the article poses, extend to a commitment to social and civic responsibilities. Steve McCloskey proudly goes through the long list of activities, programs and projects that focus on the world around the NJC.

The article explains that NJC is an adult congregation that maintains a partnership with the Unitarian-Universalist Congregation where worshiping takes place on three Friday nights and one Saturday morning.

We, at NJC, are proud of 25 years of strong spirit and commitment and are grateful to the Naples Press and Ms. Heithaus for sharing with their readers.

For the full version of the article, refer to The Naples Press, September 15, 2023.

For more details on NJC, visit NaplesJewishcongregation.org

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