

**RABBI SION A. DAVID, D.D.**

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January 17, 1995

Mr. Zolen Lazer, President  
Tree of Life Congregation  
59 Gilmore Street  
Uniontown, PA 15401

Dear Zolen,

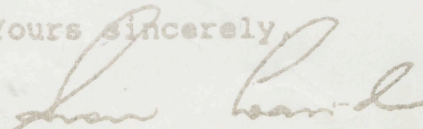
I would like to thank all members of the Search Committee for the opportunity to be interviewed for the position of Rabbi at the Tree of Life Congregation. After much consideration I have decided that I do not wish to pursue this position at the present time. As you know, I am a graduate of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, a Reform Seminary where I was ordained in 1966. My interpretation of Jewish Law and Practices is "liberal" or "reform." Even within Reform Judaism there are differences in philosophy and practices. Each Reform Rabbi is autonomous and is not required to believe or practice Judaism in accordance with a central rabbinic organization or authority.

I understand that the Boards of Tree of Life and Temple Israel have agreed in principle to a merger of their congregations. This is indeed a unique opportunity to develop a harmonious united Jewish Community in spite of differences in philosophy and ritual. Many congregations in Western Pennsylvania and in other parts of the country have successfully achieved a merger without giving up their belief systems. Compromises have been achieved either by having both traditional and reform services in the same congregation or developing a new, unique service that can meet the religious needs of all members. There are resources available from these congregations as well as the Pennsylvania Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

While I am not interested in the position at Tree of Life, I am very much interested in discussing the possibility of serving a merged congregation. In the interim, I will be pleased to offer my services for life cycle ceremonies for members of Tree of Life while negotiations for the merger are progressing.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Rabbi Sion A. David, D.D.

cc: J. Leonard Pariser  
Scott Pollock