

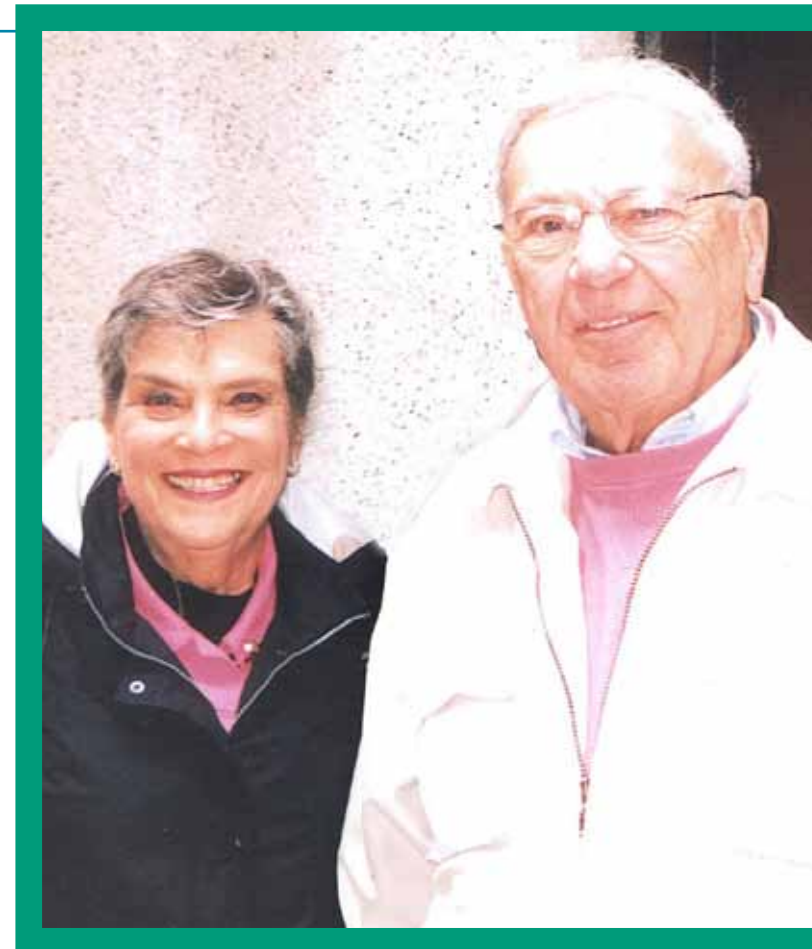
Libby and Bennett Pearl

It was in 1997 that Libby and I finally had time to sit back and reflect. I was newly retired from a demanding forty-two year career as a business pension and retirement planner. My career was all encompassing. We looked forward to the quiet time that retirement would bring...but all that changed with a phone call.

My good friends Bob Kramer and Norton Glass, past Presidents of Congregation Beth Israel, invited me to work on the Temple's newly formed Ezra Society. The purpose of this committee was to initiate an endowment fund for the Temple. That was thirteen years ago, and I have been actively engaged in this process ever since. This calling has become my "second career."

Retirement affords one the luxury of time to look back on life and take into account how one's past may impact the future. We raised our children David, Sherri and Elaine in West Hartford and joined the Temple forty-eight years ago. It is there that we celebrated life's wonderful simchas. Baby namings, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, confirmations and weddings represent our fondest, most meaningful memories. At seventy years of age, we shared the revelation that hard work and a career are just a means to an end. The true purpose of our life's journey is our drive to keep Congregation Beth Israel thriving so that future generations can experience the same joy at our beloved Temple.

We are very proud that Libby was the first congregant to purchase a life insurance policy naming the Temple as beneficiary. In addition, Libby and I created a legacy for the Temple through the Jewish Community Foundation.



This gift will live on in perpetuity and continues to grow as my children often honor today's simchas with additional donations to our fund.

On Friday nights, Libby and I attend Sabbath services at Beth Israel. Each Friday, we are moved when all the children in attendance share in the weekly "Nonviolent Challah Pull." We want to know that every child and their children will have the opportunity to grow within our beautiful Temple community. We will continue to work tirelessly for Congregation Beth Israel because we truly believe that all families deserve the right to participate in a supportive spiritual community regardless of their financial status. Our charitable donations, and those of others, will help to make this goal a reality. - January 2011

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