

# REDESIGN MOVES FORWARD

The Sanctuary Redesign Committee, chaired by Carole Bass and John Weiser, is working hard to deliver the congregation's top priorities for our main worship space.

Soaring costs are forcing a significant reduction in the scope of the project. The committee is focused on making the sanctuary more functional, comfortable, and accessible. Aesthetic improvements will have to be more modest than originally proposed.

Top priorities, as expressed in a 2021 congregational survey, include accessibility, more natural light, a flexible seating arrangement, better acoustics, improved climate control and air quality, and an environment conducive to BEKI's style of participatory, member-led communal prayer.

Along with our architect, the Sanctuary Redesign Committee is working with revised cost estimates furnished by several construction firms. We are squeezing the costs as hard as we can without sacrificing quality and durability of materials. We hope that the revised project will include:

- A new, fully accessible bimah and ark
- Movable chairs that can accommodate multiple seating arrangements
- Better light, both natural and artificial
- HVAC improvements
- Energy-efficient windows
- An improved sound system
- A new movable wall to replace the battered accordion

wall between the sanctuary and the social hall.

HVAC work is a high priority. The redesign originally called for two sets of improvements: refurbishing the existing equipment and adding ductwork for better air distribution. We are now planning to do the repair and

refurbishment before the rest of the sanctuary project.

Our architect, Michael Goldblum of Building Studio Architects, is working on a new design for the ark, bimah, and front of the sanctuary. After the committee approves a design, we will repeat last year's process of getting cost estimates from construction firms. When we have a revised design that fits within the budget, the committee will present it to the congregation in a Zoom meeting.

A fundraising team, which is separate from the Sanctuary Redesign Committee, previously announced donations and pledges of slightly over

\$600,000. The fundraising team paused its work during BEKI's annual appeal in the fall. In January, the fundraising team will renew its efforts to close the gap between the amount raised so far and the \$1.25 million budget.

The Sanctuary Redesign Committee will continue to update the congregation and synagogue leaders as plans move forward. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us at [sanctuaryredesign@beki.org](mailto:sanctuaryredesign@beki.org).



**The original BEKI bimah, decorated for an event in 1960.**