

Remarks at Joe Kennedy III's Yom Kippur Talk at Temple Emanuel

September 14, 2003

Intro:

Hello, I am Alan Leifer, a Temple Emanuel AIPAC member, and I am pleased to join Rabbi Wes Gardenswartz in presenting today's program.

3 Questions to ponder:

What mysterious force could possibly lead a Generation X Irish Catholic political "rock star" to develop a strong personal bond with a baby boomer grandson of poor Russian Jewish refugees?

What issue could be so important to have hundreds of people take a break from the solemn rituals of Yom Kippur to hear about current events?

Am I a terrible host if I don't even offer a glass of water to my guest?

These are the things I was thinking about in late August as the High Holidays were approaching.

Last year, Steve Grossman brought us the life story of Daniel Inouye, the great Japanese – American war hero from Hawaii who, after befriending a wounded Jewish GI during his extensive hospitalization, went on to become the main builder of the "Unshakable Bond" that exists between Israel and the United States.

In mid-year, Wes called on us to "go deep" and reflect on what we can personally do to bring life to the Blue Banner that hangs on Ward Street and announces to the world – "We Stand with Israel."

This Yom Kippur, we are asking each of you to become a "Blue Banner Upstander" by deepening our bonds with Israel through trips and advocacy.

Congressman Joe Kennedy and his wife Lauren just returned from an Israel trip organized by AIPAC's educational foundation. With 37 Congressional families, it

was the largest Congressional delegation ever to travel to Israel. For Joe and Lauren it was their first trip to Israel together and for most of the members it was their first Israel trip ever.

Joe has already made the decision that the U.S. - Israel alliance will play an important role in his legislative and public policy career. He is a member of both the House Foreign Affairs Committee and its Middle East subcommittee and the House Science and Technology Committee.

Joe has regularly invited me and my colleagues to share our ideas about the policy choices he faces in helping America navigate its way in the Middle East. He welcomes us in friendship and with an open heart and it has always been a pleasure to visit with him in the district or on Capitol Hill.

What is that mysterious force that I said binds us together? It is our shared appreciation of the amazing spiritual treasures of Jerusalem and the miracle of the modern State of Israel.

Thank you, Joe, for sharing your reflections with us today and for always being a friend to Israel and the Jewish people.

Q&A:

Prior to the holiday, congregants were invited to submit their questions in advance and I've asked members of the Temple Emanuel AIPAC Steering Committee to ask as many as time permits.

Our first question is being presented by Sheryl Kalis.

Ned Holstein

Sue Bergman

Barry Bergman

So here is my call to action: Join me and the 300 other Temple Emanuel AIPAC members in our determination in becoming "Blue Banner Upstanders."

The Temple is providing three premiere opportunities this coming year you should consider.

First, is the Temple Emanuel Community Trip to Israel being led by Rabbi Robinson this December.

Second, is the AIPAC Policy Conference Temple mission being led by Bob Kann in March.

Third, is the Temple Emanuel's Study Mission to the Hartman Institute in Jerusalem next June led by Rabbi Gardenswartz.

I've participated in all three and I found them life changing events.

Rabbi Gardenswartz