

**October 28, 2008**

**Dear Friends,**

*During one of the workshops I attended at the Union for Reform Judaism Northeast Council Biennial Convention in Albany (over this weekend), one of the presenters used this quote from 20th Century Jewish philosopher Martin Buber:*

*“Every person born into this world represents something new, something that never existed before, something original and unique. It is the duty of every person...to know and consider that he or she is unique in the world in his or her particular character and that there has never been anyone like him or her in the world, for if there had been someone, there would have been no need for him or her to be in the world. Every single person is a new thing in the world and is called upon to fulfill his particularity in this world.”*

*These words resonated with me for a number of reasons, especially because my rabbinic ordination service booklet included this quote. My classmates and I knew that this statement provided us with a lens through which we could view every person we would encounter in our rabbinate and in our daily life. Buber’s words echoed the rabbinic declaration from PIRKEI AVOT, “Despise no one and call nothing useless, for there is no person who doesn’t have his/her time and there is no thing that does not have its place.”*

*Every one of us can make an impact on and a difference in the world through what we say and do – and we need to remember that, in the same way, other people can make an impact on us. Regardless of whether we agree or disagree on major or minor issues of values and politics, and no matter what background and concerns we bring to the community table, we all have something to offer and something to learn from everyone. That is a humble lesson we can always acknowledge and from which we can grow as members of a congregation and the human family.*

*I look forward to seeing you soon!*

**-- L'shalom,  
Rabbi Larry K.**