

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Jen Boxerman, Communications Director

Temple Isaiah of Contra Costa County

Phone: (925) 283-8576 ext. 310

Email: jenb@temple-isaiah.org

URL: temple-isaiah.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Temple Isaiah of Contra Costa County Opposes the Boy Scouts of America's Discriminatory Policy

LAFAYETTE, CA – JANUARY 17, 2013 – The Board of Directors of Temple Isaiah of Contra Costa County voted unanimously Tuesday night to express its opposition to the Boy Scouts of America's decision to disqualify participants because of sexual orientation. "A superb candidate for Eagle Scout in our neighborhood (Moraga, CA) has recently been denied his due, solely on the ground that he openly affirms his homosexuality. Though we cannot change the Scouts' national policy, we can work hard within and outside Temple Isaiah's walls to create an awareness of the damaging consequences of such policies on all our youth and on our communities." – Rabbi Roberto Graetz, Temple Isaiah. The Board policy calls for a letter writing campaign to the local and national BSA councils, as well as encouraging Temple members and other community organizations to join in the effort to enact change through letters, financial pressure, postponing participation and supporting movements such as Scouts for Equality. The Temple Isaiah Board supports the clergy's current policy of not writing Eagle Scout recommendations or signing off on religious awards for the Boy Scouts until the BSA membership policy is changed. "This issue is far greater than that of this individual scout and his particular circumstances. We must act to assure that institutions in our community are open and accepting of all children and families without regard to age, gender, religion, race, or sexual orientation. This is the civil rights issue of our time. I hope we can work together to bring social justice to this minority group and open scouting to all children and families that might choose to participate." – Robert Goldberg, President, Temple Isaiah. "Ten years ago, the Reform [Jewish] movement, through its governing bodies and constituencies, issued a strong recommendation favoring full inclusion of gay Scouts and troop leaders, in contradiction of the BSA policy forbidding their participation. This recommendation is in keeping with the Union of Reform Judaism's policy that our congregations be welcoming and affirming of the sexuality of our members within monogamous, respectful, and loving relationships. Temple Isaiah is proud to be part of a consortium of congregations that warmly welcomes and affirms the sexual identity of all of its members. Together we can affirm as precious the value of every human being. Let us teach our children that the spaces, groups, and activities we create for them are safe ones, open to growth and exploration, free from bullying and/or discrimination." - Rabbi Roberto Graetz, Temple Isaiah.

For more information about Temple Isaiah's BSA Policy, visit temple-isaiah.org/about-us/bsa-policy/

Temple Isaiah of Contra Costa County is an inclusive community of over 900 families, established over sixty years ago and proud member of the Union for Reform Judaism. Temple Isaiah's mission is to embody, enhance and perpetuate our Jewish tradition by providing a welcoming spiritual home where the membership gathers to worship God, study Torah, engage in acts of Tikun Olam, participate in Jewish rituals and life cycle events, and experience the joy of being a part of a caring community.

#