

Temple Beth El Jewish Community Center *Community Covenant (brit)*

This Covenant of Members suggests ways for you to be involved, engaged, and connected to our temple community. Please use it as a guide when determining your own level of involvement and participation, perhaps seeking to stretch beyond your current level. It is set up according to the four main functions of synagogue life: to serve as a House of worship, a House of Study, a House of Community and a House of Social Justice. These pages are yours to keep as a reminder of the covenantal relationship between you and our temple community. (We will expand on this definition at the end of the document.) The Personal Covenant page is for your personal use to help you develop your commitments to this covenantal relationship. It is not intended to be returned to the Temple. **Your involvement in any or all of these Houses is welcomed and deeply appreciated, for that is what sustains the Temple.**

“And it is not with you alone that I make this sworn covenant: I make it with those who are standing here with us today before the Lord Adonai our G-d, and equally with all who are not here with us today.”

Deuteronomy 29: 13-14

A Sacred Partnership - A Covenant of Members

“If you do something that you enjoy or find meaningful, share it with the Temple community. Together, we can provide each other with ideas and community to strengthen our covenant with God and each other. **And** at a special Shabbat this year, we will especially honor all of our covenanted members.”

Quote from our Rabbinic Team

House of Worship – Beit Tefillah

“...to nurture our souls”

We, as members of the Temple family, will:

- ◆ Offer worship experiences that reflect the richness and diversity of Jewish practice
- ◆ Encourage families to observe home rituals relating to Shabbat, holidays and celebrations
- ◆ Create powerful Jewish memories for our children by providing meaningful and engaging experiences
- ◆ Provide knowledge and inspiration for members to live more Jewish lives
- ◆ Provide spiritual leadership

House of Community – Beit Kneset

“...to extend our embrace”

We, as members of the Temple family, will:

- ◆ Provide a variety of programming to engage the diverse meaningful journeys of our members
- ◆ Create a welcoming and nurturing experience for each member according to their history and tenure
- ◆ Encourage and empower members to take responsibility for their Jewish knowledge and experience
- ◆ Meet pastoral needs of the membership and offer spiritual emotional support
- ◆ Communicate regularly to the membership about all aspects of Temple life
- ◆ Help the leadership to create and nurture a vision for the Temple that motivates and inspires members to be involved
- ◆ Operate in a financially sound and effective manner, while embracing all members regardless of financial ability

House of Study – Beít Midrash

“...to challenge our minds”

We, as members of the Temple family, will:

- ◆ Help each other live Jewish lives
- ◆ Provide opportunities to expand Jewish literacy and observance
- ◆ Provide life-long learning opportunities
- ◆ Provide a link to other Reform congregations and to the Reform movement
- ◆ Provide a high quality education for our children from birth through adulthood

House of Social Justice – Beít Tikkun Olam

“...to compel our hearts”

We, as members of the Temple family, will:

- ◆ Care for others in our Temple by reaching out to welcome the stranger, visit the sick and comfort the bereaved
- ◆ Provide opportunities for involvement in acts of care and concern and social justice
- ◆ Teach about the centrality of social justice to Reform Judaism by connecting it to Torah and tradition
- ◆ Keep the congregation informed about local, national and global issues relating to social justice.

Why a covenant?

The concept of covenant (brit) is central to Judaism. It is a covenant that defines our relationship to G-d, Torah, and Israel. In such a covenantal relationship, each partner has responsibilities incumbent upon him or her. Just as G-d promised Abraham and Sarah land, progeny and protection, Abraham and Sarah promised to “go forth” from their native land, to have faith in G-d and to teach their children the ways of G-d. We continue to hold fast to this covenant today. The Ketubah is a covenant between committed partners and, while it may not be spoken of in these terms, a 13-year-old enters into a covenant between the community and the new Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

With this Covenant of Membership, we propose to look at Temple membership as a covenantal relationship. We, as a temple community, bear certain responsibilities to each and every one of our members, just as each individual member bears certain responsibilities to the larger temple community. We all have the opportunity and privilege to create our temple community as a place where we nourish our spirits, strengthen our ethics, and enrich our Jewish education.

We honor that members will participate in the synagogue in various ways at different times in their lives. We welcome all members and encourage each person to feel a part of the community in the way that they feel best suits their interests and needs. With this Covenant of Members, we commit to being part of and contributing to a temple community where all members’ spiritual, religious, and pastoral needs are met; where lasting and meaningful Jewish memories are made; where relationships are developed that support us as individuals, families and community; where our rich and abiding heritage is passed from generation to generation, and where social justice is upheld for all people.

Personal Covenant

Like my ancestors before me, I affirm my place in the Covenant of Members of our Temple Beth El community and congregation.

For the House of Worship, I will commit to enrich our community by _____

For the House of Study, I will commit to enrich our community by _____

For the House of Community, I will commit to enrich our community by _____

For the House of Social Justice, I will commit to enrich our community by _____

*This personal covenant is **not** intended to be returned to the Temple. It is for your personal use in developing the affirmations you decide to make in the four areas of Temple life. We encourage you to place them on your mirror, or refrigerator where you can revisit them often.*