



Beit Ahavah

The Reform Synagogue of Greater Northampton



Membership & Renewal ~ Community Partnership

2022-2023 ~ 5783

Shalom & Welcome!

www.beitahavah.org

Welcome to a new year ahead with Beit Ahavah, creating a radically progressive Jewish community to repair the world, with creativity, connections with each other, deep learning and transformation.

- This year we will celebrate with musical Shabbat services, uplifting and transformative High Holydays, holiday celebrations, life cycle events, Shabbat dinners and meals, adult learning, *tikkun olam* - repair of the world) and *tzedek tzedek* - pursuing social justice, healing and *chesed* - lovingkindness, wildly fun and meaningful family, youth and teen programming, creative B'nei Mitzvah, Havurot - small interest groups, being a Jewish presence in the Valley, and so much more.
- The pandemic reinforced for us how important community is, and that Beit Ahavah is thriving and growing as we come together, support, dream and reimagine Jewish community to face life's challenges and celebrate our joys, and make an impact on healing the world.
- We are a Reform congregation of compassionate seekers who together believe that renewal is possible, and we will be here for others and ourselves to grow and nourish the soul. We welcome and celebrate interfaith partners, LGBTQ+ families, Jews of Color, all spiritual backgrounds and people seeking Jewish community. We are thrilled to be in our fifteenth year with Rabbi Riqi Kosovske who continues to lead us and shine with her depth of caring, knowledge and creativity.
- As a Reform synagogue community, we are committed to inclusive and radical welcoming as a proud member of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), and we also affiliate with the ALEPH Jewish Renewal movement, and progressive and feminist Judaism. We often collaborate with others throughout the Pioneer Valley Jewish community, interfaith and social justice partners, and we uniquely share sacred space with Florence Congregational Church and the new Bombyx Center for Arts & Equity that will steward our building, and beyond.
- Welcome! **Thank you for being part of Beit Ahavah.**

L'shalom, peace,

Board of Directors 2021-22:

Anne Bussler, President
Peter Nabut, Vice President
Morris Lainer, Treasurer
Rachel Goldberg
Diane Kelly

Andy Morris-Friedman

Rabbi Riqi Kosovske

Incoming Board Members 2022-23:

Karen Bell
Rebecca Slitt



Member Contact Information

Adult(s) in the household	Email Address(es):



Names of other family members including children	Age/Grade (including if in college)

City, State, Zip: _____

Cell Phone(s): _____

Home Phone: _____

PREFERENCES:

-  To save earthly/financial resources, we send most communications electronically. If you do not have email or prefer important communication sent via U.S. mail, please check: ___ **I PREFER U.S. MAIL.**
- Beit Ahavah occasionally shares information with Jewish organizations that our congregation is part of, such as Jewish Federation of Western M, PJ Library (young families), NFTY-Northeast (teens), Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). May we share your information? ___ **YES** ___ **NO**
- Grandparents, parents or friends can receive invitations to Beit Ahavah events, and/or Beit Ahavah Highlights e-newsletter. **Please share names/emails:**
- _____
-  Beit Ahavah staff and members may take photos at community events (such as for school news, website, annual slide show, Beit Ahavah social media, etc.).
- ___ **Check if you DO NOT want photos of you to be included.**
- ___ **Check if you DO NOT want photos of your children to be included.**



Involvement & Engagement

Each person makes a difference! We are shaped by our community members' participation, connection and creativity. Volunteering is also a wonderful way to get to know and be part of the community. This can mean planning an event, assisting a family in need with a meal, reading Torah, mentoring a student, organizing a Havdalah gathering, serving on a committee, cleaning up with a crew after Shabbat services, welcoming newcomers on Zoom, delivering holiday goody bags, suggesting or organizing a speaker, or bringing your other passions, talents and interests.

I am interested in these opportunities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usher and greet during services or events | <input type="checkbox"/> Help out at youth and family events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help set up or clean up for services or events | <input type="checkbox"/> Help plan a holiday celebration or other event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Host an Oneg Shabbat after services | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan a fundraising event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join the High Holydays or Other Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Invite a friend with me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join or start a Havurah | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach youth or adults on the following topics: | |

Committees are a wonderful part of our community for connection, friendship and leadership. “Be a mensch, join a committee.” Please check below if interested:

- I am interested in or passionate about being involved with _____.
- Chesed/Lovingkindness** - Support people during challenges, simchahs or life changes (i.e. birth or adoption of a child, illness, loss).
- Education** - The YOFIE education committee stands for “Youth & Families Involved in Education” to strengthen creative programming for all youth ages and families.
- Membership** - Engage new and returning members, be an ambassador, reach out to newcomers, plan welcome events and foster growth.
- Prayer & Practice** - Work with the Rabbi on community ritual, services, religious practice, and spirituality.
- High Holydays** - Dreaming up another amazing High Holydays Experience for 2022/5783.
- Tzedek Tzedek/Social Justice** - Pressing justice issues and mitzvot, with projects for healing the world.
- Fundraising & Development** - Energetic approach to keeping our synagogue alive and thriving through philanthropy and healthy giving.
- Adult Programming** - Events and learning for adults to enrich intellectual, contemporary issues and cultural engagement.



Membership ~ Flexible Dues Commitment

“Im ein kemach, ein Torah” אין תורה, אם אין קמח, ~ If there is no flour, there is no Torah. (Pirkei Avot 3:21)

About our “flour”: Five years ago (in 2017), Beit Ahavah took an innovative leap of faith to change the old-school synagogue dues structure, by creating a fair share dues commitment system, with suggested ranges both to sustain and strengthen our congregation and to make membership possible for everyone, without having to go through an abatement process. We also did this because we believe that to give is a profoundly spiritual act! We hope everyone will feel this way.

If you are able to give the highest suggested amount or to give above the suggested range, that enables us to keep dues flexible. We rely on everyone’s enthusiastic commitment to give at the level you are able.

Renewing Members: My dues contribution last year was: _____. *Please consider increasing this amount for 2022-23.*

Category	Suggested Range
First Year (New Members)	\$900 - \$1800
Second Year, Returning Members and After	\$1200 - \$2200
Dual Membership (paying dues to another synagogue)	\$700 - \$1800
Student or Limited Income	\$36 - \$360

Beit Ahavah is committed to welcoming everyone regardless of finances. Please write in your amount below.

Membership Category _____ My 2022-2023 dues commitment will be \$ _____.

Additional Contributions:

BA General Fund	\$ _____
Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund	\$ _____
Klara Grape Memorial Music Fund	\$ _____
Madison Ruth Meade Young Education Fund	\$ _____
Tot Shabbat Fund	\$ _____
Leroy Seftel Adult Education Fund	\$ _____

Please designate contributions in memory/honor of/life cycle events to be acknowledged: _____

Total Financial Support \$ _____

_____ Full amount is enclosed via check. ([PayPal](#) is also an option.)*

_____ 50% enclosed via check; remainder will be due in equal payments Sep 15, Dec 15, and March 15.

_____ Automatic withdrawal authorization on file for 12 equal monthly transfers on or around the fifteen of the month (July 2022-June 2023). ([PayPal](#) is also an option.)

_____ Automatic withdrawal authorization for 10 equal monthly transfers on or around the fifteenth of the month (July 2022-April 2023).

Member Signature _____ Date _____

Please print your name _____

*You may also use our [Online Membership Form](#) or by check mailed to Beit Ahavah, 130 Pine Street, Florence, MA 01062.

Please consider adding 3% if you use PayPal to cover their fees. Thank you!



FAQ ~ Membership/Dues & Payment Information

Why did Beit Ahavah introduce a major and innovative change to the dues structure, back in 2017?

With thoughtful research and consideration, Beit Ahavah changed from a Fixed Share system to a Fair Share system. Instead of the synagogue Board determining your contribution ability based on the type of household or income you have (and members having to request an abatement when needed), the Board established a fair share system which determines what the synagogue needs to exist, with suggested dues, while asking you to determine your capability and means to support the synagogue's ability to exist and grow. If you cannot pay the higher end of the dues, we ask you to determine how much you can pay. You can pay monthly (like with automatic withdrawal for NPR or other charitable organizations), triennially or annually.

It has always been challenging for congregations to determine a dues structure that is fair, affordable and equitable while providing a solid financial base for the synagogue to operate and grow. **Expenses for dynamic and adapted programming during COVID-19 are actually greater than before the pandemic.** This new dues system is a statement to welcome everyone while providing complete transparency as to the synagogue's finances, which encourages members to make a dues commitment that reflects what is minimally needed to sustain and grow Beit Ahavah. The goal is that this system will result in increased financial support and a growth of membership.

How do I determine my dues commitment?

In Judaism, dues are considered both a gift of the heart ("*nadiv lev*") from each member as well as part of our communal responsibility ("*zedakah*"). Typically dues increase every year (or in this case, our suggested range), so please review your dues from last year if you are a renewing member, and consider the importance of an increase - and going beyond the range if you are able to. As expected, Beit Ahavah's basic expenses continue to increase, especially during COVID, and it is our wish to *strengthen* programming and support rather than have to decrease it! The dues ranges are based on a sense of *minimum* reasonable amount on the one hand and a figure that will contribute to Beit Ahavah's stability on the other. We will still need to do much additional fundraising beyond dues, as does every organization. *So if you are able to give at the top level or beyond the range, please designate that on the membership form or via the online membership form.* This will deeply help Beit Ahavah since not everyone is in a position to contribute at higher levels. However, every single dues amount is significant and appreciated!

How much money does Beit Ahavah need to meet our financial goals?

Projected expenses for the coming fiscal year 2022-23 total nearly \$180,000. Expenses include remuneration for our staff, Rabbi, teachers, specialists, office manager; professional services, space, insurance, technology, internet; programming, community events, supplies; High Holydays expenses, youth programs, life cycles, community outreach.

I might only attend a few events each year/I come all the time. Should this be a factor in my dues?

Think of dues as a way of supporting Beit Ahavah and progressive Judaism in all the value generated for the entire congregation, Jewish community, next generation, world and future. Fair share dues support the ongoing operating expenses needed all year round associated with making our synagogue, functions and our Rabbi available to all our congregants for joyous events (simchahs) as well as hard times, and committed to excellence despite being a small congregation. Especially during COVID-19, we are highly engaged and working particularly hard as Rabbi Riqi, Board members and lay leaders apply all of our creativity to these new situations to ensure support for community members and for our Beit Ahavah Jewish community to thrive.

Will my dues amount be kept confidential?

Of course. Financial information as well as any conversations will be confidential. Our treasurer Morris Lainer (morrislainer@icloud.com) is happy to speak with you.



2022-2023 Scrip Subscription - Sign up for Scrip!

Scrip is a cash card (like a prepaid credit card) used at **Stop & Shop for food or gas** or **River Valley Co-op**.

Beit Ahavah receives a 5% rebate from all Scrip sold! This adds up to a **significant** amount for Beit Ahavah if many people participate. Scrip is a great and easy way to provide additional financial support to Beit Ahavah without costing you any more than you already spend on groceries or gas. Scrip cards never expire, can be given as gifts, donated to those in need, or shared with family members.

Scrip is purchased on a monthly basis through a DIRECT WITHDRAWAL program, and the cards will be mailed to you by our member Ruth Barham. Please fill out the Direct Payment Authorization form below.

I _____, agree to the following terms for my purchasing of Scrip from Beit Ahavah:
(print name)

- For renewals:** Please continue my current Scrip subscription using my current payment method unless otherwise specified.

I agree to purchase scrip on a MONTHLY subscription basis from one or both of the following (please circle):

- Stop & Shop:**

\$100 \$200 \$300 \$400 \$500 \$600 \$700 \$800 \$900 \$1,000



- River Valley Co-op:**

\$100 \$200 \$300 \$400 \$500 \$600 \$700 \$800 \$900 \$1,000



The payment must be received by the 15th of the month, then new Scrip card(s) in the amount circled will be automatically sent to the address listed below, until Beit Ahavah has been notified of cancellation.

Cancellation requires 30 days notice. Direct Payment Authorization will be withdrawn on the 15th of each month.

I agree that once the Scrip subscription has been purchased, the cards cannot be returned unless there are extenuating circumstances, which have been discussed and agreed upon by the Beit Ahavah Board of Directors, that would allow me to remit my purchase and payment agreement. I agree that upon signing this document, I am bound by all statements herein.

Beit Ahavah will send by regular mail unless you **make arrangements** to pick up your monthly card at the office during regular office hours (Mon-Thurs, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. or call to make an appointment).

Purchaser Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address:

Street/P. O. Box

City

State

Zip Code



DIRECT PAYMENT/Bank Draft Authorization for DUES COMMITMENT and/or SCRIP CARDS

*Im ein kemach, ein Torah ... If there is no flour, there is no Torah.
- Pirkei Avot 3:21*

Direct Payment saves Beit Ahavah from paying credit card fees.

When you authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account, your payments will be made automatically on the specified day. Proof of payment will appear with your bank statement.

The authority you give to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization. If the amount of your payment changes, we will notify you at least 10 days before the payment date.

I authorize Beit Ahavah to initiate debit entries to my checking/savings account for the amounts listed on the dues and scrip forms. This authority will remain in effect until I cancel the preauthorized transfer, which requires **at least five (5) days written notice** to Beit Ahavah before the next transfer.

_____ (Name of Financial Institution) (Branch)

_____ (City) (State) (Zip Code)

_____ (Name As It Appears On Your Account - Please Print)

_____ (Signature) (Date)

Initial payment amount: \$ _____ Regular payment date: _____

Checking **Savings**

TRANSIT ROUTING NUMBER

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ABA

ACCOUNT NUMBER INFORMATION

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Please attach a voided check.

PLEASE RETAIN A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS

On _____ (date), I authorized Beit Ahavah to initiate electronic entries to my checking/savings account and have agreed to the terms listed on the authorization.

Initial payment amount: \$ _____ Regular payment date: _____

I may revoke my authorization by writing to the address above, providing at least 5 days notice prior to the next scheduled transfer.

