



Beit Ahavah

The Reform Synagogue of Greater Northampton

Partnership & Renewal ~ Community Packet 2024-2025 ~ 5785

Shalom and welcome to Beit Ahavah, where we strive to create progressive Jewish community with spirituality, connections, learning and Tikkun Olam while we “Rebuild the Mikdash,” making sacred community. We’re excited to strengthen this Partnership model as an evolving paradigm of being part and investing in our Jewish community and congregation. The transition from the word “Membership” to “Partnership” last year began with a simple premise: *Each is part of something greater than ourselves, and gives something of ourselves to enhance and enrich our exploration of Jewish values, life, traditions, and community.*

We hope, in our evolving “Partnership” model, we will grow together, heal the world, and nourish the soul.

- **This is a celebratory milestone year!** It is truly incredible to be entering our... **18th-Chai year with our rabbi, Rabbah Riqi Kosovske!** This is an exciting accomplishment and we look forward to all of us contributing to ways we can celebrate together and re-imagine our future. *L’chaim!* To Life.
- **Beit Ahavah was founded twenty-six years ago** as a progressive, Reform congregation in the Pioneer Valley foundationally committed to radical inclusion and welcoming. We celebrate all who seek Jewish community, including interfaith, LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC households. 26 is also a magnificent number: lucky 13x2, or double “Ahavah” (love) in Jewish numerology! 26 is also the numerology for the Ineffable Name of the Holy One. We aspire for this year to magnify love and nurturing in our quest to heal the world and make meaningful community.
- **Our theme has been “Rebuilding the Mikdash” or “Making Sacred Community.”** We look forward to a new year guided by another phrase from the prayerbook, “*L’taken Olam b’Malchut Shadai*, Healing the World through the Majesty of Nurture” with our creativity, joy, learning, renewing sacred vessels like the Ark and Solar Ner Tamid, dedicated leadership and voluntarism, as well as music, participatory Shabbat services and uplifting High Holydays, holiday celebrations, life cycles and B’nei Mitzvah, Shabbat dinners, adult learning, *tikkun olam* – repair of the world, *tzedeck tzedeck tirdof* – pursuing social justice, *chesed* – healing support and lovingkindness, and of course fun and meaningful family, youth, teen and multi-generational programming and more.
- **Beit Ahavah is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ).** We benefit from so many URJ resources and learning opportunities. We also draw inspiration through the **ALEPH Alliance for Jewish Renewal** and other streams of progressive, queer, feminist and egalitarian Judaism. We collaborate throughout the Pioneer Valley with Jewish, interfaith and social justice partners.
- **A unique opportunity to share and shape sacred space and collaborations in its beautiful renaissance:** We share a home with wonderful organizations at the Florence Congregational Church and to be part of the Bombyx Center for Arts & Equity, in this historic neighborhood along the Freedom and Women’s Suffrage Trail, and Sojourner Truth Memorial. We are excited to create Jewish community in this positive, supportive environment.

Thank you for being a Partner with Beit Ahavah!

B’ahavah, with love, u’l’shalom, in peace,

Rabbah Riqi Kosovske

Officers

Peter Nabut, President

Nick Orsini, Treasurer

Lisa Prolman, Secretary

Board of Directors

Martin Konowitch

Joan Kurtz

Andy Morris-Friedman, immediate past-President

Diane Scherrer

Rebecca Slitt

Claire Trivax





Contact Information

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

Names of other household members including children	Age/Grade (including if in college or young adult)

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 Massachusetts, PJ Library (young families), NFTY-Northeast (teens), Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). May we share your information (email address, phone number)? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
- ☐ Friends & Family: Grandparents, parents or friends who are not members can receive the Highlights newsletter, information and invitations to Beit Ahavah events. **Please share their names/emails:**

- ☐ Beit Ahavah staff and members sometimes take photos at events (i.e. for school, website, 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! Beit Ahavah is shaped by your participation, connection and creativity. Volunteering is 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 or greet during services or events
<input type="checkbox"/> Host or coordinate an Oneg Shabbat after services
<input type="checkbox"/> Be part of the High Holydays or other committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Join or start a Havurah special interest group
<input type="checkbox"/> Teach or offer a program to youth or adults on the following topics: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Help out at family or youth events
<input type="checkbox"/> Help plan a holiday celebration or other event
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan a fundraising event
<input type="checkbox"/> Invite a friend with me
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|---|--|

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

- ☐ **I am interested in, curious or passionate about:**

- ☐ **Chesed/Lovingkindness** – Offer support during life’s challenges, happy simchahs, illness and loss.
- ☐ **YOFIE Education** – Deepen our RUACH community school and Jewish opportunities for youth and families.
- ☐ **Engagement** – Engage new and returning partners, be an ambassador, plan welcome events, grow and have fun.
- ☐ **Prayer & Practice** – Inspire community ritual, services, religious practice, and spirituality.
- ☐ **High Holydays** – Dream up another amazing High Holydays Experience for the whole community.
- ☐ **Tzedek Tzedek/Social Justice** – Raising justice issues and mitzvot, with projects for healing the world.
- ☐ **Fundraising & Finance** – Energetic approach for our synagogue to stay alive and thrive through philanthropy and healthy giving.
- ☐ **Adult Programming** – Jewish learning and events for adults to deepen intellectual and cultural experience.
- ☐ **Board of Directors** – Be at the hub of our incredible wheel (you may serve on additional committees).



Partnership ~ Gift of the Heart Commitment

"Im ein kemach, ein Torah" אין קֶמַח, אין תּוֹרָה ~ If there is no flour, there is no Torah. (Pirkei Avot 3:21)

About our "flour" and our "Torah": In 2017, Beit Ahavah began an innovative leap of faith to change the old-school synagogue dues structure. We created a fair-share dues commitment system, with suggested ranges both to sustain and strengthen our congregation and to make partnership possible for everyone, without having to go through the abatement process. We do this also because we believe that to give is a profoundly spiritual act! We hope everyone will feel this way.

This year Beit Ahavah takes another innovative leap: The old term "Membership" conveyed a club – but we are a community. So we are renaming ourselves as "Partnership" – where everyone belongs.

If you are able to give the highest or above the Suggested Range, that enables us to keep "dues" flexible as a Gift of the Heart. **We optimistically rely on everyone's enthusiastic commitment to give at the level you are able.**

Renewing Partners: My dues contribution last year was: _____. *Please consider increasing for the upcoming year.*

Category	Suggested Range
First Year (New Partners)	\$1080- \$1980
Second Year, Returning Partners and After	\$1350 - \$2340
Multiple Affiliations (paying dues to another synagogue)	\$720 - \$1980
Student or Limited Income	\$54 - \$540

Beit Ahavah is committed to welcoming everyone equally regardless of finances. Please write in your Gift of the Heart amount.

My Partnership Category _____. **My 2023-2024 dues commitment of the heart will be \$**_____.

Additional Contributions:

BA General Fund	\$ _____
Rabbi's Discretionary Fund	\$ _____
Klara Grape Memorial Music Fund	\$ _____
Madison Ruth Meade Young Education Fund	\$ _____

Please designate if contributions in Memory/Honor of, to be acknowledged: _____.

Total Financial Support \$ _____

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

_____ **50% enclosed** via check ([PayPal](#) is also an option); remainder due in equal payments Sept. 14, Dec. 14, 2023, March 14, 2024.

_____ **Automatic withdrawal** authorization for 12 equal monthly transfers on or around the fourteenth of the month (July 2024-June 2025). ([PayPal](#) is also an option.)

_____ **Automatic withdrawal** authorization for 9 equal monthly transfers on or around the fourteenth of the month (August 2024-April 2025).

Partner Signature _____ Date _____

Please print your name _____

**You may also use our short [Online Partnership Form](#) for PayPal to set up Monthly, Annual and Sustaining payment options, or mail checks to Beit Ahavah, 130 Pine Street, Florence, MA 01062.*



FAQ ~ Partnership/Dues “Gifts of the Heart” & Fair Share Payment Information

Why did Beit Ahavah introduce its first major and innovative change to the old-school dues structure, back in 2017? And why do we continue to evolve our dues structure to “Gifts of the Heart”?

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 (or community partners having to request an abatement or reduction 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 programming *since COVID-19* are actually greater than before the pandemic. Our evolving dues system and Community Partnership is a statement to welcome everyone while providing complete transparency as to the synagogue’s finances and challenges, which encourages partners to invest in a dues commitment that reflects what is needed to sustain and grow Beit Ahavah. The goal is that this system will result in increased financial support and a growth of Partnership, engagement and involvement.

How do I determine my dues commitment / Gift of the Heart?

In Judaism and in the Torah, “dues” are considered both a Gift of the Heart (“*Nadiv Lev*”) from each partner as well as part of our communal support responsibility (“*Tzedakah*”). 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 Partner, and consider the importance of an increase or going beyond the range if you are able to. As expected, Beit Ahavah’s basic expenses continue to increase, especially since 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 non-profit and Jewish organization. *So if you are able to give at the top level or beyond the range, please designate that on the partnership form or via the online Partnership form.* This will deeply help Beit Ahavah since not everyone is in a position to contribute at higher levels. However, every single dues / Gift of the Heart amount is significant and appreciated!

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

Projected expenses for the coming fiscal year 2023-24 total above **\$180,000**. Expenses include remuneration for our staff, Rabbah, teachers, specialists and team; professional services, rent for building space, insurances, technology, internet; programming and administrative costs for community events, supplies; holiday expenses, youth and family 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 - or Gifts of the Heart - support and sustain the ongoing operating expenses needed year round associated with making our synagogue’s functions



and our Rabbi available to all our congregants for joyous events (*simchahs*) as well as in hard times, and committed to excellence despite being a small congregation. Since COVID-19, we are highly engaged and working in new ways as Rabbi Riqi, Board members and lay leaders apply all of our creativity to new and renewing situations to ensure support for everyone and for our Beit Ahavah Jewish community to thrive.

Will my dues / Gift of the Heart amount be kept confidential?

Of course. Financial information and conversations will be confidential. Our treasurer Nick Orsini (nicko4882@gmail.com) or president Peter Nabut (peter nabut@gmail.com) are happy to speak with you.



2023-2024 Scrip Subscription - Donate while you shop!!

"Scrip" is like a prepaid credit card used at **Stop & Shop or Big Y for food or gas** or at **River Valley Co-op in Northampton/Easthampton**. It never expires!

Beit Ahavah receives a 5% rebate from all Scrip sold! This will add up to a **significant** amount if many people participate. Scrip is an awesome and easy way for you 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 partners.

Scrip is purchased on a monthly basis through a DIRECT WITHDRAWAL program, and the cards will be mailed to you by 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 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



☐ **Big Y (new this year):**

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



Beit Ahavah will send cards by regular mail.

The payment must be received by the 15th of the month, then Scrip card(s) in the amount circled will be automatically sent to the address listed below, unless 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.

Purchaser Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____



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 [or great challah!]

- Pirkei Avot 3:21

Direct Payment saves Beit Ahavah from paying credit card fees.

Thank you for supporting the synagogue through purchasing Scrip cards for your shopping!

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

ABA

ACCOUNT NUMBER INFORMATION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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.

