



BETH DAVID
REFORM CONGREGATION

Seek. Learn. Do.

July 7, 2024

Dear Beth David Members:

As I start my term as Beth David's new President, I am writing to share some thoughts on what it means to be a member of our synagogue's community. Admittedly, the focus of these thoughts may be the least favorite part of being a congregant – that of making a financial commitment!

In a few days, you will receive an email with your July statement -- the first of the new fiscal year – along with a link to an online form for you to select your level of giving. This renewal process can unfortunately feel like a financial transaction instead of what the annual covenant truly means. Of course, we rely on membership dues to pay the bills, but your decision to be a member of our congregation reflects a recognition that membership is an act demonstrating what you value, not the quantifiable value of what you get in return. Your annual commitment is evidence that a Jewish community such as ours depends on each of its members, and that the continued existence of our community has value not just for us individually, but for everyone else as well.

This annual act is perhaps the greatest way we embody the concept of *l'dor vador* (from generation to generation). For young families, joining a synagogue for the first time expresses a need to connect ourselves and our children to our collective past, to the generations that have come before us and have instilled in us a Jewish identity. For those who have chosen Judaism as an adult, membership is a statement of consciously joining a people with a long history. For families with non-Jewish members, joining the religious institution of just one partner is, in this community, often the first step in finding a spiritual home for the entire family. Progressing through life, the decision to continue membership long after our children have completed their formal Jewish education (as is the case for my husband Richard and me) often comes from a recognition of the blessings and support we've received throughout our journey, and a feeling of responsibility to ensure that the community is sustained in order to support the generations to come.

I am asking you to renew your covenant -- to say, "*Hineni*, here I am, you can count on me." If you are financially able, please consider indicating a higher level of giving on the form to

reduce the need for on-going fundraising to cover our annual operating budget. Be assured that no one will be turned away for financial reasons: contact our Executive Director Jill Cooper for special arrangements. Just remember that whatever you can do to support this community helps give each of us the space and means to live out our values in our special Jewish way.

Throughout the year, we'll be highlighting Beth David congregants to share with current and potential members – let me know if you'd like to be included. While I'll be spending most of the summer in Bartlett, New Hampshire, I'd be delighted to meet with you virtually at our mutual convenience, or in person after Labor Day. You can email me at jhorwitz@bdavid.org to set up a time for a phone or video chat.

Thank you for being part of our sacred community.

L'Shalom (In Peace),

Jane Horwitz