



Welcome!

We are happy that you are interested in our congregation. You are invited to share with us in our worship service on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings as well as our festivals, celebrations and events. We hope you will visit our Temple, tour the facilities and chat with our members, Rabbi Block, Eileen Hamilton, our Director of Administration, Education and Youth Engagement, and our warm and efficient office personnel.

Enclosed you will find a Temple Membership Application and other information about Congregation B'nai Israel. As soon as you return your application, a representative from the Temple Board of Trustees will contact you, and thank you for your interest in Congregation B'nai Israel.

We hope that you will join our Congregation. However, should you choose not to join at this time you can continue to learn about our events on our website at <http://www.bnai-israel.us>.

Sincerely,

Trudy Jacobson  
Membership/Hospitality Co-Chair

Meg Marion  
Membership/Hospitality Co-Chair

Amanda Orgel Ferguson  
Temple President

### **Congregation B'nai Israel**

3700 N. Rodney Parham Road ✧ Little Rock AR, 72212-2498

Phone (501) 225-9700 ✧ Fax (501) 225-3550

Website: <http://www.bnai-israel.us/>

## **What does Congregation B'nai Israel represent?**

Congregation B'nai Israel was founded in 1866 and is a Reform Jewish Congregation active in the Reform movement. We are affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, which is the North American Association of Reform temples, and we are a patron of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, the seminary for Reform Rabbis. Our Temple membership consists of approximately 350 families.

## **Why Congregation B'nai Israel?**

Our congregation strives to serve Judaism and our members through worship services, Jewish education for children and adults, social and cultural activities, special experiences for all ages, and ceremonies involved in the cycle of life. Coming-of-age ceremonies such as Bar and Bat Mitzvah and Confirmation are an integral part of our Temple life. Members may purchase lots for the purpose of burial in consecrated grounds in the Temple cemetery.

## **Who is our staff?**

Rabbi Barry Block joined our congregation as spiritual leader in 2013. He brings energy, scholarship, and caring to his leadership of our worship services, his care for our congregants, and his efforts in the wider community of Central Arkansas.

Eileen Hamilton, our Director of Education and Youth Engagement joined our staff the summer of 2016.

Religious School teachers include Temple members who give their time and talent to the pursuit of Jewish education.

Our administrative staff includes a Temple Administrator, secretary, bookkeeper, & building maintenance staff.

Temple members volunteer in more capacities than we can count, from leading services when the rabbi is away and providing the beautiful worship music week in and week out to answering phones in the office.

## **What does it mean to be a member of our congregation?**

We cordially invite you to make Congregation B'nai Israel your religious home and to become part of our congregational family. Please feel welcome to become engaged in congregational life before becoming an official member! As you make your decision, please rest assured that nobody is turned away from membership because of inability to pay. Annual pledges are based on the ability to pay, and we will arrive at that figure with you in a sensitive and confidential conversation. We hope that our religious and cultural atmosphere, philosophy, rituals, programs, organization, and our staff are what you desire to make you want to become a part of our B'nai Israel family.

Membership provides benefits such as Religious School, life cycle ceremonies, and the opportunity to contribute to our synagogue community.

Today's Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Family Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) to be used on the address Label \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST ADULT

SECOND ADULT

Title you prefer:  Mr.  Ms.  Mrs.  Dr.  other

Mr.  Ms.  Mrs.  Dr.  other

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Middle initial: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(maiden name if appropriate)

(maiden name if appropriate)

Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status:  Married  
 Divorced  
 Single  
 Separated  
 Other  
 Widowed

Married  
 Divorced  
 Single  
 Separated  
 Other  
 Widowed

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Wedding Anniversary: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Local Home Address:

Street \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(circle one) Listed/Unlisted

( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(circle one) Listed/Unlisted

Mobile Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(circle one) Listed/Unlisted

( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(circle one) Listed/Unlisted

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Address:

Winter

Summer

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Out-of-Town Phone #'s:

( ) \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate address dates:

START \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

START \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

STOP \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

STOP \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Occupation (if any):

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Full     Part Time     Retired                       Full     Part Time                       Retired

Name and address of Employer:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone:

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Fax:

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Jewish Tradition in which you were raised:

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Reform       | <input type="radio"/> Reform       |
| <input type="radio"/> Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Conservative |
| <input type="radio"/> Orthodox     | <input type="radio"/> Orthodox     |

If not, are you a:

- |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Jew By Choice | <input type="radio"/> Jew By Choice |
| <input type="radio"/> Non-Jew _____ | <input type="radio"/> Non-Jew _____ |
| (Denomination)                      | (Denomination)                      |

Do you own a Cemetery Plot?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes at B'nai Israel Oakland Cemetery | <input type="radio"/> Yes at B'nai Israel Oakland Cemetery |
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, elsewhere at: _____             | <input type="radio"/> Yes, elsewhere at: _____             |
| <input type="radio"/> No, not anywhere                     | <input type="radio"/> No, not anywhere                     |

FIRST ADULT

SECOND ADULT

Your Hebrew Name

(if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Previous synagogue Affiliation (if any):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City, ST: \_\_\_\_\_

Related to a Temple member:       Yes     No                       Yes     No

Whom? \_\_\_\_\_

How Related? \_\_\_\_\_

=====

Congregation B'nai Israel is fully accessible to those with special needs. Please make us aware of any special needs, so that we may proactively assure that our Temple is fully accessible to you.

Physical Restrictions:     Vision                                       Vision  
    Hearing     Hearing  
    Mobility     Mobility  
    Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_                       Other(specify)\_\_\_\_\_

=====

Other Adult(s) at home:

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT RELATIONSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Yahrzeits Observances – Add additional pages if needed. We record Yahrzeits on the Hebrew or Secular calendar, at each member's preference.

Name	Date of Death	Relationship to Adult 1	Relationship to Adult2

PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS IT APPLIES TO EACH OF YOUR DEPENDENT CHILDREN (ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NEEDED)

<u>Child 1</u>	<u>Child 2</u>	<u>Child 3</u>
Sex: <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female
Title: <input type="radio"/> Mr. <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms.	<input type="radio"/> Mr. <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms.	<input type="radio"/> Mr. <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms.

First & Middle Names:

\_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Name/Nickname:

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name (if different from yours):

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (If different from yours):

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Religious School?

<input type="radio"/> Attended	<input type="radio"/> Attended	<input type="radio"/> Attended
<input type="radio"/> Attending	<input type="radio"/> Attending	<input type="radio"/> Attending
<input type="radio"/> Will Attend	<input type="radio"/> Will Attend	<input type="radio"/> Will Attend
<input type="radio"/> Attends Elsewhere	<input type="radio"/> Attends Elsewhere	<input type="radio"/> Attends Elsewhere

Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Yes  No                       Yes  No                       Yes  No

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Public/Private School name:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Class of \_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_      Class of \_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_      Class of \_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_

Is child living at home?     Yes  No     Yes  No     Yes  No

Member of Youth Group     Yes  No     Yes  No     Yes  No

Child's Hebrew Name (If known)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Child's Address (If different from yours; also include College name if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you are interested in volunteering, please list any talents or skills that would be useful to the Congregation:

---

## CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL COMMITMENT PLAN

**How our congregation is supported:** Congregation B'nai Israel is a non-profit religious institution belonging to its membership. The Officers and Trustees, who are elected at an annual congregational meeting, conduct the business affairs of the congregation in consultation with our Rabbi. The only compensation received by the Officers and Trustees is the satisfaction that they and the members of the many active committees feel from doing their work well. Through careful planning and review, the costs of operation are held to a minimum and are comparable to similar costs of other congregations throughout the United States.

**Commitment Determination:** The primary source of funding for the Temple's programs are the financial commitments of our members. Our process for pledging financial support is known as T'rumat HaLev (Gifts of the Heart). Each member family decides on a yearly basis the amount they expect to pay towards the financial support of the congregation for the upcoming fiscal year (June 1 – May 31). Forms are sent annually in the spring. A form is included with this application along with an explanation of the process. Yearly pledges are prorated for new members. Please complete the form and return with your application.

## SUSTAINING FUND

Shortly after our congregation occupied our present facilities in 1975, payment was completed for our building and property. All of our facilities, together with our rolling and wooded grounds are mortgage free, thanks to the generosity of our members who contributed so whole-heartedly. In order to preserve our place of worship, it deserves our ultimate care. It is also sound business practice to plan for emergencies in maintaining the grounds and buildings. Those funds contributed and pledged by our membership to the Sustaining Fund, money is being set aside and invested to assure preservation of the facilities during and beyond our lifetime.

As new members, you are asked to make a pledge to the Sustaining Fund in an amount of \$1,200 to be paid over a five year period. In this way, you will share in the preservation of our Temple, which will enable it to fulfill the spiritual, educational, cultural, and social needs of our children, and in turn, their children. Pledges to the Temple Sustaining Fund are billed and payments are due monthly, quarterly, or annually as desired. The first installment is to be paid at the time of membership.

We are pleased that you want to join our Temple and look forward to our partnership. Please complete the Membership Application form and return to:

Congregation B'nai Israel  
3700 North Rodney Parham Road  
Little Rock, AR 72212

Having given serious thought to the meaning of Temple affiliation, and feeling that our philosophy of Judaism will be nurtured by the programs offered at Congregation B'nai Israel, I (we) hereby make application for membership in Congregation B'nai Israel.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Applicant (s) Printed Name(s)  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that a pledge of \$1,200.00 to the Sustaining Fund is mandatory and can be paid over a five-year period. Our pledge will be paid:

\$240.00 Annually \_\_\_\_\_

\$60.00 Quarterly \_\_\_\_\_

\$20.00 Monthly \_\_\_\_\_

Full payment is enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

The President of the congregation will contact you to discuss your membership commitment level.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Board Approval Date \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Code \_\_\_\_\_



**Congregation B'nai Israel**  
**New Member Annual Membership Commitment**  
**June 1, 2020 through May 31, 2021**

Information to assist you as you consider your membership commitment:

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your 2019-2020 Annual Commitment: N/A (New Member)

**Cost Per Member Family Unit needed to meet annual expenses: \$2,220**

By pledging at the operating cost per household, you enable us to maintain our current programming. If you are able to pledge at a higher level, you will help ensure our ability to meet our congregation's financial needs while welcoming all who wish to join our community. **Please know that we appreciate your sincere gift regardless of the specific amount.**

Those who pledge at the "cost" amount or above will be recognized in Annual Meeting materials as Pillars, while those who increase their annual pledge by 10% or more will be recognized as Builders.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not want to be recognized as a Pillar or Builder.

My (Our) 2020-2021 **Gift of the Heart** (financial commitment) will be: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am an Out-of-State Member: (pledge set by Board at \$180)  
I would like to pledge an additional gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am an Arkansas Distance Member: (pledge set by Board at \$600)  
I would like to pledge an additional gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a Full-time Student. My annual commitment will be: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I have special circumstances. Please call me to discuss my Annual Membership commitment.

I would like to be billed (choose one)

\_\_\_\_\_ Annually    \_\_\_\_\_ Semi-annually    \_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly    \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly

Recognizing that my community needs my active participation in order to remain a living congregation, I pledge my **Gift of the Hand** as follows (**OVER**):

## GIFT OF THE HAND

Please check off as many items as you would like. Your participation is integral to the future of our vibrant congregation. You will be contacted by an activity representative to coordinate your participation.

I WOULD LIKE TO SERVE ON THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES OR ORGANIZED EFFORTS TO SUPPORT:

- ADULT LEARNING (plan, organize, support with refreshments, market)
- FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT (budget preparation, financial priorities, investment)
- CARING AND SHARING (outreach initiatives, visiting, memorial receptions)
- COMMUNITY OUTREACH/SOCIAL ACTION (Our House, social action drives, new projects)
- HISTORY AND ARCHIVES (organizing, research, filing)
- HOUSE AND GROUNDS (maintenance and improvement of building and grounds)
- SECURITY (emergency planning, action plans)
- WELCOME AND MEMBERSHIP (greet visitors, outreach to prospective members, Membership Shabbat)
- RELIGIOUS SCHOOL (teacher, substitute, committee, policies)
- BOARD OF TRUSTEES (serve on board, committee chairperson)
- COMMUNICATION (chronicle, Eblast, website, social media, special event publicity, photos)
- ONEG SHABBAT AND DINNERS (shop and prepare for weekly and other events)
- YOUTH GROUP (support, plan, and support teen initiatives)
- YOUNG CHILDREN/FAMILY EVENTS (plan, market, create experiences for young families with children)
- OFFICE (mailing assistance, answering phones, special projects)
- LEAD TEMPLE TOURS (training required).
- LEAD SERVICES
  - o Friday evening \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday morning \_\_\_\_\_ Deliver a sermon \_\_\_\_\_
- LEAD TORAH STUDY
- SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT (support, plan, and recruit for social events at Temple)

I would like to share my special talent with the congregation:

I have a great idea for a new program or initiative:

*Adonai spoke to Moses saying, "Tell the Israelite people to bring me gifts; you shall accept gifts (t'rumot) for me from every person whose heart (lev) so moves him. And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." – Exodus 25:1-2.*

How does T'rumot HaLev work?

Each member unit of Congregation B'nai Israel will receive an annual commitment form in the spring. Members will use the form to pledge the amount of financial support they are able to commit to the congregation for the coming fiscal year. The commitment form also will request that members pledge to participate in the activities of our communal life. Additional space will be provided on the form for members to share ideas, hopes, wishes, and dreams for our spiritual community as well as any concerns. All information on the Annual Commitment Form will be confidential.

What is the "cost" amount?

The "cost" amount that appears on the form is the financial contribution per member unit needed in order for the congregation to meet the expenses outlined in the annual budget. The "cost" amount is a calculated figure that takes into account income available to the congregation from other sources.

How is the "cost" amount calculated?

The Budget Committee in collaboration with the Membership Commitment Committee developed a formula for arriving at the "cost" amount. This formula was approved by the Board of Trustees and is shown below:

<u>2020- 2021 Cost Amount Calculation</u>	
2020- 2021 Projected Budget Expense	\$670,000
Ehrman Fund Projection	-\$45,000
Endowment Fund Projection	-\$38,000
Key Club Budgeted	-\$21,250
MB/Yahrzeit/Chronicle Budgeted	-\$8,000
Fundraising	-\$10,000
<b>Expenses Remaining</b>	<b>\$547,750</b>
Congregational Family Units (excluding out of state)	250
<b>"COST" PER FAMILY UNIT</b>	<b>\$2,220.00</b>

(please note there is no increase per family from 2019-2020).

The "cost" amount may change from year to year as your Board continues diligent efforts to reduce expenses. Note that the "cost" amount calculation avoids assuming the ability to take **all** of the available-to-distribute from the Ehrman and Endowment Funds. The formula anticipates taking only 85% of last year's "available to distribute" from the Ehrman Fund and only 50% of 2016 "available to distribute" from Endowment. This protects these funds in the event of poor financial market performance. In addition, taking less from our invested funds will allow them to grow so that income will be available in the event of an emergency or to offset a decline in future membership revenue.

Is everyone expected to pay the "cost" amount?

No. We recognize that many members of our congregational family are not able to pledge at the “cost” amount. Fortunately, other members who have been blessed financially are able to pay and do pay at levels substantially above the “cost” amount. As a “fair share” guide, two percent (2%) of gross income is a suggested amount used by many U.R.J. congregations. We provide the “cost” amount for informational purposes. We ask that our members be thoughtful, realistic, and generous. We hope to send the message that all of our members are valued as part of our sacred community regardless of financial means.

Should we include our anticipated Key Club (High Holy Days pledge) contribution in our Annual Membership Commitment pledge?

No. The Key Club (High Holy Day) campaign will continue to be a separate opportunity for assisting the congregation financially. Note that the “cost” amount formula assumes that the congregation will receive 85% of the previous year’s Key Club donations as a separate source of income. A shortfall in Key Club donations would increase the “cost” amount.

A Word About Funds

Our congregation is blessed to be the custodian of a number of funds established for the support and enhancement of the congregation and its programs. Most of these funds are restricted so that the income derived is available only for the specific purpose outlined in the fund documents. Therefore, most of our funds do not assist with meeting our annual budget expenses. Rather, the funds allow us to enhance our basic programs and service, offer special programming from time to time, and assist congregants in need. [Exceptions are the Ehrman and Endowment Funds which do support the budget.] Contributions to our various funds are much needed and appreciated. However, the fund contributions should be seen as over and above the basic financial support that our congregation requires to maintain services to our community.

Levels of Giving

Each of our congregants is a precious member of our sacred community regardless of the amount of financial support he or she may be able to provide. We would like to express, as a community, our deep gratitude to those who give at a level that allows our congregation to provide a welcoming home for everyone. We would like to recognize as “Pillars” all those members who give at the “cost” level or above and as “Builders” all those members who increase their level of Annual Membership Commitment by 10% over the preceding year. If you would prefer not to receive this recognition, there will be a space on the Annual Membership Commitment form to request anonymity in this regard.

*And the people continued to bring freewill offerings morning after morning. So all the skilled workers who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left what they were doing and said to Moses, “The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work Adonai commanded to be done.” – Exodus 36:3-5*