

BAJC Special Funds

Please consider supporting the congregation through a donation to one of BAJC's special funds. These and other donations may be sent in honor of a special event or person, or in memory of a loved one. An appropriate acknowledgement will be sent.

Building Fund—Maintains and repairs our synagogue, seed money for future growth.

Cemetery Fund—Supports the upkeep and care of our cemetery.

Arts & Cultural Events Fund—Allows for speakers and special events not intended as fundraising events.

Discretionary Fund—Dispersed by the spiritual leader as needed, at his discretion.

Family in Need Fund—Gives financial aid to Jewish families facing difficult times.

Prayer Book Fund—Allows us to augment our prayer book collection as needed.

Redstone Israel Scholarship/Camp Fund—Supports youth traveling to Israel for a kibbutz experience, and youngsters attending a URJ camp.

Education Fund—Augments our Hebrew school budget for books, supplies, holiday celebrations and funds scholarships.

Adult Education Fund—Provides honoraria for lecturers & teachers of adult ed. classes.

Torah Fund—Provides funds to keep our Torahs in proper repair. Perhaps someday this fund will support the purchase of a new Torah.

Gift Fund—Enables us to buy gifts for our teachers at the end of the school year, and for other people deemed worthy by the Board of Trustees on special occasion.

General Operating Fund—Helps to meet operating expenses not covered by dues and special fundraising events. Often these donations are for Yizkor and yahrzeits.

High Holy Day Fund—Contributions to this fund help defray the costs associated with the High Holy Days and enable us to open our doors to all.



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Congregation Shir Heharim
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Partial List of Programs

Adult Education

Our courses and workshops are offered over three semesters each year: free for members, a small fee for others. Recent offerings include: Praying in Hebrew, Exploring Shabbat, Finding a Home in Jewish Prayer, Chanukah Workshop, Mysticism/Meditation, Decoding Hebrew, Basic Judaism, Judaism's Storytelling Treasury, Conversational Hebrew, Trope, Mikveh, Pesach Workshop, Roots of Zionism, Group Singing, Israeli Folk Dance, Women's Discussion Group, Interfaith Family Discussion Group, Jewish Mysticism & Meditation. Course catalogs & schedule are available in print and at www.bajcvermont.org.

Torah Study

Lay-led Torah Study is generally held twice monthly, preceded by Shacharit service.

Interfaith Services

BAJC has enjoyed many opportunities to participate in Interfaith Services, including a Family of Abraham event, Yom HaShoah service, Jewish-Muslim services, and workshops.

Significant Jewish Books Club

Meeting at member homes, the club discusses a new book monthly.

Tahara

The process for preparing the deceased for burial is called tahara, or purification. As death is the end of the cycle of life, funeral rituals reflect those of birth. Just as a newborn is washed and dressed, the deceased is carefully washed and dressed by members of chevre kadisha. A tahara service can be requested when funeral arrangements are made.



Our mission is to provide a context and structure for people to be Jewish together in a rural environment. This community fosters Jewish pride and identity by participating together in religious, spiritual, educational, social and cultural experiences. We welcome anyone interested in participating and learning.

About Shir Heharim

Shir Heharim means *Song of the Mountains*.

More than 50 years ago, a group of women in the Brattleboro area began to meet for Jewish study. They organized holiday celebrations and social gatherings for the few Jewish families in the area. Over the years, the growing Jewish presence in southern Vermont desired formal religious organization: Shabbat and holiday services, a structure for celebrating life-cycle events, and a way to educate the children about their Jewish heritage. Thus the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community was born and, in 1970, incorporated. Lay leaders conducted the business, religious, social, and educational activities of the group. Services, holiday celebrations, and a tiny Hebrew school were housed in various rented facilities.

Over the course of years of renting space, the desire grew strong for BAJC to have a home of its own and a clearly visible presence in southern Vermont. Through extensive work and exploration, in 2001 BAJC found the “perfect property” and began a campaign to raise enough money for the home it needed for religious observance, for education, for social and cultural events—a place for all generations in this time and in the future.

The first step toward our goal was to renovate the farmhouse on the property to use as a synagogue and a school. This was accomplished in February 2007. Although there is still work to be done, and although BAJC is sure it will outgrow this facility in the not-too-distant future, it is wonderful to have an active and tangible focus for being Jewish here in the “rural diaspora” of southern Vermont! BAJC’s *mishkan* (the holy ark in which the Torah is kept) is no longer a traveling ark and the *ner tamid* (the

eternal light that symbolizes G-d’s presence) can now always be kept alight.

BAJC has approximately 110 member households, with 50 youngsters registered for Hebrew School. While all members pay dues and the Hebrew school requires tuition, no one is turned away because of inability to pay the full amount. Dues help pay the salary of our *Shaliach Tzibur* (spiritual leader) and Hebrew School teachers, the mortgage, operating expenses, rent when we have to hold large-group events in another venue, insurance for our Torahs, and other expenses.

Our congregation is committed to being a comfortable and welcoming place for our diverse membership, showing respect for the way each person has chosen to practice Judaism. BAJC provides a way of staying connected to one’s Jewish roots, a chance to find peace and quiet in the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and an opportunity to find friendship and support in a warm, accepting environment: a place in which to learn. Most importantly, it provides a place for our Jewish children to be with other Jewish children, learning and playing together, and it gives everyone a chance to experience the values of tradition and community.

*BAJC
thrives on active involvement
of our membership. Come check out our
services & classes, sign up for the newsletter
and consider joining!*

Why Become a Member?

People become members for a variety of reasons. Many find fulfillment through active participation in community events. As Jews, we find connections to our heritage through time spent with each other. Membership fosters lasting friendships, stimulating learning, meaningful worship and the peace that comes with finding a spiritual home. Membership is a means of actively supporting Jewish continuity in the world.

*“Do not separate yourself
from the community...”*

Hillel, first century Jewish sage

If you value having a synagogue and congregation available in moments of need, please consider supporting BAJC with your membership. Dues provide 85% of our operating income, allowing us to provide a spiritual leader and a Jewish home, Shabbat and holiday services, cultural events, Hebrew school, high holiday observance, Yizkor services, a cemetery, a monthly newsletter and website, adult education classes, a subscription to *Reform Judaism* magazine, and more.

When is the right time to join?

When you move to a new area? When you get married and establish a home of your own? When your children start Hebrew school? When you need a rabbi for a wedding, a bris, a baby-naming, a funeral? When you want to learn more about Jewish beliefs, traditions, and practices? The answer is that it is *always* the right time to belong!

Yes, I am interested in joining the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community!

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Home Phone

Work Phone

Email address(es) (for BAJC news updates)

Names & ages of children

Membership Commitment Levels

(set at annual membership meeting)

Basic family \$1220

Sustaining family \$1250 - \$1500

Contributing family \$1500 +

Basic individual \$715

Sustaining individual \$720 - \$900

Contributing individual \$900 +

Basic seasonal \$715

Sustaining & contributing members support our ability to welcome everyone regardless of ability to pay & to provide Hebrew school scholarships.

I pledge to support Congregation Shir Heharim with membership commitment of \$_____.

I will pay (circle one):

annually semi-annually quarterly monthly

Amount included: _____

I would like to speak with someone about application for dues abatement.

Signature