

# **Bet Aviv**



**A Reform Congregation  
in Columbia, Maryland**

## **Members' Handbook**

**January 2018**

**Updated September 2019**

Welcome to Bet Aviv. We are delighted to have you as a member of our family. This booklet is designed to let you know the ins and outs of membership – but it’s impossible to predict every situation. Never feel bad about asking – we’re mishpucha! Call the office; call the membership team; call the President or an officer – it doesn’t matter. Just don’t stay in the dark.

### ***A Reform Congregation***

You already know about Bet Aviv, but let’s start at the beginning. Bet Aviv is a Reform Congregation, affiliated with the Union of Reform Judaism. Reform Judaism is not “Judaism Lite” or “Convenient Judaism;” since its earliest days, Reform Judaism has asserted that a Judaism frozen in time cannot coexist effectively with those who live in modern times. Reform Judaism introduces innovation while preserving tradition. It maintains faith in sacred texts without sacrificing critical scholarship.

Reform Judaism affirms the central tenets of Judaism - God, Torah and Israel - even as it acknowledges the diversity of Reform Jewish beliefs and practices. Reform Judaism believes that all human beings are created in the image of God, and that everyone is God’s partner in improving the world. *Tikkun olam* — repairing the world — is a hallmark of Reform Judaism as our members strive to bring peace, freedom, and justice to all people.

As you meet other congregants, you will find that some were raised as Reform Jews, while others were raised in Conservative or even Orthodox households. No one looks down on anyone’s beliefs or practices. You will note that some people wear a kippah (yarmulke) while others are bare headed. Some follow formal traditions as they daven. Some are more comfortable with the Hebrew language than others. Whether guitar or piano, you will hear plenty of music in our services. In Reform Judaism, we practice in whatever manner we are comfortable.

### ***An Adult Congregation***

Bet Aviv is an adult congregation which means that the undivided attention of clergy and resources is targeted on the adult population. Sermons and education programs are at an adult level. There is relevancy in all programs addressing congregational needs, as the congregation’s needs are similar. Moreover, there is an atmosphere at services conducive to spirituality and inner peace.

Don’t confuse adult orientation with an under appreciation of children. Bet Aviv founding members were empty nesters when they joined together in 1997 to form Bet Aviv. Without children, there was no need for a Hebrew school and without a school, our services rarely include a Bar or Bat Mitzvah (except of the adult variety). Children or grandchildren are welcome to join the congregation at services and some services – such as Purim, Simchat Torah and Hanukkah – are specifically designed for child inclusion. Moreover, High Holiday Services are

held in conjunction with a congregation, Kol Nefesh, with whom Bet Aviv has a very close relationship. Kol Nefesh provides the children's services and babysitting which the Bet Aviv grandchildren can attend even if not members of Kol Nefesh, and Bet Aviv provides the adult service which Kol Nefesh parents attend. The services join together in the adult sanctuary when the Torahs are paraded around the room, the children each carrying a Torah (of the stuffed variety).

### ***Part Time Schedule of Services***

Bet Aviv's schedule of services is "part-time." Shabbat services are held twice each month, except during the summer when the congregation meets once a month. Services are generally on Friday evenings, with occasional Saturday morning services. Except for the High Holy Days, our Holidays are celebrated on the nearest scheduled Shabbat service. Maintaining this "part time" service schedule enables us to maintain affordability.

While the schedule may be part time, there is nothing "half-way" about worship at Bet Aviv. The Rabbi and Cantor share the pulpit, blending together words and music from the Reform prayer book, Mishkan T'Filah. Services progress through the prayer service, a Torah service, a sermon, and conclude with Aleinu and Kaddish. The entire congregation rises in solidarity with mourners and those memorializing Yahrzeits. The congregation then moves into the adjoining space for Kiddush, Motzi and an Oneg – more than the food, it is a time to be with each other and share adventures from the time since the last service.

### ***Interfaith Center***

In visiting Bet Aviv, you noted that it is not located in its own building; Bet Aviv's home is within the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center (OMI – or, alternatively, The Meeting House). In part, the building is shared as an economical measure to remain affordable. More so, however, those of us who have been in Columbia since or near the beginning know the Interfaith Center to be one of the guiding principles of Jim Rouse as he built Columbia. Property use restrictions in official Columbia forbade the construction of Houses of Worship, regardless of denomination. You practiced religion in an interfaith center, learning to work together for the greater good, or you practiced outside of Columbia. The good feelings of working together with people of all religions overshadow the occasional inconveniences of scheduling conflict.

The clergy and congregations at OMI have joined to form the Interfaith Coalition for Compassion. This organization exists only to accept donations and help people in the area who are in need financially to be able to pay an electric bill, rent, or meet some other emergency. With low overhead, virtually 100% of contributions go to helping others. Bet Aviv is proud of its role in this organization.

# Administration



## ***Communication at Bet Aviv***

In order to stay abreast of what is happening at Bet Aviv, watch your email for the following: (1) directed emails; (2) *What's Nu?*; and (3) *The Observer*. Each of these publications is described below. In addition, our website ([www.betaviv.org](http://www.betaviv.org)) contains valuable information and a calendar of events that is updated regularly. You can also get information and see what Bet Aviv has been doing on our Facebook page, @BetAvivColumbia.

**Directed emails:** Bet Aviv will send emails to you announcing programs and events. Please ensure that an accurate email address is on file with the office. In the past, some notices (like invoices, High Holiday information, and annual meeting information) were mailed through the US Postal Service. Bet Aviv is now, absent special circumstances, relying entirely on email.

**What's Nu?:** An electronic bulletin announcing upcoming events is sent to all Bet Aviv members weekly. In addition to providing a list of events, the bulletin allows members to “click” on the event to obtain more information, or to “click” on the name of the organizer to send an email.

**The Observer:** Five times a year, Bet Aviv distributes an electronic newsletter containing columns from the Rabbi, Cantor and President as well as articles relating to Temple news. Upcoming events are also announced, and donations are recognized. Contributions of articles are welcome.

**Directory:** A membership directory containing names, addresses and other contact information of our members is distributed several times each year. This document is restricted in its use as it contains confidential, private information of our members. The list is not to be used for commercial or political solicitation. The list is not to be shared with non-members for any purpose. Disclosure of the information in the Directory by the congregation is restricted by the Bet Aviv Privacy Policy.

## ***The Bet Aviv Office***

Bet Aviv maintains a regular presence inside of OMI, with offices for the Administrator and Rabbi. There is also a “mail slot” in the office area to “drop things off” for Bet Aviv. Mail deposited without a return address will not be opened for security purposes. Our Administrator, Lin Mascia, is generally available in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 2:00.

Office contact:       email [office@betaviv.org](mailto:office@betaviv.org)  
                              Phone: (410) 992-9994

Mailing address:     Bet Aviv  
                              The Meeting House  
                              5885 Robert Oliver Place  
                              Columbia, Maryland 21045

### ***Weather Policy***

There is a weather policy that governs decisions by Bet Aviv as to whether a service or program will be held. The complete policy is on the website. As a general rule, subject to being overridden by the President and the Rabbi, Bet Aviv will follow the decisions of the Howard Community College on cancellations.

### ***Annual Meeting***

Under the by-laws of Bet Aviv, an annual meeting is required once each year in November or December. The stated purpose of the meeting is to elect officers and approve the budget and dues for the following fiscal year that begins in January. In addition, the President will present the State of the Congregation and a look at the year in review. The Clergy give recognition to the passage of any members since the preceding meeting. And congregants get a chance to make suggestions and give input.

### ***Dues***

Membership dues for Bet Aviv are currently (2019) set at \$920 for family memberships and \$460 for individual memberships. Dues are established at the annual meeting each year. There is no mandate that individual members live alone; however, non-paying partners of individual members are not entitled to attend High Holiday services as “immediate family” for free.

Any member who is financially unable to pay the established dues may apply confidentially to the President and Treasurer for dues relief. Bet Aviv is committed to making sure that financial hardship does not become a barrier to membership. All information in these discussions will remain confidential.

An invoice for annual dues is issued electronically (unless alternative means have been established) to every individual or family in January of each year. Dues are requested to be paid by February 28 of the year to which the dues are applicable. Dues may be paid by check to the Temple office, or may be paid on line or in person by credit card or e-check. While e-check payments on line are free, there is a nominal (3%) administrative fee for credit card transactions.

For those wishing to spread payments over a longer period of time, payments may be made in three equal installments. However, if the initial payment is not received by February 28th and no other arrangement has been made, an administrative fee of \$15.00 will be assessed. In any event, dues payments must be completed by June 15<sup>th</sup>. In the event that a member has not done so, an administrative fee of 25.00 will be assessed, in addition to any other fees. Persons who have not paid dues in full or made alternative arrangements cannot be admitted to High Holiday services.

## ***Donations***

As is evident from the Treasurer's presentation at each Annual Meeting, dues alone are insufficient to cover the expenses associated with operating the congregation. It is therefore requested that you consider additional donations to the congregation's General Fund, if you have the means. The acceptance of credit cards enables the congregation to accept automatic monthly donations in any amount, if writing a single check in a total amount is inconvenient or causes a substantial burden.

You are also urged to consider donations with respect to life cycle events. What better way to celebrate an anniversary, a special birthday, or a new grandchild? These wondrous moments may bring about a desire to sponsor an Oneg Shabbat (\$250). Sponsoring an Oneg may also be a way to honor someone or a group, or to give thanks for a job well done!

There are also less celebratory times when a donation may be appropriate. Members are urged to consider a donation in response to recovery from a health situation, either their own, a family member, or a friend. By tradition, death and remembrance are appropriate times for charitable contributions. A gift to the Temple is an appropriate way to remember loved ones on these occasions.

Separate from individual donations, members may wish to memorialize the loss of loved ones in perpetuity with the purchase of a brass plaque or plaques to add to the Bet Aviv Memorial Board displayed at services (\$155 per plaque).

If you so desire, donations to the General Fund may be restricted in terms of use. Your gift may be "for the use of the Choir" or "to purchase a new Ark" or any similar limitation. Recognize that once the need is extinguished, contributions will no longer be restricted.

In addition to gifts to the General Fund, restricted funds have been established which limit the use of the monies indefinitely to the purpose for which the fund was established:

- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund – For the Rabbi to utilize in the Rabbi's discretion for the benefit of the congregation, to help the needy, or for other charitable purposes.
- Cantor's Discretionary Fund -- For the Cantor to utilize in the Cantor's discretion for the benefit of the Congregation, to help the needy, or for other charitable purposes.
- Marv. Hoss Adult Education Fund – in support of congregational adult education
- Paula Polinsky Congeniality Fund – In support of the membership committee and special programs
- Richard Tobin Memorial Fund -- For Torah repair and rededication
- Arnold Feldman Social Action Fund – In support of social action programs and causes

Bet Aviv does not conduct annual pledge drives or phone-a-thons. The congregation relies on the good will of our membership to help generate revenue beyond the annual dues and all help is greatly appreciated.

Forms for donations, Oneg Shabbat sponsorships and Memorial Plaque purchases are available on the Bet Aviv website.

### ***Staff and Volunteerism***

In addition to our Clergy, Bet Aviv hires a part time (15 – 20 hours per week) administrator to collect and sort mail, pay bills, do book keeping and banking, answer the phone, handle inquiries from members and prospective members, book the rooms needed, maintain the office supplies, do copying, maintain the roster of members, prepare the Shabbat program, and get out Yahrzeit reminders.

Bet Aviv also hires a Facility Assistant to assist with set up and break down at our services. (OMI provides the room and the chair set up with a microphone at each podium.) Our Facility Assistant takes the Ark from the storage closet and wheels it up a ramp onto the bima; sets up the bima with covers, platforms, flags and the Ner Tamid. The Assistant also hangs the memorial boards on the wall, places the mezuzah on the door to the room, and sets up the wireless microphones that were purchased by the Congregation. At the end of the service, the Assistant returns all Bet Aviv property to its appropriate storage location.

The Oneg Assistant is also paid by Bet Aviv. The Assistant cuts up any fruit or vegetables that will be served, sets up the beverages, and does all plating and set up for the Oneg. The Assistant also cuts up the Challah and pours the wine for distribution at the conclusion of the service. During the Oneg, the Assistant replenishes the food on the Oneg table. The Assistant also cleans up and packs up all perishable food for delivery to Grassroots.

**“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” – Elizabeth Andrew**

No other staff are retained by Bet Aviv. Unlike other congregations, there is no Executive Director and no Program Director or a secretary for the Rabbi. The operation of the Temple in all respects other than described above is left to volunteers.

The officers and Board members are volunteers.



The website, the “*What’s Nu?*” publication, the *Observer* newsletter, and the Facebook page are all handled by volunteers.

Volunteers turn out to clean the roads, cook food for the needy, serve food and work at the shelter. Volunteers organize social events and book club meetings.

Every program from adult education to pot luck dinners requires volunteers to make it happen. Even if the event is to be catered someone has to obtain a caterer, plan the menu, publicize the event, maintain a headcount (and menu selections), reserve the room and plan the layout, decorate the room, obtain any supplies not provided by the caterer (including beverages), serve the food and clean up / pack up. And this list does not touch upon the content of the program itself.

Bet Aviv members are very good about pitching in to do the “grunt work” on the day of the event. There is opportunity beyond pitching in to do a mitzvah for your congregation. Bet Aviv needs people who are willing to plan and coordinate programs. There are people in the congregation who have planned these events before who are willing to provide guidance to someone

“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.” - Sherry Anderson

unfamiliar with the process. The same people cannot be asked to coordinate events all of the time, so we are always encouraging new involvement.

Bet Aviv would greatly appreciate it if you would consider getting

involved. Contact the office and someone will contact you to find out what you want to do. Not only will the congregation benefit, but it will make you feel good as well.

Ways to get involved – these are only a few ....

- Work with the Membership Committee to greet new members; Pack and deliver “welcome” packages; “touch base” with congregants to let them know we care and are listening.
- Work with the Social Action Committee to serve at the Route One Day Resource Center; collect goods for the Route One Day Resource Center; help clean our “adopted” road; help serve meals at “Our Daily Bread;” help with the Yom Kippur Food drive.

- Work with the Ritual / Worship Committee to identify participants for Shabbat services; suggest and implement new ways to celebrate Holidays.
- Work with the other Adult Education volunteers to set up the coffee, ensure enough seating, and help clean the room on completion of the event; identify speakers for the Scholar in Residence program.
- Work with the communication team writing articles for the Observer, obtaining advertising for the Observer, getting photos for Facebook; doing publicity for events.
- Work with accounting – preparing for audit and preparing the annual budget.
- Help with the facility – maintain inventory of property; purchase needed equipment; manage off-site storage.
- Coordinate a Special Event (or just volunteer to help) -- Hanukkah; Sukkot Pot Luck; Casual Shabbat Pot Luck; Passover.
- Work on the High Holidays Team.
- Work with the Social Committee to plan an event.

The list is limited only by your imagination!



# Leadership and Governance



## ***Officers and Board of Directors***

Bet Aviv is a “lay led” congregation, meaning that while the Rabbi is the leader of the congregation for all things relating to content of services and religious practices, it is the President and Board of Directors who are responsible for the operations and policies of the congregation.

The officers at Bet Aviv serve terms of two years; a second two-year term is permitted under the by-laws. Terms run consistent with the calendar year (which is also the Bet Aviv fiscal year). The officers (also known as the Executive Committee) of Bet Aviv are the President, three Vice Presidents, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the Immediate Past President. The current officers are identified in the “Contacts” section of this Handbook.

The Board of Directors generally meets monthly and is comprised of the Executive Committee as well as standing committee chairpersons and members-at-large. The Rabbi is an ex officio member of the Board. The current committees represented on the Board are the Ritual/Worship Committee, the Social Action Committee, the Adult Education Committee, the Social Events Committee, the Membership Committee, the Publicity and Marketing Committee, the Communication Committee, the Budget Committee, the Sisterhood, the Men’s Club, and Members-at-Large, as determined by the officers.

## ***Clergy***

Our Rabbi, Linda Joseph, is the spiritual and religious leader of the congregation. As well as leading services, our Rabbi leads adult education programs and provides pastoral support to congregants in need. She is available to conduct weddings and funerals and other life cycle events per Policies, as well as to counsel those in need.

The Rabbi’s office hours are irregular, so an appointment is advised. Rather than attempt to make an appointment or otherwise “grab” the Rabbi after a class or during the Oneg, it is advised to contact the Rabbi at:

Rabbi Phone:           (410) 992-9995  
Rabbi Email:            [rabbijoseph@betaviv.org](mailto:rabbijoseph@betaviv.org)

Our Cantor, Stephanie Weishaar, is also a religious and cultural leader. In addition to chanting prayers on her own, she is responsible for leading the congregation in song and for crafting a worship experience that invites communal singing.



## **In Times of Need ....**



There are two times in particular when the Temple plays an important part in many peoples' lives ... on the occasion of serious illness or injury, and in the event of death. The Clergy play a significant pastoral role in providing aid and comfort, and the Temple's Caring Committee and Shiva Committee support those in need from a more practical, though still comforting, perspective.

### ***Pastoral visits***

The Rabbi and/or Cantor may pay a pastoral visit to congregants who are in a grievous condition at home or in a hospital. While visits for serious, but not grievous, conditions may occur from time to time, it should not be the expectation of Congregants that a Bet Aviv clergy member will visit with every hospitalization or medical condition. As described below, visits from fellow congregants through the Caring Committee are available. Alternatively, members desiring spiritual support during hospitalizations are encouraged to seek support from the hospital pastoral team.

### ***Caring Committee***

Bet Aviv members have formed a Caring Committee to give support to fellow congregants. Support is primarily available in three areas: (1) moral support through cards and visits; (2) nourishment support through the preparation of meals; and (3) support in conjunction with funerals by providing people to remain at the shiva house during the funeral to accept food deliveries, set up food, and greet mourners following the service. The Caring Committee should be contacted directly in times of need, or Congregants may receive an unsolicited call from a committee member when a situation becomes known.

### ***Serious illness or death***

The following contacts should be made in the unfortunate event of a serious illness or death of a congregant or a loved one.

Rabbi Joseph  
Caring Committee –  
Bereavement Committee -

### ***Funeral Policy***

Bet Aviv has adopted a funeral policy that is available on the Bet Aviv website. In essence, Bet Aviv will provide, at no cost to a congregant, the services of our Rabbi or Cantor to conduct a funeral service in the Baltimore / Washington area for any deceased congregant of Bet Aviv or a deceased child / grandchild of a congregant of Bet Aviv. A congregant is any current member of Bet Aviv. If the family of the deceased requests both our Rabbi and Cantor to conduct the funeral

service and both are available, Bet Aviv will assume the cost of one clergy member, and the family is responsible for an honorarium for the other. Bet Aviv clergy may be available by arrangement to conduct the service for a parent of a Congregant, with expenses borne by the family. The family is responsible for room costs associated with a funeral service or reception (including a room at the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center).

Bet Aviv will arrange to lead or conduct up to three (3) Shiva services for a deceased congregant of Bet Aviv, deceased child/grandchild of a congregant of Bet Aviv, or a deceased parent of a

congregant of Bet Aviv, as requested by the bereaved. Shiva services, if requested by the family, will be arranged by Bet Aviv and lay-led. Books for the service will be provided on loan for the Shiva services. Bet Aviv will not pay for room costs associated with a Shiva service.

If requested, and if clergy are available, a congregant may contract with Bet Aviv to provide clergy to perform the unveiling service at the family's expense. At the request of the bereaved, assistance will be provided in developing content for a self-led unveiling service.

Implementation of the above policy is through contact with the Shiva Committee or through contact with or a voice mail left at the Bet Aviv office in the Meeting House. A member of the Shiva Committee will review the Bet Aviv Funeral Policy with the family of the deceased and assist the bereaved with its implementation.

### ***Cemeteries***

Bet Aviv does not maintain its own cemetery. Bet Aviv is recognized as a Jewish congregation by the Columbia Memorial Park that will entitle its members to burial in the Jewish section of the cemetery in proximity to other deceased congregants based on availability. There is no formal pricing agreement with Columbia Memorial Park. Some congregants prefer to go to Silver Spring or to Baltimore.





# Worship



## ***Shabbat***

At the heart of Bet Aviv is our Shabbat worship. We gather at OMI twice each month (except in July and August when it becomes once a month) at 8:00 pm for Friday services to welcome the Sabbath as a community. From January through October, services are generally held on the second and fourth Fridays of the month. In November and December, services shift to the first and third Fridays in order to avoid conflict with Thanksgiving and winter break travel plans and company. Occasionally, services are held on Saturday mornings at 10:00 am, particularly to celebrate a holiday that is important for children to enjoy (such as Purim and Simchat Torah). There are other times when the schedule is adjusted to fit Jewish holidays or for other reasons, so be sure to watch What's Nu?, the website's calendar, or Facebook for the latest schedule.

We pray from *Mishkan T'filah*, a Reform Siddur published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR). The prayer books are purchased by the Temple and available outside of the door to the room prior to the start of each service. Kippot (yarmulkes) are optional to wear at each service. A basket of "loaners" is available by the door as well for those who wish to cover their heads. All Shabbat attendees are encouraged to put on a name tag from the front table at the entrance to the worship hall, so we can all get to know each other. Please make sure to pick up a program as you enter. In addition to information relating to the service, a list of upcoming events is in the program.

As the service moves to conclusion, the names of the recently departed are read together with the Yahrzeits (anniversary of death) of those who our members desire to be remembered. The Yahrzeit list is printed in the program. A reminder is sent to congregants in advance of the Shabbat on which the name of the departed will be read, so long as the loved one is on record with the Temple office. It is traditional and a mitzvah, although not obligatory, to offer a donation to the Temple in conjunction with the reading of a name.

Following the services, the congregation moves into a separate room for an Oneg Shabbat. The congregation has retained the services of someone to set up the food, and to clean up after. Wine (or apple juice) and challah are offered to congregants as they leave the worship area and approach the Oneg table. Kiddush and Motzi are recited together and congregants then have an opportunity to nosh and catch up, as well as to make new acquaintances. Do not be surprised if someone you don't know greets you during this time and do not be afraid to go up to someone and say "Hello."

On a rotating basis that extends over several years, members are scheduled to serve as Shabbat hosts. This mitzvah calls for those scheduled to arrive in advance of services to complete the set-up (Put Shabbat candles on bima; set up the front table with programs, name tags and yarmulkes; wheel out the book cart), greet arriving worshipers, pass out wine and challah after the services, and close down the front table during the Oneg. If you have a

conflict, you are asked to “swap” with another congregant for a date that is more amenable and contact the Shabbat Host coordinator.

You may also receive a call asking if you would like to participate in the Shabbat service. Anyone receiving such a call is encouraged to accept. If you do not read Hebrew, there are parts in English. If you do not want to read aloud at all, there are non-speaking parts.

### ***Special Shabbat Celebrations***

During the year some of our Shabbat services are tied to specific Jewish holidays which are discussed below. Other Shabbat services may have special themes or attributes, as follows:

#### Shabbat Shirah

This Shabbat is one of song as the Torah portion associated with the service is from Exodus where the Jewish people cross the Sea of Reeds. It is from this passage that the “Mi Chamocha” prayer was adopted into the liturgy. The choir performs and music reins. Women have a special affiliation with this service based on the role Miriam played in leading the crossing. The service is usually in January/February.

#### Sisterhood Shabbat

The new (effective July 1) Sisterhood officers are recognized in the spring at a service. The women design and direct the service with the Rabbi.

#### Choir Shabbat

A special service in May featuring performances by the choir.

#### Baby Naming

There are many congregants who are becoming grandparents and whose children are unaffiliated with any congregation. Bet Aviv welcomes the opportunity to recognize the child’s Hebrew name and identity. This short supplement to a regular Shabbat service is highlighted by the Rabbi’s blessing of the child and a sweet melody from the Cantor. It is traditional and a mitzvah for the congregant to sponsor the Oneg following the service. See section on Donations.

## ***High Holy Days***

### Advance Notification

As summer progresses toward conclusion, you will receive a communication about the High Holidays relating to your attendance and the attendance of your family and guests. Bet Aviv does not charge a separate fee to attend High Holiday services, either for congregants or immediate family members. Congregants wishing to celebrate the holidays with others who are not “immediate family” are invited to purchase “guest” admissions. Children’s services and babysitting are also available. On Yom Kippur, there is a moving Yahrzeit service and memorial booklet and, at the conclusion of Yom Kippur, an optional delicious Break the Fast meal. As explained below, there are forms that need to be completed and returned to the Temple in order for program organizers to accommodate the needs of the congregation.

Bet Aviv Attendance Form – This form asks for the names of congregants who will be attending and the names of immediate family members who will be attending. A separate section asks for the names of those attending children’s services (adult must attend with children) and babysitting. It is also used to purchase guest admissions.

Memorial Book Form – Congregants are invited to identify names of the departed that they wish to appear in the Memorial Book that is distributed in conjunction with the Yizkor service on Yom Kippur. It is a tradition and a mitzvah to make a contribution in conjunction with names published in the book.

Break the Fast Form – This form, with the cost, provides an opportunity for congregants to pre-register for the Break the Fast meal in OMI that follows the Ne’ilah service at the conclusion of Yom Kippur. Normally, dairy / fish platters are the fare. A separate charge for the meal is specified. All attendees must pre-register.

### Prayer Books

Bet Aviv utilizes *Mishkan Hanefesh, Machzor for the Days of Awe* – Rosh Hashanah and *Mishkan Hanefesh, Machzor for the Days of Awe* – Yom Kippur for its High Holiday services. **It is expected that all congregants will purchase the two-book set for their own use.** Copies are available for a discounted price (\$30/set) through the Temple office. Loaner copies are available at services for family members and guests.

## Services

The High Holy Days commence with a “warm-up” service known as “Selichot.” This service is held at OMI on the Saturday evening prior to Rosh Hashanah. Special prayer books are used (and provided) for the short service that highlights themes of forgiveness and repentance. The service is followed by a program highlighting these same themes.

The formal start of the High Holy Days is Erev Rosh Hashanah. Services commence at 8:00 pm at OMI. There is no Children/Family service for this evening event.

The Rosh Hashanah Morning Service is also at OMI and commences at 10:00 am. There is a Children’s/Family service and babysitting available through the efforts of Kol Nefesh, a congregation with whom Bet Aviv maintains a special relationship. Those participating in the Children’s service are invited to participate in a special hakafah (Torah procession) in the adult service when the Torah is brought out of the Ark and marched through the congregation.

At the conclusion of the morning service, apples and honey are distributed to the departing congregants in hopes of a sweet year. Additionally, bags are distributed requesting donations of non-perishable food for those in need locally and a pre-addressed envelope is distributed seeking monetary contributions for MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger. Those wishing to contribute food are asked to return the filled bag to services on Yom Kippur morning. Contributions to Mazon are to be mailed directly.

Later in the day, a tashlich service to cast away sins is convened around a body of water for those who wish to participate.

A second day of Rosh Hashanah service is available for those who wish to participate at OMI. The service begins at 10:00 am.

Yom Kippur initiates with a Kol Nidre service, held at 8:00 pm at OMI. By tradition, through a generous annual donation, Bet Aviv has listened to the music of the Kol Nidre with its touching melodic phrases that vary in intensity from pianissimo (quiet) to fortissimo (loud) first through presentation by cello and piano. This is followed by the beautiful chanting of our Cantor, and then the remainder of the service. There is no Children/Family service for this evening event.

The Yom Kippur Morning services are also at OMI and commence at 10:00 am. Congregants are asked to deposit non-perishable food donations with a representative of the Howard County Food Bank at the front of OMI prior to services. There is a Children’s/Family service and babysitting available on this morning through the efforts of Kol Nefesh.

The morning service is followed by a break until 2:00 when several Bet Aviv congregants present their personal journeys. Each one of our members has traveled to this point in life impacted in some way by their Judaism, their culture, their upbringing, or their beliefs. The congregants who have agreed to share their stories embody the concept that “the thing we have in common with each other is our uniqueness.” At the conclusion of these candid tales and the ensuing discussions, comes the Yom Kippur afternoon service.

At 5:00 pm, a Yizkor service is held. It is respectfully requested that those who attend this one-hour memorial service arrive prior to the start of the service and remain in the sanctuary for the entire service. It is the desire of all in attendance that a reverential atmosphere be maintained throughout this service. The Yizkor service is open to the community without guest registration.

The concluding service, Ne’ilah, commences at 6:00 and lasts approximately one hour.

### Break the Fast

For those who desire to break the day long fast without the need to drive home and prepare a meal, or for those who simply desire to share a meal with other congregants as a way to joyously bring the High Holy Days to a close, a “Break the Fast” meal is offered. There is a separate charge for this event and pre-registration is required. There are no “day of the event” sign-ups.

### Aliyahs and Honors

The High Holy Days represent an opportunity to acknowledge the work throughout the year of those who dedicate their time and commitment to Bet Aviv. Congregants who are called to the Torah for an Aliyah, or to offer or lead a reading, or to perform a task on the bima or at the Ark have given of themselves during the prior year. (Some who give of themselves are too shy to accept an honor, and the number of opportunities to give acknowledgment are limited, so those called forward do not represent the full panoply of volunteers.)

### Volunteers and Donations

By the above description, it is easy to imagine the amount of work that it takes to organize and execute High Holiday services. Feel free to volunteer through the Temple office to be part of the High Holiday team.

Bet Aviv does not charge a separate fee for attendance at High Holiday services for either congregants or their immediate families. Tickets aren’t distributed, but congregants are required to sign in upon arrival.

Bet Aviv does not conduct a High Holiday Pledge Drive. We rely on the good will of our Congregants to ease the financial burden. For example, a traditional monetary contribution has been for the decoration of the bima with High Holiday floral arrangements. High Holiday contributions are graciously accepted, with or without designation of purpose.

## ***Holidays***

For the most part, Jewish religious holidays at Bet Aviv are celebrated on the Shabbat closest in time to the holiday.

### Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Immediately following the High Holidays is the holiday of Sukkot, celebrated on the Jewish calendar five days after Yom Kippur. The Festival of Booths, as it is sometimes known, commemorates the fall harvest and the protection that was afforded by the Almighty to the Jews on their journey through the desert after leaving Egypt. At Bet Aviv we erect a booth or hut, known as a sukkah, behind OMI in honor of the holiday.

The holiday lasts for one week, or eight days in the diaspora (outside of Israel). On this final day of the holiday, a Yizkor service is held at 10:00 am at OMI for those wishing to remember their departed loved ones. Bet Aviv does not combine Yizkor services with Shabbat services, but holds them independently in one of the smaller rooms at OMI.

The holiday of Simchat Torah is also officially on the eighth day of Sukkot, though it is a holiday in its own right. Simchat Torah marks the end of the cycle of public Torah readings with the final passage of Deuteronomy and, demonstrating the never-ending nature of the lessons of Torah, the first passage of Genesis (or B'reishit). The holiday is marked by joyous parades of the Torah around the congregation between passages.

Due to the Bet Aviv practice of merging the celebration of holidays with a Shabbat service, and due to the proximity of these holidays to the High Holidays, the manner and time for recognizing these holidays may vary from year to year.

### Hanukkah

A grand Hanukkah celebration is held at Bet Aviv, usually on the Friday night that falls during Hanukkah. The menorah is lit prior to the lighting of Shabbat candles and, in addition to the congregational menorah, families light their individual menorahs at their tables. A traditional Hanukkah dinner is served as a part of the celebration, including homemade latkes made by the "Latke Mavens" of the Bet Aviv Men's club. There is a separate sign up and reasonable fee associated with the dinner. The Bet Aviv choir entertains with Hanukkah favorites and, in recent

years, the children's choir from Kol Nefesh has also led the congregation in song. A Shabbat service is a part of the celebration.

### Purim

Purim provides an opportunity to celebrate the foiling of Haman's plan to murder all the Jews thanks to the efforts of Queen Esther by having some fun. In past years, the story of Purim has been retold in spiels where parody lyrics have been written and applied to modern familiar tunes, and Purim characters have been featured as stars in the old TV show "The Match Game." You never know what will be next, except for two things: (1) costumes will be encouraged; and (2) hamantaschen will be served. This celebration is generally combined with a Shabbat service.

### Passover

Passover is unique in that it is a religious holiday outside of the synagogue. It is important that everyone have a place to hear the story of the Jewish people's escape from Egypt and to partake of the symbols of the holiday. Let all who are hungry come and eat.

In years past, Bet Aviv sponsored a "Second Seder" at a local hotel on the second night of the holiday. Bet Aviv has also initiated a system of matching those who wanted to be joined by others with those looking for a place to go. How the Holiday is celebrated this year will be announced.

A memorial Yizkor service is held on the eighth day of Passover. The service will be at 10:00 am in a room at OMI.

### Shavuot

Shavuot commemorates the receipt of the Torah on Mt. Sinai during the Jewish trek through the desert. A Yizkor ceremony is associated with this holiday which will be held at 10:00 am in a room at OMI. The holiday itself is recognized at the Shabbat service in closest proximity to the holiday.





## Activities



## ***Adult Education***

### Monthly Education

One Sunday each month, except during the summer, an adult education class is conducted from a variety of topics. The classes are generally led by the Rabbi, though on occasion the Cantor or an outside speaker may take charge of the class. Topics generally relate to Judaism, Torah, text study, or Israel. As OMI is in use on Sunday mornings by the churches of the Interfaith Center, classes are usually held at another Columbia location in Columbia. Sessions begin at 9:45 am.

### Lunch and Learn

Weekly, on Thursdays at 12:30, the Rabbi leads a “Lunch and Learn” program at OMI. The Rabbi provides the coffee and attendees are encouraged to bring a lunch to eat during the discussion. Topics cover areas of history, philosophy, text study, holiday origins and others. The group may also delve into critique of Jewish-centric writings. The sessions are more discussion oriented than the Sunday adult education, but your level of preexisting knowledge is unimportant to participation. All are welcome.

### Gene Klein Scholar in Residence

Annually, usually in the fall, Bet Aviv hosts the Gene Klein Scholar in Residence program where an outside speaker presents a topic of interest to the congregation. This is often open to the community. Each presentation is usually divided into two sessions, the first commencing at 10:00 am and the second ending at 2:00 pm. A box lunch is generally available for purchase by pre-registering.

Past speakers in this series have included, among others:

- Rabbi Aaron Panken, Dean of the Hebrew Union College -Jewish Institute of Religion's New York School (the future of Reform Judaism; the origins of Jewish beliefs on abortion and stem cell research)
- Rabbi Larry Raphael, Senior Rabbi of Congregation Sherith Israel in San Francisco (the New Israel Fund, the decision about Intelligent Design, and an anthology of Jewish mystery writers)
- Julie Galambush, Associate Professor of Religion at the College of William and Mary (Lady Wisdom and How She Grew; The New Testament "Letter to the Hebrews")
- Rabbi Stephen Fuchs (Why God Chose Abraham as Partner; Violence in the Media)

- Rabbi David Saperstein, Chair, URJ Religious Action Center ("Racing with God: The Use and Abuse of Religion in American Elections"; "The Impact of the 2012 Elections on the Jewish Community's Agenda")
- Alan Cooperman, Director of Religion Research at the Pew Research Center (Trends in Jewish Affiliation and Identity; "The Rise of the 'Nones'")
- Mitchell Duneier, author of the book "Ghetto," (evolution of the term in history) and Devin Allen (photographer for his book, "A Beautiful Ghetto")
- Rabbi Bennett Miller, past Chair, Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA), (the meaning of being a Reform Zionist; Issues on the ground in Israel for the non-Orthodox Jew)

### Educational Programs by Affiliated Groups

In addition to the above, there are myriads of programs and lectures of interest to Bet Aviv congregants sponsored by the Bet Aviv Sisterhood and Men's Club. Additionally, The Howard County Jewish Federation offers speakers and programs from time to time.

### ***Social Action***

Bet Aviv is very proud of its role in *tikkun olam* – repairing the world. The following are some of the social action activities in which the congregation has been involved.

Grassroots' Route One Day Resource Center – Members of Bet Aviv serve at the Resource Center monthly in a variety of capacities relating to meeting the needs of the local homeless. Some serve in the pantry, the clothes room, the laundry, the computer room, and the showers. Additionally, Bet Aviv raised the funds to purchase new washers and dryers to equip the laundry in the new recently opened facility. From time to time, and particularly at Hanukkah, congregants "Pack the Pick-Up" with supplies of food, water, clothing/socks, and batteries for the Center to distribute to those in need

Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center – At the conclusion of our Onegs and our pot luck dinners, there is always food left over. Bet Aviv is proud to donate this food for the benefit of the women and children living at the Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center.

Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen – Quarterly, Bet Aviv members serve meals at the Catholic Charities facility in downtown Baltimore alongside volunteers from churches, other Jewish congregations and organizations from all over the area.

Adopt-a-Road – Quarterly, the Bet Aviv "road crew" dons the orange vests and gloves, picks up trash bags and scours a section of Old Columbia Pike off of Route 32.

Bridges to Housing Stability Chili Cook off – Bet Aviv is a regular participant in the interfaith effort to raise funds for those in need in order to remain in their homes in Howard County.

HIAS – Bet Aviv is recognized by HIAS (originally the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) as a “welcoming congregation” for its commitment to supporting refugees. Bet Aviv has been involved in an interfaith effort to support an immigrant family recently settling in the county.

Yom Kippur Food Drive – The fast on the Day of Atonement is a reminder that others do not eat on a regular basis because they have no food. Bet Aviv asks members to bring non-perishable food to OMI prior to morning services for the benefit of the Howard County Food Bank. Additionally or alternatively, congregants are asked to donate to MAZON – the Jewish response to Hunger in America.

Interfaith Coalition for Compassion – Bet Aviv is a regular contributor to the Interfaith Coalition for Compassion, providing emergency funds to those in need of assistance to pay electric bills, water bills, rent and so on in the OMI community.

Knitting project – In association with Mercy Hospital, Bet Aviv members knit hats and scarves to help keep Baltimoreans warm in the winter.

#### Social Action Programs by Affiliated Groups

In addition to the above, the Bet Aviv Sisterhood is designated as a “Friend of Grassroots” and provides meals on a monthly basis to the Crisis Intervention Center as well as monetary support. They support other agencies in the area including JEN (the Jewish Emergency Network) and the Interfaith Coalition for Compassion.

#### ***Social Events***

Bet Aviv organizes outings, such as baseball games, museum trips or shows for congregants to enjoy each other’s company in a social environment. Additionally, Bet Aviv holds social functions, such as luncheons honoring departing clergy and parties celebrating the anniversaries of the congregation.

#### ***Travel***

Bet Aviv has organized some amazing trips during which Congregants have been able to explore their Jewish heritage. While the travel is at the expense of the travelers and not subsidized by the congregation, negotiations with tour companies have yielded travel that has been packed with age appropriate activities at a reasonable rate. In 2014, the congregation traveled to Israel;

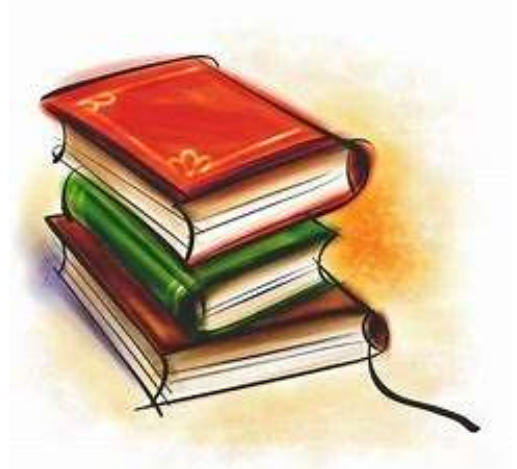
in 2016, the congregation traveled to Central Europe (including Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic); and in 2018, back to Israel.

Future travel will be based on interests of the congregation.





# Affiliated Organizations, Clubs and Chavurot



You are invited to explore membership in, or association with, any of the affiliated groups associated with Bet Aviv:

**Bet Aviv Choir** - Your singing voice is welcome, regardless of training or experience. Rehearsals usually are held on two Sunday evenings each month at 6:30 pm.

**Sisterhood** - Women committed to each other in support of the individual, the congregation, the community and the world. Sisterhood has many programs and activities throughout the year relating to education, community service, charity, and social events. There is also a Sisterhood book club. Check the calendar for what Sisterhood is doing. The Sisterhood year begins with a kick-off in September, but members are always welcome.

**Men's Club** – The Men's Club of Bet Aviv is committed to the wellbeing of the congregation regardless of gender. Men's club sponsors a speaker on one Sunday morning each month, preceded by an optional "Bagelicious Brunch." Men's Club is most renowned for the delicious latkes prepared by the Latke Mavens in support of the Temple Hanukkah celebration.

**Singles' Club** – There is a very active Singles' Club at Bet Aviv that gets together in small or large groups to go out to dinner, to the movies, to the theater or other places of interest. They also hold cook outs or pot luck dinners at members' homes twice a year for the group.

**Temple Book Club** – The Temple Book Club (separate from the Sisterhood book club) meets every six weeks to discuss books selected by its members. Men and women are invited.

**Chaver Connection** –We want to ensure that our new members feel a comfortable, valued connection to Bet Aviv. The *Chaver Connection* member reaches out to a specific new member, to welcome them, to meet up at Services, answer questions, and encourage them to join us for Shabbat services and special events. The hope is to perhaps go for coffee and keep in touch several times for their first year. The "mentor" person from the *Chaver Connection* would deliver the new member Shabbat welcome bag to "their" new member, as part of their introduction to Bet Aviv.

**Would you like to start a club of your own?** - Some of the above Clubs began because a member had an interest that turned out to be shared by others. The Board will facilitate starting groups that you think may be of interest to others i