

2. OUR VISION AND CORE VALUES

Our Vision

Beth El is an open, sacred community which recognizes that “every soul is a holy soul.” Inspired by the tenets of modern Reform Judaism, we provide a safe and supportive environment where all individuals are encouraged to continue their spiritual journeys through exploration, education and participation. Understanding that the quest for personal holiness extends beyond each individual, we are dedicated to bringing wholeness and healing to both our own Beth El community and the wider community wherever and whenever possible.

Our Core Values

■ *We are an open Congregation*

We welcome all who enter: people of all ages, races, and abilities; Jewish or inter-married; individuals of all sexual orientations and gender identities; and those with disabilities. We make a conscious effort to ensure that each and every one can find a home at Beth El

■ *We believe that every soul is a holy soul*

While family constellations are important, we make a special effort to value every individual and understand that each member may have different needs and is worthy of attention.

■ *We are guided by the tenets of Reform Judaism*

While we are informed by the values and traditions of Judaism in its entirety, we are specifically influenced by the evolution in thought and values that has occurred in Reform Judaism. In order to be true to this, it is incumbent upon us to continually study, be aware of, experience and experiment with the constant innovation that Reform Judaism encourages.

■ *We provide a safe, supportive environment*

We are “safe” in the sense of not only of a physically safe environment but also an experientially safe environment. We want Beth El to be a place where individuals can express differing opinions, try out different spiritual practices consistent with the congregation’s mission, suggest new and untested ventures, and be supported in all of these efforts, even if some are not sustainable or do not realize their full potential.

■ *We encourage all individuals to pursue their own spiritual journeys*

Beth El is not a homogeneous congregation and people come to our synagogue with differing needs. While we cannot be all things to all people, we can help individuals who are interested in pursuing their journeys along a Jewish path and ensure that Beth El becomes a spiritual home to those who wish it to be theirs.

- *We encourage involvement in the Beth El community as well as in the wider local, national, and international communities*

Because we are a sacred community, we cannot just focus simply on the individual. We seek to promote and grow a greater sense of and investment in the idea of community both internally as well as externally. Involvement in the wider community strengthens our own, encourages acts of Tikkun Olam (acts to heal, reform, and transform the world), and promotes a strong sense of “self” to make a difference in the real issues of the wider community.

- *We embrace our responsibility to perpetuate Jewish values, history, and culture*

Our children represent the future of Judaism. Through its religious practices, life cycle events, religious education programs, connections to Israel, adult education programs, and moral leadership and example, Beth El transmits knowledge and understanding of Jewish faith, traditions, history, and culture to our children, ourselves, and interested members of the larger community.