

Dear Temple Sholom Congregants,

Have you ever paused to think about what Temple Sholom means to you?

- Perhaps Temple Sholom is your source for connection to the Jewish community, Jewish culture and to community service.
- Perhaps it is where you join with people who support and comfort each other in their good times and challenging times.
- Maybe it is where you join with young people and adults for educational opportunities about Jewish heritage and values.
- Maybe it is where you go for the celebration of lifecycle events. Or it is where you experience meaningful worship as part of a larger community.

Temple Sholom means many things to many people. But Temple Sholom would be nothing without the dedicated support of the members of our community. To assure the financial viability of the Temple and to provide a fairer and more equitable means of collecting funds to pay for the day-to-day costs of operating Temple Sholom the Board of Trustees has adopted a new membership fee structure for the coming year. Starting July 1, 2023, the conscientious contribution system will be replaced with a defined membership dues system.

This new system was developed, in part, based on membership feedback provided during January 29, 2023 Special Meeting, where a discussion of the process of obtaining new clergy was discussed. The new system was also developed, in part, based on experiences of other Temples' in obtaining operating funds.

The need for this change is based on two facts:

1. That the Conscientious Contribution system is not providing enough money to fund the Temple's day to day operating expenses and this is depleting Temple Sholom's Endowment fund.
2. The conscientious contributions being made by the membership is not fair or equitable; only a portion of Temple Sholom's members families are contributing the suggested amount of \$2,400 per year, while others are contributing minimal amounts (without there being a commensurate hardship). The \$2400 recommendation has not been raised in many years.

The coming year's **Congregational Membership** dues amount will not change from the current year's suggested amount (with the exception for children's Jewish education). However, Families may be eligible for discounts depending on your family's financial and demographic circumstances as follows:

1. Financial hardships will always be accommodated for those that cannot afford the full membership dues fee. A case-by-case dues determination will be made for those with a financial hardship situation. In all cases, no one will ever be turned away for inability to pay.
2. There is also an optional discount available to adult-only families over the age of 65.
3. There are provisions for the added costs associated with families with children desiring a Jewish education.
4. As an incentive towards increasing our membership, new prospective members will be eligible for a one-time free trial membership for six months, after which prorated membership dues will be due for the remainder of the year.

As always, all **Congregational Members**, regardless of any applicable discounts, will be entitled to the complete services that Temple Sholom provides, at no additional cost, such as:

- ▶ Attendance at High Holiday Services
- ▶ Pastoral Care and Counseling
- ▶ Adult Education and Study
- ▶ Attend Members Only or Member Free Events
- ▶ Customary Life-cycle Events (such as bat / bar Mitzvah, weddings, funerals, baby naming, conversions, etc.)
- ▶ Children's Education (with selection of the appropriate fee category)
- ▶ Attendance at Congregational Meetings
- ▶ Voting Privileges

The annual **Congregational Membership** dues for a family unit (consisting of immediate household members), will be as follows for the 2023-2024 fiscal year:

1. Family Household, Adult(s) Only: \$2,400 per year.
2. Family Household, Adult(s) Only, over 65 years in Age: \$2,040 per year.
3. Family Household, with Childrens' Jewish Education included: \$2,800 per year.

4. Family Household, with a Financial Hardship: To be determined on a case-by-case basis (Please call the Temple (860-354-0273 or 475-218-0919) to make an arrangement.

For other individuals that may want to be affiliated with Temple Sholom and support it from afar, they may do so as a **Friend and Associate** of Temple Sholom. This is intended only for individuals or families not having a residence within a reasonable commuting distance to Temple Sholom, as determined by Temple leadership, on a case-by-case basis. **Friends and Associates** are entitled to the following services if visiting the area:

- ▶ Attendance at Events Open to the General Public and Member-Only Events
- ▶ Attendance at High Holiday Service at a discounted additional cost
- ▶ Customary Life-cycle Events (such as bat / bar mitzvah, weddings, funerals, baby naming, conversions, etc.) at an additional cost (to be determined on a case-by-case basis by Clergy)

Costs associated with being a **Friend and Associate** is:

1. Basic Fee, Family Household: \$600 per year
2. High Holiday Services (Tickets): \$200 per person

Please call the Temple (860-354-0273 or 475-218-0919) if you have questions or need help completing the attached membership dues form.

Sincerely,

The Officers and Trustees of Temple Sholom