

LIBRARY MINYAN GOVERNING CHARTER

(Rev. 2/20/12)

PREAMBLE

The Library Minyan, a constituent minyan of Temple Beth Am, is a participatory, lay-led, child-friendly community that blends traditional observance with a modern and egalitarian approach to Jewish living.

The Minyan is led by coordinators and committees that organize participation in three areas: (1) aspects of services, such as serving as gabbai, reading Torah and Haftarah, and leading the congregation in prayer; (2) teaching, such as divrei Torah or classes; and (3) social functions, such as kiddushes and potlucks.

The Minyan strives to create a sense of community through members joining together to share in each others' celebrations and support one another through sorrows. The Minyan's motto "Come, Serve, and Belong" (formerly "Pay, Come, and Serve") encapsulates the foundations of Minyan life—attending the Minyan regularly, taking an active role in Minyan activities, and paying membership dues to Temple Beth Am. Decisions on Library Minyan practice are made through a democratic process, within the guidelines of Jewish law and Temple Beth Am policy.

I. GOVERNANCE

The Library Minyan is governed by its standing committees. The number, names and scope of the committees may change over time, as determined by the Steering Committee and/or the Minyan as a whole. Committee members are encouraged to serve for an initial two-year term, and may serve for additional terms as needed. All terms begin on Tu Bishvat (or as close to then as is practical) in even-numbered years. Each committee determines its number of participants and when to accept new members. Committees shall meet as necessary, but not less than twice a year.

Each committee has a chairperson who is selected by members of that committee. A committee chairperson serves for an initial two-year term and may, at the discretion of the committee, serve as chair for a consecutive two-year term. A chairperson who serves two consecutive terms must wait two years before serving again as chairperson.

In addition to leading their particular committees, the chairpersons constitute the Steering Committee, which also includes the *Rosh Ha-Minyan* (the “Rosh”). The Steering Committee shall meet at least quarterly.

The Steering Committee is convened and led by the Rosh. The Rosh is selected by the members of the Steering Committee from among current and past members of the Steering Committee. The Rosh serves for a two-year term, and may serve for additional, but not consecutive, terms. The Rosh provides liaison with Temple Beth Am, while also serving as the point of contact for members and visitors who have questions concerning Minyan policy or practice.

After receiving an inquiry on a substantial matter, the Rosh circulates the inquiry to the members of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee decides whether it should resolve the issue, delegate it to an Action Committee, or bring it to the Minyan as a whole for a majority vote, either at a general meeting or by mail ballot.

The Minyan holds general meetings as needed, but at least twice per year. The agenda for such meetings is set by the Rosh, with input from the Steering Committee. Any member of the Minyan can propose adding an item to the agenda of a general meeting.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Other than on the High Holidays, any person who wishes to attend the Library Minyan is welcome, whether or not the person is a member. However, only members of the Library Minyan may vote on issues or serve on a Minyan committee. Members must be of Bar or Bat Mitzvah age.

The Minyan describes membership with the phrase “**Come, Serve, and Belong.**” The first part of this phrase—**Come**—reflects the Minyan’s philosophy that those who attend the Minyan on a regular basis count as members. Those who attend infrequently are most welcome, but do not vote on Minyan issues.

The second part—**Serve**—stems from the fact that the Minyan is lay-led. Therefore, all members are expected to give of themselves in one form or another. Service opportunities include ritual and non-ritual jobs, from reading Torah to organizing meals for a family sitting

shiva or welcoming a new baby; from serving on a committee to serving as Gabbai; from greeting people at the door on Shabbat morning to helping plan a Purim seudah. Some ways of serving are more fully described in the Committees section below.

The third part—**Belong**—means that voting membership in the Minyan requires being a paid member of Temple Beth Am.

III. COMMITTEES

Standing committees of the Library Minyan are made up of Minyan members. The standing committees include one Steering Committee and eight Action Committees. To assure wide participation in decision-making and governance, members are encouraged to join a committee.

The **Steering Committee** consists of the chairpeople of each of the Action Committees and the Rosh. The Steering Committee supervises the overall functioning of the Minyan by delegating tasks to the Action Committees and reviewing the Action Committees' decisions for final ratification. The Steering Committee coordinates the activities of the Action Committees, and may appoint ad-hoc Action Committees as appropriate. The Steering Committee also focuses on the Minyan's growth and plans for the Minyan's future, with attention to the Minyan's place in the shul and the larger community, as well as to outreach, strategic planning, and financial oversight.

The Action Committees and their charges are as follows:

1. The **Children and Youth Committee** strengthens the connection of young people to the Minyan by expanding their participation in services, welcoming and involving pre-b'nai mitzvah children and their families, maintaining a child-friendly atmosphere, and addressing the unique needs of families with young children.
2. The **Ritual Committee** determines permitted ritual and spiritual expression. It also seeks ways to keep the prayer experience relevant and meaningful, and to cultivate a sense of renewal.

3. The **Education Committee** provides educational programming to the Minyan (open to the entire TBA kahal), whether within or outside of services. It supports projects like the Mishnah study group and the on-line Parashat Hashavua Archives. Additionally, it organizes group classes and individual, volunteer tutorials to help members learn how to daven, be a gabbai, give a drash, and related skills.
4. The **Social and Hospitality Committee** arranges different types of outreach intended to strengthen the Minyan's sense of community. These may include the Diaspora Potluck subcommittee, which provides off-site communal social opportunities; the Chesed subcommittee, which organizes support for members who are encountering hardship; the Hachnasat Orchim subcommittee, which helps provide a welcoming atmosphere to newcomers and makes matches for holiday meals; and the Greeter subcommittee, which recruits people to provide a welcoming greeting at the door.
5. The **Gabbaim and Coordinators Committee** deals with issues regarding weekly and festival davening, and actively recruits gabbaim and coordinators. This committee consists of the Shabbat gabbaim; the Drash, Torah, Haftarah, High Holy Days, and Megillah coordinators; the Simcha Coordinator, and the Ritual Committee chairperson. Gabbaim and coordinators serve for an initial two-year term, and for additional terms as desired. The committee is responsible for appointing new coordinators and gabbaim as needed.
6. The **Membership Committee** helps members find outlets for service according to their abilities and interests. It develops ways to increase and retain participation, engages in outreach and membership recruitment, and maintains the membership list.
7. The **Communications Committee** maintains, updates, and disseminates Minyan-related information to members. It does this through the website, Minyan Monthly, electronic or other voting system, on-line forums and social media. The chairperson of the Communications Committee acts as recording secretary for the Steering

Committee, and ensures that records of Steering Committee meetings and Minyan general meetings are maintained.

8. The **Finance Committee** handles day-to-day financial matters in cooperation with the appropriate Temple Beth Am personnel, and as approved by the Steering Committee. The Minyan Treasurer, who is appointed by the Steering Committee, is a member of the Finance Committee.

IV. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

This Charter must be adopted by majority vote, and may be amended in the future by simple majority vote at a Library Minyan general meeting or by mail ballot.