

## ***Draft* LIBRARY MINYAN GOVERNING CHARTER**

### **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 Haftara, 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 "Pay, Come, and Serve" encapsulates the foundations of Minyan life—membership in Temple Beth Am, regular attendance at the Minyan, and taking an active role in Minyan activities. 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 serve for an initial two-year term, and for additional terms as needed. All terms begin on Tu B'Shevat. Each committee determines its number of participants, and

accepts new members at fixed intervals. Committees shall meet as necessary, and not less than twice a year.

Each committee has a chairperson, who is selected by members of that committee. The committee chairpersons serve for an initial two-year term, and may serve for one additional two-year term.

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 serves for a two-year term, and is selected from among and by the members of the Steering Committee. That is, the Rosh will have been a committee chairperson before moving into the Rosh position. The Rosh provides liaison with Temple Beth Am, while also serving as point-person 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. The Minyan holds general meetings as needed, but at least twice per year.

## **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.

The Minyan has traditionally described membership with the phrase “**pay, come and serve.**” The first part of this phrase means that membership in the Library Minyan requires being a **paid** member of Temple Beth Am.

The second part—**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 third 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 seduah. Such ways of serving are more fully described in the Committees section below.

### **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.

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 youth-Minyan connection by expanding young people's participation in services, welcoming and involving pre-bnai 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.) The committee provides this programming within or outside of services. It supports projects like the Mishna study group and the on-line Parashat Hashavua Archives. Additionally, it organizes group classes and individual, volunteer tutorials to help members learn davening, gabbayut, drashing 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 coordinator, who 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; 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. It investigates alternate sources of communication to Minyan members.
8. The **Finance Committee** is headed by the Minyan Treasurer. It handles day-to-day financial matters in cooperation with the appropriate Temple Beth Am personnel and as approved by the Steering Committee.