



Welcome to

Congregation Ohav Shalom

ק"ק אוהב שלום



This guide contains the name of God. Please treat it with respect and do not discard it.

Any and all parts of this guide may be downloaded from our website: www.ohavshalom.com

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE FROM SANCTUARY

Ohav Shalom



Mission Statement



*Congregation Ohav Shalom
is committed to the enhancement of Jewish life
through worship, religious education, mitzvot (commandments),
communal outreach, and social action (Tikun Olam). Our synagogue
is committed to being a welcoming place where all people feel at home and
share each other's simchas (joyous milestones) and sadness. It is our mission
to meet the diverse spiritual, religious, educational and social needs of our
members within the framework of Conservative Judaism and to further the
causes of the Jewish people and the State of Israel. We strive to build
unity with our fellow Jews of all persuasions and affiliations
and the community at large, in a spirit
of love and respect.*

We hope this guide will help make your worship experience with us this morning more comfortable and enjoyable. If you have any questions, please speak with one of our ushers or with our clergy following services. Our rabbis are always available for Jewish spiritual guidance and can be contacted through the synagogue office. Information about our religious services, programs, etc. is available at our website (www.ohavshalom.com) or at our office.

We Welcome You

To Our Synagogue

This booklet is designed to help you navigate through our prayers and to give you an idea of the structure and content of the *Shabbat* (Sabbath) morning service.

- 1 Synagogue Etiquette.
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Synagogue Etiquette

Thank you for respecting the dignity of our worship. In accordance with traditional Jewish practice, and to maintain a spirit of sanctity, our synagogue does not permit the use of cell phones, cameras, other electronic devices or writing instruments anywhere in the building on *Shabbat* and Holy Days. (In the event of a medical emergency, private use of a cell or synagogue phone will always be accommodated.)

Respectful attire also helps maintain an appropriate spirit in our sanctuary. We ask that you refrain from wearing jeans, tank tops, sleeveless and spaghetti strap dresses, shorts or miniskirts. Please understand that if you are dressed inappropriately, you may not be able to go up for an honor on the *bimah* (the dais where services are led).

Smoking is always forbidden in and near the building, in accordance with Jewish and state regulations, and is prohibited on the grounds throughout *Shabbat*.

When is it proper to stand? Everyone in the sanctuary, whether participating in leadership of the service or not, stands whenever the Holy Ark is open and when the Torah scroll is lifted or carried through the congregation. When prayers are offered that require worshipers to stand, all those who are physically able should do so. An announcement to stand or sit will usually be made, or you can follow the lead of the people around you.

We are pleased to offer honors to those attending our services. You may be asked to ascend the *bimah* to open or close the ark, to carry a Torah scroll or to take an *aliyah* to the Torah. Some English prayers are read at the central podium on the floor.

If you have any uncertainty about your ability to accept an honor, please speak with the *parnas* (usher.)



The Tools and Vocabulary

of Jewish Prayer

Siddur (prayer book) – The blue book labeled **Siddur Sim Shalom** contains the prayers of *Shabbat* and other Holy Days. This volume contains the traditional Jewish liturgy developed over many centuries. It includes English translations and additional readings which have been incorporated into the service over time.

Chumash (Bible) – The larger red volume is the **Etz Hayim Torah and Commentary** and is referred to as the *chumash*. It contains the text of the Five Books of Moses, as well as readings from the Prophets and English translations and commentaries. As the Torah portion is chanted from the scroll, the congregation follows the reading in this book.

Kippah (*yarmulke*, or skullcap) – Adults and older children wear a head covering as a sign of reverence to God. All males are asked to wear a *kippah* in all areas of the building at all times. Older girls and women are encouraged to wear a *kippah* or other head covering. Any adult who ascends the *bimah* to receive an honor or participate in the service is required to wear a head covering.

Tallit (prayer shawl) – A *tallit* is worn by Jewish men and women after the age of *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* (Jewish adulthood). Its fringes remind us of the *mitzvot*, the sacred obligations of our tradition. While in previous generations a *tallit* was generally worn only by men, we now encourage all Jewish adults to wear one as an affirmation of our commitment to *mitzvot* (commandments), to the Jewish people, and as a way to enhance the personal experience of prayer.

Congratulations from Congregants – After you have taken an honor or led a part of the service, some congregants will congratulate you by shaking your hand and saying *Yasher Koach*, which means “may your strength be firm” or “more power to you.” The proper reply to a man is *Baruch Tihyeh* and to a woman *Beruchah Tehi* (which means “may you be blessed.”)



If a life cycle event is being celebrated at the service, the celebrants may be wished *mazel tov* (congratulations) and the congregation may all sing the following song expressing good wishes to the celebrants:

Mazel Tov / Congratulations Song:

סימן טוב ומזל טוב ומזל טוב ו סימן טוב (3) יהא לנו ולכל ישראל (3)

Si-man tov, u'mazal tov, u'mazal tov v'si-man tov (3) ye-hey lanu (3) u'l'chol Yis-ra-el.

The congregation may also join in reciting *Shehecheyanu*, gratitude to God for helping us reach this special moment:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה :

*Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam,
sheh-heb-cheh-yanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higiyanu ,la-z'man ha-zeh*



Items available in our gift shop.

Outline of the *Shabbat* Morning Service

The morning worship of *Shabbat* (Sabbath) consists of a series of units, each with a somewhat different focus and a distinct tone and rhythm. Together these units make up the *Shabbat* service. (Page numbers listed for each service division refer to those in the *Siddur Sim Shalom*, the blue prayer book.)

BIRKOT HA-SHACHAR – MORNING BLESSINGS (p. 65)

At the start of each daily service, we give thanks to God as we awaken to a new day. In a series of blessings, we appreciate anew the gifts of our bodies and of our souls, and the gifts which define us as humans. Following the blessings, we read brief texts and prayers which describe what it means to act with *chesed*, with loving kindness. We are mindful of our goal to behave lovingly towards others as we start each day.

P'SUKEI D'ZIMRA – VERSES OF SONG (p. 83)

This section consists of a selection of readings drawn primarily from the biblical Book of Psalms. This part of the service is intended as a kind of “warm up” to prayer, meant to spiritually prepare the worshiper for prayer and bring him or her to a spirit of *kavannah*, devoted focus and attention.

SHACHARIT – MAIN MORNING SERVICE (p. 107)

The core of the morning service begins with *Barchu* – a formal call to public prayer. This part of the morning worship contains the central passages known as the *Sh'ma*. In these Biblical selections, we proclaim God’s unity and affirm our faith and our commitment to a relationship and covenant with God. The *Sh'ma* passages are surrounded by additional blessings of gratitude for creation, revelation and redemption.

The congregation then stands for the *amidah*, which is said privately by individuals and then repeated out loud by the prayer leader. The *amidah* replaced the daily offerings in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, and now forms the center of every Jewish worship service. The silent portion of the *amidah* is a time set aside for personal, private meditation. In the *amidah* of *Shabbat*, we thank God for the gift of this special day. During the reader’s chanting of the *amidah*, the congregation as a community proclaims the holiness of God with the recitation of the *Kedushah* (p.116).

SEDER HOTZA'AT HATORAH – TORAH SERVICE (p. 139)

The Torah service is a dramatic pageant that is at the center of the *Shabbat* morning experience. Each *Shabbat* the Torah scroll is taken out of the ark and carried through the congregation as the community symbolically “receives” the Torah once again.

KRIYAT HATORAH – CHANTING OF THE TORAH PORTION As a synagogue practice dating back over 2000 years, a designated biblical selection is chanted publically by readers who have prepared the Hebrew and cantillation melody in advance. The reading can be followed in *Humash Etz Hayyim*, the red Bible volume.

The weekly Torah selection is divided into at least 7 portions, called *aliyot*. Different individuals come forward to recite blessings before and after each *aliyah*, an honor which is called “taking an *aliyah*.” The *aliyah* blessings thank God for the gift of the Torah.

While the Torah scroll is out of the Ark, a blessing for healing is recited. Additional prayers may also be included, celebrating a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*, a baby naming, a prospective bride and groom (“*aufruf*”), or a prayer of gratitude to God for surviving an illness or dangerous situation (“*gomel*”).

HAGBAH AND G'LILAH – RAISING AND ROLLING THE TORAH SCROLL (p. 146) After the chanting is concluded, honorees from the congregation lift and display the scroll to the congregation, and then roll and dress the scroll in its mantle.

HAFTARAH A selection from the book of Prophets is chanted. The designated selection relates in some way to the Torah portion of that week, or to the time on the Jewish calendar, for example, an upcoming Holy Day. The Haftarah can be followed in *Humash Etz Hayyim*.

SEDER HAKHNASAT HATORAH – RETURNING THE SCROLL TO THE ARK (p. 153) The Torah service ends with a second procession, as the scroll is carried through the congregation accompanied by joyous singing and is then returned to the Holy Ark.

MUSAF – ADDITIONAL SERVICE (p. 156a or 156b) The *Musaf* service consists of an additional *amidah* prayer. It is recited on every *Shabbat* and Holy Day, recalling the additional Temple sacrifice which was offered for special occasions. We stand for a silent recitation of the *amidah*, including personal introspective prayers. The congregation responds as the reader chants the *Kedushah*, the public proclamation of God’s holiness.

CONCLUDING SERVICE (p. 182) The service ends with festive hymns that serve as a joyous “amen” to the morning worship. Those in mourning, and those who are observing a *yahrzeit*, the anniversary of a loved one’s death, recite the Mourners’ *Kaddish* and the congregation responds as a gesture of support.

KIDDUSH AND MOTZI A prayer sanctifying the Sabbath day is recited over a cup of wine, and the blessing for bread, which serves as the prelude to a meal, is recited in the sanctuary. Everyone present is then invited to a light reception in honor of *Shabbat*.



Selected Transliterations

for Worship at Ohav Shalom

The best way to participate in the chanting of prayer in Hebrew is to learn how to read Hebrew. However, in order to help everyone feel included in our communal chanting, below we provide you with a list of transliterations found throughout *Siddur Sim Shalom*, the *Shabbat* and holiday prayer book that we use in our congregation. For more transliterations and to learn to chant prayers on-line, please visit the website www.sidduraudio.com.

1. *Shalom Aleichem* (Shabbat Welcome Song), p. 13.
2. Mourners' *Kaddish*, pp. 24, 52, 82, 184, 249, 298.
3. *Barchu* (Call To Worship), p. 107.
4. *Sh'ma* (First Paragraph), p. 112.
5. *Mi Chamochah* (Prayer Before the amidah), p. 114.
6. *Kedushah* (Partial Transliteration), pp. 116, 124, 157, 167, 235.
7. *Aliyah* To the Torah: See Inside This Booklet.
8. Torah Service: Opening and Closing, pp. 139, 153-154.
9. *Ein Keloheinu*, p. 182.
10. *Aleinu* (Partial Transliteration), p. 183.
11. *Adon Olam* And *Yigdal* (Closing Hymns), pp. 53-54, 187.
12. Various Blessings and Home Rituals, pp. 301-350.

Please note: We are using the letters "ch" to represent the sound of "ch" in "Bach."



What Do You See Around You?

Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark) and *Sifrei Torah* (Torah Scrolls)

The focal point of the sanctuary is the *aron kodesh*, literally the “sacred cabinet,” the Holy Ark which sits behind the white wooden doors at the front of the room. Arks in contemporary synagogues are based on the ark described in the Bible that contained the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, which was carried through the wilderness by the Israelites; it later was the central place in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. (See page 12)

In present-day synagogues, the ark is where the Torah scrolls are kept. Torah scrolls are the most sacred Jewish ritual object. The word Torah literally means “teaching.” Every Torah scroll contains the text of the Five Books of Moses, the first five books of the Bible. Both the words contained in the scroll and the scroll itself are considered holy. Each scroll is handwritten with a quill on parchment by a specially qualified scribe. At least one of our scrolls was rescued from the former Czechoslovakia after the destruction of that community in the Nazi Holocaust. In 2012, in honor of our 100th anniversary, our congregation commissioned the writing of a brand-new scroll.

During the service, the sliding doors of the ark and the *parochet*, ark curtain, may be opened and closed as one or more scrolls are removed for ritual purposes. As a sign of respect, it is customary to stand when the ark is open, and when a Torah scroll is being lifted. When the scroll is carried through the congregation, which occurs twice during the service, it is Jewish custom to touch the scroll cover with a book or one’s hand and pay honor to it.

Ner Tamid (Eternal Light)

A light hangs over the *aron kodesh* and burns continuously, symbolizing God’s constant presence. Like the ark, this lamp is based on the *menorah*, the continuously burning candelabrum that was found in the ancient tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem. (See page 9)

Bimah (raised platform)

At the front of the sanctuary, the ark and the Torah scrolls are located on an elevated area, the *bimah*, from which the chanting from the Torah and other parts of the service take place. This platform is meant to be reminiscent of an altar, or of a mountain, specifically Mount Sinai, the scene of God’s revelation of Torah to our ancestors. The *bimah* symbolizes access to the divine, and is the spiritual center of the room.

Art in the Sanctuary



Artistic décor and design differ greatly from one Jewish sanctuary to another. At Ohav Shalom, the doors of the wooden *aron kodesh* (ark) are carved with scenes from the Torah, including Jacob’s ladder, the Exodus from slavery, and the receiving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Above the doors hangs a brass sculpture which spells out in Hebrew letters the opening of the phrase from Psalm 122: “Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem; may those who love you be at peace.” The city of Jerusalem represents the soul of the Jewish people, both our connection to one another and our connection to the Holy One.

In our sanctuary, colorful needlepoint tapestries adorn the wall, as well as most of our Torah scrolls. All needlepoint wall hangings were designed by contemporary artist Alice Nussbaum. The needlepoint work was done entirely by volunteer members of our congregation under the leadership of our longtime congregant and *gabbai* Les Stein.



The needlepoint to the left of the *aron kodesh* depicts the hands of the *kohanim*, the priests who were responsible for ancient ritual, and the altar where they carried out these rituals. The priests raised their hands as they blessed the people, acting as God’s intermediaries. The Hebrew words surrounding the work are the text of the Priestly Blessing from the Torah: “May *Adonai* bless you and protect you; May *Adonai* show you favor and be gracious to you; May *Adonai* show you kindness and grant you peace.” (Numbers 6:22) In contemporary times, this blessing is offered not only by *kohanim*, but by parents to their children on *Shabbat* and by others who wish to offer blessings at sacred moments.



The needlepoint to the right of the *aron kodesh* represents the joyous worship of God with dancers and musicians surrounding the Hebrew word *Halleluyah* (“Praise God”). The text on the perimeter quotes Psalm 149 “Sing a new song to *Adonai*, Where the faithful gather, Let God be praised.... Let them dance in praise of God; let them celebrate with drum and harp.”

On the Torah scrolls, five needlepoint mantles depict central motifs of each of the Five Books of Moses. These five mantles also represent the color spectrum of the rainbow. Additional needlepoint Torah covers depict other themes connected to Torah and to Jewish mystical thought.

God, Open My Lips:

Pathways into Tefillah (*Jewish Prayer*)

We are pleased to welcome you to worship with us at Ohav Shalom. We are committed to creating a sacred space for prayer that is meaningful and true to tradition, yet is also creative, accessible and non-threatening for as many people as possible. We encourage your participation in our *davening* (Yiddish for praying) at whatever level you are able and comfortable.

Traditional Jewish worship is a communal experience. As we pray together, we focus on ourselves, but also on the needs, joys and sorrows of the community. We praise, petition, and thank God with one large collective voice that “storms the gates of heaven.” Yet in Jewish prayer there are also moments of exquisite silence in which the deep hopes, dreams and concerns of individuals find their own quiet voices. At Ohav Shalom, in all of our services, we try to insure that there are times that allow for quiet contemplation as well as moments of “joyful noise” and song.

What Are The Gifts of Prayer?

Through participation in formal Jewish prayer we may:

- **express** wonder and gratitude at the miracles of God’s creation.
- **raise** our awareness of the ethical values of Judaism.
- **strengthen** our connection to God.
- **deepen** our connection to the Jewish community and the entire Jewish people.
- **discipline** ourselves to recognize God’s ongoing presence in our lives.

Our relationships with Jewish prayer, as with all of Judaism, are not static. As we mature spiritually, our experience of prayer changes and matures with us. There is no one “right way” that you should always feel at services. Be open to different responses you might have – a prayer that usually seems meaningless to you may suddenly draw you in, and vice versa. At any given time, certain themes may resonate with you because of something that is happening in your life or in the larger community.



Challenges And Struggles With Prayer

“What constitutes service of God with one’s heart? Prayer.”
(From *The Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Taanit 2a*).

Our language and our liturgy have bound the Jewish people together for thousands of years by offering us a common means for expressing our faith. We recognize the importance of traditional Jewish worship, especially the use of our sacred language, Hebrew. At the same time, we are sensitive to the frustrations that some people experience because they are unfamiliar with the forms of the service and/or with Hebrew. In response, we offer the following suggestions for enhancing your own prayer experience and your comfort level in the synagogue:

- Create a structure for yourself: establish a regular attendance schedule that is manageable for you, and a routine for yourself at services, such as a regular area to sit in, people to sit near, and specific prayers to focus on. Feel free to “start small” and build from there, but try to make your structure a regular one.
- When you arrive at a service, prepare yourself to enter “prayer mode.” No matter what is going on in the formal service at that moment, take a minute to get settled, sit quietly with your thoughts, read a prayer of your choice, or do whatever helps you connect with the worship experience.
- Don’t worry about always “keeping up” and “knowing the place.” Create a balance between “working” during the service, and letting yourself be peaceful. If following the service is a struggle, take some moments to sit back; hum along instead of trying to read the words; close your eyes and listen or meditate. It is also appropriate to bring a good Jewish book to read during parts of the service. Jewish study is its own form of worship.
- Enter prayer with your whole body: wear the “uniform” or “accessories” of prayer – head covering, *tallit*; learn the movements of the different prayers: bowing, kissing, swaying (known in Yiddish as “*shuckling*”), and move with the rhythms of the people around you; close your eyes and focus inward; learn by trial and error at what moments of the service this works for you: for example – during silent prayer; during loud singing; during the *Sh’ma*.
- Don’t worry about understanding the prayers logically, even in English translation. Prayer is metaphorical, imaginative and poetic, and it needs to be experienced poetically rather than understood literally.



- Create a *kavannah*, a prayer in your own words that expresses something you wish to express. These can be said any time, but are traditionally added at the end of the privately recited *amidah*. (The silent standing prayer.)
- Study one or two prayers, learn the Hebrew or the melody for those, learn what they mean, and don’t worry yet about the parts of the service that are not known to you or that don’t pull you in.
- Focus on what is coming from inside you, not on “evaluating” the service and what is being presented to you. You are the principal actor in your prayer experience.
- To enhance your prayer skills, check out www.sidduraudio.com online!

Thinking About A Particular Prayer

Questions to consider to help you understand a prayer in a personally meaningful way:

- What values and beliefs does this prayer express?
- What did these words mean to the author of the prayer? Why was it written?
- Do these words mean the same thing to me, or my contemporaries, as they did to the author(s)?
- Is the author speaking as an individual, as a member of the Jewish community, or as a member of the world community?
- How does this prayer help me to connect to God, however I understand God?



How to Take an Aliyah to the Torah:

A Guide to Help You Make the Most of this Sacred Experience

The *parnas* (service usher) may offer you the honor of taking one of the seven *aliyot* during the Torah reading. If you are a *kohen* or *bat kohen*, please accept only the first *aliyah*. If you are a *levi* or *bat levi*, please accept only the second *aliyah*. If you have questions or are unsure whether you are able to accept an *aliyah*, please discuss this with the *parnas*.

Ohav's tradition is for only one person to recite the Torah blessings for each Torah reading.

Going up for an Aliyah: Your head must be covered. (*Kippot*, lace head coverings and bobby pins are available outside the sanctuary.) All who are being honored with an *aliyah* should be prepared to fluently read the blessings. A copy of the blessings in Hebrew and in English transliteration is on the Torah table.



Being Called: When you are called, stand to the right of the Torah reader. Please be prepared to give your name in Hebrew, in the form of your Hebrew name _____, *Ben/Bat* (son/daughter of) your father's Hebrew name _____ and your mother's Hebrew name _____.

Once called, if you are wearing a *tallit*, hold a corner of your *tallit* or some of the *tzitzit* (fringes); if you are not wearing a *tallit*, the *gabbai* (Torah reading assistant) will hand you the Torah sash or another object with which to touch the scroll. The Torah reader will point to where the reading begins. Touch near that spot. Then kiss the *tallit* or the sash. Please note that men and boys are required to wear a *tallit* when coming up to the Torah; women and girls are strongly encouraged to do so.

The Chanting of the Torah: After reciting the first blessing, hold onto the *aitz hayim* (Torah "handle") closest to you. Throughout the reading, follow the words as they are pointed to with the *yad* (pointer).

When the reader finishes chanting, again take the *tallit*, *tzitzit*, or sash and touch in the column adjacent to where the reading ended. (The Torah reader will point out to you where he or she finished reading.) Then kiss the *tallit* or sash, roll the scrolls together and recite the second blessing.

The Next Aliyah: After your *aliyah*, move to the side of the table. Remain there until the completion of the next Torah reading, as a symbol of your reluctance to leave the Torah.

The Blessings Before and After Torah Reading

Person(s) with Aliyah:
בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ.
Barchu et Ado-nai ha-m'vorach.

Congregation Responds:
בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
Baruch Ado-nai ha-m'vorach l'olam va-ed.

Person(s) with Aliyah Continues:
בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
Baruch Ado-nai ha-m'vorach l'olam va-ed.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר-בָּנוּ מִכָּל־
הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן-לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ,
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.
Baruch ata Ado-nai, Elo-heinu Melech ha'olam, asher
bachar banu mi-kol ha-amim, v'natan lanu et Torato,
Baruch ata Ado-nai, notain ha-torah.

After the Reading:
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן-לָנוּ תּוֹרַת
אֱמֶת וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכָנוּ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.
Baruch ata Ado-nai, Elo-heinu Melech ha'olam, asher
natan lanu torat emet v'cha-yei olam nota b'to-chei-nu.
Baruch ata Ado-nai, notain ha-torah.

Love Peace and Pursue Peace:

An Appreciation of Congregation Ohav Shalom

“Be one of the disciples of Aaron, (the high priest of ancient times and Moses’ brother), by emulating him. Love and pursue peace, love all people and bring them close to the Torah.” (Ethics Of The Sages, 1:12)

These words of the Jewish sage Hillel who lived in the land of Israel in the first century BCE, capture the essence of our synagogue, which has been an Albany institution since 1911. Ohav Shalom is a yiddishized form of Hillel’s statement in the Hebrew, “*Ohev Shalom*,” being a lover of peace. This name symbolizes the core values of the congregation: bringing love and peace into the world through studying our ancient Jewish tradition and applying it to the challenges of today. Further, as a member of the Conservative Jewish denomination in North America, Ohav Shalom seeks to fulfill our movement’s motto of balancing tradition with change and blending the ancient with the modern.

Ohav Shalom is located at the corner of New Krumkill Road and Route 85, which is a meeting point of the cities and towns of Albany, Guilderland, and Bethlehem. This nexus point symbolizes the community’s successful efforts to blend the culture of the city with the growing demands of suburban Jewish families. All of our members bring diversity, commitment and vital resources to the life of the community. Creating a nourishing spiritual home for diverse Jewish populations in a supportive and respectful setting is one of our synagogue’s main missions. Great effort is put into bringing the religious school and day school populations together as one community. As our religious education program has grown and diversified, more of our families have deepened their sense of ownership of religious and ritual life. We actively reach out to gay and lesbian Jews, intermarried families, singles, people considering conversion to Judaism, those with disabilities, the bereaved, and the sick. Our rabbinic leadership is renowned for its strong emphasis upon pastoral care, counseling and leadership for all who seek spiritual guidance within the framework of Judaism.



Ohav's former location 1922-1961

The Ohav family is proud of our preschool, religious school, youth activities and adult studies programs; our outreach efforts and our emphasis on the individual’s religious empowerment; our strong lay leadership in religious and secular matters; and our growing social action program and presence in the community.

We maintain a strong intergenerational relationship with the residents of the Ohav senior apartments. We are committed to providing strong support for Zionism and the State of Israel. We continue to play an important role in Conservative Judaism. We value the spiritual journey of each person and household connected with us. Congregation Ohav Shalom is a “*Makom Torah*,” a place in which Torah embraces every person and family, helping everyone to grow in soul, wisdom, and compassion in his or her own ways. This is surely an important way of loving and pursuing peace and spreading love to all people. We are proud to welcome you to our Jewish family!



Soft torahs for young children.



Congregation Ohav Shalom

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