



June 15, 2021

Dear VBS Member,

What a year it has been! We continue to navigate our way through a global pandemic with strength, resilience and resolve. We were able to safely reopen our doors for Shabbat services and evening minyan, and we continue to plan for additional on site programs this summer and meaningful High Holiday experiences in the fall. Our VBS schools and Youth Department programs are flourishing with both on site and virtual options. And despite the many challenges, pivots and restarts over the past several months, we are proud to announce our highest number of new student applications for the ECC and Day School in over a decade, and we also maintained a synagogue membership renewal level of nearly 100%. This is a testament to the commitment of our educators, staff, parents and you, our supporters. Throughout the turmoil of the past 15 months, we saw our community come together in ways that we could never have imagined! Our staff and members established many new successful initiatives, including the Helping Hands volunteer errand program, the "War on Isolation" peer-to-peer calls to vulnerable members, the Youth Department's Homework Helpers program offering free virtual tutoring for K-6 students, and increased Food Bank efforts to support the local community. We are profoundly grateful for your engagement with and support of VBS during these unprecedented times. It has been truly remarkable to see how much this special community comes together when it matters most!

This past year has taught us that our community is so much more than the physical space of our campus. We were able to experience life's greatest and most difficult moments together despite being apart. We are now able to see the light at the end of this tunnel, and we know the coming year will be one of tremendous joy and celebration! Thanks to your support, the VBS you love is more vibrant than ever. Your membership matters.

As a member, you are a stakeholder in and builder of our community. Your partnership is the most important element in the health and vibrancy of VBS. We look forward to another year together. As we ask for your membership renewal, we recognize that there are those in our community impacted by the pandemic, and we want to make one thing very clear: **we are committed to never losing a single member due to financial need.** We will work with any member experiencing financial hardship so they can continue to be part of VBS. **Whatever your circumstances, you belong with us.** If you are in a position to help, we urge you to join (or rejoin) our Premier membership program (formerly "AGB") to sustain our community even further. **The** VBS Premier program helps ensure that every family has an opportunity to belong and every child has the chance to grow up at VBS.

High Holiday Seating

Our plans for the High Holidays will include both in person and virtual options that will allow members the flexibility to join us at their comfort level. We will be in touch with you in the coming weeks to share those plans and to invite you to reserve your tickets. Please keep in mind there may be fewer service options than in previous

years. We appreciate your understanding and will be available to assist you in making the best choices for you and/or your family.

Payment Plans – We offer a pay in full option or monthly payments. The monthly plan must be secured with a debit or credit card, and a \$50 administrative fee will be assessed.

Optional, but Kindly Requested Credit Card Coverage Donation: VBS incurs significant credit card processing fees each year in order to enable our members the convenience to pay via credit card. In fact, we pay upwards of \$160,000 annually in fees. Please help us cover this cost by making an optional 3% tax deductible donation on top of your payment. You will see this option on the payment form.

About the VBS Premier Program (formerly known as “AGB”): VBS Premier participants enable VBS to provide synagogue membership and Jewish education to every family who desires to be part of VBS. Your VBS Premier commitment ensures that we never turn anyone away due to financial concerns. While the gift of giving needs no incentive, the Premier program offers many benefits, including: complimentary membership in our affiliate programs including Sisterhood, Brotherhood and Youth Department; catering benefits with LA Kosher Catering; special occasions with our VBS rabbis, and more. If you wish to learn more, please check off this option on your statement (or online at vbs.org/premier). If you have questions about the Premier program, contact Natasha Benzaken at 818.530.4008.

Commitment Dates – As an incentive to register “early”, all membership commitments made by July 15, 2021 will receive a coupon for \$50 off your next LA Kosher catering order (minimum order of \$100). LA Kosher catering, a department of Valley Beth Shalom, offers extensive menu options at reduced pricing for all VBS members. We invite you to learn more about LA Kosher Catering at LAKoshercatering.com or (818) 789-7588. **We ask all members to renew their commitments no later than July 31, 2021.**

We will continue to be here for you and your family. We deeply appreciate your ongoing support of VBS. Your membership matters, now, as much as ever. We hope you are staying safe and healthy.

B'Shalom,



Jeff Goss
President



Rabbi Ed Feinstein
Senior Rabbi



Matthew Weintraub
Executive Director



Stephanie Walsh
Membership V.P.

Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue

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