

Dear Friends,

Since the establishment of Temple Emanuel in 1874, we have relied on our members to support our community (our *kehila*) by paying annual dues. Because of your ongoing support, we have been able to create a congregation that values a compassionate and welcoming atmosphere, engaging programs for all ages, meaningful life-cycle events where we celebrate joy and provide comfort in times of hardship, and a religious education program that educates all who walk through our doors for a nominal fee. In past years, we have asked you to contribute a “fair share” (1.5%) percentage of your annual household income to support the Temple. We know that, while the concept of “fair share” dues makes sense, the reality is that many of our congregants do not see the 1.5% benchmark as realistic. As a result, the current level by which we are sustained will not allow us to rise to the level of excellence towards which we strive and which all of us deserve. This is why we are changing our approach towards dues – as our President, Mark Idelberg, announced at High Holy Day services this past year.

According to our research, the average dues of Temple Emanuel members is far lower than most other congregations in Denver. We can no longer sustain ourselves at this level. Beginning on July 1, 2018, a new annual financial commitment model will take effect – it’s called **Kehila 1874**. Named for our community (our *kehila*) and the year of our founding (1874), this model will enable us to fill long-standing gaps and achieve richer programming and education for all. Additionally, Kehila 1874 is a representation of how we live our values. If we want to live in a community that is educated, engaged, and spiritual, we must ensure that it is available for all community members.

As always, no one will ever be turned away from our congregation due to inability to contribute. Some of our membership will only be able to contribute at or below a sustaining level. Others will be able to give more. Below are the opportunities for annual giving at Temple Emanuel. Each level offers different benefits and connections. In addition, volunteer appreciation is a foundational pillar of our values and commitment to community. In the coming months, I would ask that you reflect on how Temple Emanuel has been a welcoming home for you, whether you are in the building every week for services, educating your children here, or reflecting on memories and friendships made in these hallways years ago. In the Mishnah, we find:

Im ein kemach, ein torah, V' im eyn Torah, ein Kemach –

If there is no bread, there can be no Torah. If there is no Torah, there can be no bread.”

In other words, the holy work that we do here at Temple relies on your contributions. However, we also understand that the support you give is nothing if it is not based on Jewish values and tradition. We understand and appreciate the fact that your gifts to Temple Emanuel help to bring holiness into the world. The sacred bond between our *kehila* (community) and our membership is something we cherish and protect every day at Temple Emanuel.

We ask that you opt in to Kehila 1874 between now and July 1, 2018. You can contact [Francie Miran](#) or [Steve Stark](#) for more information and to confirm your commitment level. We will be holding parlor meetings, sending out more information in eNotes and on the website, and will be available to answer questions as we move along in the process. Please do not hesitate to contact

Steve, Francie, or [me](#) with any questions or concerns. Again, as always, no one will be turned away for financial reasons.

Thank you for your support. With friendship and appreciation for the sacred partnership we have created, I am...

L'Shalom (in peace),

Rabbi Joseph R. Black