



Celebrating 39 Years

# Membership Information

**2020 - 2021**  
**5780 - 5781**

Congregation Beth El  
3900 Raoul Wallenberg Lane  
Missouri City, Texas 77459

[WWW.BETHELTX.ORG](http://WWW.BETHELTX.ORG)  
281.499.5066 office | 281-261-0070 fax



Congregation Beth El is the center of Reform Judaism in Fort Bend County. Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, Congregation Beth El strives to fulfill its mission of helping each member connect to what is important to them as Jews and as part of the global community. We seek to do this by offering engaging and spiritually-uplifting Shabbat and holiday services, a vibrant educational program for children and adults, and opportunities to perform acts of tikkun olam, repairing the world. Most importantly, Beth El provides a warm, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all our members, Jewish or non-Jewish, as we seek to create a close-knit community bonded together by the highest ideals of our faith.

Rabbi Ariel Sholklapper and Cantor Renee Waghalter provide our spiritual leadership. They both take great pride in getting to know each congregant individually and making them feel welcome. Rabbi Sholklapper enjoys meeting with prospective and new members and listening to their stories. In this way, the rabbi is able to develop a personal and meaningful relationship with everyone who walks through our doors.

Jewish education is emphasized at Congregation Beth El. Our Religious school, headed by education director Michele Croft, is committed to its excellence. In addition to learning Hebrew, Jewish traditions, history, and values, we provide a safe space for our students to explore their faith and make friends with their Jewish peers. Our kids love coming to Beth El!

Throughout the year, we celebrate religious holidays and gather for social functions. We are a congregation that is ever-growing and developing, with a full range of congregational services. Our activities are continuously expanding as new programs are developed.



## WHO WE ARE

- ✧ A Reform congregation affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism dedicated to the development and propagation of a strong Jewish community in Fort Bend County and the surrounding areas
- ✧ Approximately two hundred members with a common goal
- ✧ A congregation committed to the continuation of our Jewish heritage through education and practice

## WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER

- ✧ A warm, welcoming, and inclusive Jewish community!
- ✧ Spiritually enriching Shabbat services
- ✧ High Holy Day services and joyous holiday celebrations
- ✧ Young family Shabbat and holiday programming
- ✧ Kindergarten through 12th grade religious school, with active PTO
- ✧ Engaging Jewish programming on Sundays for parents and children
- ✧ Bar/Bat Mitzvah training for children, beginning in grade 4
- ✧ Confirmation & senior graduation ceremonies
- ✧ BEFTY Senior Youth Group (affiliated with NFTY) and Junior Youth Group
- ✧ Active social groups for empty-nesters, young families, and seniors
- ✧ Community-building social events throughout the year for all ages
- ✧ Opportunities to create a better world through social action projects
- ✧ An opportunity to become an active part of our community with the ability to participate in and influence our present and future goals.
- ✧ Visit our web site: [www.betheltx.org](http://www.betheltx.org)

***For more information, contact our office at 281.499.5066 or [admin@betheltx.org](mailto:admin@betheltx.org)***

# MEET OUR STAFF

## ***Rabbi Ariel Sholklapper***

Rabbi Ariel Sholklapper earned a degree in philosophy and Jewish Studies at UCLA and was ordained at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. He also holds an MBA in Nonprofit Management. A native of Los Angeles, Rabbi Sholklapper trained as a Jewish mindfulness meditation teacher through the Institute for Jewish Spirituality. He loves to teach in a variety of settings including businesses, schools, nonprofits, and religious organizations and currently is on the staff of The Jung Center in Houston and The Jewish Mindfulness Center of Texas. He has facilitated retreats and mindfulness meditation groups all over the world. He lives in Houston with his wife, Rabbi Sarah Fort, and his adorable son, David.

## ***Cantor Renee Waghalter***

Cantor Renee Waghalter has served the Jewish community as a cantor since 1996, and as a Jewish educator since 1988. She was among the first to graduate from the Cantorial Internship of the Cantors Assembly program and earned her bachelor's degree in Judaic studies with honors at Brown University. Passionate about active participation during services and in all aspects of synagogue life, Cantor Waghalter strives to make Jewish praying, living and learning accessible, meaningful, and joyful. Cantor Waghalter grew up in Houston and became bat mitzvah at Congregation Emanu El. She makes her home in Southwest Houston with her husband, Dave, and son, Zev.

## ***Erin Bersin, Finance Director***

Erin, a native of Colorado, has called Texas her home since 1998. She attended Southern Methodist University and earned a degree in Financial Accounting. After graduation she moved to the Houston area and has been here ever since. She joined the temple staff in January 2017 and does an exceptional job at handling the accounts receivables/payables as well as all of business functions for the temple. Erin is married to Michael Bersin, and they are proud parents of two daughters.

## ***Marilyn Gorel, Office Manager***

Marilyn, grew up in Laredo, Texas, and received a degree in business from the University of Texas. She has been with Congregation Beth El 1994, first working as a pre-school teacher, then the Pre-school Director Assistant. She is now the face of the congregation in her role as Office Manager Marilyn is married to Lance Gorel, and they are the proud parents of two daughters.

## ***Norma Gonzales, Digital Specialist***

Norma, fourth generation Texan, has worked in Houston's Jewish community for over 15 years. Her career began as the Temple Administrator at Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism in Houston. She then moved on to be the Senior Rabbi's assistant and later Program Director at Congregation Beth Yeshurun. Norma joined the staff at Beth El in 2017 as the Administrator and now is using her graphics and creative skills as our first Digital Specialist. Norma is married to Rudy Gonzales and they are the proud parents of one son and seven daughters and doting grandparents to ten little people.

## ***Michele Croft, Director of Education***

Michele, a former New Englander, has called Texas her home since 1988. She attended the University of Vermont where she earned a degree in Elementary Education. She has her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in reading. Michele has been teaching for over 30 years. During this time, she has taught preschoolers through high school age students. Michele is married to her husband Wayne, and are the proud parents of two grown sons. They have been members of Congregation Beth El since 1991. She has taught in the religious all ages and is now the Interim Religious School Director.



# CONGREGATION BETH EL

*The Center of Jewish Life in Fort Bend County*

## Staff

<b>Rabbi</b>	<b>Rabbi Ariel Sholklapper</b>
<b>Cantor</b>	<b>Cantor Renee Waghalter</b>
<b>Finance Director</b>	<b>Erin Bersin</b>
<b>Office Manager</b>	<b>Marilyn Gorel</b>
<b>Digital Specialist</b>	<b>Norma Gonzales</b>
<b>Education Director</b>	<b>Michele Croft</b>

## Executive Board

<b>President</b>	<b>Michael Bersin</b>
<b>First Vice-President</b>	<b>Barbara Zack</b>
<b>Second Vice-President</b>	<b>Joe Nickels</b>
<b>Third Vice-President</b>	<b>Deb Paras</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Richard Friedman</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	
<b>Member at Large</b>	<b>Mark Shapiro</b>
<b>Member at Large</b>	<b>Ali Gratz</b>

## Committees

<b>Adult Education</b>	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Membership</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Financial Support</b>	<b>Ritual</b>
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Fundraising</b>	<b>Social Action</b>

## Auxiliary Groups

<b>BEFTY Youth Group</b>	<b>Caring Committee</b>	<b>Active Older Adults</b>
<b>Men's Club</b>	<b>Women's Book Club</b>	

To reach a board member or committee rep, call the temple office at 281.499.5066



# CONGREGATION BETH EL

The Center of Jewish Life in Fort Bend County

## Application for Membership

When you are ready to JOIN and have read the attached information, please fill out the following application and return it to our front office for processing.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Anniversary (M/D/Y): \_\_\_\_\_ Married  Single

Moving to this area from: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed  Divorced

### ADULT #1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Business: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one: Jewish by Birth Jewish by Choice Non-Jew

### ADULT #2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Business: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one: Jewish by Birth Jewish by Choice Non-Jew

### CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME (INCLUDE COLLEGE STUDENTS)

NAME (ENGLISH & HEBREW)	DATE OF BIRTH (M/D/Y)	NAME (ENGLISH & HEBREW)	DATE OF BIRTH (M/D/Y)

### ADULT CHILDREN NOT LIVING AT HOME

NAME (ENGLISH)	NAME (HEBREW)	ADDRESS

## PERSONS IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD OTHER THAN CHILDREN

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH (M/D/Y)	MARITAL STATUS	RELATIONSHIP

## DECEASED LOVED ONES FOR YAHRZEIT REMINDERS

\* Would you wish to be notified according to the English or the Hebrew date? \_\_\_\_\_ English      \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew

NAME	NOTIFY ENGLISH DATE * YAHRZEIT (MONTH/DAY/ YEAR)	NOTIFY HEBREW DATE * YAHRZEIT (MONTH/DAY/ YEAR)	RELATIONSHIP/RELATED TO (NAME) (I.E., PARENT,SIBLING,SPOUSE,CHILD OF ... )

Relationship to any present member of Beth El: \_\_\_\_\_

Friends who are members of Beth El: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you presently a member of another congregation?      yes                      no

If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_ If no, previous congregation \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear of Congregation Beth El? \_\_\_\_\_

## Activities

Mark any of the following groups which would interest you or a family member (please indicate which member)

\_\_\_\_\_ Brotherhood      \_\_\_\_\_ PTO      \_\_\_\_\_ BEFTY Youth Group  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sisterhood      \_\_\_\_\_ Seniors      \_\_\_\_\_

Have you or any member of your family had experience or training in leadership in any of the following: (please indicate which member)

\_\_\_\_\_ Leading Religious Service      \_\_\_\_\_ Leading Youth Group  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching Religious School      \_\_\_\_\_ Social Activities  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching Hebrew School      \_\_\_\_\_ Fund Raising

Interests/Hobbies

\_\_\_\_\_ Education      \_\_\_\_\_ Art      \_\_\_\_\_ Social Action  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Photography      \_\_\_\_\_ Social Media      \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish Holidays  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Food      \_\_\_\_\_ Sports      \_\_\_\_\_ Interfaith Activities  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish Culture      \_\_\_\_\_ Politics      \_\_\_\_\_ Israel  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Music and Dance      \_\_\_\_\_ Family Activities      \_\_\_\_\_ Nature

## Commitment

It is not our intent to turn anyone away if you cannot financially afford our commitment schedule.  
 Please request our special financial assistance form. Religious school forms are available in the office.  
 To attend Religious School, you must be a member of the temple.

# CONGREGATION BETH EL MEMBERSHIP 2020 – 2021 COMMITMENT SCHEDULE

Please look at the commitment schedule below, select the appropriate level and write in your commitment pledge. The suggested range is 2.5% of a member family's gross income.

Please note that High Holy Day tickets **ARE** included. Services including B'nai Mitzvah fees and Religious School are not included. The \$118 URJ Membership), \$150 Building Fund Fee, and \$72 Security Fee are not included in the below chart, you will add these at the bottom.

PLEASE CHECK ONE	TOTAL GROSS FAMILY INCOME	ANNUAL COMMITMENT (SUGGESTED RANGE)	COMMITMENT PLEDGED
	<\$25,000	\$600	
	\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$625 - \$1,250	
	\$50,001 - \$75,000	\$1,251 - \$1,875	
	\$75,001 - \$100,000	\$1,876 - \$2,500	
	\$100,001 - \$125,000	\$2,501 - \$3,125	
	\$125,001 - \$150,000	\$3,126 - \$3,750	
	\$150,001 - \$200,000	\$3,751 - \$5,000	
	<i>Chai-Life</i>	\$5,500	
	<i>Kavod-Honor</i>	\$7,500	
	<i>Tzedek-Righteousness</i>	\$10,000	

Dues Commitment	\$
URJ Membership Fee	\$118
Building Fund Fee	\$150
Security Fee	\$ 72
<b>TOTAL COMMITMENT</b>	\$

This form and all information contained herein will remain confidential and restricted for the use by the Finance Director, Treasurer and/or Treasurer Financial Support Committee.

**ADULT #1**      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

**ADULT #2**      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_