**Guiding Principles and Values**

* **Keeping Shabbat — “Rest on the seventh day,” (Exodus 23:12); “Don’t do any work.” (Exodus 20:10):** Resting from labor on the seventh day is a positive mitzvah, as [Torah] says, “Rest on the seventh day.” Anyone who does work on it negates the positive mitzvah, and also transgresses against a negative mitzvah, as it is said, “Don’t do any work.” (Rambam, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shabbat* 1:1)
* ***Mikdash M’at* / Sanctity of the Synagogue (Talmud, *Megillah* 29a):** “I [God] have been to them as a *mikdash m’at*, a little sanctuary.” R. Isaac said: This refers to the synagogue and houses of learning in Babylon. (Talmud, *Megillah* 29a)
* ***Oneg Shabbat* / Sabbath Joy — (Talmud, *Shabbat* 118a):** Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei: With regard to anyone who delights in the Shabbat, God gives him a boundless portion. (Talmud, *Shabbat* 118a)
* **Human Need for Rest and Rejuvenation:** Human beings are created in the “Divine Image” **(Genesis 1:27)**
* ***Shalom Bayit* (Keeping “Peace in the House”):** Beth Elohim’s commitment to pluralism means that we make allowances for a wide variety of Jewish practice
* **The Primacy of Doing “the Business of Heaven” (Talmud, *Shabbat* 150a):** But Rav Chisda and Rav Chamnuna both said: It is permitted to make calculations pertaining to a mitzvah on Shabbat, and Rabbi Elazar said that this means that one may apportion tzedakah for the poor on Shabbat. And Rabbi Ya’akov bar Idi said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: One may attend to activities necessary for saving a life or for saving the masses on Shabbat, and one may go to a synagogue to attend to communal affairs on Shabbat.

… it is permitted in these cases because the verse said: “Nor pursuing your business, nor speaking of it” (Isaiah 58:13), which indicates that your business matters are prohibited to speak of on Shabbat, but the business of Heaven, matters which have religious significance, is permitted to speak of. (Talmud, *Shabbat* 150a)

* The aspirational nature of this policy: Shabbat is a time of joy and rest, and refraining from work is one aspect of its joy. It is lovely to observe Shabbat in its glory and to think of the prohibitions positively. For many people, hearing a cell phone ring during services, for example, diminishes the joy of Shabbat. We recognize that it’s easy to make a mistake, and no one should be called out or shamed for that. We never want to embarrass someone who makes a mistake, but we want them to understand the effect it may have on others.

1. ***Chagim*  observed by CBE**

For purpose of this policy, the following Jewish Holidays are considered *Chagim:*

* Rosh Hashana
* Yom Kippur
* First Day of Sukkot
* Simchat Torah/ Shmini Atzeret
* First Day of Passover
* Seventh Day of Passover
* Shavuot

All *Chagim* shall be indicated as such in the CBE calendar.

1. **Communication via official CBE channels (including email, text, phone, Facebook, etc.)**

* No official communication shall be made via email, text, or phone until Shabbat or *chag* are over.
* Individual board members and committee leaders shall make every effort to resist communicating in an official capacity via email, text, or phone until Shabbat or *chag* are over.
* Except in the case of personal or communal emergencies, no congregation business shall be conducted on Shabbat or *chagim*, inside or outside of the building.
* Senior staff or lay leaders shall not post congregation-related matters to social media on Shabbat or *chagim*. It is the responsibility of the lay leadership to clearly communicate and reinforce this policy.
* Exceptions to all the above can be made for the purpose of *gemilut chasadim*, personally reaching out in kindness to individual members, or for “the business of Heaven,” such as visiting the sick or bringing food to those in need.
* These guidelines extend to all CBE-affiliated groups (e.g., Board of Directors, Committees, Brotherhood and Sisterhood, fundraising, social action, religious school, Early Learning Center, etc.).

1. **Synagogue programs and functions**

* Jewish religious services and Torah study are permitted at all times.
* No money shall be exchanged during Shabbat or *chagim*, except for gifts given *l’tzorech mitzvah* (for the sake of performing a mitzvah).
* Non-essential administrative synagogue functions (e.g., budgetary, communication, photocopying) shall be avoided on Shabbat or *chagim*.
* (Synagogue-organized) events at secular locations (concerts, sporting events) shall not be scheduled on Shabbat or *chag*. Exceptions for the sake of *oneg Shabbat* may be made, only in consultation with the rabbi with sufficient advance notice.
* Events or celebrations that occur on Shabbat or *chag*, or as either are coming to a close, shall include Jewish ritual components appropriate to the day and time (e.g., Kiddush, Havdalah).
* Writing for the enjoyment of the day (e.g., writing name tags, children making crafts) is permissible on Shabbat and *chag*. Writing for administrative and financial purposes shall be avoided.
* Halachically, candles should be lit prior to sundown on Shabbat. However, as many people do not light, it is our custom to give them the opportunity to light, and to enjoy ushering in the Sabbath at the beginning of services, with the hope that they may begin the custom at home.
* This does not include actions by private individuals separate from the synagogue

1. **Use of the building and facilities**

* Our synagogue is considered a *mikdash m’at*, a miniature sanctuary. Maintaining the sanctity of our space on Shabbat and *chag* is an essential element of that sanctity.
* The lighting of candles in order to enhance the sacred quality of Shabbat or *chag* is permissible.
* No permanent alterations or maintenance shall be made to the building, except in cases of structural or personal danger.
* Temporary adjustments within the building, such as changes to the sound system and climate control system, may be made solely for the purpose of *oneg Shabbat and chagim*, at the discretion of synagogue leaders.
* On Shabbat, the kitchen may only be used to prepare or reheat previously cooked food. Food may not be prepared from scratch on Shabbat.
* It’s permissible to cook on *chag* only if one intends to eat the food that’s prepared that day of *chag*. However, one may not cook for the next day whether it’s a weekday, *chag*, or Shabbat.
* Non-CBE affiliated groups shall not rent our facility for use on Shabbat and *chag*.
* Employees shall not be required to perform administrative or other non-essential synagogue functions on Shabbat and *chag*.
* Congregants and visitors shall not communicate via electronic devices in the sanctuary during Shabbat or *chag*. In all other places in the synagogue building, congregants and visitors are strongly discouraged from communicating via electronic devices during Shabbat and *chag*.
* Congregants may set up for events occurring in the building following Shabbat and *chagim*, only if no other time is available or practicable.
* Photography and video are permitted during services discreetly, as long as it is not disruptive to other members of the community.
* B’nai mitzvah photographers must agree to the photography policy in advance, as outlined in the B’nai Mitzvah manual.

1. **Special Considerations — Operation of the Early Learning Center**

* Social ELC events, whether on or offsite, shall not be held on Shabbat or *chag* without prior consultation with the Rabbi.
* If the ELC is open for a short time at the beginning of Shabbatot during the winter months, and on chagim for example, the first day of Pesach. We recognize that caring for young children is a Jewish value that, like *Pikuach Nefesh* supercedes observance of Shabbat. However, no administrative work should be done during this time.