

## **CBE Core Jewish Values**

September 2021/Tishrei 5782

Rabbi Mike and the CBE Board have asked our community to define the core Jewish values that help guide our decision-making. A congregant committee met with the Rabbi over many months to consider which Jewish values accurately reflect the identity and priorities of our community. We recognize that multiple and competing values are relevant in any difficult decision. The *process* of considering how these values influence the decision is at least as important as the decision itself.

### **B'tzelem Elohim – All Human Beings are Created in God's Image**

Because we see ourselves as containing a spark of the divine, we understand that every person has infinite worth, and we should always attempt to see the humanity in those we encounter. This attitude underlies many Jewish values.

- **Loving all People – Ahavat Habriyot**
  - All human beings deserve to be loved and to love others. Valuing love involves working to sustain and protect loving relationships.
- **Respecting all People – Kavod**
  - We respect the dignity of each human being and act in a way consistent with that dignity.
- **Saving a Life - Pikuach Nefesh**
  - A core Jewish value is that human life is sacred. Other commandments can be broken to save a life.

### **Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh baZeh – All Jews are Responsible for Each Other**

The Jews are one people with a shared history. We are responsible for each other regardless of differences in ideology or practice. We need each other, not just for survival, but to make the world a better place.

- **Kinship with all Jews – Ahavat Yisrael**
  - We care about and feel a connection to all Jews throughout our community and the world
- **Fiscal Responsibility – Torah chasa el mammon**
  - We recognize that resources are limited and that we have a responsibility to manage them carefully in order to ensure the sustainability of our work.
- **Love of Israel – Tziyonut**
  - We are committed to the welfare and safety of the State of Israel while we recognize the complex challenges of the region.

### **Gemilut Chasadim – Acts of Loving Kindness**

Members of our communities and our families deserve caring action simply because we share the bonds of interpersonal connection. Caring for each other is part of what makes us fully human.

- **Peace in the House – Shalom Bayit**
  - Those who share living space should be respected, nurtured and loved by each other. We see the “house” as not only our personal home but also our CBE house, our community.
- **Welcoming Guests – Hachnasat Orchim**
  - All are invited to visit and join our synagogue community and all are greeted warmly.
- **Kindness to Animals – Tzaar Ba'alei Chayim**
  - Animals are God's creatures so we should avoid cruelty and treat them with kindness.

## **Tikkun Olam – Repairing the World**

We live in a world that is far from perfect. Judaism has always had a vision of a world characterized by justice, sufficiency, harmony and peace. On the interpersonal, political, and environmental levels, there is an enormous amount to be done, and each good thing we do makes a difference.

- **Guarding the Earth – Sh'mirat HaAdamah**
  - We are the beneficiaries of Creation and serve as its stewards. Human beings do not ultimately own what is theirs in the world; it is on loan to us, and we are responsible for taking care of it.
- **Justice and Righteousness for all Communities – Tzedek**
  - To ensure just treatment means preserving human dignity and meeting basic human needs. We live in a just society only when every one of its members is treated justly.
- **Love of the Stranger – Ahavat haGer**
  - The Bible teaches us that “we were strangers in a strange land” so we have a responsibility to take care of the stranger in our midst.

## **Talmud Torah – Learning and Study**

We are a learning community and value lifelong education.

- **Intergenerational Education – V'shinantam L'vanecha**
  - From the ELC and the religious school to Adult Ed, we provide a welcoming, engaging space for all ages to learn.
- **Spiritual Exploration – Ruchaniyut**
  - What is the meaning of life? Why are we here? What happens after we die? We may not have the answers but we ask the questions together, as a community.
- **Study and Action – Torah im derech eretz**
  - We do not study simply to study, but to make positive change in our lives, in the lives of those we love, and in the world around us.

Sources:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com>

<https://www.reconstructingjudaism.org/article/attitudes-beliefs-and-values-shaping-jewish-practice>

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