



WELCOME !

We are delighted to welcome you as you consider membership in our congregation.

Congregation Shaar Hashalom is a Conservative Jewish synagogue of approximately 100 families located in Clear Lake near Houston, Texas. Our primary goals are to support and strengthen our Jewish way of life as individuals and families, and to enhance our Jewish identity as an active part of our local community.

Our synagogue is a friendly place to worship, learn, fellowship, and enjoy a vibrant Jewish lifestyle as part of the Houston Jewish community. Our weekly program includes Shabbat services on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, education programs on Sunday & Wednesday during the school year. We also enjoy a full calendar of Jewish holidays and celebrations throughout the year. Congregation Shaar Hashalom provides both a Hebrew school and a religious school to educate our children, and we support an active youth group program. We offer our adult members many opportunities to participate in educational, social and community service activities through our adult education program, Social Action committee and an active Sisterhood and Men's Club.

To protect the health and safety of our members and staff during the covid-19 pandemic, we are using online virtual media for all services, religious school, adult education, and social activities. We look forward to the fellowship of in person gatherings in our synagogue facilities as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our Membership Package is available online at <https://www.shaarhashalom.org/membership.html>, or you can pick up a printed package in the synagogue entry area. We use a "fair share" annual dues structure based on 2.5% of your adjusted gross income as reported on your federal income taxes. We also apply nominal annual fees to support our cantorial services for the High Holy Days, building maintenance, security and participation in the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. We have a one-time capital improvement fee that can be paid over three years. Religious school tuition is additional to these membership dues and fees. We are sensitive to the financial challenges that many of our families face, and we invite you to discuss your "fair share" contributions, with our assurance of your total privacy.

Congregation Shaar Hashalom is a friendly and caring family. We look forward to your affiliation, adding your talents, energy and fellowship to our community at whatever level of participation is comfortable for you. Our Rabbi, Stuart Federow, and our Board members are eager to share more information about our synagogue and answer your questions. Please call our office (10am-2pm, Tuesday-Friday) at 281.488.5861 or send an email to membership@shaarhashalom.org with your questions and comments.

Please join us making Congregation Shaar Hashalom a vibrant Jewish presence in Clear Lake!

Cheryl Sigel

Cheryl Sigel, President
President@ShaarHaShalom.org



Rabbi Federow

Dear Prospective Member,

Please join our congregation and make yourself a home!

So often, people express their dislike for “organized religion.” But they will organize with others for the things they wish to accomplish. Two examples are that they will create with others a little league for their children to play baseball, or they will join a civic organization to help the community in which they live. People organize to get things done, they organize to accomplish goals that they have in common with others and to create a safe environment to do the things that interest them. Organizing around religion is no different. We organize around our common religious Belief System known as Judaism to educate ourselves and our children in our common history, values, beliefs, and rituals. We organize around religion to pray together with others of the same faith, and those who are interested in our faith. Judaism is not what your rabbi or your congregation does for you. ***Judaism is what you do for yourself!*** If you should join us and become a member of Shaar Hashalom, you would not be alone in living your Jewish life. You would be a part of a congregation that organizes together to be active, involved, and creative.

As a member, should you have ideas for any kind of programming please share them with us, and together we can turn your ideas into reality. We look forward to working together, but we cannot do anything without your help. Attend our Shabbat, Holiday and Holy Day services. Volunteer for our congregational committees and/or serve on our Board of Directors. We need you to make Shaar Hashalom an environment where you will be free to take advantage of Jewish programming in a variety of areas of possible interest. I will be teaching classes in Judaic studies, and we have discussions concerning the Torah Portion at every Shabbat morning service. We have active adult education programs, and a vibrant religious school which serves toddlers through Confirmation. We have educational, social, as well as social action, and religious events throughout the year.

I would love to become your rabbi! I will help you in any way I can and for anything that concerns your religious needs. Ask questions of me, learn about Judaism and the Jewish People. I will be there for you to the best of my ability, so long as you make your needs known to me. Please feel free to call me at home, at the office, or on my cell. If you want to meet with me, please call and we can schedule an appointment.

Again, I invite you to join us!

Rabbi Stuart Federow

Rabbi@ShaarHaShalom.org

Home: 281-499-8080

Cell: 281-732-4206



Religious School Curriculum

Our religious school's mission is to provide our students with a warm environment and a comprehensive Jewish education. We have programming for children from Pre-Kindergarten through the Tenth Grade. The school offers a curriculum that stresses a strong foundation in Jewish history, Israel, observance of Jewish rituals, customs, ceremonies, and Modern Hebrew as well as Hebrew prayer skills that enable them to be comfortable with the Conservative prayer book.

The school is open on Sunday mornings for Pre-K to Tenth Grade. Parental involvement is strongly encouraged. It is only with the parents' help, participation and encouragement that our children will embrace our teachings with joy.

Using drama, storytelling, crafts, and songs, children in the primary grades (Pre-K to 2nd Grade) are introduced to Torah stories, Israel and Mitzvot. They experience the classroom as a model Jewish home where they give Tzedakah, celebrate Shabbat, and discover the rituals and customs of our Jewish holidays. They learn about the synagogue by visiting the sanctuary, dressing the Torah, and participating in children's services. In a playful, entertaining setting, they begin developing a basic Hebrew vocabulary while learning the Alef Bet. When they get to Second Grade, they begin reading and writing basic words in Hebrew.

In the middle grades (3rd to 7th grades), our students learn about Jewish wisdom in action. They connect the Jewish values they discover through stories and biblical texts to their daily life, and they understand the role they can play in the community. They not only celebrate the holidays in the classroom, but understand their meaning and learn the main prayers. They are introduced to the ceremonies surrounding life cycle events such as Brit Milah, Naming, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Confirmation, Weddings and Funerals. They travel through time to discover the secrets of Jewish history from Abraham to the present time, in Israel and the Diaspora. They learn about significant Jews throughout the generations and explore which of these "heroes" can serve as role models. By the Seventh Grade, our students know more about our past so that they can better understand our present.

In Hebrew, they progress with more reading and writing skills and expanding their vocabulary as they discover Modern Hebrew stories. The focus is on being comfortable with the Conservative prayer book. Our teachers also try to interject modern conversation skills wherever they can. Shaar Hashalom prides itself on our children who are essentially able to LEAD Shabbat services by the end of the Seventh Grade. We have an excellent Bar/Bat Mitzvah program with months of one-to-one instruction that is geared towards the child's skill level. Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Shaar Hashalom is a very special community event as the whole congregation is invited to witness and celebrate each child's entrance into Jewish adulthood at our Shabbat services.

Our Pre-Confirmation and Confirmation programs (8th to 10th Grades) are very exciting for the students as they delve much deeper into Jewish issues and finding their place in the world using Judaism as their springboard. Subjects such as ethics, mitzvot (commandments), tikkun olam (repairing the world), social action, the Holocaust, Jews around the world, Israel, the Middle East, responding to missionaries, and life cycle events are all explored in a deeper way to give our students a solid foundation on the meaning of being Jewish and developing a personal Jewish identity.



The last year, Tenth Grade, is spent with the rabbi as their teacher and many subjects are explored such as the afterlife, abortion, medical research, euthanasia, and anything about which the children have questions. The school year culminates in a lovely Confirmation service led by the students.

We also have an active Education committee consisting of parent volunteers who help to support the school, offer assistance with the special programs that are held throughout the year, problem-solve issues that may arise, and help to advise the Education director. We try to offer as much family involvement as we are able, and hold special events for every Jewish Holy Day, including a huge Community Purim Carnival. The congregation Men's Club and Sisterhood also work to support the school programs as everyone recognizes that our future lies in our children. Congregation Shaar Hashalom has a wonderful welcoming warm attitude towards our children, and we hope you will join us.

Allie Epstein

Education Vice President

Education@ShaarHaShalom.org

Katy Izygon

Education Director

Education-Dir@ShaarHaShalom.org



Youth Group

Welcome to Congregation Shaar HaShalom (CSH) Youth Group! We are a casual bunch of friends who like to hang out, have fun, and sometimes get into some shenanigans. We come from all walks of Jewish life. This is a judgement free zone where you can come and just be yourself!

We like to meet regularly for some youth group fun, to have game nights and lock in's, or to do service projects. We are also members of CLUSY and Kadima (see below), which hosts events for Jewish youth in our area and all over the world.

Clear Lake United Synagogue Youth (CLUSY) is an organization for Jewish teenagers in the Clear Lake Area. Teenagers from **9th to 12th grade** are eligible to join CLUSY. The youth group keeps young members involved with their religion while they spend time with their friends. CLUSY members are involved in community service projects and participate in social programs. CLUSY plans both local and Houston city-wide events that include USY groups from all over the Houston area. There are also regional, national and international USY conventions.

Kadima is an organization for Jewish pre-teens and teens in the Clear Lake Area. Kids from **5th to 8th grade** are eligible to join Kadima. Like CLUSY, this youth group keeps members involved with their religion while they spend time with their friends and enjoy making new ones. Kadima members also participate in social programs and have local, city-wide events as well as regional conventions.

Kristi Doss

Youth Group Leader

YouthGroup@ShaarHaShalom.org



Adult Education

The opportunities for learning and fun are endless!

Jewish tradition teaches that education is a lifelong journey that enriches our lives and spirits. At Congregation Shaar Hashalom, we are excited to offer a wide range of adult learning opportunities, with classes and activities for every interest.

The Adult Education Committee sponsors interesting programs throughout the year including various speakers, hands on learning opportunities, films and day trips. We select a wide array of topics to meet the diverse interests and needs of our Congregation members and the local community. We sponsor paper-shredding events, a monthly Bingo game and some really fun talent shows. We also organize the delivery of specialty Jewish baked goods to our Synagogue for Rosh Hashanah and Passover catered meals.

Our Rabbi provides scheduled classes on topics related to the Jewish holidays and feasts throughout the year. On a continuing basis, the Rabbi conducts classes on "An Introduction to Judaism / All About Judaism" along with an informal "Lunch with Rabbi" each week with an open invitation to discuss virtually any topic that is on your mind. In addition, we offer the opportunity for Adult Hebrew classes as well as Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah class for those who might have these interests.

Come and learn with us! Our journey of learning never ends. And, after all, why should the kids have all the fun?

Sandy Ostrosky

Adult Education Trustee

AdultEd@ShaarHaShalom.org



Sisterhood

Shalom! The Shaar Hashalom's Sisterhood would like to invite you to become a member. Our CSH Sisterhood group is nationally affiliated with the Women's League of Conservative Judaism, and offers a rich mosaic of benefits to its members. Sisterhood is a way to enrich Jewish life in the synagogue as well as in the community. We are active in the promotion of women's roles in Judaism, and in our egalitarian synagogue.

Our Sisterhood sponsors many social events and holiday celebrations, High Holy Days babysitting and a Yom Kippur Break-the-Fast. Sisterhood manages a comprehensive and lovely gift shop, is supportive of our religious school and has always been a loyal and generous supporter of our synagogue. Through the years, we have made major financial and other contributions to the synagogue including such items as sanctuary chairs, multi-purpose six and eight-foot folding tables, room dividers, the office copy machine, and a kitchen when the synagogue was constructed.

Sisterhood has programs, scheduled speakers, meetings, and other social events. Some of our social gatherings include our annual paid-up membership event and Chanukah social. Yearly we support an author presentation at the JCC Book Fair, provide "Mishloach Manot" bags for each congregation family as well as have enriching, fun experiences at our Sisterhood Shabbaton.

Membership at Congregation Shaar Hashalom is not a requirement for Sisterhood membership – it is open to all Jewish women. Our annual dues are \$36 for congregation members and \$40 for non-members with a special new congregation member offer of \$20 for the 1st year. Dues even include the special paid-up event held in the fall!

As a vital arm of the synagogue, the Sisterhood connects and supports the women of CSH. Our vision is to include every woman at Shaar HaShalom. Together, we can accomplish anything!

Nurit Mittlefehldt

Heather McKnight

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

Sisterhood@ShaarHaShalom.org



Men's Club

We would like to invite you to become a member of the Congregation Shaar Hashalom Men's Club. Our Men's Club provides fellowship, social activities and a variety of events that connect men of all ages within our congregation and encourages lasting friendships based on camaraderie, common interests, and Jewish values.

To protect the safety of our members and staff during the covid-19 pandemic, we are using online virtual media for all activities. As a result, our Men's Club agenda has been somewhat limited. We look forward to the fellowship of in person gatherings as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our Men's Club activities have involved a variety of social events along with supporting the congregation religious school. In past years, we enjoyed these fun activities:

- Coffee & Bagel breakfasts
- Football tailgating parties
- Going to sporting events
- Poker nights
- World Wide Wrap: Teaching how to use Tefillin
- Kosher Chili Cook-off
- Yom Hashoah Yellow Candle Project
- Religious School Purim Carnival
- Annual Congregation Picnic

Whatever your interests are, we try to provide something for everyone. As a new member of the synagogue, your Men's Club dues are free for the first year and then only \$45 per year thereafter.

We extend our warm welcome and look forward to sharing a nice conversation with you over a bagel and coffee as soon as possible.

Please address any questions about the Men's Club to:

Jay Sigel

jaybsigel@gmail.com



Social Action Committee

Interfaith Food Bank

Congregation Shaar Hashalom actively participates, along with our interfaith community, in a local food bank/pantry with our friends at the Clear Lake Baptist Church. Through our joint efforts, we are serving food to thousands of people in our community.

Yom Kippur Food Drive

At Yom Kippur, one of the reasons we fast is to remind ourselves of the hunger many people face throughout the year. Make this New Year's fast still more meaningful by bringing nonperishable foods to donate for our Yom Kippur Food Drive. Our tradition at CSH is to donate the equivalent of food that each of our family members would normally eat during this 24 hour period. Each year, the Yom Kippur Food Drive sends donations to our local Food Banks in the Greater Clear Lake area.

Purim Food Drive

Giving of Mishloach Manot - The source for Mishloach Manot is found in the book of Esther in chapter 9. Immediately after the military victory over their enemies the Jews celebrated and established a day of festivities and joy, called Purim. The way they celebrated this holiday was by having a big feast, the giving of "Mishloach Manot Ish L'Re'ehu" (gifts of food to one's friends), and giving money to the poor (9:19,22). Here at Congregation Shaar HaShalom, we also have a tradition. Each year, our Purim Food Drive collects donations for the various Food Banks in the Greater Clear Lake area.

Blessing of the Animals

The Mishnah teaches that the beginning of the month of Elul was "the new year of the animals" used to calculate the age of animals used as offerings. At CSH, we observe that designated date as one of celebration of our animal companions. We bring our dogs, cats, chickens, guinea pigs, fish, etc. to the CSH, where we offer blessings to our animal friends!

Bagels at Bay Area Farmer's Market

We have organized and brought to our Clear Lake community, the sale of bagels and other deli items from the New York Bagel Bakery & Café from across town at the Bay Area Mall on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in placing an advance order or want more details, please visit their web site at www.nybagelcafe.com.

The Social Action Committee of CSH invites you to participate in these important community activities. Our participation in our Clear Lake community supports CSH and the interfaith community. For more information, please contact the office 281-488-5861 or at socialaction@shaarhashalom.org.

Risa Stein

Social Action Trustee

SocialAction@ShaarHaShalom.org



Financial Commitment Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Determining your level of financial commitment:

Member dues payments account for 70% of the synagogue's revenue. We use these funds to pay for the education, programs and services that CSH provides for our Jewish community. You are welcome to contact our Financial Secretary with any questions you might have about our dues structure or to discuss your financial situation, with our assurance of your privacy.

	<u>Amount</u>
Annual Membership Dues	
<i>Based on 2.5% of your AGI from your Federal taxes</i>	
<i>(For example, AGI from last year was \$50,000,</i>	
<i>then calculate $\\$50,000 \times .025 = \\$1,250$)</i>	\$ _____
• Building Maintenance & Capital Improvement Fund	+ \$75.00
• USCJ Annual Dues Assessment	+ \$74.50
• Cantor Annual Assessment	+ \$70.00
• Security Annual Assessment	+ \$36.00
Total Annual Commitment	\$ _____

By signing below, I/we commit to pay the amount above each fiscal year (July-Jun)

Date: _____

Member(s): _____

Thank you for your generous financial support of Congregation Shaar HaShalom. If you have any questions regarding these forms or to submit it, please email Finance-Sec@ShaarHaShalom.org or mail Shaar HaShalom, 16020 El Camino Real, Houston, TX, 77062 attention FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

Gin Nixon

Financial Secretary

Finance-Sec@ShaarHaShalom.org





Membership Application Form

Today's Date: _____

Family Information

Family Last Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Married (Date: _____) Single Divorced Widow Years in Houston: _____

Household Members

Adult 1

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Email: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Hebrew Name: _____ Cohen Levi Yisroel

Religious Tradition: Conservative Reform Orthodox Reconstructionist Non-Jewish

Father's Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Cohen Levi Yisroel

Mother's Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Cohen Levi Yisroel

Adult 2

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Email: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Hebrew Name: _____ Cohen Levi Yisroel

Religious Tradition: Conservative Reform Orthodox Reconstructionist Non-Jewish

Father's Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Cohen Levi Yisroel

Mother's Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Cohen Levi Yisroel



Children

Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Birth Date: _____

Living at Home / In College _____

Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Birth Date: _____

Living at Home / In College _____

Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Birth Date: _____

Living at Home / In College _____

Name: _____ Hebrew Name _____ Birth Date: _____

Living at Home / In College _____

Yahrzeits

English Name _____ Hebrew Name, Ben/Bat _____

Related To (ex. Mother of *Whom?*) _____ Date of Death (MM/DD/Year) _____

English Name _____ Hebrew Name, Ben/Bat _____

Related To (ex. Mother of *Whom?*) _____ Date of Death (MM/DD/Year) _____

English Name _____ Hebrew Name, Ben/Bat _____

Related To (ex. Mother of *Whom?*) _____ Date of Death (MM/DD/Year) _____

Current member of another congregation? Yes No

Congregation Name: _____

Location: _____

Past member of another congregation? Yes No

Congregation Name: _____

Location: _____

When? _____



Areas of Interest / Volunteer Opportunities (Please check all that apply)

Activity	Adult 1	Adult 2
Adult Education		
Bulletin/Website		
Facilities		
Fundraising		
Membership		
Publicity		
Religious School		
Ritual		

Activity	Adult 1	Adult 2
Youth Group		
Men's Club		
Sisterhood		
Social Action		
Singles Programs		
Seniors Programs		
Young Family Programs		
Office Assistance		

How can CSH best meet your needs?

Please email your completed Membership Application Form to:
Finance-Sec@ShaarHaShalom.org

Or, you can send it by postal mail to:
Congregation Shaar HaShalom, 16020 El Camino Real, Houston, TX, 77062
(attention FINANCIAL SECRETARY)

Bill Rothschild
Membership Trustee
Membership@ShaarHaShalom.org

