

CONGREGATION AHAVAS ACHIM  
SHABBAT POLICY  
2015

*If one observes and celebrates the Sabbath it is as if they have fulfilled the entire Torah.  
(Talmud).*

*The Sabbath is the sign of the everlasting covenant between God and People of Israel (Exodus).*

It is hard to overstate the importance of Shabbat in the Jewish Tradition. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> of Ten Commandments; it is considered a holier day than either Yom Kippur or Passover; it is the first Mitzvah we received as a nation after leaving Egypt; and the Torah urges us to contemplate Shabbat (even during the week!) on a continuous basis. Above all, the observance of Shabbat is seen as the perfect expression of the pivotal Jewish idea that worship of God and love of humanity are two sides of the same coin. The Sabbath both recognizes God as the creator of the universe and, at the same time, creates a world with more social equality (**everyone** rests including employees, animals etc.) and social harmony (a day of joy and feasting).

Shabbat is also one of the most difficult Jewish practices to fully observe. Particularly in the hectic world we live in, taking 24 hours every week to rest, be grateful and strengthen ones connection to God is not an easy task. Coming to synagogue on Shabbat is the perfect way to make Shabbat a living reality in your life.

Shabbat is not only about “do nots” it is also about “dos.” Shabbat is like a symphony, numerous elements all in play together creating a joyous and holy atmosphere. We all choose to observe Shabbat in a different way but when we come to synagogue we want to ensure that every person present experiences the gift of Shabbat. It is to this purpose that this Shabbat policy is written as an update to CAA policies dating back to 1988.

Every effort should be made to ensure appropriate observance on the premises and at functions away from the synagogue which are sponsored by the congregation and that they be essentially spiritual in quality and purpose. To reflect the sanctity of the Sabbath day, please be mindful when coming to synagogue to wear clothing honoring Shabbat.

Therefore, the following are not permitted: video or still photography, recording, and electronic communications. Cell phones must be silenced or remain off. Also excluded are: smoking, writing, handling of money, candle lighting, social dancing, entertainment and recorded or live music. Acoustic instruments are permitted on Friday night in the social hall only, when used for spiritual and not entertainment purposes.

As stated in the Kashrut Policy, no cooking, including brewing coffee is permitted on Shabbat. Automatic timers set before Shabbat may be used to brew coffee or hot water.

One should not shop on Shabbat for congregation functions, or use email or telephone to communicate synagogue related matters on Shabbat.

All of the above notwithstanding, preservation of health and life is a mitzvah which overrides all restrictions.