

ברית חברות

Jewish Congregation of Brookville Brit Haverut—Covenant of Membership June 2009—Sivan 5769

The concept of covenant—brit—is central to Jewish life. At Mount Sinai the Jewish people willingly entered into a covenant with God. This covenant entailed obligations upon the people—to live by God's Torah, as well as obligations upon God—to stand by the Jewish people. Our history is a record of how we have lived up to these obligations. Jewish history is a testimony of how our God and our people have at times drawn apart and at other times drawn toward each other. The purpose of the obligations of the Jewish covenant is to pull a people and its Creator together.

It is this model of a covenant life which we wish to apply to our Congregation, the Jewish Congregation of Brookville. Like every American synagogue and the vast majority of volunteer organizations, there are dues to belong to our congregation. We require dues and donations in order to run the myriad of programs and services we offer. In becoming a member of our synagogue community, you indicate your acceptance of your spiritual and financial obligations to your synagogue community. In turn, the synagogue and its leadership pledge to live up to its covenantal responsibilities.

The congregation's financial needs create the impression, however, that our synagogue is a fee for service agency. This is not the case. We are more than a conglomeration of fees and services. We wish to be a holy community—kehillah kedoshah.

To belong to a holy community requires obligations and responsibilities.

To accept a covenant implies mutual obligations and responsibilities.

JCB

Rabbi Steven Henson Moskowitz
Talya Smilowitz, Cantorial Soloist
Kim Bertash, Education Director
Marie Pindus and Debbie Rechler, Co-Presidents

The Jewish Congregation of Brookville makes the following pledges to you, its loyal member:

- 1. To lead inspiring, joyous Shabbat and holiday prayer services.*
- 2. To offer a range of creative educational opportunities for adults and children*
- 3. To offer a warm, welcoming environment to all who enter our doors.*
- 4. To serve as your Jewish conscience reminding you of what is important and lasting.*
- 5. To build your connections to the Jewish people, past and present, and foster your*
- 6. attachment to the land and State of Israel.*
- 7. To stand by your side during times of difficulty and loss as well as during times of joy.*

The Jewish tradition makes a three-fold demand on its adherents: Torah study (talmud torah), prayer (avodah) and acts of loving-kindness (gemilut hasadim). As a member of the Jewish Congregation of Brookville I agree to fulfill the following obligations to my community to the best of my abilities:

- 1. To attend Shabbat and holiday services on a regular basis.*
- 2. To pray at home with my family and to observe many of Judaism's beautiful home rituals.*
- 3. To take advantage of the many learning opportunities for adults and to challenge myself to learn something new about my Jewish tradition. To teach my children and grandchildren about the beauty and joy of the Jewish way of life.*
- 4. To help those in need, reaching out to the broken world around me and in particular to give tzedakah to those less fortunate than I.*
- 5. To offer comfort to those in mourning, to visit the sick and to reach out to my fellow congregants.*

These obligations I willingly take upon myself. I recognize that the more I do, the more I will feel a part of the Jewish Congregation of Brookville; the more I will feel connected to other members of my holy congregation, the more I will feel closer to my God and my tradition. The more I do the more meaning I will add to my life.

JCB

**Rabbi Steven Henson Moskowitz
Talya Smilowitz, Cantorial Soloist
Kim Bertash, Education Director
Marie Pindus and Debbie Rechler, Co-Presidents**