



Membership Contribution Guidelines and FAQs

Congregation Shir Libeynu is an inclusive and welcoming part-time community that strives to fully meet the needs of all our members. Our *Pay What You Can* donation model, first introduced three years ago, is intended to ensure that programming costs are fully supported, while remaining open to all who wish to join, regardless of means. We firmly believe in the idea of “from each according to their ability”, and ask you to consider the importance of the continued availability of this special Jewish space where everyone is truly welcome to come as you are, with all of your identities honoured.

What your annual donation supports

The contribution you commit to will help to support:

- Membership for those who are unable to pay the recommended minimum;
- Salaries (Spiritual Leader, Administrator);
- Shabbat, High Holy Day services*;
- Other programs including our AGM; Purim and Chanukah celebrations; adult learning programming; costs of venue rentals, tech support, kiddush, childcare, musicians, and more;
- Communications technology including database fees, Zoom fees and tech support during services; website support; newsletter tool, and more;
- Honoraria for guest speakers; and
- Other administrative costs including wages for our bookkeeper; insurance; banking fees and other professional service fees as needed.

Revenue streams

We have four sources of revenue:

- Your Membership Contributions, which makes up 99% of all revenue;
- Fees for simchas;
- Donations/Fundraising;
- Reserves (only if necessary);

What are the Benefits of Membership?

Membership provides an opportunity to belong to a vibrant, diverse and unique Jewish community in downtown Toronto, and includes:

- Admission to all our High Holy Day services*;
- Spiritual guidance and support for life cycle events from our spiritual leader, Cantor Cheryl Wunch;
- Monthly Shabbat Services
- Unlimited opportunities to actively participate in our services and programs -- read Torah, read in English, join the High Holy Day choir, sound shofar and more!
- Enjoyment of our adult engagement programs including our monthly Lunch and Learn;
- Pride events and services, and not just during Pride Month;
- A vote at our Annual General Meeting;
- Informative and informational monthly newsletters;
- Opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors;
- Celebrating B'Mitzvah with Congregation Shir Libeynu**
- Receiving Yahrtzeit and simcha reminders;
- Availability for purchase of burial plots in the Shir Libeynu section of Beit Olam, which welcomes people of Jewish faith, interfaith families and those with Jewish connection;
- Access to the larger Toronto Jewish community through alliances and sharing of information;
- Other special holiday services such as Selichot, Purim, Chanukah.

*Most synagogues charge additionally for High Holy Day attendance at rates higher than our recommended minimums. In addition, we are pleased to once again be offering a hybrid of online and in-person services held at venues where this is possible.

**Fees in addition to membership donations apply.

Is there a minimum donation required?

To help determine your level of giving, the board has created giving guidelines. You are encouraged to view these amounts as the **suggested minimum** levels of contribution, and ***if you have the means, to give above those minimums in the true spirit of paying what you can.***

The **suggested minimums are per person** and are set by the board during our budgeting process with the goal of having enough resources to meet our obligations and commitments to members and to the broader community.

How is the minimum calculated?

The minimum suggested membership donation is arrived at by dividing the operating budget of the synagogue by the number of current dues paying members.

For the coming year, that calculation comes to an actual cost of \$800 per adult.

To allow those who can afford more than our suggested minimum to help those who cannot, we provide a sliding scale of suggested minimum contributions with descriptions of how those contributions will help us to maintain our community.

NEW THIS YEAR

To assist families, we have extended free membership to all children up to age 18, and we are asking for consideration of a minimum donation of \$250 for people from 19-26 years of age.

Fine. But how much should I really give?

In these times of increasing costs we ask all members to do the very best you can. All contributions should be made on a per person basis. Despite rising costs, with the above noted exception, we have held our recommended minimums at last year's rate in order to make giving easier for you.

If you are unable to contribute at the higher end of the scale (see chart below), please help us meet rising costs if you can by adding at least 10% per person more than you contributed last year. **If you don't remember how much you contributed last year,** contact Amanda at shirlibeynuadmin@gmail.com and she will look it up for you.

Payment

We encourage those who are able to pay in full when you complete your membership form.

If, however, you feel you will be able to give more by spreading your payments out over the year, or if you are struggling and paying over time will make it easier for you, please consider opting for the quarterly payment plan. If you require a different payment arrangement, please **contact Amanda at** shirlibeynuadmin@gmail.com

Of course, regardless of the amount contributed, all members have equal access to the Congregation Shir Libeynu member benefits listed above.

SUGGESTED PWYC MINIMUM COMMITMENT LEVELS PER PERSON
We welcome contributions per person of any amount. Please consider the following suggested minimum amounts*.

NIL	\$250+ per person	\$800+ per person	\$1250+ per person	\$1500+ per person	\$2500+ per person	\$5000+ Per person
Ages 18 and under	Ages 19-26; full-time students; people on a fixed income	Sustaining membership for adults aged 27+	Help us meet our community goals by donating this amount (\$800 adult donation plus an extra \$450+)	Top up the contribution of those who cannot afford the fully suggested minimum by donating this amount (\$800 adult donation plus an extra \$700+)	Help us restore our reserves by donating this amount (\$800 adult donation plus an extra \$1700+)	Help us improve and sustain our programming by donating this amount (\$800 adult donation plus an extra \$4200+)

***100% of your contribution is tax deductible**

Your contribution ensures that we are able to continue to offer high quality, low barrier, and inclusive programming throughout the year. There aren't sufficient words to express the board's appreciation for your generosity at this time. We thank you, and we look forward to seeing you at upcoming services and programmes throughout the year.

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