



MAKE IT YOUR OWN!

How We Build Our Community

Hi,

As you already know, BEKI is a warm, vibrant and active synagogue. LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY!

To build and maintain this wonderful community takes the efforts of many, MANY people. No one can (or SHOULD) do it alone!

Please read through the list that follows.

Are there perhaps 1 or 2 (or more) ways in which you can help? There is no obligation - only the desire to lend your time, interest and skills to make BEKI even better.

Check off all that you are interested in helping to happen.

- Abatement (Financial Obligations Evaluation) Committee
As a diverse community, there are sometimes circumstances that arise in which special financial arrangements must be considered to enable our congregants to continue or begin membership in the synagogue. This small committee functions with total discretion and confidentiality.
- Adult Education
There is, at present, no formal committee functioning. Most educational programming is overseen by the Programming Committee. If this is an area of particular interest to you, your leadership and creativity would be very welcome.
- Annual Yizkor Memorial Book
Our annual Yizkor Memorial Book is updated each year before the High Holy Days to be used first at the Yizkor Memorial Service on Yom Kippur and then throughout the year as Yizkor is recited (Sukkot, Pesach, Shavuot). This committee prepares communications to the community, revises the book each year per member requests, and is responsible for the design and printing of the books each year.
- Art and Decoration Committee
The aesthetics of our synagogue add to our enjoyment of the space, and can serve to educate us and open our imaginations. Work on planning our rotating art exhibits and on our permanent collection.
- Audio/Visual – Photography
Digital (and other) Media . Whether it's recording events at the synagogue for our own archives and publications (photo or video), or helping to make sure that a-v equipment being used for programming is in working order and properly set-up, you're help is needed. If you can program DVR, etc., consider offering your services.
- BEKI Bulletin
Help is always needed to write and research articles of interest to our community, publicize events, edit, proofread, layout, print and mail (via snail and electronically). The Bulletin is sent to a wide circle of BEKI members, friends, businesses and community organizations and should reflect the imagination and quality of our community.

- **BEKI Green Team (Environmental initiatives)**
Conservation, environmental awareness, energy efficiency, recycling, composting kitchen waste and related concerns are addressed by a concerned and dedicated workgroup the “Green Team”. Join us.
- **BEKI Men’s Club**
Although not recently active at BEKI, for many years the Men’s Club met weekly and spearheaded many programs for the synagogue. A small group of men are interested in reviving the group. If you are interested in this effort, this is for you.
- **BEKI Oral History**
BEKI has a very rich history spanning 120 years! Be part of an effort to gather stories from our veteran members, and learn and preserve them for generations to come. Those interested in research, interviewing, archiving, videotaping, editing are especially encouraged to participate...or, if you have a story about BEKI you want to tell.
- **BEKI Religious School PTO**
This committee would be the primary vehicle for parents to be involved in shaping and supporting the religious school. The committee organizes volunteer support for school activities and provides a forum for constructive feedback about the school.
- **BEKI Sisterhood**
An historically essential arm of synagogue programming and financial support, our Sisterhood, which is affiliated with the Women’s League of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, continues to present numerous programs through the year, and overseas the following in BEKI’s interest: Sisterhood Giftshop, Marcel Gutman Scholarship Fund, Book of Life Award (and lobby listings), Torah Fund Supper in support of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Special Needs Seder and provides Goody Bags and Flags for children at holiday time.
- **B’nei Mitzva Qiddush Committee**
In response to a demonstrated need for more affordable b’nei mitzva qiddush celebrations, this group of BEKI volunteers came together with the goal of creating a sustainable committee to enable all families, regardless of their financial resources, to celebrate B’nai Mitzvah on Shabbat at BEKI. The committee plans, shops for and prepares a beautiful festive meal for those families participating.
- **Book Club**
We are hoping to revive the BEKI Book Club and expect to meet monthly. Volunteers needed to offer assistance in coordinating, scheduling and publicizing meetings.
- **Brunches**
Several times a year, between October and June, BEKI members and others are provided the opportunity to share a Sunday brunch of eggs, bagels, babka, etc., while hearing a presentation on and discussing a topic of interest to the community. The speakers come from our synagogue’s diverse membership as well as from outside the community, and offer various perspectives on Jewish and contemporary life. Suggestions for speakers and help with food preparation are always needed!
- **Budget & Finance**
The Budget and Finance committee addresses the financial requirements of BEKI whether it be collections of outstanding dues and charges, establishing an operating budget for the current year, policy on endowment distribution, assistance with abatement issues, investment issues, and any miscellaneous requirements of the Board.
- **Capital Campaign**
Legacy gifts are the focus of our long-range and capital development. We are speaking with supporters one-by-one to explore estate gifts to insure the vitality of the community; the response has been encouraging. We are also calling on some supporters about immediate needs for projects that include window replacement, masonry repair, heating-cooling equipment and sanctuary sound improvement.

- **Cemetery Association**
 The BEKI Cemetery Association is charged with the responsibility for oversight and maintenance of records, documents, and the physical grounds of the Beth El cemetery in Hamden and the Keser Israel cemetery in West Haven and for the sale of plots in both.
- **Chant Haftora**
 These readings from Prophets are chanted weekly following the Shabbat Torah reading by congregants familiar with the beautiful and special haftora trope.
- **Deli Boxes**
 Beginning in 1992, our annual Deli Boxes program and sale is our sole major fundraiser in support of our joint BEKI/BJ Youth Programs. Culminating each year on Superbowl Sunday, it requires planning, shopping, accounting, and mass amounts of volunteer help to assemble the orders. Program is under the auspices of the joint BEKI/BJ Youth Commission.
- **Desktop Publishing Projects**
 Volunteers are needed for desktop publishing throughout the year to work on regular and special projects:
 - Flyers
 - Booklets
 - Yizkor Memorial Book
 - Synagogue Calendar
 - Newsletter
 - Membership Directory
 - Event Materials
 - Posters
 If you have good skills, access to graphics, word processing, and layout software, working computer equipment - WE NEED YOU!!!
- **Family Education**
 Many people wonder what makes Jewish Family Education programs different from any other family learning event. The Family Education Committee programs are designed to not only create an environment in which families can learn together about Jewish things, but to go beyond this with learning that "goes home": to be used, practiced, and embedded in Jewish family and community life.
- **Fundraising Events**
 The synagogue is always looking for creative and energetic people to conceive of and organize effective programs designed to both engage the community and raise funds for our operation. Got any ideas? How about energy?
- **Gardening and Grounds Work**
 Keep BEKI beautiful! From time to time the hedges need trimming, new flowers and plants need planting, or the old ones need tending. Let us know if you have a green thumb, or even if not, if you're willing to put some effort into it.
- **Graphic Design Projects**
 Flyers, banners, invitations, BEKI Bulletin, Torah covers...your creative eye and expert skills are always needed to enhance the aesthetics of everything we do and see at BEKI.
- **Hazak (programming for congregants over 65)**
 We'd like to begin an initiative to create some daytime programs that would appeal to those with a more "mature" viewpoint and schedule. We need your creativity and energy.
- **Hesed Committee**
 This committee makes all arrangements for providing meals for those individuals and families who could use some community support. In the event of a birth, a death, an illness, or just tough times, a complete meal or other help can be provided. If you are willing to be on call to provide any of the following support:

to call for a kosher meal (from kosher vendors, or members of the community) or to prepare one, to make phone calls or visits to those who need friendly contact, to provide rides to those who otherwise would be housebound, to shop for and deliver groceries for someone, etc. NO MEETINGS

- **Hevra Kadisha / Shmira Exploration**
Join those interested in the exploration of these essential customs of our tradition with great respect and reverence preparing one who has just departed for burial (and learning about the resources in our community). This group also sets up and participates in a rotation for “guarding”, that is, staying with a recently departed until burial.
- **House & Maintenance Committee**
The Building and Maintenance Committee is involved in overseeing the maintenance of the BEKI’s building and grounds. Tiles fall from the ceilings, sidewalks crack, the parking lot develops sink holes, and the bushes grow. All of these problems require people who care about the appearance of the synagogue and about the safety of the congregants. The B&M Committee needs people who not only see what needs to be done, but care enough to do something about it. Join the B&M Committee and get involved in organizing cleaning projects, working with contractors, changing a light bulb or two, and transforming our Shul.
- **Kiddush Committee**
The largest committee at BEKI, we work in four rotating teams to prepare our weekly Shabbat Kiddush Lunches following services and to enlist sponsors to cover the costs of our weekly lunch. Each team needs preppers and dedicated shoppers. Additional help is always welcome. *We are very much in need of someone to oversee FESTIVAL Kiddush organization and preparation. If that’s you – please let us know.*
- **Lead services**
We conduct services twice daily. Help out by leading services if you are already familiar with the traditional nusah (melody) for Shaharit Morning, Minha Afternoon, Maariv evening for daily, Shabbat or Festival services.
- **Learn Ritual Skills (Torah reading, chanting Haftora, leading services)**
Learn from scratch or refresh your skills. Our congregation is fortunate to have many talented congregant who are happy to work with you personally to meet your goals and to enable you to serve the community in this way.
- **Mailings**
Our synagogue prepares and sends out two monthly mailings to the congregation and others of news and information: a newsletter – The BEKI Bulletin – sent out at the end of each month, and a collection of flyers – sent midmonth – that provides important new information and updates. All this work is done by dedicated volunteers. We invite you to join us in these twice-monthly sessions. No previous experience is required.
- **Membership Committee**
The membership committee is all about welcoming! We reach out to people who have expressed interest in joining our community, or who have been recommended as possible new members, and talk to them about BEKI. Once they have joined BEKI, we integrate them into the community: with an orientation meeting, an annual brunch for new members, and introductions to other members who may have similar interests. This is a perfect committee to join if you like meeting new people and talking up our wonderful synagogue. Commitment is low, and you are giving a great gift to BEKI and to its new members by bringing them in.
- **Membership Photo Directory**
Every few years, we update our BEKI Photo Directory, providing a guide to those in our shul of those in our shul! Working with an established directory company, we set up photo shoots for our members (providing them the opportunity to take family portraits), and craft a “face book” with contact information about us and our staff.

- **Minyan Makers**

You are ALWAYS needed to help make a minyan, helping to make a group of at least ten men and women who can form a quorum for daily services. Whether it is for the camaraderie, to provide for those in our community saying “kaddish” for a loved one, or because you like good coffee, dark chocolate or Oreos. Opportunities EVERY morning and every evening.
- **Personnel (or HR) Committee**

We cherish the few professional staff people that we have at BEKI (the rabbi, the office manager, the maintenance crew, the teachers). This committee, in partnership with the Executive Board, oversees hiring and firing practices, periodically conducts performance reviews, and acts as a grievance committee.
- **Planned Giving / Income Development**

This committee exists to encourage and assist people in establishing endowments, wills, charitable trusts and gift annuities for the benefit of BEKI. We can work closely with the Jewish Foundation for Greater New Haven, the Community Foundation for New Haven and other agencies in establishing a planned gift. In addition to standing ready to explain and facilitate the making of a planned gift, the committee would like to run some programs geared around the theme of "Leave A Legacy" and how to do so, including tax consequences of various planning devices. We also could use assistance in making personal contact with some of the elders of our congregation and community to explore their wishes with respect to their estates and how BEKI might fit in to them.
- **Programming / Education Committee**

Work with other energetic and creative congregants to create, plan and carry out a full array of events for the community, including Shabbat Shmoozes, Sunday brunches, Shabbat and Festival Dinners, classes and workshops, concerts, family programs, etc.
- **Publicity Committee**

Help publicize BEKI programs, events and initiatives in local print and online media in order to attract the general public to these events and to gain visibility for BEKI in the New Haven Jewish community and the greater New Haven general community. The Committee works closely with the Program Committee and other BEKI committees. We collect the information, compose articles, and secure illustrations or photos when possible. We enter BEKI events in the JCC online community calendar and online calendars of local news media. We also pitch feature stories to print media such as the Connecticut Jewish Ledger, New Haven Register, and local weekly papers in the surrounding towns.
- **Purim Baskets**

Help organize and implement our wonderful annual Purim Baskets fundraiser and make lots and lots of people happy. Purchase contents, fill bags, promote participation, and making deliveries – any or all of these would be a great help.
- **Read Torah (Leyn)**

Use your knowledge of Hebrew and Torah trope to read from the Torah scrolls on Shabbat, Festivals and during the daily Monday and Thursday services. We do a full Torah reading (entire parasha) each Shabbat. Also, teach trope to interested congregants.
- **Ritual Committee**

This committee works with the Rabbi to address the ritual needs of the congregation and to oversee the ritual aspects of congregational programs and activities. These often involve reviewing daily, Shabbat, and holiday services and observances, with discussion of ways to make them more accessible and meaningful to the congregants while maintaining the halakhic standards of the Conservative movement. We also see to it that the Torah scrolls are maintained, and make recommendations, within the budgetary process, for the purchase of prayer and biblical books for use in the services. There are many ways for members to become more involved in the ritual life of the congregation. Since most ritual functions are performed by congregants, those with the necessary skills are always welcome to volunteer to lead services, read Torah and haftarah, give divrei Torah, etc.

- **Shabbat Dinners**
 Working with the Programming Committee, take on organizing a congregational Shabbat Dinner.
- **Shabbat Schmoozes**
 Almost anything goes! This community has a thirst for knowledge on an infinite range of subjects and people. Know someone who knows something worth sharing? Topics of previous schmoozes have ranged from acting to water resource management, from the book of Jonah to community resources for the elderly, from adoption to minority rights in Israel...you name it!
- **Shopping**
 We are always looking for help to shop for all the events taking place at BEKI.....for the Brunches, for USY/Kadima programs, for Break the Fast, for Luncheons, for Kiddush, for Kids' Snacks for Shabbat and Religious School, etc. Shop once or shop regularly. Don't forget to use our BEKI Food Coupons when you go. This is a *terrific* time saver for those people organizing events. Don't forget, every hour you spend helping, is an additional hour they don't have to pile onto what they are already doing.
- **Sukka Set-Up & Break Down**
 Help put up our Moishe Schnitman Memorial Sukkah – a wonderful big sukka in BEKI's front courtyard. Bring tools and your enthusiasm. Usually the Sunday between Yom Kippur and Sukkot (if there is one). Break down is the Sunday following Simhat Torah. Everyone's help is needed!!
- **Tikkun Olam Committee**
 The concept of *tikun olam* or repairing the world through social action is one of the traditional categories of tzedaka (righteousness and justice). The word "tikun" first appears in the book of Ecclesiastes (1:5, 7:13; 12:9), where it means "setting straight" or "setting in order." The Tikun Olam Committee researches, advises and coordinates opportunities for the Synagogue to participate in social justice activities in the Greater New Haven area and sometimes beyond.
- **20s/30s Havurah**
 The 20s-30s Havura is a group of singles and couples in their 20s and 30s who gather frequently throughout the year to share a Shabbat Dinner, Sunday Brunch, Hanuka celebration or sacred time. The Havura serves as a network of friends (both BEKI members and non-members) to support each other as they face the challenges of career development, finding partners and spouses, relating to the established Jewish institutions, dealing with illness, celebrating accomplishments, and other issues of the day. The Havura is particularly important to some participants who do not have extended family in the area as well as those who wish to expand their existing circle of friends. The atmosphere of the Havura is intimate, warm and informal, with ten to twenty people participating in a typical monthly event. It is a great place to meet people, but it is not a "singles' scene" like one might encounter at a large Jewish singles' dance.
- **USCJ Liaison**
 United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) is the umbrella organization for Conservative synagogues across the United States and Canada. USCJ provides leadership training in all areas of synagogue life, support for new initiatives, problem-solving and guidance. Be the person who lets us know what's happening month to month, encourage participation in conference calls, workshops, and listservs, and represent BEKI's interests to the national leadership.
- **USY / Kadima**
 The official Youth Groups of the Conservative movement, Kadima is for 5th-8th graders and USY (United Synagogue Youth) is for 9th – 11th graders. In January, rising 4th graders are welcomed to Kadima and rising 8th graders are welcomed to USY.
- **Website Design & Maintenance**
 Work to update, design, and maintain the BEKI website. We are totally redesigning the website to more actively and interactively support the programming needs of the BEKI community and to provide an exciting introduction to our community and information to those searching for a new synagogue.

- **Yizkor Memorial Book**
We plan and execute the solicitation of memorial listings, additional appropriate information and readings for Yizkor services during the year, and work on the design of the book, layout, printing and distribution. This includes all mailings, desktop publishing, proofreading, discussions with congregation members and non-members, and finds a yearly sponsor for the Yizkor Memorial Book.
- **Young Children's Programming**
Participate in the oversight, creative and organizational, of our wonderful programming for young children: Shabbat (and Festival) Havura, K-2 Kehila, Junior Congregation and Cosmic Conversations.
- **Youth Commission**
The Youth Commission at BEKI works to provide guidance, support and advocacy for the middle school, junior high and high school age children of our congregation (gr. 5-12). It oversees staff and policy for the synagogue's United Synagogue affiliated youth groups: Kadima (6-8) and USY (9-12) and works to provide a context for community involvement, social action, continuing informal Jewish education, leadership development, and a safe and comfortable Jewish teen social environment. Because our youth groups are supported jointly by BEKI and B'nai Jacob, some meetings are held together to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship between the two synagogues, for the benefit of all. Also involves helping out at some USY and Kadima functions if needed.

GOT MORE IDEAS?

3 way to let us know:

1. YOU CAN EITHER **CHECK OFF YOUR INTERESTS** ON THIS BOOKLET WITH YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFO

2. COMPLETE **ONLINE** AT HOME AT:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/volunteerforBEKI>

3. OR, **SEND A LIST** OF YOUR CHOICES TO: kuperst@aol.com

NAME _____

CONTACT INFO _____