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# *Temple Beth Israel*

840 HIGHLAND ROAD  
SHARON, PENNSYLVANIA 16146

*Stephen L. Sniderman*  
RABBI

March 1, 1988

Dear Member,

Every year at this time the Budget and Finance Committee sends out a pledge card to the membership of our Temple for their Fair Share Dues for the coming fiscal year, which starts July 1, 1988. Let us explain briefly why we need everyone to thoughtfully consider their pledge and how it relates to the position of Temple Beth Israel in the Shenango Valley.

We are the only synagogue in the immediate area, and we employ a full-time Rabbi and staff to provide the services needed by a viable Jewish community. Although there are other synagogues and Temples in the Youngstown area we need a Jewish presence here and there is only one way to provide these services -- pay for them! For that - we depend on our membership to pay their Fair Share, and even more if able to do so. The cost of operating OUR Temple continues to increase, while our membership continues to decline for various reasons. Some of our expenses, such as utilities and insurance, are beyond our control. We continue to lose members through death, and those who resign or move out-of-town. The Shenango Valley does not seem to attract many Jewish families, and we do not have enough new members each year to offset the loss of members. In the fiscal year that started July 1, 1987 we lost seven members due to death and three "family units" resigned. It is quite obvious that the membership will have to make up the difference in lost dues to avoid drastic changes.

Our current fiscal year budget (July 1, 1987 - June 30, 1988) is \$93,875.00. To date we have 152 family units. A family unit can be a family, a single head of household, a widow or widower, etc. Only 77 family units have the head of household working. The rest of our membership consists of retired members, widows, etc. If everyone were to pay their Fair Share of the income needed for this year it would amount to \$617.00 per family unit. For the immediate past fiscal year this number was \$585.00 per family unit -- the number keeps rising with the loss of membership.

For this fiscal year approximately 20 members are paying between \$500 and \$750 in dues, and 36 members are paying over \$750 in dues. These 56 dues paying units are approximately 1/3 of our membership.



It has long been a policy of the Temple that most of our operating budget should come from dues. For the current fiscal year we have received approximately \$3700 in interest and other income which is less than 5% of our expected income. Donations made to the Temple to specific funds, such as the Library or Kallah Fund, cannot be used for general operating expenses.

We think it fair to say that none of us want our Temple to operate at a deficit, and unless voluntary increases are made in dues by those best able to pay, we will have no alternative but to reduce the services of our Temple. We are certain that this is the least desirable way of handling our finances, and running our Temple to serve the needs of a diverse Jewish community. We earnestly request each of you to review your financial commitment to the Temple and make your voluntary increases in accordance with our Fair Share dues policy. Enclosed is a Fair Share guide and the pledge card for the 1988-89 fiscal year. Please be sure to promptly return the SIGNED pledge card so that the budget committee will be better able to prepare the forthcoming budget when they meet in March. The budget will then be presented at the annual Congregational meeting in May.

Although we are a changing congregation we are still very much alive and vibrant -- with your help we will continue to serve the needs of the Jewish community in the future, as Temple Beth Israel has always done in the past.

Sincerely,

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Harriett Bolotin, Treasurer

Lois Werner, Financial Secretary

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