



Beit Am

Mid-Willamette Jewish Community

June 5, 2009

Friends,

Attached you will find the 2009-2010 pledge form for renewing your membership to Beit Am. This form incorporates an increase in dues from 1.75% to 2% of gross household income, as approved by Beit Am's Board.

As you may be aware, supporting a rabbi has more than doubled our operating budget, so that our expenditures now exceed our revenue. We cannot continue to employ the rabbi if we do not balance our budget. Over the last year the Financial Sustainability Committee (FSC) developed a strategy for how to balance our budget, based in part on input received at a series of 14 community gatherings. At its May meeting, the Board decided to adopt the FSC's recommendations in two phases: The first phase includes a \$5000 reduction in net expenditures, the increase to a 2% dues rate, and raising an additional \$3500 in income through fees and fundraising. The second phase, which will only be implemented if the first phase is not successful in reaching its target, would set a minimum dues rate and establish tuition for our religious school (VJCCS). In developing and approving these actions, the Board strived to balance our need to raise the money necessary to continue our operations with a strong community value that we not exclude anyone based on financial need (more detailed information, including the FSC's report, is available at our website at beitam.org).

We realize that this is a difficult time financially, and that many of our members are experiencing hardship. However, we heard over and over at the community gatherings that people value what Beit Am offers. This is your opportunity to support our community. If you cannot afford the 2% income, please give what you can, and help by contributing in other ways (e.g., through volunteering). If you are able to pledge more than 2%, please give extra to help defray the dues of those in need. Also, because passing our Jewish heritage to our children is the responsibility of the entire community, please consider making a contribution to support VJCCS.

This year we need to raise \$117,236 in dues if we are to balance our budget. To do this will require that we all take responsibility for our community's financial health. To that end, we will communicate with you regularly about our finances and track our progress in the newsletter and on our website. Please help by returning your pledge form and initial payment by June 30. Having your pledge by this date will help us evaluate whether we are meeting our financial goals.

On behalf of the Beit Am Board,
Scott Leibowitz, President

