

## TEMPLE B'NAI ABRAHAM GUIDING VALUES

Voted on by Temple B'nai Abraham's Board of Directors on March 14, 2017

TBA's values express our highest aspirations for who we are and who we hope to be as a congregation. They are a touchstone for us to reflect on, in our actions and our decisions, guiding us in our life together as a Jewish community. The values address our commitment to caring for each other and our actions in the larger community.

### קהלה

***Kehillah (Commitment to Community)***: Relationships are central to who we are. Anchored within a web of mutual obligation, members share a commitment to the wellbeing of the community and its values, and to supporting one another.

### צלם אלהים

***Tzelem Elohim (Inclusion and Human Dignity)***: We affirm the Jewish teaching that every human being is created *b'tzelem Elohim*, "in God's image" and is thus deserving of care and respect. We welcome all those who share our values: people of all ages, races and ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, abilities, family or partner status, gender identities, sexual orientations, and immigration status.

### מחלוקת לשם שמים

***Machloket l'shem shamayim (Debate for the Sake of Heaven)***: We foster respectful discourse and affirm the traditional Jewish value of "debate for the sake of heaven" as evidenced in our ancient teachings of the Mishnah and Talmud. We welcome and need dialogue about issues that may divide us.

### לימוד תורה

***Limmud Torah (Lifelong Jewish Learning)***: Our rabbis taught that study is greater than action because it leads to action. We strive to engage with Jewish texts, values, practices, and traditions in ways that move and inspire us. We are committed to the mitzvah of teaching our children and to nourishing the next generation's values, traditions, and spiritual lives.

### רוחניות

***Ruchaniyut (Spirituality)***: We seek out and nurture experiences, both individually and collectively, that elevate, inspire, and connect us to that which is beyond ourselves, including Shabbat, holiday and lifecycle celebrations and various forms of spiritual practices.

### ארץ ישראל

***Eretz Yisrael (The Land of Israel)***: We support Israel's basic right to safety and self-preservation as a democratic Jewish State in our ancient homeland. We can respectfully disagree with each other regarding government policies, while holding the Israeli democracy up to Jewish standards of justice and fairness. We commit to learning more about the complicated dynamics and history of Israel, the Palestinians, and the entire region so that our opinions and actions can be strengthened and well informed.

### תקון עולם

***Tikkun Olam (Repair of the World)***: We are guided by the Prophets of Israel and our sacred teachings that call on us to take stands against all forms of hate, oppression, and injustice – stands that we understand to be religious imperatives. We understand that our tradition implores us to care for our Jewish brothers and sisters as well as members of our local and global communities and our precious planet.

As Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel taught, "...there is no limit to the concern one must feel for the suffering of human beings, that indifference to evil is worse than evil itself, that in a free society, some are guilty, but all are responsible." May all beings live in safety.

We thank Rabbi Toba Spitzer Congregation & Dorshei Tzedek in Newton, whose value statement served as a guide.