



## Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Ithaca Reform Temple  
Spirit • Community • Justice

October 11, 2023

Dear Tikkun v'Or Members,

Warm wishes for a healthy and fulfilling year to all. We were so happy to see so many of you at High Holiday Services both in person and online. We found this year's services to be meaningful and inspiring, and we hope you did as well.

Tikkun v'Or is many things to many people. A center for learning, a spiritual home, a home for the holidays, a place to make and meet friends, a place to pursue justice. Our founders and past presidents have created something truly special at TvO. While we are deeply committed to sustaining and enriching that foundation, we need your help. As you pay your dues this year, we invite you to ask yourself ***what is it worth to you to have a progressive Jewish Community in Ithaca that welcomes all?***

Last year, we promised that we would prioritize our core values with our spending while also taking care of our building - our spiritual home - which is aging and in need of repair. Over this past year, we replaced the worn, torn and stained carpeting with flooring that promises to be more sustainable. We repaired our Torah and Torah cover. We provided a variety of options for learning and praying together. We updated some of our technology. We invested in our educators. We hired experts to help keep us safe. Unfortunately, for the last few years, our expenses have been greater than our income.

In the coming year, there is more to be done. Inflation and our personnel costs have been increasing. We need to continue with repairs to our building. We are currently working to assess our security needs and will be applying for grant funding to help with those costs. In the name of inclusivity, we would like to continue with hybrid events but our current AV equipment is woefully inadequate. We need to replenish our savings to plan for expenses that we know are coming in the near future. And while the Board will make fundraising a top priority in the coming year, we now need your financial support more than ever.

May it be a Shana Tova for all. We look forward to your continued membership and participation.

Sue Merkel  
Co-President

Laurie Willick  
Co-President

## Tikkun v'Or Member Contributions: Three-Part Financial Structure

Congregation Tikkun v'Or raises the funds we need through **dues, gifts and fees**. Our financial structure is inspired by traditional Jewish values of fairness, dignity, inclusivity and generosity. ***Finances should never be a barrier to Tikkun v'Or membership. However, to ensure the long-term viability of the temple, we ask that you please think seriously about your level of support and follow the suggested guideline to the best of your ability. Dues and gifts are all fully tax deductible.***

**Dues** are assessed in two parts: the *hetzi-shekel* (half-shekel) portion, and a portion determined by an income-based sliding scale.

The *hetzi-shekel* portion (\$90 per household) is intended to symbolize the equality of all members in the community, regardless of income. The concept derives from the story told in the book of Exodus that Moses and Aaron collected a half-shekel from each of the Israelites as their first contribution toward building the sanctuary.

The **income-based (“fair share”) dues\*** are 1.6% of household income from all sources. The sliding scale dues structure reflects our community’s commitment to justice and fairness. These are guidelines. Please pay as your circumstances allow. As an example, if your gross income is \$40,000  $\times 0.016 = \$640$  Suggested “Fair Share” Dues Payment.

Our projected budget depends on most members *self-assessing* and paying at the 1.6% level. However, if life circumstances affect your ability to pay dues at the target level or at the times indicated, please self-assess at a lower level or adjust the payment schedule as needed. You can also contact us, Laurie Willick and Sue Merkel ([presidents\\_22@tikkunvor.org](mailto:presidents_22@tikkunvor.org)), to discuss your dues at any time. ***Finances should never be a barrier to Tikkun v'Or membership.***

**Gifts:** The *hetzi-shekel* and income-based dues (described above) comprise about 66% of our budget. Thus, Tikkun v'Or also relies on **nediv lev**, which translates as “generosity” or “giving from the heart”. This phrase comes from the book of Exodus where it is told that the Israelites offered materials for building the sanctuary with a “willing heart,” each contributing according to their ability. **Nediv lev** contributions to Tikkun v'Or account for approximately 15% of yearly revenue and are requested during our annual spring fundraising campaign.

**Fees** for our Jewish Learning Experiences and b'mitzvah program help cover the costs of these programs, but do not fully sustain the school. If school fees pose a financial hardship, please be in touch with us, Laurie Willick and Sue Merkel ([presidents\\_22@tikkunvor.org](mailto:presidents_22@tikkunvor.org)), to discuss. Note that first-year families with students in grades K-5 are given the option of paying a slightly higher school fee that includes temple membership (*i.e.*, if this option is chosen, other temple membership dues are waived for that first year). Please contact our school administrator, Naomi Wilensky ([naomi.wilensky@tikkunvor.org](mailto:naomi.wilensky@tikkunvor.org)), with questions about fees or registration.

### Payment options:

1. **Check:** Congregation Tikkun v'Or PO Box 3981 Ithaca NY 14852. Please note “ Membership Dues” in the memo.
2. **Online, using PayPal Account or Credit Card:** Please go to the TVO website, [tikkunvor.org](http://tikkunvor.org), and click on the PP (for paypal) Link
3. **Credit card:** Contact Sally Ezra at (607) 256-1471 [sally.ezra@tikkunvor.org](mailto:sally.ezra@tikkunvor.org), or enter credit card information on the dues form.

**Either way, please respond no later than November 16, 2023.** Thank you in advance for your quick response, which will be a big help in managing our finances. Information on the dues form is confidential and accessible only to the co-presidents and to Tikkun v'Or's bookkeeper, Sally Ezra.

## **Benefits of Membership in Congregation Tikkun v'Or**

- A vital, progressive Jewish presence in our community
- A rabbi who inspires, educates and supports our congregation
- A beautiful building that houses our community
- Many meaningful life cycle events
- Inspiring Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and other holiday services
- Growing Jewish Learning Experiences and B'mitzvah programs
- Bereavement support
- Adult education opportunities
- Prayer services on most Fridays and many Saturdays
- Social justice projects
- Programs to stimulate our minds, conscience, and spirit
- Community Shabbat dinners
- A community Passover seder, meaningful and delicious
- Jewish community events shared with other Ithaca congregations
- Access to our listserv and Members Only section on our website
- The right to vote and have your voice heard as we make decisions for the community



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## Dues Payment Form

Please complete the form below, and mail it to Congregation Tikkun v'Or, P. O. Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852. Or to renew your membership online using PayPal, please click on the "Dues Payment" page under the "Join Us" tab on our website: [www.tikkunvor.org](http://www.tikkunvor.org). **Whether you renew by mail or online, checks are preferred to avoid credit card fees.**

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### My contribution for 2023-2024:

Fair Share dues (*see guidelines above):	\$ _____
+ \$ 90 (half-shekel contribution)	\$ <u>90</u>
Total =	\$ _____

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment method: (check one):

- One payment (in full by November 16, **checks preferred to avoid credit card fees**):
  - \_\_\_ By check (please include your check with this form).
  - \_\_\_ By credit card (charges made on or about November 16).
- Two payments (half-payment by November 16 and the balance by February 22)
  - \_\_\_ By check (please include first check with this form).
  - \_\_\_ By credit card (charges made on or about November 16 and February 22).
- Four equal payments: only by credit card
  - \_\_\_ By credit card (charges made on or about November 16, January 22, April 22, June 22).

\_\_\_\_\_  
*If you are paying by credit card, please provide the following additional information:*

Card company (check one) \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ MasterCard

Name (as it appears on card) \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration (Month/Year) \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize Tikkun v'Or to charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the credit card listed here.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_