

David Offer requested that I talk about the value of our system of Terumah.

Terumah is the method that we have chosen to fund our Temple. The Hebrew word Terumah can be translated to mean “free will offering.” Instead of setting an amount each member pays in dues, any amount you contribute makes you a member.

Temple Beth El adopted this method in 2017 after an almost two-year process of intentional conversation among the Temple community. We wanted to create a welcoming, egalitarian, and sustaining method of raising the funds needed each year to pay our operational expenses.

This will be our sixth fiscal year using Terumah at Temple Beth El. When we send out our annual membership renewal letters, we do note a suggested amount, per household, that we need to meet our budget, though you are welcome to support the Temple at a level that is meaningful to you. Some people send more than the suggested level, some people send less. Either way, this approach seems to be working!

At the end of our last fiscal year, June 30th, we finished the year with a bit of a surplus, and, at last report, we have 111 member households this year. This is an increase of almost 10% in membership from when we began the Terumah system! And, we maintained this growth through the pandemic. *But we need your continuing support.* I am grateful that our Temple community is committed to maintaining our presence here in Central Maine through your generosity from the heart. Thank you.

As Treasurer, I will say that Terumah reminders were mailed this week, and please find me if you have any questions. Or email me after the holiday. I am happy to talk Temple finances. But for now, may you have an easy fast and L’shana Tova.

Hildie Lipson
Treasurer
Temple Beth El, Augusta
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