

Imahot/Egalitarian Liturgy

At Congregation Beth El, we are a fully egalitarian congregation. That includes within our liturgy. All of our *Shlichei Tzibbur*, service leaders, include the proper additions of our biblical matriarchs to the Amidah and elsewhere in our *tefillot*.

Kippot/Headcoverings

We affirm each person's gender identity and leave it up to each person to determine their gender identity for themselves. That being said, we ask that all those who identify as a man, and strongly encourage all those who identify as a woman, to please make sure your head is covered while in our sanctuary. Regardless of gender identity, we ask that all who come on the bimah for an honor have their head covering. This is equally true for those who identify as Jewish and those who identify as another faith. We acknowledge that while on the bimah and standing in front of the ark and Torah holds even greater sanctity. Kippot are available in our lobby for anyone who might need.

Tallitot/Prayer Shawls

We ask all Jewish men - and encourage all Jewish women - over the age of B'nai Mitzvah to wear a *tallit*, a prayer shawl, while in the sanctuary during services.

Dress

Shabbat and holidays are special days that we make *kadosh*, sacred and distinct from other days. As part of the joy and holiness of these days, we dress in a way that is special and different. What matters most is that we each come as we are, feel comfortable, and focus on our *kavannah*, our intentionality and focus, during prayer. We ask that all who enter the Sanctuary dress respectfully, but we leave it to families and individuals to decide what that means to them.

Shlichei Tzibbur/Service Leaders

At Congregation Beth El, we pride ourselves on how many dedicated congregants regularly lead us in prayer. Some choose to face the congregation as a way to sing with and engage the community. Others prefer to face the ark, a commonly preferred *halakhic* practice, to focus on the relationship between the service leader and God. We welcome each service leader to follow their own personal custom.

Children in the Sanctuary

It is a priority that children and teens feel at home in the Sanctuary. We seek out their participation in honors (ie opening the ark, leading prayers) and joining their adult family members on the bimah when they come up for honors. We all learn by doing and the more actively kids participate in the service, the more they will learn. Children make noise - and that's okay in the Sanctuary, too! We ask parents to use their best judgment when it feels too disruptive, but we err on the side of welcome to all ages.