



Congregation Etz Chaim

Community, Spirituality, and You

Andrea J. Cosnowsky, Senior Rabbi
Frederick Kamil, Associate Rabbi
Marla Friedman, Religious School Principal
Cody Gierat, Office Manager
Steven M. Bob, Rabbi Emeritus
Anne Stein, Educator Emerita
Rachel Wood, Inclusion Specialist

Congregation Etz Chaim Committee Guide

The Budget Committee oversees the synagogue's annual budgeting process which projects operating income and expenses for the coming year. The fiscal year runs July 1st to June 30th. The budgeting process is a seasonal activity that runs from late December through March, with board approval in April and congregational approval at the May annual meeting. The committee meets regularly during the December - March timeframe at the synagogue.

Each committee is requested to provide a preliminary budget request by late January. This expense data is compiled and compared to estimated revenue streams (from membership and schools) to determine the extent of any shortfall. The committee, the vice-president responsible for the committee, and the treasurer then discuss ideas for how to balance the budget through increasing revenues and/or decreasing expenses. The executive officers of the congregation provide strategic input and guidance for the budget as well.

All Congregation Etz Chaim members who want to participate in the budgeting process of the congregation are invited to join the committee.

Contact Ed Levy at cec.budget@congetzchaim.org

The Caring Committee provides support for and assistance to Congregation Etz Chaim members in times of need. There are many different services that are provided on an as-needed basis. The goal is to have many volunteers, each of whom might be called on once or twice in a year.

The caring committee aids congregants in several important ways; arranging rides, providing meals in times of illness, assistance with shiva, visiting the sick, arranging rides to services, etc.

If you have any questions about what we do, please contact us. If you know of someone who is in need of our services, please call the synagogue office directly at 630-627-3912.

Contact Renee Gossage Ray at cec.caring@congetzchaim.org

The Facilities Committee is set up to ensure our facility is safe, secure, functionally attractive, maintainable and energy efficient. The committee is responsible for all the infrastructure of the synagogue facility as well as the outdoor landscaping. The committee administers the Landscape/Facilities Fund as well as the Building Maintenance Fund.

The Facilities Committee meets once a month.

Contact Doug Longman at cec.facilities@congetzchaim.org



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The Inclusion Committee provides inclusion opportunities for students and adults in the congregation. Etz Chaim is committed to be an inclusive congregation. They strive to make all feel welcome and that they belong in our community. They work to make accommodations for our congregants by providing interpreters and close captioning at events, offering preferred seating, hearing assistance systems, and having a resource room for students who need additional support. They are constantly working to become a more inclusive environment.

Contact Rachel Wood at cec.inclusionspecialist@congetzchaim.org

The Library Committee staffs the library and oversees purchases for the collections, as well as leads the book discussion group.

Etz Chaim's Jeremy Bruder Memorial Library holds a collection of fiction and nonfiction books of Jewish interest for all age groups. The library also offers movies on DVD and music on CDs. Two computers are available for congregants to use on a first-come first-serve basis.

Borrowing an item is easy – select the book, fill in the pocket card, and drop the card on the librarian's desk, or hand it to the librarian. Returning materials is even easier – simply drop them in the bin located in the building entryway. This applies to all library materials, not just books.

The library is staffed by our librarian during religious school hours on Sundays and Wednesdays, but it is always open if the building is open. All materials are purchased through donations to the Robert N. Glass Memorial Library Fund.

Contact Nicole Coover-Thompson, Librarian, at cec.librarian@congetzchaim.org

Contact Patricia Rosenmann, Library Committee Chair, at cec.library@congetzchaim.org

The Lifelong Learning Committee develops learning programs for our adult congregants who wish to expand their knowledge of Judaism, current events, Israel, Hebrew, and Torah. Programs, classes or events may be led by the Congregation's rabbis or lay leaders, by visiting rabbis or by other outside experts. These programs have included a series on Israel, adult Hebrew and B'nai Mitzvah classes, interfaith presentations, weekly Torah study, author talks, and Artist and Scholar-in-Residence weekends. Beginning in the fall of 2015, Etz Chaim became a site for the international Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning and the national Chai Mitzvah programs. Our diverse offerings span every day of the week, Sunday through Shabbat -- morning, afternoon, and evening times.

The committee collaborates with several committees to present various programs including, but not limited to, the Library committee, Social Action committee, and our Seniors group.

Our Senior Sponsored Lunch and Learn programs are held monthly in the Etz Chaim social hall focus on the arts, film, history, and current events. These programs are open to all. Contact Mark Turner if you are interested in attending these programs at cec.seniors@congetzchaim.org



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They also partner with outside organizations to offer programs such as Jewish genealogy, Spertus One Book/One Community, and the “Three Synagogue” annual event.

They meet monthly.

Contact Barb Turner and Kenya Madison-Gabler at cec.lifelonglearning@congetzchaim.org

The Membership Committee is driven by a diverse group of our members. They are a contact for Prospective Members who have questions regarding the Congregation and call our new members and welcome them to the family. They plan many events throughout the year to attract new members as well as retain our current Etz Chaim family. Among the many events throughout the year, they plan the Prospective Member Open House, Congregational Hanukkah dinner, membership recognition Shabbat and more.

Contact Martha Titiner at cec.membership@congetzchaim.org

The Retreat Committee oversees the planning of our congregational retreat to OSRUI. Every year in the spring, the congregation takes a trip up to Oconomowoc, WI for a weekend of learning, spirituality, and friendship.

Contact Karen Butterfield at cec.retreat@congetzchaim.org

The Ritual and Religious (R&R) Committee reviews and guides the congregation in worship and ritual observances. The committee discusses current practices to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the congregation. Through discussions the committee explores ways to enrich and improve these current practices.

With the guidance of the rabbis, the committee works to make sure that our worship services are warm, welcoming and provide for a deep sense of community. The committee has in-depth discussions regarding the physical set-up of the sanctuary, the use of the prayer book, the impact of the music within the worship service or celebration, and sanctuary etiquette.

It is the charge of this committee to ensure that all worship-related materials and items are available and that our religious observances continue to grow to meet the needs of our congregation. The New Prayer Book and Ritual and Religious Funds are administered by R&R.

Participation in the R&R Committee is open to any congregant. So why do they participate in this particular committee? Are they the most knowledgeable, most observant, or those brought up in the most orthodox families? No. The backgrounds of committee members vary greatly. Participation in the committee is a learning experience and, due to the active discussions, it allows committee members to:



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Learn to understand Reform Judaism liturgy.
Explore ways to contribute to the congregation.
Bring varied people together to make worship decisions, contributing different experiences, insights and knowledge.
Have input into the worship experience.

If you have a desire to learn about and contribute to the religious experience at Etz Chaim, please join us at our monthly meetings. There are no prerequisites!

Ritual & Religious Committee meetings are scheduled for the fourth Monday of the month.

Contact Marcey Siegel at cec.ritualandreligious@congetzchaim.org

The Religious School Committee of Congregation Etz Chaim is a group of dedicated parents, teachers and volunteers that meets once a month to support the religious school staff in accomplishing their mission, as outlined in the religious school handbook. The committee is also responsible for organizing several annual events including holiday programming and teacher appreciation brunch.

Religious School Committee meetings take place once a month.

Contact Jody Freeman at cec.religiousschool@congetzchaim.org

The Social Action Committee plans activities to engage the congregation in *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) including:

- P.A.D.S. (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) hosts the homeless in our social hall every Sunday evening, providing a safe respite as well as a home-cooked meal, breakfast, and a sack lunch.
- Garry Gardner Memorial Bowls for Hunger, an Empty Bowls event, in which hand-made pottery and home-made soups are sold to raise money to help feed the hungry of DuPage County.

The Social Action Committee plans and oversees many activities and events throughout the year. Many of their projects involve outreach into the community beyond Etz Chaim and the Jewish world, and even beyond the Western Hemisphere!

The committee oversees other committees including the Interfaith Outreach Committee. They are dedicated to bringing together people from all faiths and religions. Contact Barbara Margolis and Barbara Turner for more information at cec.io@congetzchaim.org

The Social Action Committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM.

Contact Marla Gerard at cec.socialaction@congetzchaim.org



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The Ways and Means Committee holds the primary fundraising responsibility for Congregation Etz Chaim. Fundraising includes events exclusive of dues and fees, which contribute to the general fund of the congregation.

One of the fundraising tools is the sale of Manna gift cards. Manna sales take place once per month during the year. You buy gift cards at face value, and the congregation receives a percentage of the proceeds. It's that simple! There are hundreds of retailers available, so you are sure to find whatever you need whether it be gas, groceries, or gifts. Any questions concerning the Manna program may be directed to Jon Berman or Mike Field.

Contact Laura Pietrzak at cec.waysandmeans@congetzchaim.org

The Youth Committee oversees our four youth groups and college outreach. They believe that establishing Jewish connections at a young age is important to lead a Jewish lifestyle in the future. Our youth groups range from infants through seniors in high school. It is important that our college students know their Etz Chaim family is thinking of them even when they are away, so they send them care packages during the year.

B'Yachad (together): 0 years -1st grade

Kadimah (onward): 2nd grade-5th grade

Junior Youth Group (JYG): 6th grade-8th grade

Senior Youth Group (SYG): 9th grade-12th grade

They are always looking for new members to join us. If you are interested in participating on this committee, please contact Adam Roubitchek and Jessica Schwarz at cec.youth@congetzchaim.org



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Special Interest Groups Guide

Brotherhood and Sisterhood are social organizations that support the congregation's religious, educational, social, and social action activities and develop friendship and fellowship among all members. New temple members are automatically given a free year into the brotherhood or sisterhood.

Contact Jacob Margulies at cec.brotherhood@congetzchaim.org

Contact Ronni Markwell and Marsha Swetin at cec.sisterhood@congetzchaim.org

Jewish War Veterans honor congregants who have served in the U.S. and Israeli armed forces. They meet monthly on Sunday mornings. They support the mission of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States with their main thrust on projects that will improve the lives of Jewish war veterans and their families and attracting guest speakers on veteran related issues.

Contact Bruce Mayor at bjmayor@aol.com

Midlife Adventures Group is an adults-only social group that brings together congregants for a variety of outings such as museum visits, sports games, dinners and more. The purpose of the group is to connect and reconnect old and new members.

Contact Sharon Roth at cec.midlifeadventures@congetzchaim.org

Young Professionals brings together our congregants in their 20s-30s. This group provides a channel by which young professionals can add value to their Etz Chaim experience by providing a social group to interact with. They meet up for social gatherings and outings.

Contact Judy Miller at cec.youngprofessionals@congetzchaim.org