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*ex officio Board Member

July 6, 2022

Dear Member,

It is my honor to invite you to renew your Congregation Or Zarua membership for this coming year — 5783 — our 34th year!

As we look toward our 34th year and look forward soon enough to Or Zarua's Double Chai anniversary, it's a good time to think about and thank those founding families and Rabbi Wechsler who built this community from the ground up into the thriving pillar of Judaism on the Upper East Side that we are today. We are the only traditional, egalitarian synagogue on the Upper East Side!

Or Zarua is an address for Jewish ritual and culture. Our services are anchored in standards of practice that are recognizable by both Conservative and more traditional worshippers. Our cultural programs highlight music and art, Jewish scholarship, and an appreciation of the study of history. We believe in learning from the sacred wisdom library of the Jewish People.

As much as the last few years have been unprecedented, Or Zarua continues to be the same inclusive, egalitarian community where people of all Jewish backgrounds feel welcome and comfortable to learn, pray, participate and connect. We are a vibrant, passionate, and caring community that continues to invest our energy into growing and enhancing our congregation.

We have a fantastic Board of Trustees who are deeply engaged in driving forward the mission of Or Zarua and have just completed our biennial Strategic Review, which looks to identify longer-term challenges and opportunities to ensure the continued long-term vitality of our wonderful community.

Your membership dues allow for us to continue our mission of building and maintaining a vibrant Jewish community through daily minyan, Shabbat services, High Holy Day services, Adult Learning, Book Clubs, Art Exhibits, youth education programs, Hesed activities, Hevra Kadisha, Bikkur Holim, Shabbat dinners, Shabbatons, holiday gatherings, and Israel programs.

Nevertheless, membership dues account for only 40% of our budget, and we count on the deep generosity of our membership with our Kol Nidre appeal. The Kol Nidre appeal allows us to continue to provide unique and high-quality programming and services.

The Board of Trustees recently conducted a thorough review of the current membership dues and structure and determined it was appropriate to make changes to both the structure and dues rates. Membership dues were last adjusted four years ago.

The Board has approved a modest increase in dues of 5%, which is reflective of the increase in operational costs. We are not immune to the rapidly increasing costs of items such as health insurance, gas and electric, and building maintenance contracts, which have continued to increase year-over-year and especially more recently. From a dues structure perspective, we have created a new age category for members between the ages of 31 and 35. Previously, we only had two age cohorts: 1) under 30 and 2) 30 and over. The objective of this new dues group is to attract and retain members in the ages of 31 to 35 and prevent a sizable increase in dues when a member transitions from 29 years old to 30 years old. This will allow for a more graduated increase in dues over time.

As always, there are no extra fees to attend High Holy Day services or tiered seating. We all sit together as one congregation.

Importantly, we do not turn anyone away from Or Zarua due to financial hardship. Please contact Rabbi Bolton or Helene Santo if you need a dues adjustment. If you received a dues adjustment last year, we will offer you the same rate this year. If you can increase your commitment, please let Helene Santo know.

Rosh Hashanah begins Sunday evening, September 25th. We need you to renew your membership by August 15th. Our Rosh Hashanah, Kol Nidre, and Yom Kippur services will again be held in Wallace Hall at Park Avenue between 83rd and 84th Streets. Evening services for Rosh Hashanah will be held in our building on East 82nd Street. As has been the case for the past couple years, we will also livestream services for members who may not feel comfortable attending in person.

Please remember that, in order to receive your High Holy Day tickets, you must be a member in good standing, having paid your dues in full or made alternative payment arrangements with Helene Santo by August 15.

If you would like to order guest tickets, please go to <https://tinyurl.com/OZ-HHD-guest2022> or return the enclosed form.

If you would like to renew your membership online, please sign in to your ShulCloud account at orzarua.shulcloud.com and click My Billing under the My Account tab. Once you are logged in and on the payment page, you will have the option to set up a payment plan should you choose to do that.

Thank you for your continued membership and ongoing support of Congregation Or Zarua.

Have a wonderful summer, and I hope to see you at services, the Rabbi's summer learning series, and our other summer programming.

Sincerely,



Isaac Nagiel

President