

Congregation B'nai Israel Havurah Initiative Havurah Coordinator Application

The Story:

Throughout Jewish history, Jews have formed intentional communities called “*havurot*.” While the word “*havurot*” has meant different things to different people over time and today, it generally connotes a relatively small group of people who see themselves as connected and committed to each other in some meaningful way. Members of *havurot* often gather together to celebrate Shabbat, holidays, and key moments in the Jewish life cycle.

In the zeitgeist (spirit or mood of the time) of 1960's America, a *Havurah* movement emerged that served as a counter cultural phenomenon in relation to the organized Jewish community of their day. Going against the grain of organized Synagogue communities, *havurot* were typically organized without formal hierarchy, honoring all people as lay leaders and having no central Rabbi. They created communities around shared values and sought to live and explore their Jewish lives together.

“Havurah: An Experiment in Jewish Gathering” is a new initiative hosted by Congregation B'nai Israel which will provide support to individuals and families who are interested in gathering and building community with others. Each of our *havurot* will be organized around different themes such as young families, LGBTQIA, interfaith or blended families, people interested in gathering for meditation or music; Torah learning; the list of possibilities is endless.

Right now, we are looking for potential “*havurot* coordinators.” Each *havurah* will have a coordinator who will serve as a lead organizer. While the *havurot* are intended to be non-hierarchical and peer-led, the coordinator will play a critical role in helping to recruit, market and administer the group. Coordinators will be paid a \$1000 stipend for their work.

Do you have an idea for a havurah that you think others will respond to?
Do you have a desire to help organize a *havurah*?

If so, please read the application and apply below.

Note: This application is to both propose an idea that you have for a havurah theme, and to apply to be a havurah coordinator. If you have an idea, but don't have the interest in leadership, please still be in touch with Molly Bajgot, CBI Havurah Organizer, at havurah@cbinorthampton.org. If you are interested in both leading and proposing an idea, please continue below.

Havurah Coordinator Job Description:

Responsibilities:

1. Offer a vision of how you would like to see the community gather, and commit to seeing that plan out for at least 1 year from the creation of the havurah
2. Form timelines and outreach plans for gathering community around your proposed idea
3. Do outreach to potential havurah members and cultivate relationships with others in the community group, and support others to build relationships in the group
4. Set a calendar of programs for the havurah, at a minimum of one program per month
5. Ensure that all havurah gatherings are well organized and facilitated.
6. Help promote leadership development among fellow havurah participants.
7. Meet with area havurah coordinators and organizers as scheduled (monthly or bi-monthly)

8. Be reliable in staying in contact with the Havurah Organizer (Molly Bajgot) and other havurah leaders in the community via email and in person communication in between events and meetings.
9. This position requires a strong task manager. You will be in charge of the event planning, as well as organizing people to come together. Strong candidates will have excellent oral and written communication skills, task management, and interpersonal skills.

What's in it for you?

1. Leadership development, Jewish enrichment and support from the Havurah Organizer, Molly Bajgot, who is available to support you in setting and meeting your goals on the above responsibilities and with CBI rabbis
2. Compensation: a stipend of \$1000 over the course of the year to use at your discretion.
3. Additional programming money to spend on food, bringing in speakers, your own leadership and professional development, hosting programs or retreats, etc.
4. The chance to shape the face of our Jewish community in the Pioneer Valley and build a community that is dear to you!

What's in it for CBI?

1. We get the chance to get to know you better, your leadership, and to work with you to better meet the needs of our community.
2. The chance to offer more entry points into communal Jewish activity
3. Creating a more vibrant, sustainable Jewish community!

To Apply:

If you feel like you resonate with what is written above, and that you are up for the responsibilities identified, please submit your vision to us below.

The 4 Questions:

1. The theme: what is your vision for this havurah? What are you interested in gathering people around, and what inspires you to do this?
2. Your leadership: what experiences would you draw from to lead this havurah? Referring to the above responsibilities, what experience do you have in this role of leadership?
3. The tashlic (logistics): to be successful, havurot need to meet as a community consistently. How do you envision running this havurah? What will the format and set up be? Is it an open group (anyone can come to the events), or a closed one (you form a group of 10 people and that is the group) Sketch out a format, timeline and outreach plan.

4. The vision: In an [article written by Ari Zingerman](#), a pioneer in “visioning,” he encourages a person to imagine: "If this initiative were successful, what would it *look like? Feel like? Taste like? Smell like? Sound like?*" Take some time to draw this out. Give us a clear sense of what being in the room during a havurah gathering would be like in your ideal vision. What's happening? Be detailed, paint the picture.

Thank you for applying to be a havurah leader. We will be in touch with you about your application shortly!

Best,

Molly Bajgot
Havurah Organizer
Congregation B'nai Israel