



## Keeping our Families Whole Policy May 2017

B'nai David – Judea is committed to the principles of *Ahavat Yisrael* (the love of fellow Jews) and *Kavod Habriot* (upholding the human dignity of all) as components of our institutional commitment to Halacha. As such, we strive to be welcoming and inclusive, a spiritual home to all Jews who seek to join us in our mission of serving God through prayer, study, and the performance of *mitzvot* and *chessed*.

We welcome the membership and participation of gay and lesbian individuals and couples, embracing them as valued members of the congregation.

Our shared commitment to Halacha places parameters around what our gay and lesbian members can and cannot expect at B'nai David, and being transparent about those parameters is a crucial part of being welcoming in an authentic way. At B'nai David – Judea gay and lesbian individuals can choose either individual or household membership.

Members can expect:

- To be fully included in all social, educational, and religious programming.
- To participate in the ritual life of the community, including receiving ritual honors.
- That their children's lifecycle events will be celebrated in the synagogue no differently than those of other children.
- That, God forbid, in the case of the loss of a partner, the community will comfort and be present in all of the traditional ways.

Halachic marriage, by definition, is heterosexual. Halacha does not recognize same-sex marriages. As such, we will not be able to perform or house a same-sex wedding, or mark the wedding through celebrations such as an *aufruf* or *sheva brachot*.

We recognize that questions that we haven't anticipated will arise down the road. B'nai David's clergy is committed to working with our individual members toward exploring what is and isn't possible within a halachic framework.

We believe that it is our halachic and human obligation to extend to all Jews who wish to join us, the sense of belonging and religious purpose that we enjoy at B'nai David. With mutual effort and God's help, we pray that we will together succeed in doing so.