

Community Description

Beit Am Mid-Willamette Jewish Community
Corvallis, OR

Founded in 1974, Beit Am, the Mid-Willamette Valley Jewish Community in Corvallis, Oregon, has a membership of approximately 160 families. We are a pluralistic, unaffiliated community with a strong history of lay leadership and volunteerism. We have had a full-time rabbi for the past eleven years, and we also have three additional part-time employees: an office administrator, volunteer coordinator, and education director. Beit Am is the only synagogue in Corvallis, and serves the Jewish community of the entire Mid-Willamette Valley.

Beit Am is an inclusive center for Jewish life that embraces a diversity of religious and cultural traditions. We are a welcoming community that celebrates the diversity of our membership, which includes a significant number of interfaith families. Beit Am also welcomes and supports LGBTQ members. We currently conduct a variety of egalitarian Shabbat services using the Conservative (Sim Shalom) and Reconstructionist (Kol Haneshama) prayer books, as well as a weekly morning minyan and meditation group. We have a thriving Beit Midrash for children 3-13 years old and an active teen program. We also hold adult education classes on a wide variety of topics.

Beit Am is an active presence in the larger community, contributing to its vitality and serving those in need through our commitment to tikkun olam. Members lead regular services at the Oregon State Correctional Institution and Oregon State Prison and cook and serve meals at the local soup kitchen. We also provide significant volunteer help to the men's homeless shelter during the week of Christmas. Beit Am has a Chevra Kadisha and maintains a Jewish cemetery in Albany, Oregon. Beit Am is also an active member of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition. Beit Am provides an emergency fund for those in financial need and participates in local charitable and ecumenical activities. Oregon State University has a Hillel chapter, and the university also sponsors an annual Holocaust Memorial Week.

As a community we are eagerly anticipating moving from our current residential location into a new, much larger building. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2017, with completion anticipated in late summer of 2018. Our new building will allow us to have High Holidays and Benei Mitzvah celebrations in our own home; it will also enable us to host interfaith and community events, increasing Beit Am's presence in the Corvallis community.

Corvallis, a community of just over 50,000, has consistently been included in lists of the top-ten small cities in the United States. It is home to Oregon State University, a regional medical center, and many small advanced-technology companies. Corvallis is well known for its high-quality public and private education, and is regarded as a child-friendly and bicycle-friendly town. Located in the green, fertile Willamette Valley, its livability and quality of life make this area especially attractive. We have a vibrant, twice-weekly

farmers' market from spring until fall, as well a rich variety of co-ops, supermarkets, and restaurants. Corvallis is located approximately 80 miles south of Portland, Oregon's largest city, and by car is only two hours from snow skiing and one hour from ocean beaches. In addition, local parks, wildlife refuges, and hiking opportunities abound. The weather is mild year-round with infrequent snowfall; annual rainfall is only 40 inches, and spectacular summer days average 80 degrees.