



WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY

The Young Israel of Sharon is a youthful, vibrant Orthodox shul in the suburban town of Sharon, Massachusetts, within 30 minutes of both Boston, MA and Providence, RI. With a warm, friendly and relaxed atmosphere, Young Israel feels like a true small-town shul, despite having about 175 member families. Our ideology is inclusiveness. On any given day you can see men, women and children from a wide variety of backgrounds, with a broad array of religious styles and approaches, all unified by a commitment to authentic Torah life and spirit. Young Israel exemplifies the ideals of Modern Orthodoxy: serious Torah study and practice, together with an embrace of diversity and a participatory openness to the best of contemporary culture and community.

In some ways, the Young Israel of Sharon is like many other Modern Orthodox communities in America. We have daily minyanim; we're mostly but not entirely made up of married families with children; we have a Modern Orthodox day school in town; we celebrate strong roles for women in Jewish and secular life. But in other ways we are different from many other communities. We embrace a laid back attitude, communal diversity, as well

as nature and the environment.

In this packet, we provide a summary description of the Young Israel of Sharon and the Sharon and Greater Boston communities and resources. In addition to describing the shul and town and

different events and resources, we try to capture a bit of the spirit that makes our community special, attracts so many families to settle down here, and encourages the community's children to come back as adults to raise another generation here. We've supplemented the prose and pictures with short comments from shul members to add some personal flavor.

Many people in our shul are our extended family We support each other through good times and some bad. We daven together, learn together, socialize with each other, and some of us even vacation together.

MS, 37 years

OUR SHUL

Young Israel of Sharon was founded in 1972 with just a minyan of families. The community grew slowly at first, but expanded quickly after the construction of the Sharon Eruv in 1990. Many Orthodox families were drawn to Sharon by affordable houses with spacious green lots, Commuter Rail access to Boston, and (not least) the friendly Jewish community. In 2001, YI moved to its present-day

home at 100 Ames Street.

The shul membership is diverse in many ways: religious background, religious observance, hashkafa, Jewish education, age, number and age of children, place of origin. Many members have advanced degrees or s'micha. Our members spend their days working as teachers, dentists, accountants, homemakers, professors, social workers, programmers, and more. On Shabbat, the men's section has wardrobes

Sharon is an open Jewish community where people are comfortable interacting with the members and rabbis of all the various shuls. Tashlich at the lake is so special because of that. There is much home hospitality and continuing Jewish education on so many levels. People are not pretentious and do not stand on ceremony, yet Halakhic observance needn't be compromised.

AF, 36 years

ranging from button-down shirts without ties to sweaters to suits. We pride ourselves on our down-to-earth, inclusive environment. We are united by our shared focus on family, community, derech erez, Jewish and secular education, and an Orthodox way of life. We are engaged deliberately in modern American life without sacrificing our Torah traditions.

YI Sharon has been led for 31 years by Rabbi Dr. Meir Sendor. R' Sendor received his ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University, where he studied with R' Joseph B. Soloveitchik, zt"l. He received his Doctorate in Medieval Jewish History from Harvard University, under R' Isadore Twersky, zt"l,

and also holds a Masters from Yale University. R' Sendor teaches classes in Talmud, mysticism, meditation, and many other topics at YI Sharon and across Greater Boston. He plans to make aliyah in 2016.

MINYANIM

The YI Sharon offers a broad array of tefillah opportunities. Our shul has two daily shacharit minyanim and a daily mincha/maariv minyan. (During the winter there is one late Maariv at shul and a mincha/maariv b'zman that rotates among the three orthodox synagogues in town). The YI community davens together in one minyan on Friday nights.

On Shabbat morning, there are two options: the **hashkama minyan** and the **main minyan**. The Hashkama minyan prides itself as being committed to a quiet tefillah with proper decorum. Hashkama minyan ends with a short dvar Torah given by a minyan member. After Kiddush, many hashkama members choose to remain in shul for chavrutot or to attend a longer shiur given by one of the Sharon Kollel rabbanim. The main minyan includes a short introduction to laying as well as a longer drasha given by Rabbi Sendor.

Teen minyan takes place once or twice a month. This minyan is completely teen run--from arranging who will be davening to who will be reading Torah. The teens enjoy preparing and mingling at their own Kiddush. Once a year, around graduation time, the teens take charge of the main minyan. The teens carry this experience with them as they advance into leadership roles as young adults.

Once a month, for the past 25 years, **Tefillat Nashim** has met in the Beit Midrash. This group was initiated by women who wanted to maximize their participation in communal prayer while staying within the framework of halakha. P'sukei D'Zimrah, is often lead off by a young girl. Another Kehilah member leads the Shacharit service. The first three aliyot are layned by different participants (no B'rachot are recited). A dvar Torah follows, and the

I love the 'rural' atmosphere and relaxed lifestyle of our town; and in particular, I love the Hashkomma minyan with its quiet and respectful tone, and serious davening. MR

Haftarah is chanted by another Kehilah member. The service continues with the Musaf Amidah and then one or more of the younger girls leads everyone in the concluding prayers. During the Tefillah, an emphasis is placed on singing songs aloud.

Tefillat Nashim also meets for special occasions such as B'not Mitzvah. During a simcha such as this, the aliyot are layned by the bat mitzvah girl and are often interspersed with short divrei torah and brachot given to the bat mitzvah by special women in her life. These brachot are often poignant and reflective, and are a beautiful way for family and community members to share their love with the bat mitzvah.

Women dance with a Sefer Torah on Simchat Torah and have a chance to layn an Aliyah. On Purim morning, as part of tefilah, women layn Megillat Esther, and on the evening of Tisha B'Av they gather together by candlelight to layn Eicha.

A girl who grew up in our shul and did not attend services regularly before Tefillat Nashim said, "Tefillat Nashim gave me a greater understanding and appreciation for both the halakhic and spiritual aspects of tefillah."



YOUTH & FAMILY

Our community tremendously values our children and their spiritual growth. We place a heavy emphasis on developing and improving our youth and family programming.

Over the past 5 years we've been fortunate to participate in the Bnot Sherut Leumi program. Two young women from Israel are welcomed into our community and run programs for both our shul and Striar Hebrew Academy (SHAS).

Current programming includes:

- Tefillat Ketanim: Children ages 0-5 and their parents join together from 11:00-11:30am on Shabbat morning for a fun and relaxed tefillah with age appropriate explanations and fun tunes. The tefillah is led by a rotation of parent volunteers and their children.
- Shabbat Davening Groups: Individual davening groups include Pre-K/K, 1st & 2nd grade, and 3rd-5th grade
- Bnei Akiva Shabbat afternoon programming
- Friday Night Onegs & Motzai Shabbat Activities for Teenagers
- Shabbat morning babysitting: Supervised babysitting room for children ages 1-5 from 9:30 am-end of davening.
- Mishmash: An opportunity for children (grades 1-6) to learn a subject of their choice with their parents, in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Mishmash is held on Motzei Shabbat every two to three weeks from October to April.
- Family Succah Hop
- Children's Chanukah Party
- Purim Carnival
- Tikun Layl Shavuot, with 100+ participants from middle schoolers to grandparents

We loved tefilat ketanim; It was a fun way to introduce key parts of davening in a way my very active (and loud) son could be himself. And now, they ask to come in for the end of "big shul" with me to sing along!

KG, 9 years

CHESED

Young Israel of Sharon has an active chesed committee, which takes action to care for each person in the community during times of need. Whether there is a birth, death, illness, need for hospitality, or helping with special needs children, community members support each other with meals, visits, and charity. During the recent recession, Young Israel also created a Family Assistance Fund, to provide help for members who lost jobs or had other economic difficulties.

Receiving baby meals for eight weeks was so helpful.
LWR, 3 years

Young Israel members have formed relationships with many charities around the world (in addition to supporting local Jewish organizations like the eruv, mikveh,

schools, and YI itself). Young Israel has formed particularly close connections with institutions such as Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel, which provides excellent medical care for children in Israel and the Palestinian territories, as well as pediatric therapy focusing on the treatment of anxiety, trauma and stress, and Family Table, the largest kosher food pantry in New England. Many members and their children volunteer in the pantry, or deliver meals to poor families or to seniors.

INCLUSION

We believe that every individual in the community should feel accepted and welcome, and should be able to participate in communal life. Through our inclusion initiative we strive to increase the awareness of our members to help everyone be sensitive to the multiple visible and not-so-visible needs of members of our community. Through the use of educational and social programming, as well as physical accessibility needs assessment, we hope to bring about this awareness and ensure that the Young Israel is welcoming to individuals of all ages and of all abilities.

During our inaugural year of the inclusion initiative, 2014-15 we hosted Shelly Cohen, founder and director of The Jewish Inclusion Project, as a scholar in residence, and had a ramp built (for a boy's bar mitzvah project) to allow all members access to the Bimah. We hosted our first Yachad shabbaton, that brought together children and adults with and without special needs through various programs over Shabbat. We are working to match members with special needs with Shabbat 'buddies', whether for help following along in services or just to be a social companion. We have also created a section in our library that consists of educational and story books for children and adults about various special needs topics. Looking ahead we plan to host our second annual Yachad shabbaton in the fall of 2015, as well as bring in other speakers and programs to educate the community further about special needs.



PROGRAMMING

We enjoy various communal activities together throughout the year.

- Branch-Out Shabbat: Members expand their personal kehillah by sharing a Shabbat lunch with individuals, couples, or families with whom they have not yet connected.
- New Member Social: New members gather to meet each other and veteran kehillah members.
- Barbeque and Family Games
- Chanukah Party and Raffle
- Jazz Night
- Purim Seudah
- Yom HaShoah Speaker
- Yom Ha'Atzmaut Program
- Family Baseball Game Outing

ADULT EDUCATION

Weekly Classes: The Shul offers weekly shiurim in Gemara, Halakhah, Mishneh Torah, Machshevet Yisrael (including Jewish Philosophy, Kabbalah and Hassidut), and a shiur in Moreh Nevukhim, as well as a rotating shiur after the Hashkamah minyan on parshanut. All shiurim are co-ed, and there is also a weekly Women's Torah Circle. A list of ongoing weekly classes taught by Rabbi Sendor and other community members can be found at www.yisharon.org/classes.html

Scholar-in-Residence Program: Each year the shul hosts 3-5 Scholar-in-Residences, featuring prominent Rabbis, scholars, and educators from the modern Orthodox world. In the past, the shul has been honored to host Rabbi Saul Berman, Executive Director of Edah, and Rabbi Kenneth Brander, Director of the Center for the Jewish Future at Yeshiva University.

A very high ratio of rabbis & teachers per capita at Young Israel leads to an atmosphere of learning year-round.

ES, 17 years

An important component of the Scholar in Residence program is our annual Shabbat T'Lamdeini program that celebrates outstanding female Torah scholarship.

Summer Beit Midrash: Each summer we are privileged to host this exciting program led by Rabbi Aryeh Klapper and the Center for Modern Torah Leadership. Approximately 15 exceptional young men and women learn intensively in the shul beit midrash for six weeks during the summer and offer chavrutot for the wider shul community. In addition, there are public lectures offered to the shul community as well as a Shabbat with Rabbi Klapper as a Scholar-in-Residence.

THE SHARON JEWISH COMMUNITY

SYNAGOGUES

For a small town, Sharon has a fair number of synagogues of different denominations. Happily, these synagogues have warm relationships: YI Sharon sold its old building to Temple Kol Tikvah (where the community mikveh is still housed) in 2000, and bought its current building from Temple Sinai. The members of these synagogues get along well, with kids sharing playgrounds, Little League teams, beach sandcastles, and summer camps. The Sharon Community Kollel also brings members of different shuls together to learn, celebrate holidays, or sometimes just to eat.

Our community also offers a Mikveh, Eruv, Jewish schools and local kosher options, which are listed below.

SCHOOLS

Sharon and the surrounding area provide a broad array of choices for schooling. (See the Resources section below.) The most commonly attended Modern Orthodox school for YI Sharon's children is the Striar Hebrew Academy (SHAS) for pre-school and elementary school,

Sharon is a unique place. Most Orthodox communities outside Israel are in large urban cities. Sharon is an exception and offers a lifestyle of being close to nature and being Orthodox.

AS



and Maimonides school in Brookline for later grades. Both schools provide an excellent secular education, a peer group of other Modern Orthodox kids, and a strong foundation in Jewish learning and practice. Many parents in the community choose to send one or more children to other Jewish schools, public schools, or home schooling.

SHAS bears a particular close relationship with YI Sharon because it was established by members of the Young Israel and Rabbi Sendor for Sharon's Modern Orthodox community. Additionally, the elementary school occupies a wing of the shul building. The children's artwork and other projects adorn the hallways and social hall, the children use the sanctuary and Beit Midrash for davening and other activities, and students have had "Ask the Rabbi" sessions with Rabbi Sendor.

TOWN OF SHARON

Sharon is a beautiful suburban community in a natural setting, and offers a great Jewish environment to live in and raise kids. In 2013, it was rated by Money Magazine as the #1 small town in America, in its list of "places with great jobs, strong economies, affordable homes, excellent schools, and that special something that makes it a great place to live." (In 2015, Sharon ranked a lowly third.) Located midway between Boston and Providence, it provides access to both cities via MBTA commuter trains stopping at the Sharon station, and to New York City and Washington, D.C., via Amtrak at nearby Route 128 station. The population of 18,000 lives mostly in single-family houses ranging from relatively modest ranches to luxury properties, with some younger or older families in rental properties. Many town residents have second- and third-generation family roots in Sharon, but the town is also notable for its diversity and openness to newcomers.

Sharon is close enough to Boston for trips to cultural activities or sporting events, but far enough away to provide peace and tranquility. Shul families enjoy the small town amenities, like concerts at the bandstand by the lake, or watching their kids play baseball, lacrosse or softball. Sharon is also a safe place: some residents leave

cars and houses unlocked, and kids walk or bike themselves to school.

Despite its proximity to large cities, Sharon has green spaces and many nature activities available. Indeed, the town motto is, "A better place to live, because it's naturally beautiful." YI Sharon members make good use of the many options for hiking, bird-watching, biking, boating and other outdoor activities. Sharon's Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary and nearby state parks offer trails and hiking. In the summer, there is boating and swimming in our 353-acre, spring-fed Lake Massapoag. In the winter, there is skiing and snowboarding at New England's many resorts and ice skating at local ponds, indoor, and outdoor ice rinks. Sharon is also host to



several summer camps, and the area has multiple Jewish camp options. Every summer our town hosts The Sharon Triathlon. The race takes place in and around the lake starting with the swimming where family and friends line the beach to cheer participants. It is then on to the biking and running. The race finishes back at the park where every athlete is treated to fanfare. Participation from shul members has grown over the years with seasoned YI member athletes helping and encouraging other members to take part. It is an exciting day in August to stand by and cheer on community members ranging in age from teens to seniors.

Sharon is a family-friendly town, and many develop friendships across all denominations and religions simply from meeting neighbors around town and discovering shared interests and values. Many of our member children attend local multi-denominational or non-Jewish camps and enjoy becoming friends with non-Orthodox or unaffiliated Jewish and non-Jewish children. The camps gladly accommodate the kashrut needs of our children.

"Sharon is the best place to raise children (I raised five here). Parents watch out for each other's children, and informally help in raising each other's kids.... Topping this off, our kids and teens (and adults) feel completely safe walking all over town." RS

JEWISH RESOURCES IN & AROUND SHARON

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The Community Kollel of Sharon (www.sharonkollel.org) unites all of Sharon's diverse circles to create a

unified community with a common appreciation for the value of Jewish learning and focuses on the values that we all share. The Kollel runs many weekly classes, and runs a number of programs in collaboration with Young Israel of Sharon during the year. Unfortunately, this year, after nearly 10 years, the two couples running the Kollel moved. The community is currently working to bring in two new families.

The Center for Modern Torah Leadership (www.torahleadership.org) models and fosters a vision of fully committed halakhic Judaism that embraces the intellectual and moral challenges of modernity as spiritual opportunities, and takes responsibility for the societal implications of its interpretations of Torah. The Center carries out its mission through the Summer Beit Midrash program which educates up and coming leaders to write their own Halakhic responsum after an intense six week study session. The fellows in this program often spend time learning with members of the Young Israel community. The CMTL circulates weekly divrei torah on line as well as maintains a website with many articles and audio lectures.

Maayan (www.maayan.org), provides women of all ages and backgrounds a setting to further their Jewish learning. Weekday, evening, and Sunday classes in Tanakh, Mishnah, Talmud, Jewish thought, and liturgy are offered at locations in Newton, Brookline, Brighton and Sharon. In addition, Ma'ayan sponsors seminars and Days and Evenings of Learning on rich themes and relevant topics throughout the year. While most programs are designed for women, men are invited to some classes and many events.

The Jewish Sharon Email List (groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/jewishsharon/info) is a resource for information on the greater Jewish community of Sharon, providing a discussion forum. People also solicit recommendations, make announcements, offer items for sale / free, etc.

MIKVEH

The Sharon mikveh, run by the women of Chevrat Nashim, is at 9 Dunbar St. 781-784-7444, chevrat-nashim@gmail.com, sites.google.com/site/chevrat-nashim/.

ERUV

The Sharon Eruv is maintained under the direct supervision of Rabbi Meir Sendor of Young Israel of Sharon. With our Eruv volunteers, the Eruv is checked on a weekly



rotation basis to insure that it is intact and that all necessary repairs are made.

Founded in 1990, the Sharon Eruv, was constructed and maintained in close consultation with its original Rav HaMakshir, Rav Shimon Eider, Ztz"l. We are thankful and honored to have Rav Moshe Heinemann, Shlit"a, as our current Rav HaMakshir.

For an Eruv Map and additional information, see www.sharoneruv.org. Eruv status can be obtained by calling 781-784-4299.

SCHOOLS

Striar Hebrew Academy of Sharon (SHAS): www.striarhebrew.org

Early Learning Center for ages 15 months through Kindergarten (60 Ashcroft Road, Sharon 781-784-8700)

Elementary campus for Grades 1 through 6 (100 Ames Street, Sharon, 781-784-8724)

Maimonides School: www.maimonides.org.

Middle and Upper Schools (34 Philbrick Road, Brookline, MA. 617-232-4452)

Elementary School (2 Clark Road, Brookline, MA)

Shaloh House: www.shalohhouse.com

Preschool, Infant through Kindergarten (50 Ethyl Way, Stoughton, 781-344-6334)

Providence Hebrew Day School: www.phdschool.org

Kindergarten-Grade 8 (450 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, RI. 401-331-5327)

Gann Academy: www.gannacademy.org

High School (333 Forest Street, Waltham, MA. 781-642-6800)

Gateways: Access to Jewish Education: www.jgateways.org

My years at SHAS studying Chumash, Navi, Mishnah, and the principles of Hebrew, have provided me with an understanding of my Jewish heritage, and have instilled in me a love of Jewish learning.
ER, Class of 2008

Gateways' mission is to provide high quality special education services, expertise and support to enable students with diverse learning needs to succeed in Jewish educational settings and participate meaningfully in Jewish life.

KOSHER FOOD

Kosher products including fresh meat and chicken are available locally. In addition, freshly baked goods at a number of local supermarkets are certified kosher by the KVH (Rabbinical Council of New England).

Zayde's Family Marketplace Canton, MA. Many varieties of meats, Israeli foods as well as imported goods from other countries. An assortment of homemade food is cooked daily and certified by the KVH.

Sweethearts Three. Candy & Chocolatier (Certified by KVH. Shomer Shabbat) Sharon, MA

Crescent Ridge Dairy Farm. National Geographic ranked Crescent Ridge among the world's 10 best ice creams, competing with ice cream from as far away as Paris, Cuba, and Florence. (Crescent Ridge ice cream is KVH certified. The toppings are not all kosher. Other products that they sell are not under Hashgacha.)

*Take yourself
back in time to
eat ice cream at
Crescent Ridge
and watch the
cows.*

HB, 24 years

Life's A Bagel is a KVH-certified fresh bagel shop located in Canton, MA.

Sharon Woods Inn (Glatt & Shomer Shabbat) Bed & Breakfast in Sharon, MA (781)784-9401 dyarmush@gmail.com. Year-round kosher bed & breakfast & Shabbat meals

Shaw's Bakery: Canton and Sharon - Certified by KVH

Stop & Shop Bakery: Stoughton and Norwood - Certified KVH

Costco: Dedham - Certified by KVH

There are many kosher restaurants, bakeries and butchers in Boston, Brookline, Newton, and Providence. A list can be found at www.kashrut.com/travel/Boston/ and www.bethsholom-ri.org/kosher-food.html

OTHER RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Chabad of Sharon: www.chabadofsharon.com

Etz Chayim: Orthodox. www.etzchaimsharon.com

Temple Israel: Conservative. tisharon.org

Temple Sinai: Reform. www.temple-sinai.com

Temple Kol Tikvah: Independent Reform. koltikvahsharon.org

Sharon also houses two mosques and several churches

ACTIVITIES IN & AROUND SHARON

The Sharon Public Library has a museum pass program. Reserve a pass for one day and receive a discount per admission. Check out www.sharonpubliclibrary.org for more information.



Recreation

Westgate Lanes (candlepin & 10-pin bowling, Brockton)

Kings Bowling (Dedham)

Splitsville Luxury Lanes (at Patriot Place, Foxboro)

Launch Trampoline Park (Norwood)

Ulin Rink (ice skating, no rentals, in Milton)

McGolf mini-golf (Dedham)

Family Funway (mini-golf, Foxboro)

Nashoba Valley snow tubing & skiing

Blue Hills Ski Area (Milton)

Outdoor/Nature

Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary (Mass Audubon)

Moose Hill Farm (Trustees of the Reservation)

Ward's Berry Farm (pick-your-own berries/pumpkins, farm store, 4-H animals, playground)

Borderland State Park

Blue Hills (hiking trails, skiing)

Zoos

Franklin Park Zoo

Roger Williams Zoo

Capron Park Zoo

Davis' Farmland (petting zoo, splash park, hayride)

*Gotta love
the lake!*

ES

Museums

Providence Children's Museum
Children's Museum in Easton
Boston Children's Museum
Boston Science Museum (Cambridge)
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (Boston)
Edward M. Kennedy Institute (Boston)
Harvard Museum of Natural History (Cambridge)
Museum of Fine Arts (MFA - Boston)
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (Boston)
Fuller Craft Museum (Brockton)
Decordova Sculpture Garden (Lincoln)

Historical places

Freedom Trail
Faneuil Hall/Quincy Marketplace
Holocaust Memorial
Lexington/Concord
Adams Historical Area (Quincy)
Plimoth Plantation (Plymouth)

Shopping

Village Shoppes (Canton)
Legacy Place (Dedham): shopping, movies
Patriot Place (Foxboro): shopping, movies, Patriot Hall
of Fame, small ice skating rink
Wrentham Outlets

Crafts

Ceramics a la Carte (Canton)
The Clayroom (Walpole)
Plaster Fun Time (Dedham)
Make Meaning crafting for kids (Legacy Place, Dedham)

Seasonal

Many smaller apple orchards are located within a half hour drive of Sharon and larger orchards within a 1-hour drive.

The Big Apple Farm
Honey Pot Hill Orchards
Berlin Orchards
Nashoba Valley
Belkin Family Lookout Farm

