



Rabbi Gideon Estes

3443 Wilcrest Drive  
Houston, Texas 77042

(713) 334-4300 (office)  
(713) 334-5197 (fax)

houstonorami@gmail.com  
www.oramihouston.org

# Membership Packet

## Shă·lōm'

*peace; related to sh'lemut,  
wholeness; the greatest blessing  
there is, and the way we  
greet each other.*

שלום

# WELCOME

It is a pleasure to welcome your interest in Congregation Or Ami. We offer a wonderful setting in which to celebrate Judaism and to form enduring relationships. We are a community that values everyone and provides many opportunities for involvement. We invite you to join us for our participatory Shabbat and Holiday services, or to come by on Sunday mornings and see our energetic Religious School program.



The synagogue strengthens, supports, and nourishes our souls. Or Ami is devoted to helping each member of the congregation to grow in the understanding and practice of Judaism. We are committed to preserving Jewish traditions in an innovative and modern context.

Please feel free to call me with any questions you might have regarding any aspect of Or Ami. I look forward to meeting with you and introducing you to our members.

I am confident that your association with Or Ami will be one that brings you the blessings of joy and fulfillment.

B'Shalom,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rabbi Gideon Estes". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Rabbi Gideon Estes

Dear Prospective Member,

We are delighted that you are considering membership at  
Congregation Or Ami.

With a long tradition of being a warm and friendly synagogue,  
we welcome the opportunity to share that with you and your  
family.



Friday Night Services  
6:45PM

Shabbat Morning Services  
9:30AM








**Limmud Shabbat**

Our monthly interactive and participatory service  
9:30AM






# CONGREGATION OR AMI VISION STATEMENT

Kindling the light of learning, spiritual growth, and compassion to nurture innovative Jewish life in the home, synagogue, and community

***We will achieve this Vision by helping each member to:***

-  *Seek guidance from Torah in living each day*
-  *Engage in lifelong learning across the generations*
-  *Participate fully in Tefillah (prayer)*
-  *Strengthen identification with Conservative Judaism and Klal Yisroel (the Jewish People)*
-  *Practice Tzedakah and Gemilut Hasadim (charity and acts of loving-kindness)*

***We will achieve this Vision by committing our community to:***

-  *Create a warm, friendly, and respectful atmosphere for congregants and guests*
-  *Provide an array of activities for our diverse congregational groups*
-  *Participate actively in the Houston Jewish community*
-  *Partner with God and the interfaith community in Tikkun Olam (acts of repairing the world)*
-  *Support the State of Israel and Masorti (the Conservative movement in Israel)*

# ABOUT CONGREGATION OR AMI

The genesis of **Congregation Or Ami** occurred on July 1, 2001, when two of Houston's Conservative Synagogues merged. Congregation's Beth Am and Or Hadash came together in response to a desire to share Jewish life and practice in a small and intimate setting.

On September 9, 2005, for Shabbat Services we moved into our new home and dedicated our new building.

The founding members set forth a vision of synagogue life which would extend their Jewish commitments and those of the next generation of Jews well into the 21st century and beyond. At the core of their vision were the values and priorities which echoed from the traditions of the past, but which were embraced with new and contemporary ideas of the present.

Or Ami celebrates Shabbat and Holidays through regularly scheduled worship services. Services are led by Rabbi Gideon Estes, along with members of the congregation who are skilled in chanting prayers and reading Torah and Haftarah. Men and women over the age of B'nai Mitzvah are equally encouraged to lead and participate in services.

Erev Shabbat services are held every Friday evening at 6:45pm. Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30am and are followed by a Kiddush lunch for all in attendance.

A variety of other educational, religious, community outreach and social programs are available to meet a myriad of needs, through our Sisterhood, Men's Club, and many committees.



# CONGREGATION OR AMI RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

## Our Educational Philosophy

The goal of Or Ami's program of religious education is to create a setting in which young people may explore Judaism's many facets and enable them to build a foundation for lifelong Jewish learning and celebration. The synagogue seeks to offer learning opportunities that will enrich students' lives at home and at school.

We strive to accomplish these goals by recognizing that every student is unique in his or her approach to learning and Jewish observance. Through personal attention to each student's background and learning style, we endeavor to instill knowledge of Jewish beliefs and traditions, familiarity with Jewish ritual and liturgical skills, competence in Hebrew reading and basic language, and the practice of *mitzvot* (commandments) pertaining to *tzedakah* (righteous charity), *gemilut hasadim* (acts of compassion) and *tikkun olam* (social justice).

Or Ami's program of religious education is designed to complement and further the synagogue's overall goals as expressed in its Vision Statement:

*Kindling the Light of learning, spiritual growth, and compassion to nurture innovative Jewish life in the home, synagogue, and community.*



## MEET OUR PROFESSIONAL STAFF



Rabbi Estes was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in New York City. He also earned a Master's Degree from JTS in Jewish Studies with a concentration in Pastoral Care. Rabbi Estes was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. He graduated Cum Laude from UCLA in 2003 with a BA in Jewish Studies with a concentration in Jewish History. He has studied at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, The Hebrew University and the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem.

While in Rabbinical School, Rabbi Estes worked as *Mashgiach*, Kosher supervisor, in the JTS cafeteria under Rabbi Joel Roth, served as the Rabbinic Intern at Congregation Beth El in Fairfield, CT, as a Chaplain Intern in the UCLA Medical Center providing spiritual care to both Jewish and non-Jewish patients, and as the Coordinator of the Interseminary Dialogue, one of the oldest continuous Christian Jewish Dialogues in the country. Currently, Rabbi Estes is a member of the Rabbinical Assembly and serves on their executive council, and the Houston Rabbinical Association, where he is the Immediate Past President. He serves as a Vice President of Houston Hillel, the Board of Representatives of CanCare, and is the Vice Chair of the Katy-West Houston Interfaith Clergy Association (KWHICA).

To schedule a meeting with Rabbi Estes, please contact the office at (713) 334-4300 or e-mail him directly at [rabbi.estes@gmail.com](mailto:rabbi.estes@gmail.com).

Murray Adelstein has an extensive background in serving the Jewish community both professionally and as a volunteer. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from the University of Texas at Austin and served as the Education Director at Temple Beth Israel. Upon graduating, he worked for the Union of Reform Judaism as TOFTY Regional Advisor and at Greene Family Camp. Murray received a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Texas at Arlington.

Upon moving to Houston, he worked at the Houston Jewish Community Center, where his last position was Director of Children and Youth, and Day Camp Director at the Gordon Campsite. At Congregation Beth El in Missouri City, Murray was a Geshet Advisor for 2 years and a NFTY-TOR Advisor for 10 years. He is a BBYO advisor, a substitute teacher at Emery/Weiner School, and a Birthright trip leader.

In addition to Education Director, Congregation Or Ami is also proud to call Murray Adelstein our Youth Director. Coordinating our Kadima and USY youth groups, Murray works with our children and the Youth Committee Chair to keep our pre-teens and teenagers involved.

Murray and his wife, Sandy, have two children, Zach and Brittany, and three grand-dogs.

For further information about the religious school, its curriculum, or registering for classes, please contact Murray Adelstein at [oramieddirector@gmail.com](mailto:oramieddirector@gmail.com).



# MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND APPLICATION

Included in this packet is our membership application. Please complete this form and return it to the synagogue office.

Membership does not include tuition for Religious School. The fees for the religious school vary depending on the age of your children. Please call us for specific information.

## I. Standard Levels

Category	Yearly Amount
<b>Sustaining Member/Family</b>	\$4,000
Member/Family, Requested Minimum	\$1,500
<b>Individual Young Adult, Ages 18 to 29:</b>	
First Year, Requested Minimum	\$360
Second Year and Beyond, Requested Minimum	\$720

## II. Benefactor Levels (separate from High Holy Day Pledges)

Category	Yearly Threshold
<b>Rosh Pinah</b> (Cornerstone)	\$16,000
<b>Amud</b> (Pillar)	\$12,000
<b>Yesod</b> (Foundation)	\$7,000

### Benefactor recognition:

- Listed by level in *Kol Ami* newsletter
- Listed by level Or Ami's High Holiday Program
- Names engraved on a wall display showing each of the three levels.  
"Anonymous" is also an option.

As a matter of policy and principle, we do not turn people away from Or Ami. We simply ask that you honestly assess your situation and commit accordingly.

If you have any questions or comments about our new dues/benefactor structure, please send an email to [oramidues@gmail.com](mailto:oramidues@gmail.com).

At Or Ami, we value the many ways in which our members contribute to the wellbeing of the synagogue. If the above commitment presents a financial obstacle to your being part of our synagogue family, we would be happy to put you in touch with a member of our Finance Committee who will work with you in a confidential and supportive manner to insure your full participation at Or Ami.



# CONGREGATION OR AMI MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

<b>HOUSEHOLD MEMBER 1</b>					
Last Name:		First:		Middle:	
Date of birth:		Male      Female <i>(Please circle)</i>		Nickname:	
Mailing address:					
Email:		Phone:		Cell:	
Current Marital Status:   M S W D		Date of Marriage:			
Profession:		Business Phone:		Fax:	
Religion:		Hebrew Name:		Bar/Bat Date:	
<b>HOUSEHOLD MEMBER 2</b>					
Last Name:		First:		Middle:	
Date of birth:		Male   Female <i>(Please circle)</i>		Nickname:	
Mailing address (if different from above):					
Email:		Phone:		Cell:	
Profession:		Business Phone:		Fax:	
Religion:		Hebrew Name:		Bar/Bat Date:	
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT</b>					
Name of a relative not residing with you:					
Address:				Phone:	
City:		State:		ZIP Code:	
Relationship:					
<b>CHILDREN (IF ADDITIONAL CHILDREN, PLEASE LIST ON SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER)</b>					
Full Name (English)	Sex	Birth date mm/dd/yyyy	Religion	Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date mm/dd/yyyy	Name (Hebrew)
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

# CONGREGATION OR AMI MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## Yahrzeit Information Form

Yahrzeit Notification (Jewish custom calls for observing the anniversary of the death of parents, children, spouse, sibling according to the Jewish calendar. Please complete the information below, if pertinent, so that we may remind you of Yahrzeit dates.)

Full Name (English)	Name (Hebrew) Printed in English	Relationship to Adult #1 or Adult #2	Date of death (Secular) mm/dd/yyyy	Time of Death (Before or After Sunset)

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

ADULT #1	ADULT #2	PROGRAM / DESCRIPTION
		<b>Fundraising Committee</b> / Plans and coordinates annual fundraising events
		<b>Membership Committee</b> / Fosters membership involvement and retention
		<b>Adult Education Committee</b> / Develops ideas for life-long Jewish learning
		<b>Religious School Education Committee</b> / Fosters a positive learning environment
		<b>Youth Committee</b> / Kadima (grades 6-8), HouJew USY (grades 9-12)
		<b>Sisterhood and Men's Club</b>
		<b>Other:</b>

### QUESTIONS

What special skills, expertise, talents, or interests would you like to share with our synagogue?

Adult #1

Adult #2

Are you able to read Torah?      Adult #1                  Adult #2

Are you able to read Haftarah?      Adult #1                  Adult #2

Are you able to lead services?      Adult #1                  Adult #2

Have you been affiliated with another congregation?    Yes                  No

If so, what is the name and address of the congregation?

## CONGREGATION OR AMI MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I (We) hereby apply for membership at Congregation Or Ami, and when accepted I (we) promise to abide by the rules and regulations of the Synagogue. I (we) agree to pay the first year's dues in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ and thereafter such annual dues as may be fixed by the Synagogue Board of Trustees, in accordance with the by-laws of the Congregation.

I (We) understand that the fiscal year for payment of all Congregation Or Ami accounts is August 1 through July 31. I (We) understand that our account must be current in order to receive High Holiday tickets, and to have a life cycle event at Congregation Or Ami.

This application is accompanied by a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ which is the initial payment for my (our) first year commitment to Congregation Or Ami.

Balance to be paid in \_\_\_\_\_ monthly or \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly installments of \$\_\_\_\_\_ each.

To The Board of Trustees:

I/We hereby apply for membership in Congregation Or Ami, and if accepted, agree to abide by all rules and regulations at present in effect or hereafter promulgated for the conduct and operation of the congregation.

Signature of Adult 1: _____ Printed Name: _____	Date:
Signature of Adult 2: _____ (only if for a joint membership) Printed Name: _____	Date:

If you have any questions regarding your membership,  
 please contact Becca Evans, Office Administrator at (713) 334-4300  
 and she will put you in touch with the appropriate person.

**Visit our website: [www.oramihouston.org](http://www.oramihouston.org)**

