



Connect | Learn | Grow | Play | Belong

PTBE Circles Vision Statement

Imagine a multitude of congregants gathering regularly in small groups of 8-12 to learn and laugh, to rest and rejuvenate, and to deepen connections to one another, to PTBE, and to the rhythms of Jewish time and life. Circles will help PTBE realize this future of a connected, committed membership through the formation of small groups which will:

- Focus on the lives and significant concerns of our members.
- Organize around shared interests, life stages, and affinities.
- Foster deep relationships amongst members.
- Be self-led by lay leaders working in a group dynamic.

What are PTBE Circles?

PTBE Circles are small groups of individuals, couples, or families that help make our big community feel small. They build a vibrant, inclusive community where members feel strongly connected to our congregation and to each other. Circles are regular gatherings of eight to twelve congregants in people's homes, offices, the outdoors or anywhere around the Peninsula that promote relationship building. They are led by PTBE Circles Leaders with the frequency, dates, and locations of meetings determined by the group leader in advance. Some Circles will connect around common interests, affinities, geography, demographic, or profession for a designated time period. Other Circles will gather to discuss topics of deep concern or importance to their lives. All will engage in meaningful conversations and learning through connection.

What a PTBE Circle is not:

PTBE Circles are *not a class*. Many of us love learning and lectures, and text study may or may not be a part of our time together. A Circle Leader is not there to teach or lend expertise, but rather to facilitate a meaningful conversation based on the full participation of all group members. Likewise, while the clergy and professional staff of the synagogue will offer support and provide suggested content for your conversations, this is an opportunity to learn from one another, not the "professionals."

PTBE Circles are *not a social club*. Don't get us wrong - our groups ARE centered on relationships, and we hope you will make many new meaningful connections. The focus of our time together is not purely unstructured social time. PTBE Circles are about living a holistic Jewish life where we learn together, play together, act together, care for one another, and are accountable to each other.

PTBE Circles are *not group therapy*. People in your Circle will offer their personal stories, and you should be prepared to listen, be present, and offer support as they do. But this is not a time to give advice, troubleshoot, or "save."

Belonging to PTBE Circles encourages us to:

- Commit to new experiences that open our hearts and minds to new ideas
- Invest time and energy in one another and our Peninsula Temple Beth El community
- Relate the wisdom of Jewish tradition and values in our everyday lives
- Connect to what other Reform Jews are doing
- Look at who we are, who we want to be, and how we want to live
- Encourage personal growth in ourselves and others

For more information, please contact Monica Boardman, Director of Membership Engagement,
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