

Congregation Ohr Shalom - Summit JCC Pay What You Wish Membership – FAQs

What is a “Pay What You Wish” Membership (PWYW)?

PWYW is a COS-SJCC membership category that enables families with young children to enjoy the benefits of synagogue participation at a rate that fits their budget and spending priorities. Benefits include the opportunity for discounted Early Learning Center (ELC) tuition, to enroll students in tuition-based early grades of the Jewish Learning Center (Religious school), complimentary High Holiday access (at the suggested minimum contribution and above), member participation at special events (past examples include “Shabbat under the Stars,” concerts, cabaret night, “The Big Quiz Thing,” “Latkes and Vodkas,” etc.), clergy and community support during times of need and life cycle events, voting rights at congregational meetings, potential tax deductions, and most importantly- the knowledge that you are making it possible for our synagogue to survive and thrive.

Who is eligible for “Pay What You Wish?”

Families with children who are ALL in second grade and under are eligible for PWYW. If your oldest child is in third grade or above, you are not eligible.

OK, is it really “pay what you wish,” or is there an expected minimum contribution?

This membership category is truly pay what you wish. We suggest a minimum of \$360 per year and hope that members will consider a more generous contribution if possible (standard or “classic” membership dues start at \$3250). But we also understand that not all young families are ready or able to make that kind of investment in our community, and we are dedicated to building meaningful relationships with people at all stages of life and Jewish practice.

Is PWYW the best membership option for young families?

That depends on your family’s needs. PWYW provides many of the most important benefits of synagogue membership. However, our “Classic” membership offers additional benefits - including FREE Jewish Learning Center tuition for students in grades K-2 (PWYW offers tuition-based access to the JLC in those grades). For families with multiple children in the ELC, you may benefit from the 10% tuition discount afforded with Classic level and above membership. For people who prioritize paying the actual per-family cost of operating the synagogue, the “Sustaining” membership may be the right fit. And for families who want to ensure that COS-SJCC is strong and vibrant into the future - and who want to personally provide access for all families, regardless of financial capacity - we ask that you consider becoming VISIONARIES.

What if our family is not eligible for Pay What You Wish, but the other membership categories do not fit our budget?

COS-SJCC is committed to welcoming all people who want to participate as members of our congregation. Customized membership dues options are available upon request to accommodate each family’s situation. Contact our Financial Secretary, Amy Lewis at Amy.Lewis.Ohr.Shalom@gmail.com for a confidential conversation.

I have more questions! Who can I contact?

For any questions, including the full description of all membership categories and related benefits, reach out to Mindy Huber, Membership Chair, at mingreene@gmail.com or (917) 653-6134.