

kCongregation Keneseth Israel **Policies, Practices & Guidelines**

<u>Policy, Practice or Guideline:</u>	Worship Service Etiquette
<u>Source:</u>	Religious Practice Committee
<u>Date Adopted:</u>	11/2001
<u>Dates Revised:</u>	1/2023

- I. Introduction: Over time, the social tradition regarding Synagogue attendance, dress, and behavior have changed but as our social behavior has evolved, the Temple has failed to educate members and guests of the social acceptability of certain behaviors. At KI, our *minhag* reflects the rules of how we should act at the Temple. The purpose of this policy is to outline the guidelines for behaviors that are deemed acceptable when attending religious school, Shabbat, or holiday services.
- II. Policy Statement: It is the policy of KI that the decorum within the Sanctuary will be maintained to provide for a sacred environment in which to pray.
- III. History: Over the years discussion was held regarding the lack off adherence to the guidelines outlined in this policy. Opinions varied with regard to the balance between respect for Shabbat and appropriate dress. It was agreed that while the committee cannot mandate what is deemed suitable, a standard of behavior should be expected
- IV. Definitions:
 - a. *Minhag* A Hebrew word meaning tradition or custom
- V. Procedure: A copy of this policy is distributed to parents who have enrolled their child or children in the Religious School. It is expected that the parents will share and discuss these guidelines with their children. A letter, outlining these customs, is sent to visiting Non-Jewish groups.
 - a. Attendance and demeanor
 - No food or drink may be brought into the Sanctuary at any time. Water is made available for Choir members.

- Cell phones and audible pagers should be turned off or placed on vibrate when entering the Sanctuary.
 - Kippot and Tallit are available for men and women who choose to wear them. The Kippah is a reminder that we are in G-d's presence and may be worn by all visitors. It is not appropriate for non-Jews to wear a Tallit.
 - Worshipers of all ages are expected to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a sacred house of prayer.
 - An individual who arrives late or leaves the Sanctuary during worship must do so quietly and without disrupting the congregational worship experience.
 - Members are not permitted to enter or exit the Sanctuary when the congregation is standing or when the Ark is open.
 - Except for the *motzoi* and Kiddush on the Bimah, eating, drinking, or chewing gum are not allowed in the Sanctuary.
 - Smoking is not permitted in any of the Temple facilities or on the premises.
 - Conversations during Services are expected to be kept to a minimum.
 - Clapping is encouraged during musical selections if encouraged by the Clergy. Applauding is not appropriate in the worship environment, rather waggling of the hands in a silent show of appreciation is acceptable.
- b. Shabbat Dress Code – Appropriate dress for congregants and their guests is expected. KI operates on a smart casual dress code with women wearing garments that cover their shoulders.
- c. Families and Children
- Families are encouraged to sit together. Parents are expected to teach their children that the Temple is a sacred space that should be treated with respect.
 - Smaller children should be escorted from the service promptly if they become disruptive. Parents can generally give small children a short break from the Service in the Library.
 - To prevent Ushers from intervening, Parents are expected to redirect a disruptive child, who is sitting with friends.
 - Children are not permitted to run, play, or talk loudly in the Lobby as the noise they make carries into the Sanctuary.

II. Reference:

- a. This policy was originally adapted from *The Light*, November 2001