

Judea Reform Congregation  
Annual Report  
2016-2017  
Durham, NC



As I reminisce about the accomplishments and challenges of the last year as described in this report, I feel both proud and inspired.

I'm humbled to be part of a congregation fully engaged in the world, making a difference in people's lives. At Judea Reform, our public works of *chesed* (mercy) and *tzedek* (justice) have always been our calling card. Born in the fast-changing South of the early 1960s as a synagogue committed to progress, we've never shrunk from the issues of the day. Welcoming the stranger, standing for the poor, speaking up for the voiceless... we always have, and we always will.



The events of the past year have made this work feel even more important and urgent for many of us. Members have devoted time and energy to help resettle refugee families. We have joined of our collective voice to those of other congregations in Durham to make our community a better place to live for all. We have maintained our ongoing commitment to a variety of social action projects. All of this is to be celebrated.

Of course, as we do this work on behalf of the larger community, we continue to do equally important work within our community: celebrating with *b'nei mitzvah* families and wedding couples, supporting grieving families and people with health challenges, welcoming people into our covenant, and so much more.

My prayer is that our talented staff, dedicated leaders, and generous and thoughtful membership will continue to make Judea Reform a place to learn, pray, and build community for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Larry A. Bach".

Rabbi Larry Bach





Photo courtesy of DTownPerspective

DTown  
Perspective



Photo courtesy of Amy Stern Photography

# Our Guiding Principles

We are guided by these six pillars of faith:

## ***Torah: Teaching***

We nurture meaningful connections to God and to the core ethics and values of Judaism, illuminating modern times through the study of Torah and our sacred texts.

## ***Avodah: Worship***

We worship together as a community with spirit, joy, and song, encouraging members to fully participate in the cherished rituals and practices of our faith.



Rabbi Bach leads Religious School t'filah

## ***Limud: Study***

We encourage continual Jewish learning and intellectual growth for people of all ages.

## ***Kehillah: Community***

We join together as a diverse congregation, bound by a common desire to belong to and support our Jewish community in times of joy and sorrow, need and plenty.

## ***Tikkun Olam: World Healing***

We share a commitment to advance the welfare of the members of our congregation, our local community, the People of Israel, and of the world.



2017 Volunteers of the Year

## ***Kedushah: Sanctity***

We sanctify life's sacred moments, from birth to death, through tradition and ceremonies that unite the hearts of loving companions, celebrate the bond between parents and children, and welcome people into the covenant of our faith, honoring our heritage while reflecting with sensitivity and creativity the insights of our time.

# 2016-2017 Year in Review

Judea Reform Congregation is a vibrant, welcoming community where Jews in the greater Durham-Chapel Hill community gather to worship, learn, serve, and actively engage in the sacred traditions of our shared heritage. **Thanks to your support, we accomplished much in the 2016-17 year**, including:


- We welcomed **57 new member families** to the Judea Reform community.
- We welcomed over **1,200 members and guests** to meaningful, engaging, and community-oriented **High Holy Days services** and provided complimentary passes for newly widowed individuals, college students, conversion students, non-member spouses, and individuals in financial need.
- Our Caring Community sent out **284 cards** of condolence, healing, congratulations, and best wishes to congregants in times of need and joy.
- We were awarded the **2017 Irving J. Fain Award** by the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism for exemplary social justice work to *l'taken et ha'olam* (repair the world), for our **refugee resettlement** efforts.
- Caring Community volunteers cooked and delivered **25 meals for congregants in need** during the High Holy Days and Passover and provided meal trains for members during their times of illness.
- Volunteers prepared and served **84 casseroles to shelter residents** of Urban Ministries of Durham.



- For the 36th year, volunteers cooked, packaged, and delivered Christmas meals to house-bound residents of Durham in partnership with Meals on Wheels of Durham. We delivered our largest number yet: **297 Christmas meals**.
- The *Nechama* Subcommittee of the Caring Community supported **22 member families** by coordinating *shiva minyan* services and meals of condolence.
- We hosted the Singers of New and Ancient Music (SONAM) benefit concert, raising over **\$5,300** to support the invaluable work of Church World Service in resettling refugees in Durham.
- The Judea Reform *Chevra Kadisha* was involved with **burial preparations** ten times, for Judea Reform members, relatives of Judea Reform members, and unaffiliated Jews in our local community.

- We completed **repairs on the roofs** of both of our buildings.
- We welcomed scholar-in-residence Dr. Sarah Bunin Benor from HUC-JIR as our speaker during the **Levin-Moscovitz Annual Lecture Series**.
- We engaged adult congregants in diverse educational programs and lectures, including **30 adult learners** who participated in prayer book and modern Hebrew classes of all levels.



A man and a woman are performing a mitzvah project. The man, on the left, is wearing a black suit, a blue shirt, a patterned tie, and a colorful kippah. He is looking down at an open book. The woman, on the right, is wearing a white shawl with blue floral patterns over a blue and white floral dress. She is smiling and looking down at the book. They are both holding large wooden spindles. The background is a blue and white patterned wall.

**35 *b'nei mitzvah* students  
led Shabbat services and  
conducted community  
service *mitzvah* projects.**

Photo courtesy of Christine Prisk Photography



## In 2016-17, we made inclusion a priority:

- We were awarded the **Belin Honorable Mention**, honoring URJ congregations that have developed uniquely innovative and effective audacious hospitality programs, recognizing the work of our Inclusion Committee.
- We expanded our inventory of **large-print prayer books** and **assistive hearing devices**.
- We created an “**Easy Access Entrance**” for High Holy Day Services to better serve older adults and congregants with mobility challenges.
- We expanded the **Friendly Companions Program** to connect families that include a person with special needs with other families during Shabbat services and onegs.



JRC teens at the Durham Pride Parade



Launching the Rides for Seniors Program

The cast of "Tangled Up in Jews: A Dylan Purimshpiel"  
perform for the congregation



Over 1,500 members and guests attended our inaugural *Shir Simcha* ("joyous song") music series made up of 10 services, sing-alongs, and concerts featuring special musical guests.



**205 children from Pre-K through high school *madrachim* (counselors) furthered their Jewish education through our Religious School.**

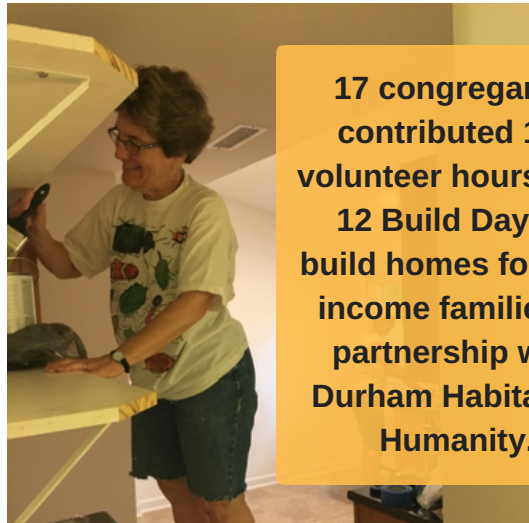


JRC Mitzvah Day volunteers of all ages prepare casseroles for the Urban Ministries shelter

Religious School students create their own Torah scrolls



**17 congregants contributed 157 volunteer hours over 12 Build Days to build homes for low-income families in partnership with Durham Habitat for Humanity.**







Students make sandwiches for shelter residents



Students practice their Hebrew letters

**We awarded 27 need-based scholarships to students enrolled in our Religious School, thanks to the Melvin & Zora Rashkis Charitable Trust.**




The Madrichim Corps assist during Religious School



Multi-generational learning for the Darchei Mitzvah Mask Project





**We welcomed over 260 Judea Reform members and guests, including 16 locally resettled refugees from four countries, for our Second Night Passover Seder led by Rabbi Larry Bach.**



We curated four art exhibitions in the Rosenzweig Gallery featuring the work of local artists, including adult and youth congregants' art.



Youth art exhibit, themed "Etz Chayim: The Tree of Life"

We sent *mishloach manot* (Purim parcels) to college students celebrating Purim away from home and to senior members of our congregation.



JRC campers with Rabbi Bach at URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy

We distributed over \$5,000 in scholarships for Judea Reform children attending five Jewish summer camps.



## **Thank You, Donors!**

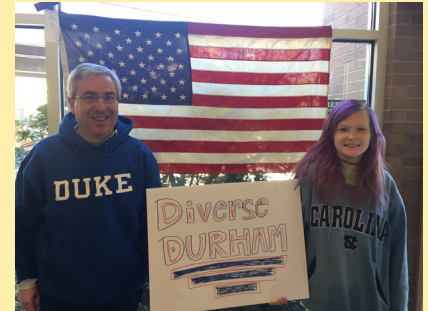
To protect our donors' privacy, we have removed the pages listing donor names from this online version of the Annual Report.

Members & donors can request a full version of the Annual Report, including a financial summary of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, by contacting Aviv Sheetrit, Development Manager, at 919-489-7062, ext. 223.

# What's Next?

**We've been listening.** Based on feedback from congregants and leadership, here are some of our priority expansion plans for the new year:

- Expanded adult education programs, including *Anshei Mitzvah* (adult *b'nei mitzvah*), Hebrew study, and guest lectures
- Opportunities for social engagement and community-building among congregants in their 20s and 30s, young families, and congregants who are 50+ years of age
- The introduction of live web streaming of Shabbat and High Holy Days services
- Expanded initiatives designed to ensure that Judea Reform is welcoming and fully inclusive of people with special needs, interfaith families, older adults, and LGBTQ individuals
- Vibrant music programs, Shabbat services, and Torah study sessions led by clergy and lay members
- Continued strengthening of community partnerships that not only support the Jewish community but also empower our community to combat injustice
- And more! Read more in our new Five-Year Strategic Plan at [judeareform.org/about-us](http://judeareform.org/about-us)



## FY 2016-2017 Officers

President: Steve Simon

Vice President: Ziva Raney

Vice President: Chip Carnathan

Treasurer: Marc Joseph

Financial Secretary: Heidi Tyson

Recording Secretary: Emily Young

## FY 2016-2017 Trustees

Building and Grounds: Bruce Elvin

Cemetery: Ed Holland

Development: Tina Prinsein

DRTY: Michael Joseph & Rachel Krome

Immediate Past President: Ivy Hoffman

Membership: Peg Carlson & Debbie Horwitz

Religious Practices: Andrew Geller

Religious School: Carrie Norry

Social Action: Martin Feinstein

Youth: Rachel Mandell

Inclusion: Cora Harrison

Adult Education: Sandra Korn

General Trustees: Jason Block, Ilene Farkas,  
Caryn Hertz, Karen O'Mansky, Arnie Lerman

## Clergy

Senior Rabbi: Larry Bach

Rabbi Emeritus: John S. Friedman







Photo courtesy of Amy Stern Photography



## Judea Reform Congregation

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