

March 2021



Tzedakah Times

Development News from **Judea Reform Congregation**



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Note: All gifts reflected in this report were received between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 (unless otherwise noted.) All names in this report are listed alphabetically.

2020 In Hindsight.

It is a year we likely won't forget and each of us carry with us memories, lessons, regrets, and growth. As we reflect on the giving from our congregants over the year, there are two Hebrew lessons that stand out.

Who is rich? One who finds happiness in what she has. (Pirkei Avot 4:1)

At the same time, we have learned again that, for those of us who are lucky enough to have our basic needs met, money alone cannot create meaning. This year reminded us: what we already have is incredible. When we recognize the good in our lives, we experience riches indeed.

Our fate is bound up in each other (BT Shevuot 39a)

In 2020, we learned the extent to which the fate of every single one of us is in each other's hands. We are woven together inextricably. We need each other. We depend on each other. We must be here for each other.

As we have said throughout the year, *chazak, chazak v'neitchazek*, be strong, be strong, and together we are strengthened. In no other recent year have we lived this more truly.

Credit: Rabbi Jordana Schuster Battis; <https://reformjudaism.org/blog>

JUDEA REFORM CONGREGATION

OUR MISSION

Judea Reform Congregation is a vibrant, welcoming community where Jews in the greater Durham-Chapel Hill area and beyond gather to worship, learn, serve, and actively engage in the sacred traditions of our shared heritage.

OUR VISION

We are inspired by Jewish history, the wisdom of our sacred texts, and the tenets of Reform Judaism. We use these in order to nurture our souls and our connection to God, to educate our children as well as ourselves, to cultivate leadership among all congregants, to celebrate our joys, to comfort those among us who are suffering, to serve our community and the world at large, and to promote peace and understanding. We preserve the great traditions of Judaism, respond to the current concerns of our community, and plan for a future of sacred engagement for generations to come.

GUIDING PILLARS

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.

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: 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.

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.

RABBI'S LETTER *Tzedakah Is Our Prophetic Power-tool*

Dear Friends,

I grew up thinking the word *tzedakah* meant “charity,” an act of going above and beyond, to help others. Something here, however, was lost in translation— and it so happens to be the most exciting part of our tradition. “How do you know a fish is alive?” asks an old Yiddish Proverb. “You know it’s alive if it swims upstream!” Judaism is more than a culture; it is a counter-culture, a way of living, which swims upstream against the “world-as-it-is,” parched with brokenness and in desperate need of healing.

Tikkun olam, our age-old obligation to repair (within and beyond ourselves), is part and parcel of the value proposition of Judaism. Our tradition exists for a holy purpose, our mission, borne out of the memory of our own people’s journey from enslavement in Egypt to liberation and freedom. Yet, this journey does not end there. As we remind ourselves while sitting around the Seder table, the journey continues beyond the Sea of Reeds. It bends onward, to the foot of

Sinai where we received our Torah, onward through the Wilderness where we endure countless trials, onward toward a Promised Land. Even then, after entering the Land, our people’s obligations to be “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” endure, as both mandate and gift, for all generations to come.

The Passover narrative is not an event of the past but a continuous call— in times such as this, a painful and unrelenting cry. Judea Reform Congregation lives and breathes as a mighty response to the cry of a broken world, and in this mission of ours there is no greater power-tool than *tzedakah*. *Tzedakah* defines both our heritage and our legacy.

As individuals and a congregation, may we honor our past with gratitude and bless our future with generosity. *Ken y’hi ratzon*, through our deeds, may we fulfill God’s will.



Rabbi Matthew V. Soffer

PRESIDENT'S LETTER 2020 in Review

As Jews, the act and art of philanthropy, *tzedakah*, is deeply connected to our beliefs, our behaviors, our social awareness. Giving to our synagogue is a statement of the value we place on Judaism— for ourselves, our families, and future generations. It is both a responsibility (mitzvah/ commandment) and an honor. The current pandemic has raised awareness of the vulnerability of our community. For me, it has also brought to light our human need for community, compassion and belonging. Other challenges we face in our country seem to be pushing us toward a stronger sense of needing to surround ourselves in community, including social & racial injustice and rising Anti-Semitism.

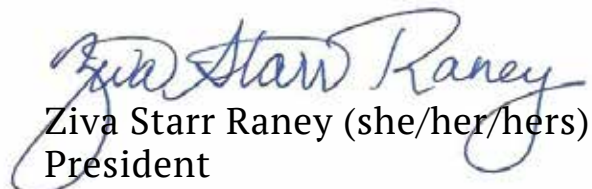
Tzedakah at Judea Reform means much more than “charity.” For several years, the leadership of Judea Reform Congregation has sought to develop a stronger culture of philanthropy among our members. That culture can be seen in the pages of this *Tzedakah Times*, representing your passion

and commitment. Your support over this remarkable year means that we have been able to thrive — bring meaningful worship into your homes, celebrate holidays as a community virtually, provide pastoral care to members in need, engage in learning for all ages, and support our social action projects throughout the area.

Giving at JRC takes the form of membership support, our annual appeal, tribute and memorial gifts, legacy gifts, matching gifts and so much more. As we look to the future, we will be transitioning to a new normal. Whatever comes next, we will continue to reimagine, reinvent and re-engage.

Judea Reform Congregation gives!

Thank you. *Todah Rabah*,



Ziva Starr Raney (she/her/hers)
President

LIFE AND LEGACY GIFTS

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Lois Eve Ballen
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Lila Singer
Joel and Barbara Smith (z"l)
Graham and Mandy Summerson
Larry Trachtman
Gary and Heidi Tyson
Gerhard and Janet Weinberg
Iris and Steve Weiss
Tom Wolf
Bonnie and Jim Yankaskas
Caryn Zimmerman Zoffer and Bill Zoffer

Gifts noted here include those to our L'Dor V'Dor Legacy Gift Society and Grinspoon Life & Legacy Program.

MAZEL TOVs

Births

Roy Stein, grandchild of Jeannette and Roy Stein

Brigida Sarah Cino, grandchild of Bill Friedman and Jill Ryder Friedman

Jonah Clarence and Miles Joseph, child of Katherine Goldstein and Travis Morrison, grandchild of Buck and Kay Goldstein

Benjamin Jamie Zeisel-McHugh, child of Jeff McHugh and Becky Zeisel, grandchild of Steve and Susan Zeisel

Adelaide Barbour, child of Aaron and Kelly Barbour, great-grandchild of Dr. Floyd Fried and Mrs. JoAnn Weissman

Talulla Rose Bogart, grandchild of Carol and George Retsch-Bogart

Meredith Evaleen Morrison, child of Casey and Kristen Morrison

Kaylee Eloise, child of Carly Rousso and Ethan Schlapper, grandchild of David and Gabe Rousso

Asher Wells Fleischman, child of David and Gitanjali Fleischman

Evelyn Brodsky, child of Erika and Peter Brodsky

Thomas William Simon, child of Erika and Howard Simon, grandchild of Chris Pankow and Steve Simon

Toby Miles Kudert, child of Grant and Sally Kudert, grandchild of Glenn and Jodi Preminger

Georgiana Miriam, child of Brianna and Eric Hoerger, grandchild of Susan and Tom Hoerger

Julia Watson, child of Jennifer Brookland and Joshua Watson

Maya Sylvia Krucoff, child of Max and Kate, grandchild of Carol and Mitch Krucoff

Andrew Harry Silverstein, grandchild of Carol and Elliot Silverstein

Maggie Lee Gentry, child of Lauren and Jon Gentry, grandchild of David and Gabe Rousso

Sophia Claire Schnautz, child of Brian and Elyson Schnautz, grandchild of Kenny Dalsheimer and Marybeth Dugan

Olivia Reese Meyer, grandchild of Paul Silverman

Benjamin Ingram, child of Sarah Dotters-Katz and David Ingram

Edward Post, child of Aaron and Anne Post

Hollings Brown, child of Britton and Julia Brown, grandchild of Alex Lichtler and Robin Schwartz

Dora Elyse, child of Jessica Friedman and Mack Zalin, grandchild of Bill Friedman and Jill Ryder Friedman

Leon "Leo" Penland, child of Corbin and Leah Penland, grandchild of Larry and Nancy Rocamora

Audra Lior Gordon, child of Laura and Maurice Gordon, grandchild of David and Ruby Jo Hiller

B'nei Mitzvah

Daniel Barth, child of Chris Barth and Pam Barth

Chance Biehn, child of Kersten and Neil Biehn

Jacobo "Coby" Chambers, child of Heather and Randy Chambers

Jack Fishkin, child of Allan and Julie Fishkin

Elijah Foster, child of Jill and Matt Foster

Elise Fricklas, child of Betsy and Ethan Fricklas

Lily Goldin, child of Debby Bussel and Steve Goldin

Gabriella Goodman, child of Steve Goodman and Julie Shermak

Caroline Kaye, child of Rhonda Kaye and Deana and Ken Kaye

Anderson Levin, child of Bob and Laura Levin

Leah Lipsitch, child of Joel Lipsitch and Abbie Melnick
Zachary Maiorana, child of Brendan and Lisa Maiorana
Alexandra Mantis, child of Brian and Tatyana Mantis
Melinda Nelkin, child of Bruce and Deana Nelkin
Maxwell Nidel, child of Ian and Jen Nidel
Ezra O'Mansky, child of Andrew Barron and Karen O'Mansky
Megan Oliver, child of Christopher and Sarah Oliver
Samuel Pickus, child of Peter Pickus and Jennifer Woodward
Ian Platts-Mills, child of Arin Isenstein and Tim Platts-Mills
Rebecca Rimon, child of Valerie Flax
Simon Schreiber, child of Carrie and Jason Schreiber
Kara Tendler, child of Amy Tendler
Kevin Wechsler, child of Alex and Natalie Wechsler
Samuel Wilcox, child of Dirk and Marlo Wilcox

Kabbalat Torah

Elena Brosnan, child of Sylvia Novinsky and Graham Brosnan
Alexa Chambers, child of Heather and Randy Chambers
Michaela Foster, child of Jill and Matt Foster
Max Gray, child of Christy Brooks and Jeff Gordon
Lars Kahn, child of Kevin and Michelle Kahn
Amelia Posner-Hess, child of Jonathan Hess (z"l) and Beth Posner
Sara Rogerson, child of Rachel Mandel and Mark Rogerson
Izaac Wohl, child of Alison Hilton and David Wohl

Marriages

Andie Cantor and Sam Miesmer
Casey Farin* and Nick Jeffreys
Ian Hainline and Mallory Shelbourne
Sonia Laurie* and Daniel Benzion
Hilary Lerner* and Francie Gottsegen
Eric Stern and Evan Zuzik

*JRC members

IN MEMORIAM

May these Judea Reform congregant's memories be a blessing.

George Baroff

Diana Celenza

Robert Gilgor

Jeannette Ross

Nicholas Bogen

Gail Dowd

Morton Green

Beatrice Serotkin

Malvina Brady

Mark Feinglos

Arlene Gura

Joel Smith

Anthony Brannon

Donald Forman

Hal Myers

Simone Soltan

The life cycle events listed here all occurred 2020.

CIRCLE OF HONOR DONORS 2019 - 2020

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\$7,200-\$9,999

Lisa Brachman and Robert Roubey
Arnie Lerman
Lisa and Scott Josephs

Circle of Mitzvah

\$5,000-\$7,199

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Marc Joseph and Betsy Polk Joseph

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Gerhard and Janet Weinberg
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Iris and Stephen Weiss
Dirk and Marlo Wilcox
Janice and Rick Woychik
Barry Wright and Kim Young-
Wright
Steve and Susan Zeisel

Represents contributions as of March 1, 2021

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Adult Education

Sharon Bushnell, In Honor of Ken Caudell's mother
Risa Hiller and Ed Levin
Susan Kemp, In Memory of Dr. Donald Forman, father of Joan Forman
Chris Pankow and Steve Simon, In Memory of George Baroff
Graham and Mandy Summerson, In Memory of George Baroff

Arts & Acquisitions

Sharon Bushnell, In Memory of Simone Soltan
Barbara Elish and Judith Race, In Memory of Henrietta Blumenfeld
Barbara Elish and Judith Race, In Memory of Joan Lenore August
Glenn and Jodi Preminger, In Memory of Sidney Lieberstein, loving father, father-in-law and "Papa"
Andrea Shapiro
Barbara and Barry Silver, In Memory of Simone Soltan
Frank and Paula Sloan, In Honor of Benjamin Jamie, new grandson to Susan & Steve Zeisel
Steve Soltan, In Memory of Simone Soltan
Iris and Steve Weiss, In Memory of Simone Soltan

Caring Community

Ben and Heidi Aycock
David and Linda Birnbaum, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Rebecca Essinger and Hayden Bosworth, In Honor of Laura, David, Rachael and Jonah Ades
Lisa Brachman and Robert Roubey, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Ken and Sharyn Caudell, In Memory of Mary Gettemy, my grandmother
Diana Celenza
Sue Dennison and Tom Wolf, In Honor of Jane Carnathan
Barbara Elish and Judith Race, In Memory of Karen Rothschild
Barbara Elish and Judith Race, In Memory of Morris Jacob Blumenfeld

Barbara Elish and Judith Race, In Memory of Howard August, my brother-in-law
Sherri Evans-Stanton and Mark Stanton, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Karen Fink, In Memory of Don Forman
David and Gita Fleischman, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Jill and Matt Foster, In Honor of Amy Newman
Rabbi Suri and Stan Friedman
John and Nan Friedman, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Karen Gantt, In Memory of David and Fay Ehrlich, my beloved parents
Peter Geoffrion and Amy Glass, In Memory of Harvey, Nan, and David Glass
Jeff Goll and Emily Young, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Rita Green, In Honor of Marcy and Rick Ohayon
Rita Green, In Honor of Jan Tuchinsky
Rita Green, In Honor of George & Helene Bosworth
Cora and Paul Harrison, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Rachel Heller, In Honor of Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Rachel Heller, In Memory of Malvina Brady
Caryn Hertz and Larry Marks
Marilyn Hertzberg, In Memory of Garson Hertzberg, my best friend and husband
Marilyn Hertzberg, In Honor of Michael
Barbara and Bruce Jentleson, In Memory of Elvia Morales Cooney
Carolyn and John Jull, In Memory of Dorothy Haenick Stearns, my grandmother
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