



On the Frontline of Advancing Reform Judaism in Israel

Israel's First Lady, Mrs.
 Nechama Rivlin, meets with
 Shonim B'Yahad Participants



BEIT DANIEL
 The Center for Progressive
 Judaism in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

MISHKENOT RUTH DANIEL
 Congregation, Tourism
 and Seminars Center and
 Guesthouse in Jaffa

KEHILAT HALEV
 Spiritual Kehila in the
 Center of Tel Aviv

[www.beit-daniel.org.il /en](http://www.beit-daniel.org.il/en)
 Summer 2016

Israel's Beloved Musician Miki Gavrielov
 (Left) Performs with Flutist Matan Klein
 (Right) at Beit Daniel's Tikkun Leil Shavuot



RABBI'S NOTE FROM TEL AVIV-JAFFA

Dear Friend,

Looking back on the past 25 years, we are so proud to see the fruits of our work. In every corner of the world, Beit Daniel's impact and presence is felt. Over the years, we have hosted tens of thousands of people from around the world in our synagogue. For example, during a recent Kabbalat Shabbat service, we welcomed Jews from Paris, Seattle, New York and Washington DC. That same evening, we were also joined by a group of Christians from Peru and Mexico. Rabbis that grew up in the Beit Daniel community now serve in North America, Poland, Russia, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Tens of thousands of tourists stay at our guesthouse and Tourism and Seminars Center, Mishkenot Ruth Daniel. Hundreds of the 400 couples married through the Daniel Centers each year arrive to Israel specifically for our egalitarian ceremonies, and return home as ambassadors of the Reform spirit. Thousands of young adults who celebrate their B'nei Mitzvah at the Daniel Centers continue to share our inclusive modern approach to Judaism with their friends and family. I hope that our progressive Jewish voice continues to provide spirit and energy to the changing needs of the 21st century. I am proud of our supporters from around the world

who have continuously stood behind us over the years, such as the Daniel Family, the Eden Family, the Barish Family, the Bearman Family, the Alcalay Family, and many others from around the world. Together, they have supported us and enabled Beit Daniel to become a beacon of Reform spirit in the Jewish world. In honor of our 25th birthday, Reform leaders and leading Reform rabbis wrote us words of encouragement and support; and it makes me so proud to read these heartwarming words.

Your support and involvement is so crucial for our success. The growing Orthodox voice is a threat for the Jewish State and a threat for Jewish modernity. We need your help as we do not have the luxury to give up. Any type and amount of support is greatly appreciated as we continue to promote and advance the pluralistic Reform Jewish voice in Tel Aviv-Jaffo, the cultural capital of Israel. With your support, I can promise you that our next 25 years will be even more fruitful.

Toda,
Rabbi Meir Azari
Senior Rabbi

EVENTS AT THE DANIEL CENTERS

Reflecting on 25 Years of Community and Diaspora Engagement

Beit Daniel opened its doors in 1991, celebrating its first Kabbalat Shabbat with a small yet hopeful community. Now, 25 years later, the Daniel Centers serve three congregations, run 18 kindergartens, provide progressive religious education in two public primary schools and educational programming in another 10 schools, support a service and learning



program for recent Diaspora college graduates called Tikkun-Olam in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, perform hundreds of weddings, B'nai Mitzvah and other lifecycle events, and host 1000s of Diaspora visitors.

We will mark our 25th birthday throughout 2016 with events, guest visitors and celebrations. On June 3, we initiated a new community project. Holding the quill with the Sofer (scribe), our B'nei Mitzvah program participants, their parents, and leaders of our community helped to write the first letters of a new

Torah scroll. Rabbi Galia Sadan led this meaningful experience for the B'nei Mitzvah students and their families, and helped coordinate an informational session beforehand with the Sofer on the Torah writing process. Over the course of the year, the young and the old in our community will continue participating in this project.

Later that evening, we held a special 25th anniversary Kabbalat Shabbat service followed by a community Kiddush. We were joined by members and relatives of the Daniel family who continue to help us to grow.

The Daniel Centers Receives the Genesis Prize for Inclusive B'nei Mitzvah for Mixed Families

The Genesis Prize - Avenues to Jewish Engagement for Intermarried Couples and their Families - has awarded a grant to the Daniel Centers for our inclusive B'nei Mitzvah program serving mixed families. Through the work of our dynamic staff, we provide mixed families an opportunity to celebrate the unique experience of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah and to find a meaningful place in our congregation and in Jewish life.

The Jewish Funders Network, which works with Jewish funders to improve the quality of their giving and maximize their impact in the Jewish World, made this grant, with support from and in honor of Genesis Prize Laureate Michael Douglas, to the Daniel Centers and to a number of other pioneering institutions.

*The Daniel Centers wish
Gerry Daniel a mazel tov on the occasion,
on June 6, of his 100th birthday.*

THINGS ARE HAPPENING...

This Year, Shonim B'Yahad Artwork Goes on Display at Dizengoff Center

For the second year in a row, the Daniel Centers have sponsored an art contest for elementary and secondary school students on the subject of "Shonim B'Yachad," ("Embracing our Differences"). This year the Dizengoff Shopping Center, located in the center of Tel Aviv, enthusiastically agreed to sponsor and display the winning artwork. For the first time in its history, the walls of this iconic mall will display Arabic script. We were honored to welcome Israel's First Lady, Mrs. Nechama Rivlin, who spoke eloquently about the vitality of this project in Israeli society today.



Tens of thousands of individuals will have the opportunity to view this exhibition. The exhibition pieces were selected on the basis of expressing best what it means to embrace the 'other.' In total, 22 works of art from 15 schools and a number of individual submissions were selected and were then enlarged and put on display. The submissions depict 'the other' as different in religion, race, nationality, (dis)ability, socio-economic background, but sharing a common humanity. The two accompanying photos are examples of the winning artwork. During the summer, a smaller exhibition of the artwork will be on display at our center in Jaffa, Mishkenot Ruth Daniel.



We thank the many individuals and organizations that have made this project possible, including our partner, The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee.

Exploring 'What the Future Holds' During Tikkun Leil Shavuot

Shavuot is the one of the Daniel Centers' most highly anticipated events of the year. This year was no exception, as we welcomed hundreds of community members and guests to Beit Daniel, Kehilat HaLev and Mishkenot Ruth Daniel. This year, our theme focused on the idea of the future, as understood from a religious, political, economic, musical, and spiritual lens. We were pleased to welcome many prominent guests who led stimulating lectures, workshops and conversations, including: esteemed Israeli author Yochi Brandeis, former Knesset Member Dr. Ruth Calderon, critically acclaimed liturgist Maureen Nehedar and one of Israel's most beloved musicians and composer of many of Arik Einstein's songs, Miki Gavrielov. As the sky began to lighten, we gathered for morning musical prayers on the banks of the Yarkon River, and reflected on a wonderful evening of learning, singing, and dancing.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

CCAR Convention Participants Visit Tel Aviv-Jaffa for a Weekend of Cultural Exploration

This February, over 300 progressive rabbis and leaders traveled to Israel to participate in the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) convention. For the first time, participants spent a weekend in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, where they toured Tel Aviv-Jaffa's lesser known corners, met and interacted with local leaders, and learned about Progressive Judaism in Israel's business and culture capital.



We at the Daniel Centers played a significant role in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa portion of the convention. To kick off the weekend, we offered participants the opportunity to take a multi-ethnic tour of Jaffa through the Mishkenot Ruth Daniel Tours and Seminar Center. The tour included a visit to the Arab Jewish Community Center, a walk through the history-filled Ajami Neighborhood, and a visit to a "Waldorf" pre-school run by an intermarried Jewish/Muslim couple.

On Friday evening, Rabbi Efrat Rotem, Rabbi of Kehilat HaLev, led a special musical Kabbalat Shabbat service for CCAR participants. The weekend ended with a large group lunch at Mishkenot Ruth Daniel, which included, among many guests, Knesset Member Professor Manuel Trachtenberg and his wife, Nadine

Trachtenberg, head of the Bank of Israel. The United States Ambassador to Israel, Dan Shapiro, and Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai joined us at the conclusion of the convention. Huldai ended with a few words on the growing presence of Reform and Progressive Judaism in the city of Tel Aviv and the bond between the city and the Daniel Centers: "It [Tel Aviv] is a city of the Torah in the broadest sense of the word: A city that developed Modern Hebrew culture and brought it to new heights. And Tel Aviv has also been a Jewish city in terms of its social sensitivity, Tikkun Olam, its care for the less fortunate, its warm embrace to all parts of Israeli society: Jews and Arabs, Israeli and foreign – all in the spirit of the teachings of the Torah: "One law and one ordinance shall be for both you and for the stranger who lives with you."

MASA Tikkun Olam in Tel Aviv Jaffa Program

Attention all college graduates! This program is excellent for college graduates with a passion for social justice and promoting an understanding between Arabs and Jews. Participants chose between a five or ten month track and volunteer or intern at local organizations, while living and learning alongside participants from Israel and around the world. Participants study Hebrew, learn about the complex realities in Israel from a broad range of perspectives, explore questions of social justice in the Jewish tradition, and discover the land and people of Israel through fascinating discussions and tours. Visit our website online to register and learn about the different tracks: www.tikkunolamisrael.org

FRIENDS & MEMBERS

Finding Even Ground in a Mothers and Daughter's Workshop for Muslim, Christian and Jewish students

This year, Sharon Abulafia, our Educational Director, accompanied by Rabbi Mira Raz of Mishkenot Ruth Daniel, started a new course in Jaffa for girls and their mothers. Based in a local public school, this class is unique as most of the students are not Jewish but rather Christian and Muslim. How do we, a Reform Jewish institution, provide meaningful lessons to a class with just a few Jewish students? We focus on shared values, traditions, and the universal process of maturation and becoming an adult, including topics such as conceptions of beauty, 'mitzvot' in our religions, and 'from generation to generation.' The girls and their mothers, spanning various religious, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds, came together over shared themes and forged intimate bonds.



Late last year, we welcomed the 2nd grade class from the same school, along with their parents, to Beit Daniel for a ceremony that traditionally marks the receiving of the Torah. In this case, we created a space welcoming Christians and Muslims, in addition to Jews. Rabbi Meir Azari, along with Christian and Muslim representatives, opened the Torah and studied, with the participants, what in fact are shared texts and history. At the end each student was presented with their respective religious books to mark their future transition into being responsible young adults.

Support the Friends of the Daniel Centers

While over 75% of our budget is self-financed, the Daniel Centers need additional funds to meet our ambitious goals of religious pluralism, multiculturalism and service. You can donate online to Friends of the Daniel Centers, by going to our website. Your donations will be processed through the secure website of the Network for Good. Or send a check directly to Friends of the Daniel Centers, 4108 Leland Street, Chevy Chase, MD 20815. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law. If you are interested in establishing a longer term relationship with the Daniel Centers, please contact us at office@beit-daniel.org.il

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