

WORLD
UNION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
JUDAISM



האיגוד
העולמי
ליהדות
מתקדמת

THE WORLD UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM IS...

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YOUR GATEWAY TO THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF REFORM JEWS

The World Union for Progressive Judaism, headquartered in Jerusalem, is the international umbrella organization of the Reform, Progressive, Liberal and Reconstructionist movements. It is the voice and soul of the largest body of religious Jews in the world, affecting the lives of millions who seek a traditional yet contemporary expression of their Jewish spiritual and cultural identity.



Developing and Strengthening Communities

There is no greater testament to the vibrancy of Reform Judaism* today than the growth and reemergence of congregations and communities around the world. The World Union is instrumental in this historic renewal, helping to develop and support Reform communities through congregation and leadership development, inspirational youth programming and the promotion of Jewish values and ideals.

In Israel, the heartland of the Jewish people, the World Union answers the call for religious pluralism with Reform programs and institutions.

In the Former Soviet Union and in central and eastern Europe, after nearly a century of religious oppression, the World Union is a driving force for growth among both new and existing congregations.

The World Union presence is growing in Latin America, Australia, South Africa and countries throughout Asia as well.

Support for community development also includes facilitating the purchase and construction of synagogues in order to provide permanent spiritual and physical homes for our communities worldwide.

Providing Leadership

The key to securing Jewish continuity and strengthening Reform Judaism is high-level professional and lay leadership. The World Union partners with many Reform institutions in the training and placement of rabbis around the world. Rabbinic seminaries include the Leo Baeck College in London, the Abraham Geiger College in Berlin and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in the United States and Israel.

The World Union also provides other avenues of leadership training, most notably the **Anita Saltz International Education Center** located at Mercaz Shimshon / Beit Shmuel, the World Union headquarters in Jerusalem. Here some of Israel's most accomplished scholars and teachers engage participants from all over the world in Jewish learning and living through a variety of programs, including the Beutel Leadership Training Seminar.

We also offer additional leadership programs such as the Machon (Institute for Modern Jewish Studies) in Moscow, which trains native paraprofessional congregational leaders, and the Netzer Olami year course in Israel.

Connecting Lives

Jewish values and practices have their greatest meaning when they are shared. The World Union creates opportunities for members of its communities to connect with each other on many levels.

Congregational leaders exchange experiences and best practices throughout the year at meetings and conventions from Moscow to São Paulo, from Johannesburg to Jerusalem. Congregational missions and personal visits bring people together in Israel, Europe, the FSU and Latin America for shared religious and social experiences.

Synagogue twinning and the Torah loan program, “Guardians of Torah,” enable Reform congregations to connect with their Liberal and Progressive counterparts around the world, while individual Bar and Bat Mitzvah youths pair with peers in foreign countries.

Through online newsletters, Internet communications and the World Union’s Web site, individuals connect daily to discuss a wide variety of matters – both religious and secular – all in pursuit of the common goals of the worldwide Reform movement.

Nurturing Youth

The future of Reform Judaism is in the hands of its youth, and the World Union focuses heavily on its large and rapidly growing Jewish youth movement, Netzer Olami (International Reform Zionist Youth).

Founded in 1979, Netzer Olami today brings together more than 16,000 young people in 18 countries and inspires them with a love of Israel, a commitment to Jewish peoplehood and continuing traditions in the context of modern democracy and pluralism. Netzer Olami is the largest Jewish youth movement in the Former Soviet Union, and with the affiliation of NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth), it is one of the largest in the world.

In 1996, Netzer Olami established TaMaR (Tnuat Magshimim Reformit), an organization for young adults aged 18 to 30, to continue their involvement in the global Reform community. We also partner with our regional programs for Young Adults.

Advocating Justice

Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) has been a core value of Reform Judaism throughout its history. The World Union seeks to mend, improve and bear responsibility for the global community we live in through local as well as international social action and by instilling the value of tikkun olam in our youth.

Feeding the hungry, helping victims of terrorism, settling new olim (immigrants) in Israel, fighting for gender equality and the preservation of our environment are all causes on the World Union’s international humanitarian agenda.

As a leader in the struggle for the recognition and legitimacy of Reform and other non-Orthodox streams of Judaism, the World Union has had a significant impact on promoting social justice and pluralism in Israel and, by extension, around the world.

The World Union has also expanded the scope of its international advocacy by partnering on special initiatives with other international and nongovernmental organizations, such as the U.N., the Human Rights Commission and UNESCO. In these times of increasing extremism, the World Union’s commitment to human dignity and tolerance make it a leading participant in the international interfaith dialog among Christians, Muslims and Jews.

* Reform Judaism is known outside of North America also as Progressive or Liberal Judaism

Quick Facts

1,800,000 people affiliated with the World Union’s constituent movements globally

45 countries with Progressive congregations*

1,200 Progressive, Liberal, Reform and Reconstructionist congregations around the world

850 Youths participating in weekly activities in youth clubs in the former Soviet Union

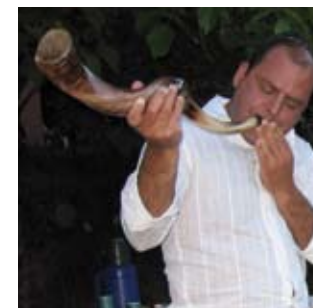
3,000 Jewish, Christian and Muslim families receiving pre-holiday food assistance in Israel

16,000 members of Netzer Olami, the World Union’s international youth movement

45,000 family members reached through Progressive Judaism’s pluralistic Jewish Studies program in Israeli public schools

70,000 people a year enjoy quality educational and cultural programs in our Mercaz Shimshon / Beit Shmuel center in Jerusalem

* Argentina, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Honduras, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, Poland, Puerto Rico, Russia, Saint Thomas, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States



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Mercaz Shimshon / Beit Shmuel, headquarters of the World Union, located in the heart of Jerusalem, is an educational, cultural and activities/conference center, and offers hotel and guest house accommodations.

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To learn more about what's happening in the global community of Reform Jews, sign up for the World Union for Progressive Judaism e-newsletter, **WUPJnews**.

To register, send a blank e-mail (no text or subject) to:
wupjnews-subscribe@wupj.org.il.

From breaking news to developing stories, WUPJnews will keep you informed with bulletins about Progressive and Reform communities in all corners of the globe, linking you with others around the world who share our values and beliefs.

MISSION STATEMENT

The **mission** of the **World Union for Progressive Judaism** is to **strengthen Jewish life and values** in **Israel** and Jewish communities throughout the **world** by **supporting and advancing** a **Progressive approach to Jewish tradition**.

The World Union for Progressive Judaism, in collaboration with its constituents and affiliates, works to accomplish its mission by:

Building and connecting Progressive Jewish communities worldwide.

Partnering in the development of Israel as a democratic and pluralistic Jewish state.

Securing the Jewish future by investing in youth and young adults.

Developing lay, rabbinic and other Jewish professional leadership.

Advocating social justice and fostering interfaith understanding.

Supporting the foundation of Judaism: Torah (study), Avodah (worship), and G'millut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness).