

DRAFT

Iyr HaMelech Fundraising Proposal

Introduction

STRIVING FOR A STRONGER COMMUNITY THROUGH GREATER COLLECTIVE ENLIGHTENMENT

*When something is important enough, you do it
even if the odds are not in your favor.*

--Elon Musk--

Dear Community Supporter,

I am the President of Congregation Iyr HaMelech, a not-for-profit faith-based congregation, and member of the Union for Reform Judaism here in Kingston, Ontario, consisting of approximately 40-50 families and serving the area of Napanee to Kingston to Gananoque.

Iyr Ha-Melech provides an inclusive and diverse connection to Jewish practices and traditions without forsaking the social and political changes of today. In addition to regular services throughout the year, we provide Baby Namings and Bris', Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, Weddings, Funerals, and Unveilings. We hold movie nights, dinners, study sessions, host a Hebrew school for children, and can arrange lessons for adults. We turn nobody away, regardless of income or ability to pay membership dues. We are apolitical, serving the spiritual needs of our congregation and the community without demanding political allegiance to any entity or organization. And, we provide support for inter-faith families, with four decades of experience in the many unique challenges these families face.

We are also the custodians of an important piece of Jewish history – in our services and High Holiday celebrations, we use a centuries-old Torah originally owned by a synagogue in Czechoslovakia. This synagogue was destroyed during the Holocaust, and all of its members exterminated by the Nazis. By bringing out and reading this Holocaust Torah in our services, we keep not only our own traditions, but the memory of that Czech congregation, alive.

Our goal is to not only retain and enlighten our members, but to attract a larger and more passionate following in the community as a whole. Just this year we were thrilled to discover that the Royal Military College was seeking a connection for their Cadets to the Kingston Jewish Community. We were honored by their decision to join us for the first time at our annual Passover community Seder. We were also joined by young students from Queens University and a local high school. The Cadets will be joining us again for our next Shabbos service, and

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we hope this will be the beginning of a long association with the students of Queen's University and the Royal Military College of Canada.

However, to continue to provide these services to the Jewish community of Eastern Ontario, we need your help and support. In the Kingston area alone the Jewish population is estimated at 600 families, many of whom are Reform or semi-practicing, and many of whom are inter-faith. With your help, we can continue to provide – and expand – our service to the community.

We hope we can count on your support and sponsorship so that we may continue to serve our members and Eastern Ontario's Jewish community.

For more information on how your donation is helping to make a difference in the lives of so many in our community, we invite you to visit our website at www.reformjewishkingston.ca. You can also find information there on our upcoming events for this year.

Thank you again for your time, and we look forward to your support.

Richard Cohen
President
Congregation Iyr Ha-Melech

About the Congregation

Founded in 1975 by members of the Kingston Jewish community wishing to practice a liberal, open form of Judaism, Iyr Ha Melech has become the home of Reform Jewish religious, educational, and social activities for Kingston and the surrounding region.

The principal lay leader in the early days of the congregation was *Michael Levison*. We are grateful for his dedicated service and the learning and passion he brought to his task. In recent years, we were served by visiting Rabbis on a monthly basis. Our previous Rabbis have included Rabbi *Ed Elkin*, now at the [First Narayever Congregation](#) in Toronto; Rabbi *Paul Golomb*, now at Vassar Temple of Poughkeepsie, New York; Rabbi *Barbara Borts*, now at [Newcastle Reform Synagogue](#) in England; Rabbi *Justin Lewis*, currently a professor at the University of Manitoba, and most recently Rabbi *Michal Shekel*, now at Or Hadash Synagogue in Newmarket. We wish them the best of luck with their new congregations and endeavors, and express our thanks for the help that they gave us as our congregation developed.

With Rabbi Matthew Kaufman as a resource for Jewish study and ritual, we continue to be a participatory community with many responsibilities in the hands of members. What started as a small group of ten families within the local Jewish community has grown to its present membership of around sixty singles and families, sharing a love of Jewish learning, celebration, and culture.

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As a Reform congregation we have been sought out especially by Jewish families who prefer to worship together, women who wish to take part fully in religious services, Gay and Lesbian Men and Women, interfaith families and non-Jews interested in exploring Judaism.

Current programs and projects

Saturday Shabbat Services

High Holidays

Community Passover Seder

Bar and Bat Mitzvahs

Weddings

Baby Namings

Care and use of Holocaust Torah

Inter-Faith Family Support

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Hebrew School

Planned programs and projects (short term and long term)

High Holiday Relocation for 2017 and 2018

Friendly Neighbour Program

Expanded Community Outreach

Marriage Preparation Courses

Adult Hebrew Education

Rewards and benefits for donors

Mention in Newsletter

Memorial Plaque or Engraved Book