A MESSAGE FROM ADAM

Begun anew. We have just finished Sukkot, as well as Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, which followed closely on the heels of the Yomim Noraim, the High Holidays. All of these holidays contain parts of the same theme – we are not permanent, our previous actions are not permanent, we should always strive to be better versions of ourselves and, yes, each year we CAN and SHOULD begin anew.

In ancient Israel, Sukkot Atzeret was a day devoted to ritual cleaning of the altar in the Temple. In modern days, the holiday does not serve the same function, but is an in-between between Sukkot and Simchat Torah. Still, we create meaning on Sukkot Atzeret by introducing the prayer for rain (which we continue to say until Purim each year) and by anticipating the conclusion and restarting of the Torah. As well, the Day of Atonement (the memorial prayer) is said on this day.

Simchat Torah is a special holiday during which we seamlessly complete the entire cycle of Torah readings and, with little pause, start again. We celebrate the restarting of the Torah equally to its completion, and vice-versa. The process is more circular and cyclical than it is linear. That is, we don’t rush to the last word of the last line of the last chapter simply to finish. We savour each section, each story of the Torah and, although we are excited to have completed all stories and all sections, we anticipate the new year and celebrate the renewed readings that will follow for the coming year. Jews are “The People of the Book” – we are grounded in tradition and constituency. We tell the same stories and perform the same rituals every year yet each time we do, we are trying to extract something different from the experience. We love the comfort of consistency, but we also love to grow and to develop.

Both Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are holidays best enjoyed in megapage and with community. Many of our holidays are more focused on our homes and our immediate families. Not these two. We celebrate the completion and renewal of the annual ‘Torah cycle as a community. We begin the year fresh, together.

As a parallel, in Jewish Calgary we share many agencies programs and initiatives, year to year, after year, each year. The celebrations and commemorations we experience together are often well attended and mean something to smiles and tears. We share these moments as a community. Together.

We find comfort in the consistent offering of such events, but challenge ourselves to improve the experience each and every time. This is a good approach – respecting history, but striving to be better. We also initiate the community’s United Jewish Appeal (UJA) Campaign each year, sometimes seemingly right on the heels of the last campaign. We complete the cycle and begin anew. In order to maintain a strong Jewish Calgary, in order to share in consistent celebrations and commemorations, in order to ensure that everyone has something to contribute, and that everyone bears the responsibility of playing a role. In Jewish Calgary, Everyone Counts.

Shana Tova,

Adam Silver,
CEO, Calgary Jewish Federation
It wasn’t that long ago that Mike and Alissa finished university and began rewarding careers. Then they found each other. Dating quickly turned into a relationship, engagement and marriage. They bought a small house together and settled in.

They’re both committed to Jewish life, built on an active Jewish upbringing. Their parents sent them to day school, youth groups, and camp, and Hillel was there for them on campus. As a couple, Mike and Alissa were looking for ways to “do Jewish,” particularly social opportunities and Tikkun Olam (repairing the world).

On Calgary Jewish Federation’s website they found JAC, Jewish Adult Calgary, a group for adults under 40 that provides cultural, social, Tikkun Olam, fundraising, leadership development, and educational opportunities. They joined up and learned the JAC group was really diverse; some singles, some married like them and some with young children – a lot of the events were family-friendly. It felt good to find their place in Jewish Calgary, make new friends, and do some good in the world, living their Jewish values.

No matter what your age, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, or political views, everyone counts in Jewish Calgary. Your gift to our community’s UJA campaign helps provide programs that make everyone feel welcome. Make your gift to today. Every gift counts.
MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!

One gift, a few payments, countless impact.

Did you know that there’s no need to pay your UJA pledge in one go – we gratefully accept monthly payments!

Spreading payments over a year can make it easier to manage an increased gift. Go to jewishcalgary.org, click on “donate now” and choose the payment plan that is best for you.

Jewish Family Service Calgary (JFSC) provides essential programs and services to the Jewish and greater Calgary Communities. Our Shalom Bayit, basic needs, resettlement, older adult and psycho-educational programs are possible because of the long standing partnership with and support of Calgary Jewish Federation through the United Jewish Appeal Campaign (UJA). We urge everyone to support the UJA campaign to assist JFSC and the other partner agencies to meet the needs of our community. “We are all in this together.”

Jewish Family Service Calgary
Max Feldman, Board of Directors Chair, Jewish Family Service Calgary

How to Give
Online jewishcalgary.org
In person 1607 90 Avenue SW
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