

Dianne Hines

Tzedakah does not just mean financial responsibility. In the Christian faith, we say that true giving requires Time, Talent, Inspiration, and Commitment. I do not know another group of people that could beat the Jewish community in the concept of *tzedakah*.

One of the first Hebrew words I learned was Rosh Hashanah. I could not pronounce it, but I knew it meant a day off work.

Raised in the Christian faith, my only exposure to Judaism growing up was reading the Old Testament. When I first took the position at the Greensboro Jewish Federation in 1987, my work was just that – a job, albeit one with more flexible hours than my previous one as a radiology technologist.

Working at the Federation not only gave me more time with my children, it also gave me a new family. I do not have parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles, so I have adopted people within the Jewish community as my family members. I really see them that way, and I believe they see me that way.



Little by little, I have also been learning more about the Jewish faith, fueled by my own curiosity and a little help from the people I have met here. I have brought Jewish culture into my family's life and my children feel at home at the Federation. Now I can name and pronounce not only Rosh Hashanah, but also dozens of other holidays. I am proud to rattle off the other Hebrew words I know such as *mazel tov* which I know now to mean congratulations. That is what Rabbi Havivi said to me when I was baptized in the Jordan River – a major highlight of the trip I took to Israel in 2005, where I participated in an interfaith mission courtesy of past campaign chairs and past presidents.

After visiting Jerusalem's city hall and speaking with a civic leader, I was so inspired that I knew I wanted to do something to help make a difference. I certainly could not build a school or hospital; but I could do something even if I were dead and gone, and that was to Create a Jewish Legacy.

When I came outside, there stood a mosaic statue of a lion. Every piece of that statue is different, and yet it takes all those pieces to make up the lion. All of my experiences came together at that moment.

As soon as I returned to Greensboro, I went straight to Susan Gutterman, the Foundation's Endowment Director, and established a Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment gift. I am now a Lion at heart.