Our Mission

Creating a vibrant, healthy Jewish community by strengthening our connections, inspiring Jewish identity, providing for those in need and promoting greater understanding.

At home and throughout the world, these **Core Values** guide Federation's programs and services to our Jewish community.

**Tzedakah**

**Charity & Social Justice**

Appreciating those who support Federation and allow us the opportunity to give back to our community.

Our Maimonides Society meets quarterly to enhance knowledge and friendships.

**Kehilah**

**Building Community**

Working with local colleges to provide programming and interfaith outreach.

Bringing our Jewish youth together, building friendships and strong community.

**Torah**

**Jewish Learning**

Building friendships across the generations and across the globe.

**Tikkun Olam**

**Repairing the World**

JFR Staff participated in United Way's Big Cheese event, helping package 500,000 units of macaroni and cheese.

Our Jewish Family Service brings Shabbat services to those living in senior living communities.

PJ library provides free Jewish themed books for children thanks to the Sue Viener Fund.
Dear Jewish Community Members of Reading/Berks,

For the past year, I've been honored to serve and lead the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks. The Board of Directors and our incredibly dedicated staff worked hard to guide the Federation through an initial difficult period. Our key team of Amanda Hornberger, Carole Robinson, Laurie Waxler, Sari Incledon, Margo Levin, Brenda Seidel, Adi Shalev and Ziv Laskin (both on loan from Israel) worked an extraordinary number of hours during the transition period from Bill Franklin's retirement in July, until we welcomed our new CEO, Brian Chartock, in January. With over 25 years in Jewish not-for-profit organizations, Brian brings additional energy and leadership to our Federation and we look forward to his leadership and vision for our future.

I want to recognize and thank the volunteers who serve on the various committees and those who help bring our programs to life. Your continued efforts allow us to support both the Jewish community and the Reading/Berks community as a whole as we continue operating two food pantries each month, offering programs, and assisting struggling individuals and families.

During the 2021-22 school year, the Federation regained ownership of the Lakin Preschool, housed inside Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Our preschool director, Holli Winick Viau, our teachers and aides strive to mold the future of our community, an important part of our mission. We are committed to maintaining its excellence and growing its enrollment.

On behalf of the board, we truly appreciate our dedicated leaders and staff, but also look to our community to help us fulfill our mission and goals. Your intelligence, skills, experience, enthusiasm, ideas, activism, and presence are needed for our Federation to continue to serve our community. We can't grow our community without your physical participation through volunteerism or participation in one of our many activities.

Finally, we wouldn't be able to do what we do without our donors. We thank each and every one of you. We need your continued support to maintain and expand our programs, particularly in view of our shrinking community base, aging population, and increasing need for services. I ask you, if possible, to consider increasing your annual financial commitment to the Federation. Alternatively, if you are need of help, please reach out to us. In short, Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) is the basis for our mission and I am so proud of all that we've done, what we continue to do and what we will do for years to come.

With sincere appreciation,

Sheila Bornstein
JFR Board Chairperson
2022 VOLUNTEERS

We asked, and you appeared. Sometimes we didn't even have to ask and you were still there. Special thanks to our volunteers, for their gifts of time and talent; helping us make a difference in our community.

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart.”
– Elizabeth Andrew

Special Thanks to: Bluestone Family & Cosmetic Dental, Phyllis Dessel, Fox Theatres, Ben Leisawitz of Barley Snyder, Sweet Street Desserts, Wyomissing Optometric Center, and Jeff Gernsheimer for their continued in-kind support.

STAFF

Brian Chartock | Chief Executive Officer
brianc@jfreading.org

Amanda Hornberger | Chief Operating Officer & Coordinator, Holocaust Library and Resource Center
amandah@jfreading.org

Laurie Waxler | Development Director
lauriew@jfreading.org

Carole Robinson | Jewish Family Service Director
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Sari Incledon, Social Worker
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Holli Winick Viau, Lakin Preschool Director
MsHolli@jfreading.org

Margo Levin, Programming Coordinator - Jewish Community Relations
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Amanda Wertz, Administrative Assistant
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Ziv Laskin, Shaliach
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Irene Mouchlizis, Bookkeeper
irenem@jfreading.org

Mark Nemirow | Shalom Editor

Brian Yaffee | Web Master

Peter Alvarez | Maintenance
2022 Total Revenue:

Annual Campaign: $275,624
Grants Received: $5,938
Program Income: $29,449
JCC Membership: $22,256
Honorariums/Memorials: $7,242
Shalom Income: $16,120
JFS Donations: $37,949
United Way: $82,658

Total: $477,236

HOW YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Finance Committee
Radene Gordon-Beck, Chair
Jonathan Avins
Sheila Bornstein
Robert Caster
Victor Hammel
Luba Karchevsky
Michele Leisawitz
Haia Mazuz
Robert Oppenheimer
Gordon Perlmutter
Jill Skaist
Jonathan Simon
Andrew Wernick
William Franklin, staff
(ending 7/31/22)
Amanda Hornberger, staff
(8/1/22 - 12/31/22)

Connecting our Community
Providing for Jews Everywhere
Ensuring our Jewish Future

JEWISH CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT
37.0 %
$175,159

JEWISH EDUCATION
14.6 %
$69,056

ISRAEL & GLOBAL NEEDS
16.1%
$77,027

SOCIAL SERVICES
32.1%
$152,012

$473,254

2022 GRANTS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

Connecting our Community
Providing for Jews Everywhere
Ensuring our Jewish Future

HOW YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Shalom Income: $16,120
JFS Donations: $37,949
United Way: $82,658

Total: $477,236
Offering a variety of programming is one element that strengthens both our Jewish identities and our community connections. We do our best to provide something for all ages, from toddlers to adults. We also collaborate with other organizations to maximize our offerings.

Please look for our Program Book that is published and mailed late summer for a full offering for the year ahead.

Programming Committee

Paul Schwartz, Chair
Nancy Russo
Michele Leisawitz
Corinne Wernick
Luba Karchevsky
Amanda Hornberger, Staff
Margo Levin, Staff

Youth Advisory Group

Paul Schwartz, Chair
Jacob Gurwitz
Luba Karchevsky
Jessica Leisawitz
Michele Leisawitz
Tracy Weiss
Brian Chartock, Staff
Ziv Laskin, Staff
Margo Levin, Staff

PJ Library participants gather for a book walk at the Exeter Library.

Our Jewish Youth gathered at Wyomissing Hills Park to welcome our new Shaliach, Ziv Laskin.

Honoring our Holocaust survivors during the Kristallnacht service.

Annual Meeting 2022

Yom Ha'atzmaut is fun for kids and adults of all ages!
**JEWISH CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT**

*Connecting our Community through Programming*

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**PJ Library enrollment:** 72 children (birth - 8 yrs)
- 11 PJ Library events with a total of 135 attendees.

**PJ Our Way enrollment:** 33 children (ages 9 - 12 yrs.)
- Special grant-funded program with author Erica Perl.

**Literatour Author Events:** 10

**Great Decisions Participants:** 16

**Annual Yashek Lecture** held on Albright’s campus with Ellen Germain, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues from the U.S. Department of State.

**Annual Leo Camp Lecture** held on Albright’s campus on November 16th with guest speaker Ira Forman, from Georgetown University, focusing on the rise of antisemitism.

**Bus trip to Jewish Heritage Night** at the Philadelphia 76ers.

**Violins of Hope Essay Contest** winners were honored on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

**Reading Jewish Film Series** - featured 2 films this year.

**Community member and artist Perry Levine** displayed her artwork.

**Holocaust education event - Memory in the Living room** with local survivor Mariette Jacobson and her daughter Rachel.

**Antisemitism workshop** with Rachel Fish at the JCC.

**Kristallnacht Commemoration** with Christ Episcopal Church in Reading with over 125 participants.

**Yom Hashoah memorial program** at the Highlands at Wyomissing with 100+ in attendance.

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**2022 Milestones**

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JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE

Jewish Family Service is an integral part of the Federation providing human services for the entire community. Serving all age groups, it is dedicated to maintaining and strengthening the quality of individual and family life in the Jewish community through outreach, counseling, emergency financial assistance and information and referral.

With the introduction and growing audiences of Noontime Knowledge and Movie Mondays, Jewish Family Service provides opportunities for retirees to join together each month, enhancing both knowledge and friendships.

2022 Milestones

- Twice monthly Friendship Circle programs.
- Holiday outreach & gift delivery to 115 seniors on Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover and Rosh Hashanah.
- Two monthly Food Pantries in conjunction with Helping Harvest:
  - 182,000 lbs of food, valued at $300,000, distributed throughout the year
  - 400 families served each month
- "Noontime Knowledge" - monthly educational program for JCC members.
- Passover Seder and Rosh Hashanah service for seniors.
- Enlist volunteers to help throughout the year.

JFS Committee

Sue Farrara, Chair
Cindy Balchunas
Phyllis Dessel
Elliott Leisawitz
Carole Robinson, staff
Sari Incledon, staff

Helene Berne at the Friendship Circle Thanksgiving meal.
Shlichim is the collective word for the emissary program our Federation has adopted over the past few years to provide a living connection to Israel by promoting personal Israeli experiences for both adults and children. Adi Shalev, our Shlicha (female emissary) from Modi'in, was with us through July, 2022, and our Shaliach (male emissary) Ziv Laskin arrived in September. Speaking authentically about their faith and culture in Israel, they bring and unique opportunity for our community to connect with the cultural side of Israel and being Jewish.

### 2022 Milestones

- **Israeli Culture**
  - Israeli cooking classes
  - Lectures from Israeli speakers and organizations
  - Weekly Hebrew Classes
- **Youth Outreach**
  - Youth volunteer opportunities with Opportunity House
  - Youth group activities for kids in grades 8 - 12
  - Religious school activities with RCOS & Chabad
- **Young Adults**
  - Monthly Shabbat dinners
  - Holiday programs
- **Connection to Israeli Holidays**
  - Yom Hazikaron commemoration
  - Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration
- **Coordination with local institutions includings RACC, Alvernia, Albright, Kutztown and local churches**
- **Community Outreach**
  - Adults' Night Out
  - Connections with community members
The Jewish Community Relations Council continues to fight for social justice and combat antisemitism in Berks County and beyond.

2022 Milestones

JCRC focused on building bridges with other minority communities in the area including:

- Centro Hispano of Reading
- LGBT Center of Reading
- Islamic Center of Reading
- NAACP
- ADL of Philadelphia
- Bring the Change

- JCRC meets regularly as part of the Greater Reading Unity Coalition made up of JFR, NAACP, Centro Hispano, the Islamic Center of Reading, Bring the Change and the LGBT Center and participates in the annual Berks Cultural Diversity Festival in Reading.
- Participated in a GRUC effort to organize a Candidate's Forum in Fall '22.
- Participated in and helped organize a candlelight vigil and Kristallnacht service at Christ Church in Reading.
- Collaborated with "Bring the Change" to host a Thanksgiving Dinner in Reading for those in need. Meals were provided for over 200 people.
- Participated in a candlelight vigil organized by the LGBT Center in memory of those lost at Club Q in Colorado.

Committee

Debbie Goldberg, Chair
Margo Levin, Staff

Introducing our new CEO, Brian Chartock, to the group in early 2023

Members of the Greater Reading Unity Coalition
MOMENTUM TRIP TO ISRAEL

"The MOMentum Year-Long Journey empowers women to connect to Jewish values, engage with Israel, take action, and foster unity, without uniformity." The subsidized trip is 9 days long, followed by a year-long journey here at home, learning more about bringing Judaism into our lives and our homes.

July 2022 Itinerary

- Tel Aviv - Anu Museum, Battae Ethiopian Heritage Center.
- Tsfat - Tour of the beautiful city perched on a mountaintop in the Upper Galilee, Tour Tsfat Mikva and Education Center.
- Visit Yad Vashem, Israel's living memorial to the Holocaust and Har Herzl, Israel's national cemetery.
- Tour of Jerusalem, followed by a visit to the Kotel - Western Wall.
- Visit to Nefesh B'Nefesh, an organization that welcomes those who wish to make aliyah to Israel.
- Shabbat candle lighting together followed by dancing at the Kotel.
- Lunch with a Shabbat host family in Jerusalem.
- Desert experience at Eretz Bereishit including camel rides, pita making, yoga and personal meditation in the desert. Several members of our group also participated in a ceremony to receive their Hebrew name.
- Dead Sea swim followed by a tour of Masada.
- IDF Soldier's Experience - the group heard from a group of female soldiers currently serving followed by a tour of Ammunition Hill, commemorating the liberation and reunification of Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War.

Trip Participants:
Erica Cohen
Jennifer Gurwitz
Antoinette LaPrince
Shelley LaPrince
Lisa Nemeroff
Jodi Radosh
Stephanie Rotenberg
Oda Schwab
Jillian Storch
Laurie Waxler
Tracy Weiss
Jennifer Koosed, Educator
Amanda Hornberger, Leader
Margo Levin, Leader

Momentum moms atop Masada, overlooking the Dead Sea

JFR's Momentum moms celebrating new friendships with their trip leader Cheryl (6th from right.)

As part of the continued learning curve, the group met to hike Monocacy Hill.
Meir Panim - based in Israel, their mission is to alleviate and diminish the harmful effects of poverty on thousands of families across Israel by supporting a range of food and social service programs aimed at helping the needy with dignity and respect, including free restaurants, meal-on-wheels, school lunch programs, prepaid food card distribution, vocational training and after-school youth clubs. For more information on this organization, please visit www.meir-panim.org

Yemin Orde - a Youth Village in Israel that is a home, school and safe-haven to 450 children from around the world. The Village has welcomed children from France, North Africa, Iran, India, Yemen, Eastern Europe and South America. Most of the children have suffered trauma in their young lives from isolation and neglect, to abandonment and extreme poverty. At Yemen Orde, they find a home, a family and a future. For more information about this organization, please visit www.impact-israel.org

The Jewish Federation of Reading helps provide advocacy & justice in Israel, and throughout the world, by supporting these two programs.
LAKIN PRESCHOOL

Offering preschool programming for toddlers and children up to age 5. The preschool is located within Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom and funded, in part, by the Federation’s Edwin A. & Alma Lakin Philanthropic Fund. As of February 2022, the Lakin preschool is now under the full ownership and management of the Jewish Federation of Reading.

2022-2023 Programming

Program Offerings:
- Little Stars Playgroup
- Discovery - for 3+ yrs
- Adventurers - for 4+ yrs
- Pre-K - new for 2023-24 school year

Directors:
- Judy Synnamon for 2021-2022
- Holli Winick Viau for 2022-23 school year

Enrichment Programs
- Amazing Athletes
- I Love Stories
- Kaleidoscope
- Soccer Shots
- Stay & Play
- Early Morning Drop off at 8:00 am

LPS kids enjoying a visit from the Wyomissing Fire Department.

Celebrating 100 days of preschool.

Lakin preschoolers celebrating Dr. Suess' birthday.
While having just arrived in January, in a few short months' time, I already feel a part of the community and the “Federation family.” Thank you to everyone who has welcomed me. Our volunteers are in a word: Incredible.

We have much to do. Among the many challenges facing us, one major opportunity is philanthropy. Over the next few years, one of Federation’s major goals will be to strengthen and to grow our philanthropic efforts; we will endeavor to expand our annual campaign and look for additional revenue streams. Why? Simply put, to allow the Federation of Reading Berks – Your Federation – to remain the best in class while serving our community. Of course, this goal can only be achieved with the 100% commitment of the Board and staff. I remain confident that we will have both. I am reminded of a quote told to us in the Pirke Avot: “You are not required to finish your work, yet neither are you required to desist from it.” It is incumbent upon all of us – as one Jewish Community – to work together to achieve greatness and to leave our Federation community in the best possible future position as our predecessors did for us.

It is a privilege and an honor for me to serve as the Federation’s CEO. My pledge to the community is to do my very best to continue to strengthen and to preserve all the good work and efforts of those who came before me; moreover, I would like to thank the Board for serving as a 100%, fully committed partner in these efforts.

I would like to personally acknowledge the hard work and resourcefulness of the JFR team: Amanda Hornberger, Carole Robinson, Laurie Waxler, Margo Levin, Sari Incledon, Ziv Laskin and Holli Winick Viau. Your dedication and commitment to Federation’s mission is truly exemplary. Thank you.

L’Shalom,

Brian Chartock
Board of Directors

Officers 2022-2023
Chairperson: Sheila Bornstein
1st Vice Chair: Paul Schwartz
2nd Vice Chair: Jennifer Koosed
Treasurer: Radene Gordon-Beck
Secretary: Debbie Goldberg

At the June 11, 2023 Annual Meeting of the Jewish Federation of Reading, the members in attendance will vote on the slate of Officers and Directors below. This information is provided in accordance with the Federation’s bylaws.

Officers 2023-2024
Chairperson: Sheila Bornstein
1st Vice Chair: Jennifer Koosed*
2nd Vice Chair: Susan Wilson*
Treasurer: Paul Schwartz*
Secretary: Debbie Goldberg

Board of Directors for 2022-2023
Irving Ehrlich
Jacob Gurwitz
Michael Karchevsky
Jennifer Koosed
Jessica Leisawitz
Michele Leisawitz
Leah Rotenberg
James Rothstein
Jonathan Simon

Lakin Preschoolers helped us commemorate the retirement of President William Franklin in July, 2022.

At the June 11, 2023 Annual Meeting of the Jewish Federation of Reading, the members in attendance will vote on the slate of Officers and Directors below. This information is provided in accordance with the Federation’s bylaws.

Past Board Chairs
Robert Caster
Haia Mazuz
Larry Rotenberg
Paul D. Cohn
Alvin Katz

Robert Caster
Haia Mazuz
Larry Rotenberg
Paul D. Cohn
Alvin Katz

Yvonne Frey Oppenheimer
Michael Fromm
Kenneth Lakin
Gordon Perlmutter
Sheila Lattin

Donald Fox
Neal Jacobs*
Paul Kozloff
Alma Lakin*
Victor H. Hammel

George P. Viener
Bernard Fromm
David N. Farber*
Gerald A. Goodman*
Benjamin Cutler*

Edwin Lakin*
Leo Camp*
George Eligman*
Norman Dunitz*
Max Fisher*

*Deceased

Board of Directors for 2023-2024
Jonathan Avins
Ronald Berman*
Irving Ehrlich
Jacob Gurwitz
Michael Karchevsky
Jessica Leisawitz
Michele Leisawitz
Leah Rotenberg
James Rothstein

*denotes new positions and nominations

Affiliate Members 2022 - 2023
Rabbi Yosef Lipsker, Chabad Lubavitch
Sue Wilson, Kesher Zion
Rabbi Brian Michelson, Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

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Affiliate Members 2023 - 2024
Rabbi Yosef Lipsker, Chabad Lubavitch
Cantor Ted Prosnitz, Kesher Zion
Rabbi Brian Michelson, Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Federation Board members present at March, 2023 meeting.

Lakin Preschoolers helped us commemorate the retirement of President William Franklin in July, 2022.
ENRICHING LIVES
健康成长

Jewish Federation®
OF READING/BERKS

1100 Berkshire Blvd.
Wyomissing, PA 19610
610-921-0624

ReadingJewishCommunity.org
info@JFReading.org

United Way of Berks County