

Stronger Together

THIS WEEK IN OUR COMMUNITY



We are living through a uniquely difficult time, facing challenges that few could have imagined even months ago. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there are insights that can be gleaned from our tradition that now, thousands of years later, afford us invaluable wisdom and perspective. This evening marks the beginning of the holiday of Shavuot. Rooted in the Hebrew words for "weeks" and "seven", Shavuot marks seven weeks after Passover and celebrates our receiving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Just as we did seven weeks ago at Passover, Shavuot invites us to put ourselves in the shoes (or sandals) of our ancestors fleeing Egypt. Having witnessed 10 devastating plagues, the Israelites fled from the life that they had known for generations to follow Moses into the wilderness. Seven weeks later, they found themselves camped at the foot of Mount Sinai receiving the Torah, our holiest text, and in so doing became a nation.

Upon receiving the Torah, the Israelites responded with one voice, "Na'a'seh V'nishma," (We will do and we will listen).

Millennia hence, we still read from Torah each week - finding not only commandments for Jewish life, but also invaluable moral lessons that transmit truths which connect our lives today with every generation that came before us.

As we approach this sacred holiday of Shavuot, we are able to draw many parallels from Mount Sinai to our community in Southern Arizona during this global pandemic. We have sought refuge in the desert from a plague that has ravaged our global civilization. As we celebrate Shavuot at a distance from each other, we also soberly remember the 100,000 lives lost in the US alone. We are beginning to emerge from this intense difficulty; yet our path forward remains uncertain.

And even still, we are able to remind ourselves to return to the central and essential text and narrative of our tradition, which affords us great comfort, clarity, and direction to create a new path. We proceed just as our ancestors did, defining a "next normal" that with our continued efforts and collective commitment to "do and listen" will undoubtedly propel us forward for the days, months, weeks, and generations to come.

Our mission is to strengthen and preserve this holy Jewish community. Our volunteers and professionals are devoted to the very ideals we received with the Torah: *tzedakah* (righteous and just giving), *chesed* (loving-kindness), and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). Together we are dedicated to advance, nourish, and enrich Jewish life through development, capacity building, and engagement.

Our Jewish Community Pandemic Relief Fund, continues to meet the immediate needs of vulnerable populations in our community now, and our volunteers and professionals are working to build capacity to identify and assist our community as this situation evolves over time. We have strategically distributed funds to the areas of most pressing concern in dialogue with other local philanthropic partners to avoid gaps in funding or duplication of efforts, and we look forward to announcing new investments in our community's well-being soon.

\$60,000

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE



\$5,712

INDIGENT MEDICAL CARE AND BURIAL



\$25,000

EMERGENCY FOOD SECURITY



Learn more about our strategic approach and donate to the Jewish Community Pandemic Relief Fund at jfsa.org/pandemic.

Our staff has worked consistently throughout this year to advance the work of the Federation and Foundation. We remain fully operational (despite not being able to convene in-person events), and have rapidly adjusted to serve the community in the ways that are called for by our evolving "next normal."



Providing For Those in Need:

The Federation utilized our senior transportation service to enable Jewish Family and Children's Services to deliver 53 packages of PPE to Holocaust survivors in our community.

Alongside the pandemic grant requests, there is growing need among our agencies and synagogues for assistance during this unprecedented time. Whether they are seeking funds to care for vulnerable populations or to provide remote Jewish education, we are committed to helping them meet today's needs and assisting them to anticipate what they will require in the future.

Your support of the [Federation's 2020 Annual Campaign](#) is essential to our continued success. Your 2020 pledges are what have enabled us to achieve the level of productivity and effectiveness in the face of the current crisis. Commitments from those who have not yet contributed are integral to providing support to our community as we move forward.

Renew or Increase Your 2020 Commitment Now

You make it possible - and together, we make it happen.

Our community will continue to work and build momentum towards realizing Jewish life's greatest potential - now and in every generation. Guided by the Torah and our values, even the coronavirus pandemic cannot meaningfully impede our imperative to build, grow, and develop our capacity to provide for those in need and create a world more just, loving, kind, and charitable than we found it.

Wishing you good health and a *Chag Shavuot Sameach* (Happy Shavuot),

Graham Hoffman
President & CEO

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Jewish Community Foundation
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