



Masorti Olami



Annual Review 2012

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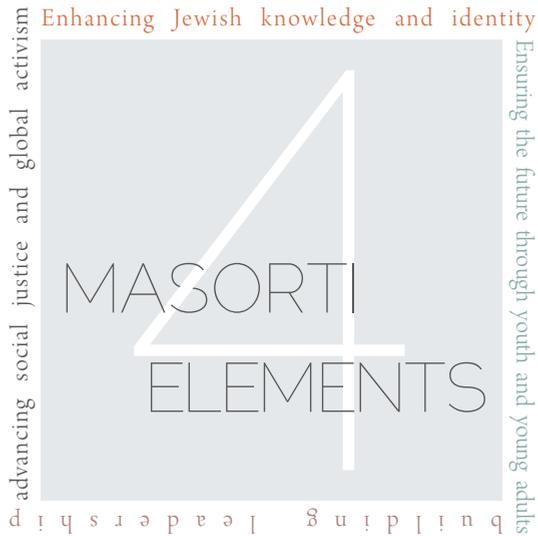


Installation Ceremony of Rabbi Reuven Stamov in Kiev, Ukraine

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Greetings | Alan Silberman

Does it really matter?

As you turn these pages, you see reports of our success, of new kehillot, exciting programs and community growth. You smile. When I share these developments with people, they nod, approvingly. And they—and you—have provided significant financial support to Masorti Olami so that we can continue our work, for which we are particularly thankful. Add to that well over five hundred men and women whose volunteer efforts, locally, regionally, and internationally, support kehillot and build Masorti Judaism throughout the world, PLUS an extraordinary dedicated staff led by Rabbi Tzvi Graetz.



But there is still an unanswered question which each of us needs to answer if we are going to continue our efforts and promote our mission: “Does it really matter?” The answer is an emphatic “Yes”. Masorti Judaism and Masorti Olami matters because it addresses a need to express Jewish belief and practice in a format that values tradition, hala-

cha and mitzvot as understood through history and refined through modern experience.

Masorti Judaism and Masorti Olami matters because it promotes Jewish life, individually and communally, with effective engagement in the multicultural civil societies in which we live.

Masorti Judaism and Masorti Olami matters because it is built on Torah and Jewish knowledge and because it creates a framework for our relationship with Am Yisrael and our commitment to Zionism as an integral part of our shared identity.

And, ultimately, Masorti Judaism and Masorti Olami – and the points of differentiation with other religious streams – provides the best possible foundation for effectively transmitting Jewish principles and practice to the next generations, in a manner which will allow us to maintain and strengthen our identification as an Am Kadosh – a holy people.

I pray that we will continue to merit your affection and support. But more than that, I pray that we will all strengthen our commitment to the Jewish future and our efforts to support like-minded men and women, young adults and youth, wherever they live.

Alan Silberman,
President, Masorti Olami

Greetings | Stephen Wolnek

As this year's elections in America and the upcoming ones in Israel have shown, the two countries remain deeply intertwined. The actions of the EU and the United Nations continue to influence policy in the Middle East. Jews all over the world - in America, in Europe, in Latin America, Australasia and the FSU tirelessly work to ensure that Israel is supported.

MERCAZ Olami, in all of the places listed above, does its part to work to influence policy around the world about Israel. In Uruguay, Silvio Geisinger, our MERCAZ representative on the Zionist Federation of Uruguay board was just elected president of the Federation. Not only is this an acknowledgement of Silvio's commitment but it will enable MERCAZ Olami to be in a position to push for the support of policies that support a pluralistic and modern State of Israel.

In Israel itself, the battle for pluralistic, open Judaism continues. In October, Anat Hoffman, Executive Director of the Israel Religious Action Center,



was arrested at the Kotel as she recited the Sh'ma out loud. She was then jailed, strip searched and threatened. Other women were arrested as well for wearing a tallit. Imagine if this were to happen to our daughters, wives, mothers or even grandmothers who were simply trying to express themselves as Jews in our homeland. This incident brings to the forefront the importance of one of the mandates of MERCAZ Olami which is a commitment to advancing the rights of ALL Jews in Israel to worship and study and live, as they wish.

It is through the hard work of our Executive Director, Rabbi Tzvi Graetz and our board members that we are able to successfully work with the Jewish Agency, Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael (Jewish National Fund) and the World Zionist organization to fund programs and organizations in Israel and the Diaspora that work not just to support pluralistic and modern Judaism in Israel, but to try and bring about change in Israel itself.

I thank them for their work and I thank you for opening your hearts and for your generosity in helping us to create a State of Israel for ALL of its citizens.

**Dr. Stephen Wolnek,
President, MERCAZ Olami**



At the 2011 Evening of Tribute (left to right): Rabbi Vernon Kurtz, honoree, Dr. Steve Wolnek, President, MERCAZ Olami, Rabbi Tzvi Graetz, Janet Tobin, Tribute Chair, Irwin Tobin, Marcus Frieze, Director of Worldwide Projects and Ariel Blufstein Executive Director, AMLAT.

Around the time of the Second Temple and certainly after its destruction, the Rabbis were searching for ways to continue Avodat Hashem. We now translate Avodat Hashem as the worship of God but in their time, they were referring to the actual sacrificial system. How then, after the Temple was gone, could the Jews continue to worship? The Rabbi's answer was simply, Tefillah or prayer. To pray every day, 3 times a day is no simple matter. Each time you pray, standing before God, you have to give a part of yourself to both God and to your community.

When you stand before your community and lead them in prayer as the Shaliach Tzibur or the Hazzan, you are representing not just yourself but the prayers of everyone there. You have a unique opportunity to create harmony, excite and elevate the spirit of the kehilla.

Several programs that Masorti Olami runs and supports which teach kehilla members and professionals to be Shlichei Tzibur or Hazzanim in their communities. (see page 20 for more on this). Through these programs, they learn not just prayer skills but also leadership skills. Leadership in our community is no different. It requires sacrifice, representation, passion and talent.

A leader has a responsibility to everyone in his/her organization, but cannot always engage each indi-



vidual at every given point. Masorti Olami works hard to lead, inspire, engage and renew Jewish life. We aren't a large organization with an extensive budget and so we must make decisions, sometimes difficult ones, about how and where to direct our energies and our funding. It is the leadership of each community that we rely on to help us to create vision, carry on tradition, guide us and assist us in our sacred work.

The Torah teaches us through the stories of our forefathers and Moses that leaders make mistakes. When this happens, there needs to be a willingness on the part of the leaders to listen and to respond. They need to adjust and to continue on and not let the mistake block them on their road to achieving their goals. I want to thank our lay leadership for giving so much of themselves – their time, their financial resources, their passion and neshama. All of their hard work bears tremendous fruit in the success of our worldwide movement.

Thank you also to our professional leadership all over the world – the Rabbis, Hazzanim, Education Directors, Program Directors, office staff and Youth Directors who help fulfill the vision of both our lay leaders and our overall organization making it a pleasure to create and dream together.

We are all standing together in our commitment to Masorti Judaism worldwide and to the principles and values we share. I look forward to many more years of working side by side with all of you.

**Rabbi Tzvi Graetz,
Executive Director
Masorti Olami & MERCAZ Olami**



*Sukkot at Neve Shalom,
St-Germain-en-Laye, France*



Greetings | Danny Kohn

Throughout the year in Latin America, we organize and participate in different activities or events that strengthen our movement.

This year, I was fortunate to participate in the most significant event of all: the installation of Rav Ariel Oliszewski in the Kehila Uniao Israelita Portoalegrense of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The installation of a rabbi could just be seen as the incorporation of a rabbi into a community. However, it is not just an event, it is the sum total of various aspects and processes that converge into the ceremony. It is a time to renew our commitment to improving our Jewish knowledge and identity, to guaranteeing continuity and to publicly promote the principles that guide our movement.

This installation was unique because a community that had never before had a rabbi made the decision not only to appoint one, but also to publicly adopt the Masorti ideology. The Rabbi, in turn, undertook



the responsibility to disseminate his knowledge and play a role in the renewal of the community.

I was given the honor to address the audience, and I believe that the best way of conveying my feelings is to share part of that address with you.

“For many of you this is probably the first ceremony of its kind.

Underneath the logo of the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano “Marshall T. Meyer”, where our dear Ari studied and trained, a phrase reads “Atem Edai”, you are my witnesses (Isaiah 43:10), and with our presence we are making this biblical phrase come true.

I feel blessed to have known Ari for a long time. I witnessed his growth since his days at the the Seminario Rabinico; we met while he was studying in Israel and I was invited to his Smicha.

... I would like to ask Ari and his colleagues to plant the same seed their teachers planted in them; for more people to study and become rabbis, so that in the near future each of us will take part in ceremonies like this much more frequently.”

Danny Kohn,
President, Masorti AMLAT

Greetings | Joanna Kubar

Masorti Europe is a spiritual assembly of people feeling lucky to be Jewish and happy to bring Jewish tradition to their everyday lives as European citizens. Geographically, we are dispersed in many cities - Alicante, Almere, Aix en Provence, Berlin, Bournemouth, Brussels, Budapest, Leeds, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Marseilles, Nice, Paris, Poznan, Prague, Saint Albans, Stockholm, Valencia... just to mention a few. There is a fervent, loving energy



flowing in each city and throughout the continent in the communities and in the national organizations. There are dozens of dedicated Masorti Jews, who are all striving to learn Hebrew, Torah, Talmud, and Liturgy – all of these different aspects of Jewish knowledge. There are lay leaders who give endlessly of their time and there are Rabbis who work more than their working hours. The Masorti Europe Board is a group of volunteers who I am privileged to bring together and to harmonize their wonderful energy. My favorite Masorti activity is being a Masorti Jew.

Joanna Kubar,
President, Masorti Europe

B'Yachad - Together

On April 27 and 28, 2012, 35 participants of Masorti/Conservative long term programs in Israel came together for a Shabbaton on the shore of Lake Kinneret. They spent the weekend getting to know each other, learning about their similarities and embracing their differences, as part of the NOAM Olami network. Participating in the Shabbaton were 5 participants from Argentina, 7 from Brazil, 2 from Chile, 5 from Israel, and 15 from the Nativ Program for North Americans.

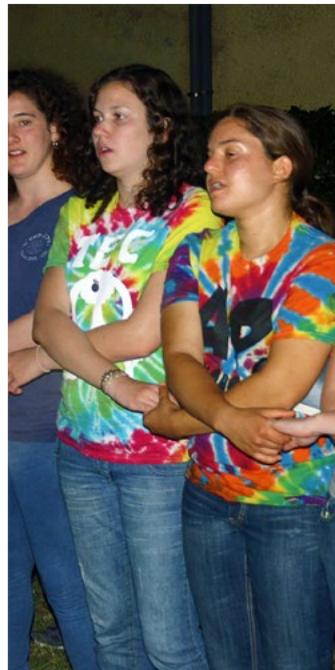
At the Shabbaton, participants gave passionate presentations, with pictures and songs, about

the life and culture in their youth movement, and how it helped to shape their Jewish identity, bringing them to participate in a year-long program in Israel.

Shabbat tfillot were an intercultural blend of melodies and minhagim. Dance steps filled the room as well as multi-colored talitot and kippot. Participants strongly debated issues of Halacha, egalitarianism, the impact youth can make in their community and much more.

Through this NOAM Olami event, participants had an opportunity to create social and personal bonds between like-minded peers and to think about

ways that they can work together and develop the NOAM Olami network further.



Above and Below: Activities during the Shnat Shabbaton



Olami - Ensuring the Future

International Leadership Seminar

It wasn't just the extremely warm welcome that the participants of the 3rd NOAM Olami International Leadership Seminar received in Sao Paulo at Comunidade Shalom or the basketball court on the roof. It wasn't just the "at home" feeling given by the host families or the intense energy felt by the 18 participants who came from the US, Israel, UK, Argentina and Chile. Or the amazing discussions held around the central theme of identity and how it connects us to each other, Israel and Am Yisrael. It was, of course, all of these things and more, which, put together made the seminar the

success it was. Many ideas were shared and many dreams dreamed about ways to bring together Masorti/Conservative youth around the world, whether virtually or in actuality. One participant from Argentina told us, "the most important thing I got from the seminar was an opportunity to participate in a dialogue about the purpose of Masorti Judaism and the reality of living as young Masorti Jews around the world." NOAM Olami will continue to bring together youth from around the world for programs, seminars and joint activities in Israel and other countries.



Young Adults Ensuring the future



Latin American participants in Kiyum (and next page middle)

Kiyum Worldwide Leadership Seminar

The Kiyum Leadership Institute brings young adults to Israel for an eight day experience to expand Jewish knowledge, increase Jewish awareness and identity and to explore the role that Zionism plays in their lives.

So far, Kiyum has brought groups from Europe and Latin America and in December 2012 will bring a group that also includes participants from America and Ukraine. One of the goals of Kiyum is to provide the tools and knowledge that enables this diverse group

of young adults to return to their communities as leaders and activists.

The Kiyum Leadership Institute is based at Kibbutz Hanaton where Masorti/Conservative Judaism thrives in a living laboratory and provides the perfect environment to examining the meanings and traditions of our movement. Also, participants explore Israel through a variety of field trips and lectures from top educators.

The personal connections made at these seminars create

a network of young adult Jewish leaders who together will work towards building the future of the Masorti movement and Am Yisrael.



Kiyum Participants at Robinson's Arch



Inspired by the annual Bankito festival run by MAROM Budapest, 'Festival Kedem' was established by MAROM UK as a weekend away camping, sharing, laughing and discussing, moving forward and developing their young adult community. 3 Shabbat dinners were used as planning meetings and for developing camaraderie. Despite the rain, the first Festival Kedem was

a huge success with a sense of something solid and sustainable being built for all those who were involved.



MAROM Olami Young Adults



MAROM at Maayane Or in Nice, France meets every shabbat after services for lunch, a walk and discussions on such things as spirituality. MAROM Nice and MAROM Paris came together in May for a Shabbat together and finished with Havdalah on the beach.

The annual Bankito festival was held in July of 2012 on the shores around the lake, with DJ-s, lemonade, spritzers and sunbathing, sports programmes, bike races, evening concerts, and films. The festival also included Shabbat services (pictured above) and discussions about being a minority in Hungary.





A group picture with all of the mission participants at the Installation ceremony



Memorial service at Babi Yar



Rabbi Vernon Kurtz (far right), Rabbi Rafi Kasimov (middle) and Rabbi Reuven Stamov meet with Sunday school students and staff in Berdichev

Reflections by Rabbi Tzvi Graetz

In July 2012, Masorti Olami along with the Schechter Institute of Jewish studies went on a mission to Ukraine as part of the installation of Masorti Rabbi Reuven Stamov in Ukraine. Here is what Rabbi Tzvi Graetz had to say about this momentous occasion.

During our mission to Ukraine, we were immersed in the history and tragedy of Jewish life there. We visited the homes of famous Jews who fled persecution before they went on to greater things and we memorialized the Jews killed in the Holocaust at

Babi Yar and other parts of Ukraine. We drove through shtetls and saw synagogues long abandoned for the gold paved streets of America or the Zionist dream of Israel. This is the place where many of our great grandparents and grandparents dreamt of a better life for themselves and their children. It was a difficult life for many of them and the flourishing of Jewish culture was brought to a halt by pogroms, emigration and the Holocaust. Shabbat

Mission to U

was spent with other Masorti Ukrainian Jews from 7 different cities around Ukraine. We prayed, ate and celebrated together.

Rabbi Reuven Stamov and his wife Lena, stood under a tallit surrounded by leaders of their own community and the numerous rabbis and lay-people from abroad who had traveled specifically for this



moment. A tallit was placed on Reuven as he held the Torah and he was blessed with the traditional blessings that the Cohanim gave to Am Yisrael in Temple times and that parents give to their children on Friday night:

Bless us, our God and God of our ancestors...

May Adonai bless you and guard you. May Adonai show you favor and be gracious to you. May Adonai show you kindness and grant you shalom.

In his dvar torah during his installation, Rabbi Stamov spoke of transitions. "This coming Shabbat's Torah portion will teach us about the transition between Am Yisrael's journey in the desert, as we finish reading the book of Numbers, and the final stages of that journey, as we begin the book of Deuteronomy." Rabbi Stamov then shared his own personal tran-



Rabbi Reuven and Lena Stamov and their daughters at the ceremony

sitions –“from secular to religious, from Ukraine to Israel and back again to Ukraine and most importantly from one chapter of history of Masorti programming and community to the next transition which is renewal of a traditional and modern Jewish life– Masorti Judaism in Ukraine.”

Just as we had sung Hatikvah at Babi Yar in reaction to the

destruction there, we sang it again at the end of the installation in the real hope for the future embodied in the ceremony.

kraine - building leadership



Mission participants "tip their hat" to Yiddish writer, Sholom Aleichem in Odessa.



Planting a tree on Tu B'shvat at Kehillat Aviv in Valencia, Spain



From Holocaust to Life, Past and Present of Masorti Congregation 1870 in Lima, Peru. The presentation was in honor of the publication of the book and includes testimonies of those German, Austrian and Czechs Jews who managed to leave Europe and to immigrate to Peru in the 1930s and 40s as well as testimonies of past presidents, and Rabbis



Passover Seder at Almere/Weesp in the Netherlands

Activities around the world Enhancing Jewish Knowledge and

The new and old leadership (pictured above) of Nueva Congregacion Israelita in Uruguay - the 3 Rabbis - gather together at the panel program which had present and past rabbis of NCI speaking about living in a Jewish community.



Beit Haknesset Beit Yaacov received a new Sefer Torah. Sofer Sebastian Grinberg came from Buenos Aires to Curitiba where everyone helped him write the last letters of the sefer

Mazal Tov to the Centro Israelita Porto Alegrense on their 95th Anniversary!

On the occasion of the 95th anniversary of the Centro Israelita Porto Alegrense we had the opportunity to learn together with Professor Noam Zion from the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Professor Zion based his lectures on the concepts of "Tzedakah, Charity and Philanthropy". As well, he met with teachers at the Israeli Brazilian College (the Jewish Day school in Porte Alegre) where he spoke on "Art, Politics, Psychology and Education of the Four Sons of the Pesach Haggadah" using that as a basis to talk about the importance of educating different types of students and their different learning styles. Professor Zion shared with the youth of our community

a dinner at the Hotel Plaza San Rafael, the kehilla began to celebrate its next 95 years and Professor Zion closed his visit with a flourish with a lecture about the relationship of parents and children through a Jewish view.

Masorti in Australasia

This year has seen further consolidation and development of the 2 Masorti congregations in Australia, with plans for the construction of new buildings for each and growing interest in other cities. Mercaz-Masorti Australasia, the regional umbrella organization of our movement, has been strengthened, including the appointment of an Executive Director. A new regional Beit Din has been formally established to provide spiritual leadership to our movement and a distinct Masorti rabbinic voice to



Sukkot celebrations in Alphaville, Brazil

Hakhnassat Sefer Torah. Or Chalom. Aix En Provence

On Sunday, June the 17th 2012, the Or Chalom community in Aix-en-Provence had the great honor to celebrate its first hakhnassat Sefer Torah. The event was made even more special to our congregation, since the sefer Torah we received, dated around 1880, comes from a Czech community around Prague whose members perished in the Shoah. Or Chalom received the scroll, thanks to the generous donation of the Cohen family, as a long-term loan from the Czech Memorial Scroll Trust in London, who, after World War II, did incredible work in saving, purchasing and restoring thousands of Czech scrolls, giving them a second life in Jewish congregations around the world. The Torah will be used with pride while accomplishing the duty of remembrance of those whose lives were taken while sanctifying the name of God. May their memory be blessed.



(Chazit Hanoar, Habonim Dror, and Betar Ofakim) about "The Power of Sisterhood: Women face a tyrant, Pharaoh, to save the baby Moshe." 60 youths intently listened to every word even though the whole neighborhood was without electricity for more than an hour. Finally, on Saturday night at



the broader Jewish community. Important steps in building outreach to a traditional community ideally suited to the Masorti approach to Jewish life.



Purim at CIB in Porto Alegre, Brazil

Congregation Israelita Paulista in Sao Paolo, Brazil

A group of friends gathered in a bayit (house) for the CIP Babayit program and the opportunity to talk with the Rabbi about various themes. It is a nice and relaxed way, surrounded by friends, to learn about different aspects of Judaism. The themes that are studied are suggested by the Rabbi and chosen by the group. For Henri Zylberstajn, a host of one of the groups, this is a very cool and rewarding opportunity. "It was a joyful night, rich and relaxed. We meet every two months to strengthen our link with Judaism" he said.



Celebration of a new Torah at Nueva Congregacion Israelita in Montevideo, Uruguay.



Havdalah after Yom Kippur in Valencia, Spain

Kids in school at NCI in Uruguay, learning about how a Torah is written.



Shalom Masorti Independent Congregation, Johannesburg, South Africa

On August 5, 2012, Shalom Masorti Independent Congregation celebrated the Bar Mitzvah, 13th anniversary of its new building at a kosher restaurant in Johannesburg, South Africa. Rabbi Robert Jacobs from Beit David Progressive Jewish Congregation, as well as Joel Alswang, the longest serving congregant and synagogue elder, joined them in their simcha. Our chairman. Mr. Toni Harman concluded

his speech that night: 'We are around 40 people here tonight. 40 wonderful souls who chose to celebrate our Bar Mitzvah milestone together. I have been a humble servant of this congregation. for the last 50 years! Some of you have been members for a longer or shorter period, but we are all here now celebrating as one. Finally like an emcee at a Bar Mitzvah, I would like to ask you to charge your glasses and

drink a L'Chaim to Shalom!!' May we continue for many more years ad 120 (meah v'esrim).



The Harmans at the dinner



Our Evening of Tribute in December of 2011, not only included the presentation of the awards but beautiful singing from the HaZamir choir and moving tributes to the honorees.

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman Memorial Rabbinic & Community Leadership Award

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Rabbi Vernon Kurtz (below middle) is the Rabbi of North Suburban Synagogue Beth El in Highland Park, Illinois. Rabbi Kurtz was recently elected President of the American Zionism Movement and has served as President of MERCAZ Olami. He is Past President of the Rabbinical Assembly, and served for 10 years as a member of the Leadership Council of Conservative Judaism. Rabbi Kurtz is married to Bryna, has two daughters and is the proud Saba of three grandchildren.

Hiddur Mitzvah Award

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Hazzan Alisa Pomerantz-Boro (far right) grew up on Mercer Island, Washington in a rabbinic home, instilled with a love of Judaism and music. Hazzan Pomerantz-Boro serves as the cantor of Congregation Beth El in Voorhees, NJ. In May 1991, Hazzan Pomerantz-Boro was among the first 14 women to be inducted into the Cantors Assembly, the international professional organization of Conservative cantors and currently serves as a national officer. She is thankful to God for

the gifts of music and miracles, to her beloved husband Stephen, and to their beautiful children, Rebecca and Joshua.

Sherut L'Am - Service To The Nation Award

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Marilyn Lishnoff Wind (below second from left) has been very active in all aspects of the Conservative Movement for many years. She currently serves on the Executive Committee of MERCAZ USA, and on the board of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. She also serves as one of five lay people on the Committee of Jewish Law and Standards. In 2001, Marilyn was



the founding President of the Kol Shalom synagogue in Rockville, MD and also serves on the Board of Trustees. In 2010, Marilyn retired after working for over 30 years at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission serving as the Deputy Associate Executive Director for Health Sciences. Marilyn is married to Gary and they have two children, Rebecca and David.





Claude Machline and Danny Kohn, President, Masorti AMLAT at the Vaad HaPoel meetings this past summer

MERCAZ USA held a cocktail party for young adults in New York City. Above, participants at the party showing they're "fans" of MERCAZ



MERCAZ Olami representatives voting on a variety of issues such as women's rights and the separation of religion and state



Dr. Stephen Wolnek, President, MERCAZ Olami talks about Claude Machline as he presents his MERCAZ Olami award. Even though his great-grandfather in Ukraine had been a Rabbi, Claude Machline grew up in Paris, France with little Jewish knowledge. However, in 1988, Claude and his wife Annette, along with 7 other families founded Adath Shalom, the first Masorti community in France. Today, Adath Shalom has more than 500 family members, with Jewish and Zionist programming for members of all ages. Claude was a founder of Masorti Europe, and continues to be an Honorary President. Claude is a member of the Zionist Federation of France



MERCAZ Olami



Mercaz Olami at WZO



The opening evening for the WZO meetings was held on a warm Jerusalem evening in July at the new Schechter Institute Building. Looking around the room, you could see supporters of our movement from all around the world. It was the perfect opportunity to honor three special people - Rabbi Yoav Ende, Mrs. Evelyn Seelig and Mr. Claude Machline. All three of our honorees work tirelessly to support our movement and our message. During the WZO meetings, an

instrumental part of what we accomplished was the agreement between the WZO and KKL which assures the stability of our religious pluralistic stream funding for the next five years. As well, the work of the Abuyadaya in Uganda was presented by our own Judy Gray in the small community committee of the Board of Governors meeting of the Jewish Agency. This report was very well received and is an important step in helping the members of that community, who were converted by Masorti rabbis, participate in MASA Israel programs.



Evelyn Seelig receiving her MERCAZ Olami Award from Rabbi Tzvi Graetz (l), Executive Director, MERCAZ Olami and Dr. Stephen Wolnek, President, MERCAZ Olami.

Evelyn is a life-long member of the Conservative/ Masorti movement, from her involvement as a youngster at Temple Emanuel in Englewood, NJ to her charter membership of Temple Beth Torah, Westbury, NY where she is still an active member. She was President of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism from 1994-98, and served as President of MERCAZ USA from 1998-2002. She currently serves as Vice President of the American Zionist Movement, and on the Boards of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, MERCAZ USA and MERCAZ Olami.



MERCAZ Olami members discuss the issues

Rabbi Yoav Ende speaks after receiving his MERCAZ Olami Award. Rabbi Ende was ordained by the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary in 2008. Rabbi Ende has worked extensively in formal & informal Jewish Zionist education, with both youth and adults from different sectors of Israeli society. He served for four years as student Rabbi in the Neve Hanna Children's Village in Kiryat Gat, worked for two years as a coordinator of field activities for Rabbis for Human Rights and in 2008 became the Director of the Hannaton Educational Center and the Rabbi of Kibbutz Hannaton, a Masorti pluralistic kibbutz in the Lower Galilee where he lives today



Masorti Olami – A UN Department of Public Information NGO

Throughout the year, our NGO at the United Nations, headed by the indomitable Gloria Landy, works hard to promote the interests of Israel in the UN and among its committees. Don't forget to support our efforts by liking us on Facebook and keeping up with what is happening in the UN!

Social Action & Global Activism



Global Sh'ma Flash Mob



NOAM Olami participants in the Sao Paolo Leadership seminar in October, joined the Global Sh'ma Flash Job sponsored by USCJ to support the Women of the Wall after the arrest of Anat Hoffman during services.

Rabbi Tzvi Graetz with Moshe Sebagago from the Abuyadaya in Uganda, who came to study at the Conservative Yeshiva this year with the support of Masorti Olami

Global Masorti

Masorti Olami sends shlichim all over the world during the high holidays and at other times during the year to help Masorti congregations by leading services, teaching skills or mentoring.

Valencia, Spain

From a letter to Chazzan Jaclyn Chernett, European Academy for Jewish Liturgy
Dear Jacky,
I took my time to write these words because I had to think

about all that happened during the Yamim Noraim (High Holidays). On Yom Kippur, I was so nervous that my voice shook when I sang Kol Nidre. I could hardly utter the first words, bearing the responsibility on my shoulders, given the whole sense of spirituality, emotion,

and meaning. For Neilah (Yom Kippur closing service), with the wonderful and inspiring nusach (tune), I was so moved... And I started crying... Many of the Kehilla members started crying too! The kids then entered with the candles and I felt so lucky when I glanced at the door



and saw my two year-old son in his father's arms, carrying his own candle...It was a very moving moment for all of us.
 Todah Rabah,
 Luciana (Pattin) from Kehillat Aviv, Valencia, Spain

Lisbon, Portugal

Rabbi Jules and Navah Harlow visited Lisbon (with hummus and baked goods in their luggage) to help Kehilla Beit Israel prepare for the High Holidays. Edgard, a kehillah member said the following "Every time Rabbi Jules and Rebbitzen Navah come to visit us, we learn a lot from them. After they leave we have this impression that we learned a lot and that we know so many things that we actually feel proud of our progress. And the moment they say 'good-bye' curiously coincides with the instant in which we start missing them."

Alicante, Spain

Rabbi Carlos A. Tapiero has led high holiday services in Alicante, Spain since 2004. Here is what he had to say this year about his experience:
 "The community leadership has an outstanding vision, and is deeply committed to Jewish continuity and Zionism, values that lead each and every activity they organize. One of the most moving facts of Beth Shalom is that their members long before set as one of their most important goals to establish a Jewish framework for them and in particular for their children.



Alsmere/Weesp Netherlands

Rabbi David Soetendorp visited the Alsmere/Weesp Masorti Congregation in the Netherlands in August and again for Yom Kippur.
 "Sunday was a moving occasion because the congregation started its religious education for its children... The parents were present all that morning which was important because it encouraged the children to value the significance of their personal Jewish learning. The Yom Kippur services in which I participated were very spiritual and moving. The service showed me the hard but very worthwhile work of this kehillah ..."



Santiago, Chile

During Purim 5772, Cantor David Tillman went to Santiago, Chile as part of a joint program of the Cantors Assembly and-Masorti Olami. He and his wife, Ellen, sang, taught and visited with the Masorti community in Santiago.

A new 'wave' in Simchat Torah Flags

A preschool in Brazil celebrating Simchat Torah

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flags@masortiolami.org



Why this Flag Enhancing Jewish Knowledge & Identity

In October of 2011, the Eretz Yisrael Museum in Tel Aviv held an exhibition of Simchat Torah flags starting in 1948 with the establishment of the State of Israel. The flags were a microcosm of the changes that Israel has been through in the last 60+ years. Our flag is also representative of change. We needed a flag that represented all of the Jewish peo-

ple. And so, we created one. Many of the countries where there is an active Masorti community are represented on our flag. There are even more countries with Masorti kehillot that aren't on the flag, only because we didn't have the space! But the flag itself did travel all over the world to all the countries with a Masorti Olami kehilla and also to the US, Canada

and even in Israel. The flag was featured in articles in the Jewish News, Haaretz English edition and on Channel 2 News in Israel. One of the links of course that binds us all together is the state of Israel. That is why the Israeli flag sits in the middle in a place of honor, larger than the others. Wherever Jews live they have always turned their hearts and support toward Israel.

The values are what we expect to see in our modern day kehillot. A group of grandparents, parents and children dancing together in a circle that represents the passing of our tradition from one to another. On the left side of the flag, you see parents looking on and participating joyfully as their children continue the tradition of celebrating the Torah and their Jewish identities. On the right side, you see generations even further back, from Herzl, who looks on in pleasure to see the centrality of the State of Israel in our hearts and minds – to Moses who gave us the Torah – to Miriam who always led the Jewish people in song and in joy.





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Masorti Olami Leadership & Staff

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- Alan Silberman, President, Masorti Olami
- Dr. Stephen Wolnek, President, MERCAZ Olami
- Dr. David Breakstone, International Vice President, Masorti Olami and MERCAZ Olami
- Rabbi Alan Silverstein, Past President, Masorti Olami
- Rabbi Vernon Kurtz, Past President, MERCAZ Olami
- Rabbi Joel Meyers, Chair, Masorti Olami Executive Operations Committee (EOC)
- Rabbi Jeffrey Wohlberg, Chief Financial Officer, Masorti Olami
- Claude Machline, Secretary, Masorti Olami
- Janet Tobin, Chair, Masorti Olami Evening of Tribute Event
- Gill Caplin, Member of EOC
- Peter Miller, Member of EOC
- Ned Gladstein, Member of EOC
- Doron Rubin, President, MAROM Olami
- Gloria Landy, Main Representative to United Nations DPI

Regional Leadership

- Joanna Kubar, President, Masorti Europe
- Daniel Kohn, President, Masorti AMLAT

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Masorti Olami & MERCAZ Olami

- Rabbi Tzvi Graetz, Executive Director, Masorti Olami & MERCAZ Olami
- Marcus Frieze, Director of Worldwide Projects
- Hillary B. Gordon, Resource Development Coordinator
- Suzanne Farber, Bookkeeper/Project Administrator
- Tehila Reuben, Jerusalem Office Manager
- Megan Atkinson, New York Office Administrator

MAROM Olami

- Avigail Ben-Aryeh, Director
- Rabbi Joshua Cohen
- Lucas "Pato" Lejderman
- Sivan Navon-Shoval

Regional Professional Staff

- Ariel Blufstein, Executive Director, Masorti AMLAT
- Rabbi Chaim Weiner, Executive Director, Masorti Europe

Jerusalem Office

32 General Pierre Koenig St, 4th Floor
 Jerusalem, Israel 93469
 Tel: 972-2-624-7106
 Fax: 972-2-624-7677
 Email: mail@masortiolami.org

New York Office

3080 Broadway
 New York, New York 10027 USA
 Tel: 212-280-6039
 Fax: 212-678-5321
 Email: worldcouncil@masortiworl.org