



# 2025 REPORT

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## Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present the 2025 WUPJ Annual Report, proudly sharing the global actions of our network, built together with the professional and volunteer leaders of Progressive Judaism.

In a world shaken by wars, with a ceasefire in Israel that allows us to aspire to lasting peace, while the conflict in Ukraine continues— and facing the phenomenon of antisemitism mutating into anti-Zionism, revealing a new wave of hatred toward Jews, our global network stands united. We support one another to advance local initiatives that transform community life into a true reflection of the values we affirm in our mission and vision.

In the following pages, you will find milestones that demonstrate that our practice of Progressive Judaism is about continuously reforming and transforming, with creativity and innovation, our leadership models.

We believe in progressivism as the evolution of Jewish civilization toward new practices of meaning and community building. Far from political or economic definitions, our progressivism refers to the dynamic process of progress that renews our millennial legacy for every generation and context.

The WUPJ celebrates the unity of the Reform/Liberal movement in its diversity of languages, cultures, geographies, and multiple practices, all reflected in this Annual Report that we proudly share with you.

Finally, we express our gratitude and recognition to each of you: your community work, your contributions and donations, and the support of this extended family within WUPJ enable us to fulfill our shared mission together.

Phyllis & Sergio

*Phyllis Jorey and Rabbi Sergio Balaban*





# Torah Exchange Program




## TORAH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

This year, the WUPJ strengthened global Jewish life through meaningful Torah scroll exchanges that advanced our commitment to shared sacred heritage.

We dedicated a historic scroll to Kehilat Ofir, a new Reform congregation in Givatayim led by MK Rabbi Gilad Kariv and founded in memory of Ofir Libstein z"l, who died defending his community on October 7.

In partnership with the Memorial Scrolls Trust, the WUPJ transferred a mid-19th-century Torah scroll from Czechia, preserved through the Holocaust, to support the community's early development. This effort was empowered by the generosity of Sandy and L. Tadd Schwab, a member of our International Leadership Council, and their family, together with support from the World Zionist Organization, reinforcing our shared mission to strengthen diverse Reform and Progressive communities.

Throughout the year, the WUPJ was contacted by several congregations interested in donating Torah scrolls, and we are now working to connect these scrolls with communities seeking to deepen their Jewish practice.



## TORAH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

At Connections 2025, our Torah Exchange Program enabled two exchanges from Har Sinai Temple in Pennington, NJ: one scroll went to Shirat Hagan in Ramat Gan, and the other to Shirat Hayam in Haifa. Temple Har Sinai was represented by our Governing Board member Peter Buchsbaum, who played a key role in supporting both exchanges. Surrounded by participants from across the Progressive world, these moments highlighted our movement's diversity and global reach, connecting communities through shared tradition and advancing our collective commitment to inclusive, vibrant Jewish expression.





# NeTzeR and TaMaR





## NETZER AND TAMAR

**NeTzeR Olami and TaMaR Olami are the global Progressive Zionist youth and young-adult movements as a part of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ).**

The main goal of the movements is to empower young Jews worldwide through education, leadership development, and social action grounded in Progressive Judaism and Tikkun Olam.

NeTzeR currently brings together 15 branches across 12 countries, while TaMaR connects young adults (18–35) in more than 20 countries, strengthening identity, activism, and leadership in inclusive and diverse communities.

Together, we reinforce Progressive Jewish life globally and represent the movement within the Zionist Council of Youth Movements.

This year presented significant challenges due to the situation in Israel and the rise in antisemitism in the Diaspora. Even so, we worked closely with branches and, with WUPJ support, prioritized empowering NeTzeR–TaMaR leaders to assume roles locally and internationally.

We strengthened branches, supported local leadership, and expanded cooperation with Moishe House, Yallah! Israel and NFTY (URJ), Tlamim, and Noar Telem, broadening our shared Progressive network and impact.





## NETZER AND TAMAR

### Development and Support of the Hanhaga and the Snifim

#### TaMaR

Throughout the year, we worked with TaMaR leaders to continue building the new Hanhaga, clarifying the ideological and structural foundations of the movement. As a professional team, we supported TaMaR branches worldwide, strengthening them as vibrant communities and accompanying them through leadership transitions. Forums, check-ins, and mentorship ensured each branch remained connected.



#### NeTzeR

We worked weekly with the elected NeTzeR Hanhaga to identify branch needs and strengthen connections. Together, we advanced a shared action plan, supported initiatives, and encouraged regional collaboration. We also held two Global Mazkirimot Forum meetings, fostering exchanges for joint projects and preparing for the Veida. In April, we held a two-day leadership seminar in Budapest to shape the educational program for the Veida and Connections.



## TaMaR Leadership Skills Webinars and Resource Platform

This year, we offered professionally led Leadership Skills webinars developed in response to needs identified by local leaders.

These sessions strengthened leadership and deepened engagement. All sessions were recorded and added to the TaMaR Resource Bank, enabling branches to exchange materials and access curated Progressive Jewish resources.

We also shared Jewish educational content ahead of major holidays to enrich community celebrations.

## Israel Experiences

### Shlichut Tzionit

Our Shlichut program strengthens the bridge between branches, Progressive communities worldwide, Israel, and Progressive Zionism.

This year, we expanded Shlichut opportunities, focusing on pre-departure preparation and ongoing support. In cooperation with the Jewish Agency, we continued working with our Shlicha in Australia, based in Sydney, who supports NeTzeR, TaMaR, and local Progressive communities. Three Shinshinim are serving with RSY-NeTzeR UK and local congregations, and a new Shaliach will soon begin in New Zealand.

We also carried out several short-term Shlichuyot in Australia, Hungary, France, and Germany to strengthen relationships and branch vitality.





## NETZER AND TAMAR

### Shnat NetZer Gap Year

Despite recruitment challenges, we worked with five participants from Shnat Avahandava Brazil, offering NetZer Yamei T'nuah focused on Progressive Judaism, Zionism, and movement identity. Activities took place in Reform spaces in Israel, including HUC and the community in Be'er Sheva. A participant from the Netherlands joined for the volunteering component at Revivim. All took part in the NetZer Veida.

Looking ahead, we are working with movements in Australia, South Africa, the Netherlands, and the UK to build next year's Shnat group. The Shnat Coordinator traveled to Australia to meet participants and adapt the program to local needs.

### Harduf Short-Term Program

We continued developing a short-term educational program with Harduf, designed for participants seeking a meaningful and flexible Israel experience. We are promoting and supporting its implementation across branches.



## NETZER AND TAMAR

### Youth Movements Conference and Regional Seminar – Europe

In February, we participated in the WZO European Zionist Youth Movements Conference in Greece. Representatives from NetZer European branches joined other youth movements in discussions about the future of Zionism and Jewish youth in Europe.

During the conference, we held a NetZer seminar that strengthened our shared Progressive Zionist vision and supported leadership development.



### Development of Activism and Engagement – Activism Seminar in Budapest

We held the WUPJ, NetZer & TaMaR Activism Seminar in Budapest as part of our growing network of young Progressive Zionist activists. Fourteen leaders from nine countries gathered for three days of learning, dialogue, and activism. The seminar explored Progressive Jewish and Zionist values, the role of Israel's National Institutions, and preparation for the World Zionist Congress. Participants practiced leadership and simulated WZC committee debates.

After the seminar, leaders continued working as activists, taking part in elections, drafting resolutions, and ultimately representing WUPJ as delegates at the Congress, where their proposals passed with strong support. This network will continue expanding within Israel's national and global institutions.





## Seminars in Israel

### Leadership Seminar – Pre-Connections and Veida

Ahead of Connections, the Veidot, and the World Zionist Congress, fifty NetZer and TaMaR leaders from seventeen countries joined a two-day seminar in Israel. We explored Israel education, Progressive Zionism, and contemporary community challenges, strengthening relationships and creating a shared foundation.

### NetZer–TaMaR Participation in WUPJ Connections 2025

Fifty leaders participated in WUPJ Connections 2025 at Beit Shmuel. They facilitated round-table discussions, supported musical and t'filah moments, and engaged in networking, including with HUC students and in a shared activity with Noar Telem (the Reform youth movement in Israel, part of NetZer Olami). We also held a session with former directors Maoz Haviv and Lior Argaman, joined by alumni now living in Israel.



## NETZER AND TAMAR

### Veida Olamit

#### TaMaR Veida Olamit

After years of growth across more than twenty branches, we gathered in person to solidify TaMaR's ideological and structural foundations. Through aseifot (assemblies), we discussed TaMaR's mission, shared resources, and learned from expert educators. We are in the process of collecting applications to build the first official TaMaR Hanhaga (international leadership team).



#### NeTzeR Veida Olamit

The NeTzeR Veida brought together leaders after two challenging years. We reflected on local needs, discussed the future of the movement, and made key decisions regarding the Hanhaga structure and long-term direction. We now move toward forming the new Hanhaga and supporting a structured transition.





## Participation of TaMaR and NeTzeR Leaders in the World Zionist Congress as Part of the WUPJ Delegation

Leaders from TaMaR and NeTzeR played an active role in the 39th World Zionist Congress as part of the WUPJ delegation. Their participation ensured meaningful youth representation in National Institutions. Delegates supported Progressive resolutions and contributed to policies related to equity, pluralism, and democratic values, demonstrating the growing influence of young Progressive leaders.





## Special Programs in Collaboration with Other Organizations

We strengthened collaborations with Yallah! Israel (URJ), connecting Reform teens from the U.S. with NeTzeR and TaMaR communities in Europe. We aim to expand this to France, Italy, and Germany. We deepened cooperation with Noar Telem and supported youth from the Shoham Reform congregation in joining the RSY-Netzer UK camp. Through a special Jewish educational grant, we supported partnerships with Moishe House and Without Walls Hosts, encouraging programs such as Purim and Shavuot celebrations, Shabbat dinners, and the TaMaR France “Masa le-Polin” initiative.





## Open Calls – Support for Educational Initiatives of the Snifim and Special Grant for Machanot (Camps)

We strengthened branches by launching Open Calls for new educational initiatives. These opportunities enabled snifim (branches) to advance programs addressing local needs, including music initiatives, educational Shabbatonim, leadership development for madrichimot, activities for the chagim, support for Beit Midrash, and the creation of Shabbat siddurim including T'nuah songs. Across Netzer and TaMar, we supported more than 25 initiatives that reinforce work at the branch level.

We also managed a special grant for Machanot, offering financial support to enhance the educational quality and accessibility of summer and winter camps, helping snifim create safe, inclusive, and meaningful spaces rooted in Progressive Zionism.





# Center for Education and Leadership Development





## Local Leadership Development

We awarded ten Local Leadership Development Grants providing both financial and pedagogical support, giving priority to projects that advance the development of Shlichei Tzibor and that are a collaboration of two or more organizational bodies.

This year's projects include local leadership training seminars organized by the SAUPJ (South Africa), FIEP (Federazione Italiana per l'Ebraismo Progressivo) led by the Or Ammim Congregation in Bologna, FJL (Fédération du Judaïsme Libéral francophone), L'dor Va'dor Progressive Judaism Center of Tbilisi, Georgia, Beit Orim Reform Jewish Congregation of Budapest, Jewish Religious Union of Mumbai, Liberaal Joodse Gemeente Amsterdam and UJR-AmLat.

All of these programs focused on developing new leadership under the age of 50. We also supported FIEP's Shlichei Tzibor training program and ARZA Canada's initiative for bringing their Israel curriculum to classrooms around the world.

We organized global forums that meet throughout the year for regional chairs, Shlichei Tzibor training leaders, heads of clergy councils, Reform/Progressive Day School Staff, and organizations running local leadership development programs. The forums are supported by the creation of a drive of shared resources.



Real Stories, Real  
Communities



## Connections 2025

We oversaw the planning and execution of the **Connections** conference with participants from all over the globe, including a very strong young adult presence. The conference was inspired by the “unconference” model, with 60 workshops led by over one hundred conference participants on the pressing topics of the day including Progressive Zionism, antisemitism, community development, and innovations in music and prayer.

The theme was “tikkun” moving from reflection on personal leadership to community best practices, our role as the global Progressive/Reform network and our spiritual journey.

Highlights include the opening ceremony rededicating the Hirsch Theater and honoring contributors to the Beit Shmuel Capital Campaign; the Tikkun Talks; the WUPJ Torah Exchange; and deeply moving prayers and Shabbat celebrations at Beit Shmuel and the egalitarian section of the Western Wall.

We organized the traditional pre-Connections Clergy Kallah at Miskenot Ruth in Tel Aviv in collaboration with Merkazei Daniel which brought together 25 rabbis and cantors who learned and prayed together over two days.







## Global Leadership Fellowship

In the first half of 2025, we completed the first ever mentoring program for the 5785 Global Leadership Fellows, which was so successful that it plays an expanded role in the next cohort. We then engaged nine new emerging global leaders for the 5786 **Global Leadership Fellowship**, from aged 18 to 64 representing seven countries.

After a series of webinars, the fellows fully engaged in Connections followed by an intensive seminar utilizing Israel as our classroom – exploring Progressive Zionism, resilience, entrepreneurial social activism, shared society, sustainable kibbutzim, and education for Jewish peoplehood. We also engaged in acquiring practical tools for project development and expanding our Global thinking.

## Supporting WUPJ Leadership

Following the implementation of the new WUPJ leadership structure, we supported the organization of the International Leadership Council into work groups. Alongside committees already in place, we formed new groups that have already met this year and taken on active roles including the Communications group, with a subgroup for Internal Communications, Rebranding and Public Policy Development; the Education and Leadership Development group; and the Youth and Young Adult group.

## Training Local Spiritual Leadership

We actively supported the Shlichei Tzibor training for Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, providing pedagogical support throughout the year to all the programs and organizing the programming for the Russian-speaking Shlichei Tzibor Israel seminar in May.

We organized the first-ever Asia Shlichei Tzibor training course attended by around twenty people which included some participants also from New Zealand and Eastern Europe. It met over five months, with a monthly virtual workshop led by a local rabbi, rabbinic mentors, and cooperation with local communities.

We provide ongoing consultation on a weekly basis with communities, organizations and regional leaders on a wide range of topics related to education and leadership development, through conversations, resource sharing, and connecting.







## Shlichut Hub

Our Shlichut Hub expanded its work this year. Over Pesach, we supported a visiting rabbi in Kehilat Shanghai, and over the High Holidays, we supported visiting rabbis in Kehilat HaMakom in Porto, Portugal, Kehilat Beijing, the Thailand Progressive Jewish Community, and Rodef Shalom in Mumbai, India. We also supported a process that brought a rabbinical student from the Avraham Geiger Kolleg to serve Kehilat B'nei Maskilim in Vilnius, Lithuania over the holidays and throughout the year.

We continue to partner with HUC and the JDC (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee) in facilitating experiences for American rabbinical and cantorial students in international communities.

We supported the placement of eight students over Pesach in Poland and Vilnius. We initiated and supported a process that brought two American students to a NetZer madrichim seminar in the Netherlands.

We also supported the site visit of a delegation of HUC students in South Africa who experienced meaningful Shabbat prayers and programming with the Temple Israel Cape Town community.

Through a relationship fostered with JCC Global (a network of over 1,000 Jewish Community Centers), we facilitated the participation of an HUC Israeli rabbinic student in a pre-Rosh HaShanah seminar of the communities of Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia, in cooperation with the Jewish Agency. This is the first time that these] communities have hosted a Reform/Progressive spiritual leader.



## Education

We organized a four-part Progressive Zionism webinar series. We formulated a working definition of Progressive Zionism, taught how to moderate fraught discussions within a community and how to confront and respond to challenging claims, and presented different paths to activism.

We also offered a webinar in cooperation with the Anu Museum on their October 7 capsule exhibit. We gratefully acknowledge the valuable and fruitful partnership with the museum, including visits by all our Israel seminars to the museum carefully crafted in collaboration with the museum educational staff.



# Connections 2025



Connections 2025 brought together 170 Progressive Jewish leaders from 28 countries, 40% of whom were under the age of 35, for several days of learning, dialogue and shared purpose in Jerusalem. Held at Beit Shmuel from 30 Tishrei to 3 Cheshvan, 5786 (October 22 to 25, 2025), the conference reflected months of preparation by a committed steering committee of lay leaders and WUPJ staff.

Guided by the values of Tikkun Atzmi, Tikkun Kehilati, Tikkun Olam and Tikkun Ami, participants explored leadership, Jewish identity, community resilience and the evolving role of Progressive Judaism. An Unconference Model allowed attendees to shape parts of the agenda, encouraging open dialogue, peer-led learning and collaborative problem-solving.

Connections brought our global Progressive family together across continents, generations and perspectives, reminding us of our collective strength and shared responsibility for the future."

Carole Sterling and Eric Beswick, Steering Committee Co-Chairs.







Other highlights included a WUPJ delegation joining the Women of the Wall Rosh Chodesh prayer, followed by a moving adult b/bar/bat mitzvah ceremony at Beit Shmuel, as well as TED-style talks from visionary leaders and dynamic sessions on shared community challenges. An evening open-mic gathering celebrated creativity, music and community.

Participants also prayed together at the Egalitarian Kotel, heard a keynote address from Rabbi Sergio Bergman and engaged in leadership roundtables shaping future WUPJ priorities. Additional moments of learning included Shacharit in Blaustein Hall overlooking the Old City, the WUPJ Torah Exchange, Torah study and affinity groups.

The conference closed with Havdalah under the Jerusalem sky, followed by participation in the Jerusalem demonstrations in support of the hostage families.

Connections 2025 strengthened cross-regional relationships, encouraged new partnerships and deepened a shared sense of responsibility across our global Progressive network.

Participants returned home with renewed energy for their communities and for the movement.



# WZC 2025





At the 39th World Zionist Congress, we began by honoring the leadership that has shaped and sustained our movement. Carole Sterling, Immediate Past Chair of the WUPJ, was awarded the Amit Kavod Award—Honorary Fellow of the World Zionist Organization—in recognition of her decades of visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to Progressive Zionism.

**"It was an honour and a privilege to receive the Amit Kavod Award from the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem during the World Zionist Congress in October 2025. I accepted the award on behalf of the many people around the world who dedicate their time and resources to strengthening the Jewish people. I am humbled to be one link in our enduring chain of tradition. Am Yisrael Chai." Carole Sterling, Immediate Past Chair of the WUPJ**

Against this backdrop, we presented a clear and intentional vision of global Jewish leadership: pluralistic, intergenerational, and actively shaped by young leaders. The Congress brought together over 700 delegates from Israel and the Diaspora to debate priorities, adopt resolutions, and translate shared values into concrete programs and resources.

Within this framework, we chose a distinctive path. Our delegation was led primarily by activists from Netzer and TaMaR, with young leaders comprising two-thirds of our representatives. They participated fully in committees, working groups, resolution drafting, and plenary votes—not as symbolic voices, but as decision-makers shaping the outcomes of the Congress.

In the days leading up to the WZC, our delegates were already deeply engaged through the international Veidot of NeTzeR and TaMaR and at Connections, the WUPJ's global conference. This continuity ensured that youth leadership at the Congress was grounded in preparation, collaboration, and a shared strategic vision.



As our President, Rabbi Sergio Bergman, emphasized, this representation marks a fundamental shift in leadership philosophy—not defined by age, but by innovation, creativity, and relevance. Our aim is not to establish a parallel youth structure, but to renew governance from within by empowering the next generation to lead today.

This approach was evident throughout the Congress. Our delegates advanced a progressive, values-driven perspective on the WZC's central issues, with a strong focus on community impact in Israel and across the Diaspora. As TaMaR Global Coordinator Julia Ullman Hevron noted: "their commitment and tireless efforts reflected a deep dedication to shaping a Zionism aligned with our sacred values."

The 39th World Zionist Congress reaffirmed its role in shaping the future of global Jewish life. We used this platform to demonstrate that for the WUPJ, youth leadership is not a promise for tomorrow, but an active and defining practice of the present.





# Russia, Belarus and Ukraine



## Spiritual and Leadership Programs in Russia.

In 2025, we continued strengthening Progressive Jewish life across Russia by connecting communities, expanding learning, and supporting emerging local leadership. More than 1,500 people remained engaged across twelve cities, each with distinct needs. Across this network, communities sustained Jewish learning, spiritual life, and essential communal support.

With only two rabbis and one cantor nationwide, we prioritized national cohesion. Our Moscow Center produced educational and holiday video resources that enabled local leaders to lead services and classes with confidence. These tools ensured participation even in geographically isolated communities. Our RuTube channel further expanded access, supporting connection across Russia's vast landscape.

Leadership development remained a core focus. Through the Shlichei Tzibur program, students led services, organized learning, and launched new initiatives. Weekly Shaharit services grew in Lipetsk and Tyumen; Sunday schools resumed in Lipetsk and Chelyabinsk; and new outreach branches opened in Kurgan and Magnitogorsk. Programs for elderly members expanded in Krasnodar and Kerch, while Tver and Yugorsk strengthened youth engagement through regular children's Shabbatons. In Saint Petersburg, Hebrew and Torah study continued consistently.





In Moscow, we offered weekly Shabbat services, Torah discussions, lectures, and a variety of educational projects. We also facilitated life-cycle events, including five Bat Mitzvahs and six Bar Mitzvahs—reflecting growing intergenerational commitment to Progressive Jewish values.

Cultural enrichment played a meaningful role as well. Cantor Dmitry Karpenko's concerts highlighted global Jewish musical traditions, and shared celebrations of Purim, Passover, and Shavuot brought communities together, including a joint Shavuot gathering on the Moskva River.

Cross-community encounters strengthened cooperation through Shabbatonim in Minsk, Chelyabinsk, Saint Petersburg, Tver, and Yugorsk, as well as a study trip through Jewish Belarus and a Round Table on "Russian Jews: Historical Heritage and Modern Development."

The year concluded with Yugorsk's first Shabbaton and an inclusive Hanukkah celebration at the Main Moscow Nikulin Circus, reaffirming our commitment to a resilient and connected Progressive Jewish future."



## Spiritual and Leadership Programs in Belarus.

In 2025, we continued to strengthen Progressive Jewish life across Belarus by connecting communities, empowering local leaders, and engaging actively with the broader society. Our year began with a powerful Holocaust Memorial Week, during which more than 800 participants joined seven events co-hosted with the UN, the Israeli Embassy, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Belarus, and 18 other diplomatic missions. These gatherings deepened our commitment to remembrance, interfaith dialogue, and solidarity with Israel and the Jewish Diaspora.

Throughout the year, we advanced our visibility and cooperation at the national level. Rabbi Abramovich met with the President of Belarus to discuss the role of Jewish life today, while we fostered ongoing relationships with the Armenian, French, Swiss, Czech, and UK embassies. These encounters strengthened our voice in civic dialogue and highlighted our dedication to inclusivity and mutual respect.

Education and leadership development remained central to our mission. We expanded the Shaliah Tzibur program, supported pedagogical training, and launched a new class of students who are now shaping prayer, learning, and communal life. Weddings, B'nei Mitzvah, and other life-cycle events reflected the growing confidence and skills of our graduates, while seminars in Israel connected our leaders with WUPJ educators and global peers.





Festivals and communal celebrations brought our network together. We hosted Passover seders in ten communities, marked Shavuot with study and music, and offered meaningful High Holy Day services across the country. Jerusalem Day programs united partners from JAFI, the Israel Embassy, the JCC, the JDC, Hillel, and NeTzeR, while youth and family activities continued to expand.

Cross-community encounters further strengthened our shared identity. Leaders from Minsk and Moscow visited the historic Volozhin Yeshiva, where we celebrated a Bat Mitzvah and held a Shir ensemble concert, both historic milestones. We also joined UBJCC for the October 7 commemoration, supported by ten embassies.

We concluded the year with Hanukkah celebrations in eight communities and with preparations for the 2026 WUPJ Anniversary in Minsk, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to a vibrant, inclusive Jewish future.



## Spiritual and Leadership Programs in Russia.

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## Ukraine Crisis Support

As the war in Ukraine enters its fourth year, the needs of our communities remain urgent and complex. Throughout 2025, the World Union for Progressive Judaism continued to provide humanitarian aid, spiritual care, and emotional support to Jewish families across Ukraine, neighboring countries, and refugee communities in Israel.

Because the conflict continues, humanitarian assistance remained central to the Ukraine Crisis Fund. In 2025, we provided:

- Food vouchers and essential supplies
- Heating assistance and power banks
- Holiday packages, greetings, and regular check-ins
- Online and in-person services to maintain spiritual continuity

These efforts ensured that families living through instability and displacement received consistent support from our global Progressive community.

This year, Eyal Ronder, WUPJ Director of Central and Eastern Europe, made 5 visits to Ukraine, including a meaningful Hanukkah mission. These visits emphasized personal connection. We met congregants, visited families who receive food vouchers, and spent time listening to their stories and realities. Meeting people in their homes reinforced the human side of our work and strengthened trust between WUPJ and local communities.

During one visit, we spent time with the Hatikva community in Kyiv, where we led services, supported congregants, and participated in an interfaith Seder with Muslim and Christian leaders, a powerful act of solidarity during wartime.



In Israel, we continued to support Russian-speaking and Ukrainian refugee communities, especially Shirat Hayam and Shirat HaGan. This year, WUPJ provided each community with a Torah scroll, strengthening their spiritual life and affirming their place within the global Progressive family.

Another major achievement of 2025 was the organization of five summer camps — one in Poland and four in Ukraine.

In the midst of ongoing war, these camps offered children and families rare moments of safety, joy, and emotional relief, alongside post-trauma psychological support, resilience-building activities, meaningful community and educational programs. For many participants, these camps provided the only opportunity during the year to feel emotionally supported, connected to one another, and sustained in their Jewish life.





2025 marked the second year of the Shlichat Tzibbur program, and its impact became clearly visible. Graduates were significantly more active this year. They helped run the summer camps, guided activities, and offered spiritual leadership. The program now strengthens communities across nine countries, showing measurable results on the ground.

In 2025 we learned that physical aid alone is not enough. After nearly four years of war, communities face deep emotional fatigue. This year, WUPJ combined humanitarian relief with spiritual and emotional support, creating a holistic model that addresses both material needs and psychological resilience. Our hope is simple and profound: that 2026 will finally be a year of peace for Ukraine, allowing our communities to rebuild with strength, dignity, and hope.



# Centennial Campaign



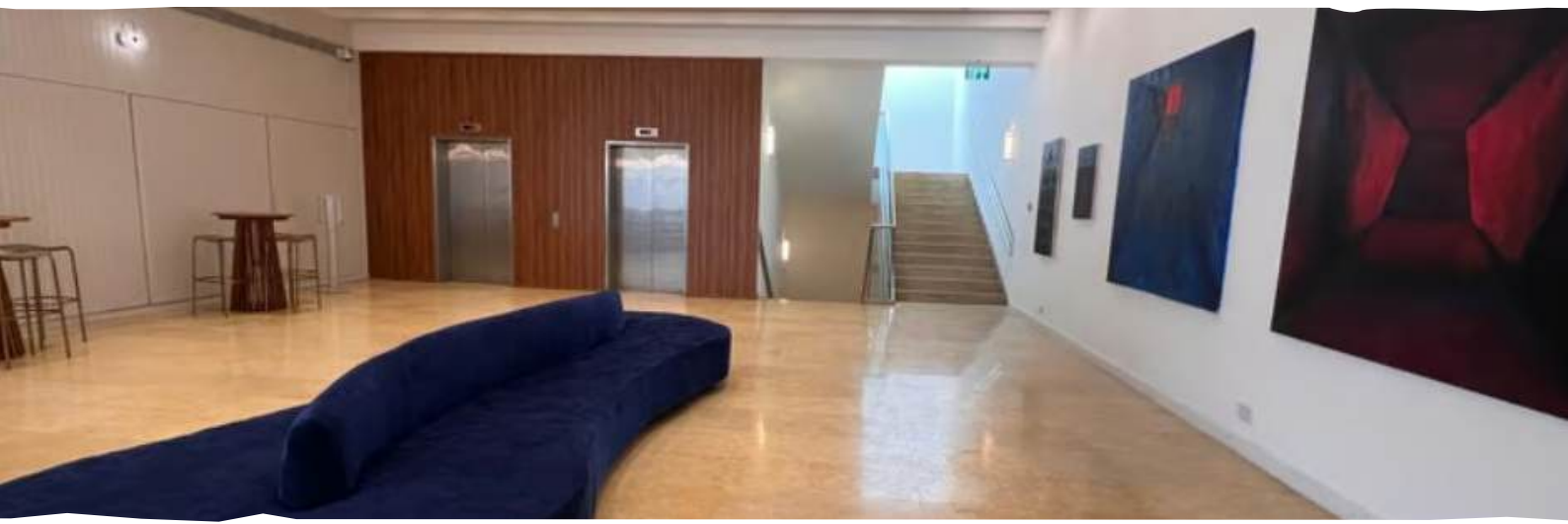


In October 2025, during Connections in Jerusalem, we proudly rededicated Beit Shmuel, the world headquarters of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. The restoration and reimagining of Beit Shmuel, Mercaz Shimshon, the Blaustein Hall, and the Hirsch Theatre marked a defining moment in our centennial year, a renewal of our physical home and of our commitment to progressive Jewish life in Jerusalem and around the world.

We launched the Centennial Capital Campaign in October 2024, in the midst of the Hamas war, fully aware of the challenges of the moment. Even under these circumstances, we moved forward deliberately and responsibly: building the campaign infrastructure, assembling leadership and volunteer teams, developing campaign materials, identifying and engaging donors, creating naming opportunities, and establishing the systems that will continue to support this campaign in the years ahead.

To date, the Centennial Campaign has raised \$6,090,347 to bring the comprehensive restoration of the 50-year-old building to life. A dedicated group of volunteers and staff met weekly to move the campaign forward, and they too were recognized at Connections. Carole Sterling and Richard Rubenstein served as co-chairs of the campaign and led a team made up of Pekka Sinervo, Peter Buchsbaum, Andrew Hoffman, Martin Jannol, Elon Cohen, and Steven Beck. WUPJ Chair Phyllis Dorey, Vice-Chair Daniel Kirwin, and WUPJ President Rabbi Sergio Bergman were active leaders in the operation with Rabbi Bergman soliciting many of the larger gifts himself. Claudia Laurelli, Yael Grant, Sarah Godfrey and Carolina Simon lent staff support to the effort led professionally by our consultant Steven Drysdale. It was truly a team effort, and a very successful one!

The exemplary generosity of our donors has ensured that we can be worthy stewards of the legacy of Rabbi Richard and Bella Hirsch z"l and the leaders of their day who first imagined our home for Progressive Judaism in Jerusalem.



The rebuilding and renewal of Beit Shmuel were made possible through the extraordinary generosity of donors whose naming gifts transformed vision into reality. Their commitment and belief in Progressive Judaism enabled Beit Shmuel to be restored as a vibrant global home for leadership, learning, culture, and community in Jerusalem.

These naming gifts honor legacy, memory, and continuity, reflecting a deep partnership between the World Union for Progressive Judaism and those who invest in the future of Jewish life. Through their support, Beit Shmuel was rebuilt and renewed as a space that will serve generations to come.

**Arthur Roswell**

**Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation**

**Beck Family Charitable Foundation**

**Daniel Kirwin**

**Laura and Stephen Olson**

**Bergman Family**

**Carole and Jay Sterling**

**Lea and Richard Rubenstein**

**The Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh**

**Shelley and Marc Wilner Hineni Fund**

**Family of Richard G. and Bella Hirsch**

**Pat and Pekka Sinervo, C.M**

**Sandy and Tadd Schwab**

**Suzanne and John Golden**

**Lisa and Andrew Hoffman**

**Ascher Family Fund**

**The Stephen and Elisabeth Frank Foundation**

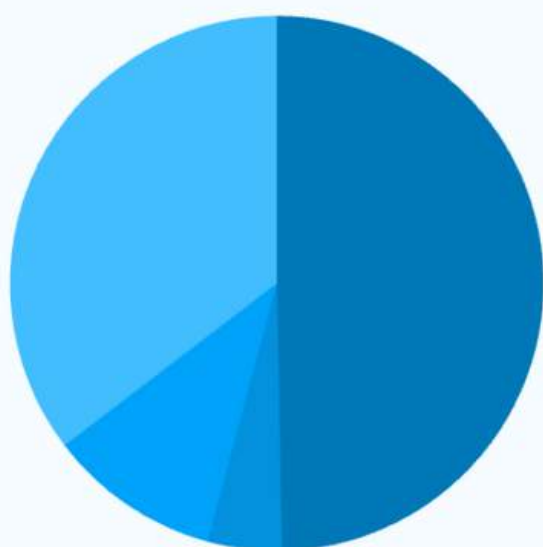
**Lenore and Daniel Mass**





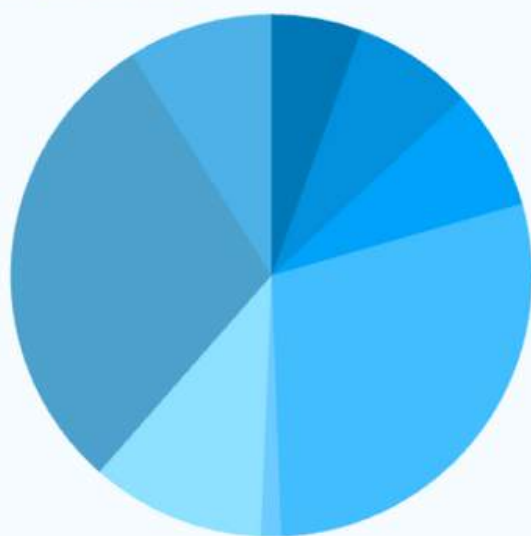
# Financial Highlights

## 2025 Income



- Grants & Contributions
- Program Income
- Support from Restricted Funds & Reserves
- Zionist Institutions (World Zionist Organization, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael - Jewish National Fund)

## 2025 Expenses



- Beit Shmuel Guest House and Conference Center
- Connections 25
- Emerging Congregations and Regions
- Former Soviet Union Programs
- Fundraising
- Leadership Training and Education
- Management and General Administration
- Youth Programs and Empowerment

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