



## **KS Giving Statement** Ensure the Future of our Community

*“Considering our role as a link in the chain of Jewish continuity is no mundane task. Jewish tradition asserts that this is one of the most significant and powerful questions we can ask ourselves—our purpose in life, the meaning of our lives, **and the legacy that we leave to those who will live on after us.**”*

*- Rabbi Darby Leigh*

One moment each year shows the unique and important covenant the members of Kerem Shalom have with each other.

On the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur, towards the end of the Schachrit service, Rabbi Darby asks specific congregants to stand and be acknowledged. Eyes well up with tears, and warmth fills the hearts of everyone in attendance. Those rising are the non-Jewish Kerem Shalom member partners including those who have committed to nurturing the next generation of the Jewish people even though they themselves are not Jewish.

Countless instances show how we have evolved into our special and uniquely progressive Jewish community that embraces all—Jews by birth, Jews by choice, and non-Jewish family members—who wish to explore their connection to Jewish culture, spirituality, religious practice, and/or education. At Kerem Shalom **every member** actively participates in the chain of Jewish continuity.

At Kerem Shalom we recognize and embrace that our covenant is communal, linking us to a heritage that emphasizes community and continuity, in all the different ways that each of us understands our spirituality and the concept of God. This covenant is central to Kerem Shalom, our vision and our core values:

- *Kehillah*                      Community
- *Simchah*                      Joy
- *K'vod ha-b'riyot*              Respect for the dignity of every person

**This communal covenant was there** a half-century ago when four families first established the Concord-Lincoln Jewish Study Group to provide a Jewish education for their children and to celebrate holidays together. And it was there in the early 1980s when our then-80 families committed to permanently establish our physical home, building the first Jewish synagogue in Concord.

**The communal covenant is here** now when our American Sign Language choir performs, strengthening our appreciation of the traditional rich musical aspects of the liturgy in new ways and perspectives. And it is here when members participate remotely

and those who have relocated far away stay connected because we have invested in technology to live-stream services and programming.

**And it continues** when students in our Hebrew School Reimagined are given a modern hands-on learning experience tuition-free, reflecting the Kerem Shalom philosophy that the entire community is responsible for providing a Jewish education for our children.

We have consistently woven the thread of this covenant into our values and into the fabric of the ever-evolving culture of Kerem Shalom.

Kerem Shalom's membership reflects the heterogeneous distribution of Jews in current society. We live in an era where membership in formal religious organizations is shrinking, and American Judaism is broadly viewed as challenged by apathy, antipathy and—increasingly—antisemitism. By embracing and welcoming all Jews and their supporters, and educating current and future generations on our history, rich culture, and traditions, Kerem Shalom is doing its part to ensure the growth and survival of the Jewish people.

Continuing our vision requires sustained, intentional and focused commitment, including further financial investment in our programming, education platform, technology, physical infrastructure and professional staff. Our community has been extraordinarily generous over the years. But – quite simply –we need to do more to achieve our broader purpose and ensure that future generations will be positioned to carry forth Kerem Shalom's values and mission. Sustained long-term funding through Legacy Giving will allow us to achieve these goals while continuing to thrive during both anticipated and unknown social and economic challenges.

The time to start has arrived – Legacy Giving is an important thread in our covenant with our entire community and our future generations – L'dor Vador.

*“Ensuring our legacy to future generations by investing in the long-term future and financial stability of Kerem Shalom is a privilege—and a serious responsibility—which we undertake in the true spirit of Jewish generosity.”*

*– Rabbi Darby Leigh*

The effects of your gift—no matter the form, timing or size—will be profound and meaningful, and the cumulative measure of all of our legacy donations will be significant and lasting. The impact of our collective generosity will maintain the vitality of Kerem Shalom in the Concord area (and beyond) and reinforce our position as a leader for progressive Judaism for years to come. Please help provide our future generations that wonderful feeling of being included that we have all experienced at Kerem Shalom.

**To learn more about Legacy Giving at Kerem Shalom, please contact our Vice President for Development at [LegacyGiving@keremshalom.org](mailto:LegacyGiving@keremshalom.org)**