

Alumni Reflections

Impact of Limud HaTorah

Minneapolis: A Makom Torah

By: Rabbi Yechezkel Greenberg, Rav of Kehillas Bais Yisroel

Kollel Member
2000-2008



The Mishna (Avos 6:9) tells the story of Rabbi Yosi ben Kisma, who said: *I was once walking on the road when a man met and greeted me and I returned his greetings. He said to me: "Rabbi, where are you from?" I answered: "I am from a great city of sages and scholars." He offered: "Rabbi, would you like to dwell with us in our place? I will give you a million gold dinars, precious stones and pearls." I replied: "If you were to give me all the silver, gold, precious stones and pearls in the world, I would dwell nowhere but in a place of Torah."*

Why was R' Yosi so quick to refuse? How did he know for sure that it was not a Makom (place of) Torah? Some explain that he understood the offer to "live in our place" to mean "come and do the Mitzvos in place of us," as we have no time for that. His stance is still perplexing, though. With such an astronomical offer, why didn't he take the money and use it to create a Makom Torah in that city?

The answer is that money alone cannot create a place of Torah; it takes Yegi'ah (toil), Ahava (love), sweat and tears.

We ask daily prior to reciting the Shema, "Instill in our hearts the

wisdom to understand and elucidate, to listen, learn, teach, safeguard, perform and fulfill all the words of your Torah's teaching with love." We ask Hashem to help us attain the ingredient that will enable us to inculcate the Torah's teachings. The Posuk (Mishlei 3:15) says "[The Torah] is more precious than pearls, and all your desires cannot compare to it." That is the attitude that people must have to enable their place to become a Makom Torah; a city that lacks that appreciation has a void that cannot be filled with money.

My family and I arrived in Minneapolis a little more than 15 years ago, and B"H we found a community ripe for further Torah development; the community members' love for Torah and interest in continually growing in Torah was palpable. That a dozen Kollel alumni have chosen to call Minneapolis home, aside from the ten current employees and members the Kollel, is testament to the fabulous Makom Torah that this Kehilla has become. May we all continue growing together.

Have a good Shabbos!

— Rav of Kehillas Bais Yisroel —
2009-



Highlighting Community Organization

Over the past decade or so, many of the Kollel's alumni and their families have gone on to make significant contributions to our community through various worthy mosdos and organizations. For the next few weeks, we will highlight one of those alumni and their organizations and how they contribute to our strong and vibrant Jewish community!





**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Chaim Simcha Gibber,**
Rosh Kollel

**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Menachem Frank,**
Rosh Kollel, 2005-2011

**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Eliyahu Stern,**
Rosh Kollel, 2011-2015

Rabbi & Mrs. Shmaryahu Abramczyk
Rabbi & Mrs. Avrohom Berzansky
Rabbi & Mrs. Nussie Bitterman
Rabbi & Mrs. Levi Botnick
Rabbi & Mrs. Aryeh Cohen
Rabbi & Mrs. Adam Crystal
Rabbi & Mrs. Yisroel Meir Ebstein
Rabbi & Mrs. Hillel Engelson
Rabbi & Mrs. Pinchos Friedlander
Rabbi & Mrs. Chaim Tzvi Friedler
Rabbi & Mrs. Aryeh Geretz
Rabbi & Mrs. Avigdor Goldberger

**Rabbi & Mrs.
Yechezkel Greenberg**

Rabbi & Mrs. Yaakov Yosef Hutman
Rabbi & Mrs. Ari Kahan
Rabbi & Mrs. Mordechai Kalatsky
Rabbi & Mrs. Moshe Koval
Rabbi & Mrs. Eliezer Lefkowitz
Rabbi & Mrs. Tzvi Lichtman
Rabbi & Mrs. Yaakov Eliyahu Mandelbaum
Rabbi & Mrs. Avromi Mayer
Rabbi & Mrs. Menachem Mendel Pam
Rabbi & Mrs. Shloime Rothstein
Rabbi & Mrs. Zecharya Rubin
Rabbi & Mrs. Yochanan Schnall
Rabbi & Mrs. Avner Sela
Rabbi & Mrs. Dovid Silverberg
Rabbi & Mrs. Yakov Ephraim Skolnick
Rabbi & Mrs. Moshe Weinreb

**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Moshe Tuvia Lieff,**
Miyased HaKollel



MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY
KOLLEL

Organization Profile

Congregation Bais Yisroel



The Rav giving an Amud Yomi Gemara shiur five nights a week...already finished several Masechtos!



Yiddishkeit is to be celebrated as evident by the exuberant dancing on a Chol Hamoed Succos Simchas Beis Hashoeva.



In Bais Yisroel the children are a focus of attention and energy...the popular and spirited Avos U'banim grand finale event.

About Bais Yisrael

Congregation Bais Yisroel, founded over 25 years ago, is one of the most dynamic and a thriving Torah Observant Kehillas in the Midwest. Founded and led by Rav Moshe Tuvia Lieff for over 19 years, It's a hub of davening, learning, children's programming and activities where one can find members using and benefiting from the Shul at all hours of most every day. In association with the Midwest division of Agudath Israel, the Shul is part of a network of kehillos sharing ideas, inspiration, timely speakers and a direct connection to the Gedolei Yisroel. Cong. Bais Yisroel has a well-earned reputation nationwide as a makom Torah where Yiddishkeit is spread and a hallmark of Chesed. The growing membership and influx of new young families into the Shul community bodes well for the future of the Torah observant community of the Twin Cities.

Community Impact

- Bais Yisroel is a resource to the broader community with multiple and a growing number of minyanim to accommodate all schedules.
- Torah learning is central, and in addition to the Rov's numerous shiurim...numerous Baalei Batim give and participate in shiurim and chavrusas and members are highly encouraged to leverage the learning opportunities of the other Torah community organizations such as the Minneapolis Community Kollel (which got its start and was housed in the Shul Beis Medrash for its early years).
- Bais Yisroel offers regular and frequent special events, boys and girls youth groups- from K thru 8th grade- as well as innovative programming to keep the children engaged under the direction of the ever-dynamic Rabbi Menachem Rabenstein.
- The weekly Bais Yisroel Shabbos Observer (BYSO) was initiated at the inception of the Kehilla and has been produced consistently for about 20 years.
- Quietly, behind the scenes, is a world-renowned Bikur Cholim operation providing meals, transportation, housing and assistance to all those with medical needs in a dignified and effective manner. A G'mach (Hebrew free loan society) has also assisted community members for the last ten years.

Congregation Bais Yisroel

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Insights into Davening

Modeh Ani

- The first thing we do in the morning, upon waking up, is to thank Hashem with the words, "Modeh ani l'fanecha, Thanks, I give before you..."
- It is interesting to note that we say the word thanks before we mention the word I. This indicates that the very first word we utter every day is Thanks.