



# Masorti Olami

*Annual Review 2013*

World Council of Conservative/ Masorti Synagogues



*Seminario Rabbinico Latinoamericano Marshall T. Meyer  
Rabbinic Ordination Ceremony in August 2013*

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# Greetings

Dear Friends,

Thanks to you, this has been one of the most successful years in Masorti Olami history. In January, a group of young adult leaders from Latin America visited the Los Angeles Jewish community to connect with Conservative institutions and leaders; our first ATID conference in Buenos Aires brought adults and youth together in August; Masorti Olami's Simchat Torah flags were used, in record numbers, by kehillot around the world and we were proud to sponsor the "Pope's Rabbi", **Rabbi Abraham Skorka**, on his multi-faceted tour of institutions on the East Coast, and television appearances aired around the world. And this doesn't include the many, many programs that took place in Latin America, Europe, Africa, Israel and Australia. These programs spanned not only the globe but the generations; youth from around the world gathering in Argentina and Baltimore, young adults in Paris and Budapest, adults in London and Lisbon and even toddlers in Berlin and Spain. Masorti Jews sat down together in cities both big and small, to plan the present and dream of the future. This is our task: building, renewing and strengthening Masorti Jewish life around the world and integrating halacha (Jewish law) with the demands of the ever changing modern world in a way that honors our tradition. We cannot achieve these goals without your generosity, support and commitment. For what you have already done, and for what you will be doing as we move forward, *toda raba!*



**Alan Silberman**  
Outgoing President

**Gillian Caplin**  
Incoming President

**Rabbi Tzvi Graetz**  
Executive Director

**Danny Cohn**  
Masorti AmLat President

**Dr. Joanna Kubar**  
Masorti Europe President

# In Memoriam: Rabbi Benjamin Z. Kreitman 1920-2012



**Rabbi Benjamin Zvi Kreitman** was born in Warsaw, Poland on December 5th, 1920 and came to the United States in 1924. He studied at Yeshiva University in New York, graduated in 1940, and was ordained as a Conservative Rabbi in 1942.

He served as a chaplain in the US Navy from 1943 to 1946, and then became a congregational Rabbi. He first served Kehillath Israel in Brookline, MA and then Beth El Synagogue in New London, CT. In 1952, he returned to New York to serve at the Brooklyn Jewish Center. He also performed various roles supporting issues of human rights, community relations and small business development. In 1976, he became the Executive VP of the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism.

During his time at the USCJ, he was instrumental in the development of Masorti Olami (also known as World Council of Conservative Synagogues), changing it from an outreach project of the United Synagogue to an organization that represents and supports all branches of Conservative/Masorti Judaism around the world. Rabbi Kreitman became VP of the then World Council of Synagogues, ensured recognition for Masorti Olami in the World Zionist Organization and led the early campaigns for religious tolerance and pluralism in Israel.

Rabbi Kreitman is survived by his wife, Joyce, a son and daughter and his grandchildren.

**May the memory of his praiseworthy life remain as a source of blessing to us all.**

## Bringing new voices to life



*A lively discussion was held at Agudath Israel in Caldwell, NJ where he continued his discussion with some of the clergy from Sacred Heart (left), the local Catholic parish and **Rabbi Alan Silverstein** (right).*

*Rabbi Skorka receiving an honorary PhD from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut (pictured here with the University President (l) and Board Chairman (r) which included a choral performance and words of praise for what he has done in advancing Catholic-Jewish relations.*



*Rabbi Michel Schlessinger with the Pope in Brazil*



*Rabbi Abraham Skorka with the Pope in the Vatican*



*Rabbi Abraham Skorka with Christiane Amanpour CNN*



## On Heaven And Earth

**Rabbi Abraham Skorka**, Rector of the Seminario Rabinico Latinamericano “Marshall T. Meyer”, never imagined that he would spend Jewish holidays at the Vatican or exchange emails with the Pope. These were some of the anecdotes that he shared with the Jewish community in New York City, New Jersey, Long Island, Baltimore, Georgetown University and Connecticut during his two week long stay in the United States. His visit was planned, organized and sponsored by Masorti Olami as part of an effort to bring other and new Jewish voices to North American Masorti Jews.

Rabbi Skorka co-authored the book *On Heaven and Earth* with his good friend, then Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio and their friendship has continued to thrive after Bergoglio’s election as **Pope Francis**. Rabbi Skorka and Pope Francis are avid supporters of dialogue between faiths and work together to promote “understanding the other” as a pathway to peace.

As part of the Milstein Center for Interreligious Studies at JTS, Rabbi Skorka shared the stage with Catholic scholar, **Dr. Celia Deustch**. While in New York, Rabbi Skorka met with renowned journalist **Barbara Walters** during a meaningful Shabbat at Sutton Place Synagogue. MERCAZ USA arranged a lunch with NY Rabbis and Rabbi Skorka spoke at the ADL National Committee meetings and met privately with ADL Director, **Abraham Foxman**. He also visited Temple Israel Center, Chizuk Amuno in Baltimore and Shelter Rock Jewish Center bringing out crowds of people eager to hear about what the new Pope means for the Jews. Georgetown University sponsored a panel discussion moderated by **Rabbi Marcelo Bronstein**. CNN international journalist, **Christiane Amanpour** interviewed Rabbi Skorka about his book, *the Pope and life in Argentina* on her worldwide show. Rabbi Skorka and Pope Francis are planning on traveling together in 2014 to Israel. Stay tuned....

## NOAM Olami - Our Masorti Youth

**What brings together young Masorti Jews from Brazil, Argentina, USA, France, England, Israel and other places around the world? NOAM Olami!**

This year NOAM Olami continued its tradition of bringing together leaders from our NOAM, USY and other Masorti youth groups during the year.

In April, we gathered together participants in gap year Israel experience programs through Nativ and the Shnat programs of Latin America and Europe. As well, we included leaders from NOAM Israel. There was an instant connection as kindred souls recognized one another through their shared Masorti language - love of Israel, youth programming, Hebrew language, prayer and Shabbat. Shabbat discussions talked about commonalities, differences, ideas for networking and strengthening Israel programming and education in their home communities and sharing best practices from their youth group experiences. When Shabbat ended, each participant realized that it was a beginning for new friendships and future partners in the important work of leading the Masorti movement into the future.

As part of the Centennial celebration for United Synagogue, the NOAM Olami Fourth Annual Leadership Seminar traveled to Baltimore, Maryland to be part of the festivities. Again, participants from Latin America, Europe, Israel and North America met amidst the many and varied participants in the Centennial.





They had the opportunity not just to meet each other and talk about working with youth but to learn from some of the best and brightest scholars, rabbis and lay leaders our movement offers. As **Sarah Beth Neville**, who joined the group from the UK said **“It was a truly inspirational week...and I am sure what we learned will be invaluable for the development of Noam Olami. It was so great to have an opportunity to collaborate with Noamniks from around the world.”**



*Israel Program Participants meet in April*



*NOAM Olami at the USCJ Centennial*



*Shnat Participants learning the mitzvah of tefillin*



*NOAM UK meets with USYers in Baltimore*



# MAROM Olami - Our Masorti Young Adults

## Latin America Goes To Los Angeles

18 young adults from Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay set out for Los Angeles in January 2013 to learn from inspirational rabbis and educators and to understand Jewish communities and institutions. This seminar was part of a two year leadership training course for these young adults in Latin America. The group was generously hosted by American Jewish University and had a chance to learn there with **Rabbi Brad Artson**, **Rabbi Elliot Dorff** and **Rabbi Aaron Alexander**. Friday night was spent with Temple Beth Am with warm Shabbat ruach under the leadership of **Rabbi Adam Kligfeld**. Shabbat morning tefillot were spent with IKAR and the top rabbi in America according to the Daily Beast, **Rabbi Sharon Brous**.

**Rabbi David Wolpe**, named the most influential rabbi in America by Newsweek magazine in 2012, met with our group at Sinai Temple. He inspired all of the participants with his honest and inspirational vision. At Valley Beth Shalom, **Rabbi Josh Hoffman** gave a tour of VBS and of the work that this community does through various points of engagement. The group also met with top leaders at the Los Angeles Jewish Federation. At various points during the week, the group met with dedicated Masorti lay leaders **Diane Wohl** and **Abner Goldstine**.

All of the participants gained a tremendous amount of insight, new ideas and different perspectives. Every spare minute was spent deep in conversations about implementing various ideas back in their home communities.



## Kiyum Seminar

From December 24 to 31 in 2012, 24 young adults gathered in Israel from all all over the world for the 3rd KIYUM seminar, a Masorti Olami leadership institute for young adults that helped them to explore their Jewish identity, their connection to Israel and to strengthen the bonds of Jewish peoplehood. Participating in the Kiyum Institute were representatives from Mexico, South America, Europe, Ukraine, United States and Israel.



*"I've always had a hard time expressing my beliefs about Israel to others. I really appreciated all the programming concerning Israel- it felt fair and balanced. I think I'll return home with a much improved articulation of my beliefs" - Kiyum Participant*



*MAROM Spain meets for a night of bowling.*

*MAROM Europe Seminar takes some time out for fun & games in London.*





# ATID עתיד

## Latin American Masorti Community Gathers For Historic Conference

In an effort to formulize strategy, ideology and goals for the Masorti movement throughout Latin America, representatives from all over the continent, Europe, Israel, and North America gathered together in Buenos Aires this past August. The conference was a joint effort of Masorti Olami, Mercaz Olami, the International Rabbinical Assembly, and Masorti organizations in Latin America (Masorti Amlat, Latin American Rabbinical Assembly and the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano Marshall T. Meyer, Noam & Marom Amlat).

**Clive Sheldon**, co- chairman of Masorti UK explained that he **“didn’t even know all of this existed”** and **“was blown away by the energy and passion he found in Latin America”** and vowed to take that back home and to work to build future cooperative projects together.

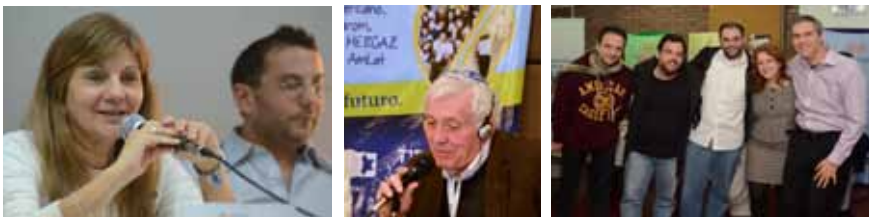


“Preserving the past, living the present and building the **future**”

The conference began with a shabbaton for hundreds of representatives from the NOAM and MAROM youth and young adult groups across Latin America. This was the first time all of the NOAM chapters in Latin America gathered together.

On Sunday, the main day of the conference took place and included over 40 speakers; rabbis, educators, lay leaders and youth. One of the main proposals to come out of the convention was the creation of educational materials about Masorti/Conservative Judaism for congregations and congregants in Latin America. These materials would focus on the wheres, whats, whys and hows of Masorti/Conservative Judaism to help build a stronger identification with the movement and its principles.

The discussions were lively, the learning serious and the desire to visualize the future of Masorti Judaism in Latin America and around the world was strongly felt throughout the whole conference.



*Above: Mario Grunebaum, Rabbi Ari Sigal, Rabbi Alejandro Bloch, Rabbi Judith Nowominski, Rabbi Marcelo Rittner & Gabriel Lasry at a panel discussion.*

## Evening of Tribute

In December of 2012, supporters of Masorti Olami gathered together in New York City at JTS for a beautiful tribute honoring three outstanding leaders:

### Rabbi Mordechai Waxman Memorial Rabbinic & Community Leadership Award

**Rabbi Michael Greenbaum** is Vice Chancellor Emeritus and Senior Advisor to the Chancellor at The Jewish Theological Seminary. He was twice named one of the "Top Most Influential Rabbis in America" by Newsweek magazine, Rabbi Greenbaum has been a keen supporter of the worldwide Conservative/Masorti movement. He has served the National Ramah Commission as well as the boards of Masorti Olami, the USCJ and MERCAZ USA.

### Hiddur Mitzvah Award

**Cantor Joseph Gole** is Cantor Emeritus of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles, where he served as Cantor for 22 years. A product of the Conservative Movement, Cantor Gole grew up in Los Angeles. His professional career includes concert appearances in numerous cities throughout the world. He has served as the International President of the Cantors Assembly. As the child of a Holocaust survivor, Cantor Gole is committed to the renewal of Jewish life in Eastern Europe and was a co-chair of the Cantors Assembly Missions to Poland, Germany and Israel.

### Sherut L'Am – Service to the Nation Award

**Gillian Caplin** grew up in Birmingham, England. She is a former Chairperson of the New North London Synagogue and Masorti UK (formerly AMS). As Chairperson of AMS, Gillian was instrumental in the creation and development of Masorti Europe. Last year, Gillian completed her term as President of Masorti Europe, Vice President of Masorti Olami and Vice President of MERCAZ Olami. In December of 2013, she became President of Masorti Olami. She is also a member of the Board of Governors of The Jewish Agency.



*At the 2012 Evening of Tribute (left to right): Cantor Joseph Gole, Janet Tobin, Rabbi Tzvi Graetz, Gillian Caplin, Alan Silberman and Rabbi Michael Greenbaum*



## Growth in Ukraine

Due to its steady growth, on September 1, the Midreshet Yerushalayim/Masorti Olami Educational & Cultural Center in Kiev moved out of a small apartment and into a more spacious facility. Community volunteers built an aron kodesh for the new space. Every Friday night, there are Kabbalat Shabbat services followed by a pot luck dinner. On Shabbat, congregants gather for the afternoon services and a class on the weekly Torah portion and to learn to read Torah. Regular activities include: Jewish cooking course, multi-generational educational programs, holiday services, a Hebrew Ulpan, Israeli dance and a family club that meets monthly. **Rabbi Reuven Stamov** was a popular speaker at Limmud in Odessa which helped to bring new members to the burgeoning kehilla.



## Partnering Together

In late July, the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs (FJMC) held their annual convention. As part of the partnership between the Brotherhood of Temple Israel in Sharon (MA) and Dor Hadash in Budapest, four representatives from Masorti Europe were invited to participate: **Dr. Joanna Kubar**, President Masorti Europe, **Rabbi Floriane Chinsky** from Chir Hadash, Brussels, **Adam Schonberger** (right) and **Lacko Bernath** (left) from Dor Hadash in Budapest.



## Celebrating our Judaism

**Cantor Abraham Lubin** spent a week in Argentina bringing the joy of Jewish music, tefillah and song to communities in Buenos Aires and Mendoza. Through a joint program with the Cantors' Assembly and Masorti Olami, Cantor Lubin shared his exuberance with adults, synagogue choirs and kids of all ages. He sang in Hebrew and even Yiddish to delighted crowds and spent time with Cantorial students at the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano Marshall T. Meyer. Cantor Lubin said of his experience **"My connection.. touched my heart and convinced me that Am Israel Chai and we have so much in common and realized then how important and [the] holy work Masorti Olami is doing with these institutions in the diaspora."**



*Cantor Lubin at Kehillat Or Israel  
with Ariel Blufstein, Dir. of FEDECC*



*Cantor Lubin in Mendoza*

## Enhancing Jewish Knowledge and Identity



*Purim in Costa Rica at Kehillat Bnei Israel*



*Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day)  
in Mexico City at Comunidad Bet El*





*Masorti Olami sponsored the participation of Artem Olinikov from Kiev at the 2013 UK Israeli Dance Institute (IDI) training seminar –“Machol Europa”. Artem is on the left.*



*Celebrating Hanukkah in Holland*



*Tu B'Shvat in Germany*



*Tu B'shvat in Spain*



*Celebrating Sukkot in Lisbon, Portugal*

# Activities around the world

# Building Vital Masorti Leadership

## Masorti Olami - a UN Dept of Public Information NGO

Due to a meeting being scheduled on the second day of Rosh Ha Shana our Masorti Olami Main NGO Representative in association with the Department of Public Information at the UN, **Gloria Landy**, Liaison-Coordinator of the Informal Jewish NGOs and many of the organizations and individuals in this group signed on to a letter Gloria wrote asking for greater consideration of the needs of the Jewish community when important conferences and/or meetings are scheduled. This resulted in a High Holidays Calendar being distributed to those responsible for planning these meetings along with the strong suggestion that sensitivity to the needs of the Jewish community be considered in all future planning.

## Ugandan Rabbi Visits South Africa

**Rabbi Gershom Sizomu**, Rabbi of the Abuyadaya community in Uganda recently visited the Masorti Shalom Congregation in Johannesburg, South Africa. **"It was an absolute pleasure to have him with us... We were absolutely overawed by his presence and thoroughly enjoyed his interaction with our congregation."** wrote **Tony Harmon**, Chairman of Masorti Shalom Congregation.



## Historic Bet Din In Lisbon

On April 26 in Lisbon, Portugal, a historic Masorti Bet Din (Rabbinic Court) gathered in Lisbon to oversee the halachic conversion of two new Masorti members of that community.



*Rabbi Reuven Hammer, Rabbi Chaim Weiner, Rabbi Jules Harlow with Juliana and Edgar.*

## Melbourne In Action

A permanent synagogue building was dedicated for Kehilat Nitzan after years of growth and the hard work of **Rabbi Adam Stein (right)** kehillot members and former **Rabbi Ehud Bandel**. With the sponsorship of Masorti Olami, **Dr. David Ungar**, from



Melbourne Australia traveled to the USA to participate in Brit Kodesh, a program that trains physicians to be mohelim.

## Masorti Europe Leadership Seminar in Brussels

During a Shabbat and Sunday, the Masorti Europe Board was hosted by our Masorti community in Brussels. Gathering in Brussels were participants from Masorti Kehillot in France, Holland, Spain, UK, Portugal, Czech Republic, Budapest and Germany. Shabbat was spent at Kehilla Chir Hadash which is led by **Rabbi Floriane Chinsky**. **Rabbi Tzvi Graetz** presented a session on "Israeli Government without the Haredim, will the status of the Masorti movement change?" The meeting culminated in an interfaith dialogue where the panel included a Muslim African Imam, a Catholic priest and Rabbi Chinsky.



*Masorti Europe Board Members in Brussels (from left) Aline Shapira, Rabbi Daniella Kolodny, Sergio Wax and Gillian Caplin*

## Our Masorti Connection to Israel

MERCAZ Olami continues to strengthen its work in Israel each year and this one was no exception. Through our involvement in egalitarian worship at the Kotel to our continued support of pluralistic Judaism in Israel, the MERCAZ community is deeply involved in insuring that the Conservative/Masorti movement has a voice in Israel. In November, MERCAZ representatives gathered in Israel for the Va'ad HaPoel meetings of the WZO. Our attendance at these meetings is crucial, as are the partnerships we forge with like minded organizations, to vote on funding Zionist activities for our kehillot around the world and Conservative/Masorti institutions in Israel. If you aren't a member of MERCAZ, sign up now! Your vote helps us in promoting Israel experience trips, sending Israeli shlichim abroad and fighting for religious pluralism and equal treatment in Israel!



***L'shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim!***

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

3rd Annual  
MERCAZ  
Olami Awards  
Fuchsberg  
Jerusalem  
Center



*Rabbi Tzvi Graetz with  
honoree Gloria Cohen and  
Dr. Stephen Wolnek*



*Honoree Moshe Cohen*

*Voting on Resolutions at  
Vaad Ha'Poel.  
From left: Steve Rubner,  
Australia, Norman Stern,  
Marion Mayman and  
Alexandra Cyngiser,  
Canada*



## Mercaz Olami Leadership Seminar

From December 14 until December 17, 2012, the international board of MERCAZ Olami gathered together in New York City for a leadership seminar.

Participants traveled from Argentina, Uruguay, UK, France, Israel and even as far away as Australia. They joined their peers in the US for a program of meetings and activities which included meeting with both professional and lay leaders of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism to share best practices about teaching and advocating for Israel.

The program also included a VIP visit to the United Nations headquarters, courtesy of **Gloria Landy**. On Shabbat, the group was graciously hosted by **Rabbi Elliot Cosgrove** and Park Avenue Synagogue for tefillot and a panel discussion on The Challenges of World Jewry.

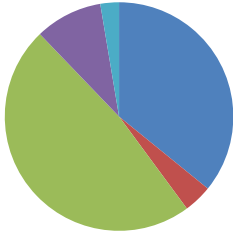
The program ended on Monday night with a special lecture on the ideology of Conservative/Masorti Judaism from leading Conservative/Masorti rabbis, **Rabbi David Wolpe** of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles and **Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg** of New North London Synagogue.



*Rabbi David Wolpe (left) and Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg (right)*

# 2013 Fiscal Year in Review

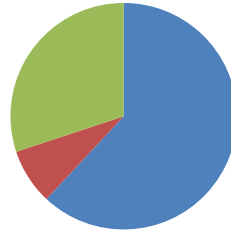
## Income 2013



- Private donors 36%
- Grants 4%
- World Zionist Organization 48%
- KKL/JNF 10%
- Other 2%

**Total Amount:** \$1,362,510

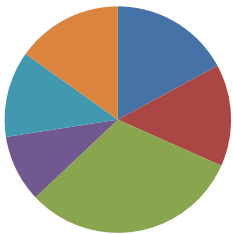
## Expenses 2013



- Projects and other program expenses 62%
- Fundraising expenses 8%
- Management and general 30%

**Total Amount:** \$1,362,510

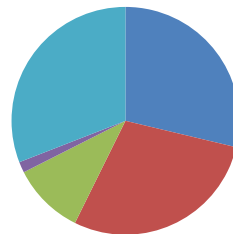
## Distribution by project categories



- Youth - NOAM 17%
- Young Adults - Marom 10%
- Leadership Training 15%
- Community Development 31%
- Education Materials 12%
- Shlichim & Rabbinic support 15%

**Total Amount:** \$844,608

## Distribution by area



- Latin America 29%
- Europe 29%
- Ukraine & FSU 10%
- Australasia 2%
- World Wide 30%

**Total Amount:** \$844,608

# Supporters and Leadership

## Supporters

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Rabbi Gary Charlestein & Family  
Rabbi Elliot Cosgrove  
Eugene Eder Foundation  
Jeffrey Feil  
Jane & Ned Gladstein  
Rabbi Jacob Herber  
Judge Howard Holtzmann  
Carol & Gershon Kekst  
Family of Rabbi Benjamin Kreitman z"l  
Gloria & Eugene Landy  
Amy & Bill Lipsey  
Amy & Peter Miller  
Joan & Paul Schultz  
Alan & Margaret Silberman  
Abby & Jon Winkelried  
Diane & Howard Wohl

## Worldwide Leadership

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Alan Silberman, Outgoing President, Masorti Olami  
Gillian Caplin, Incoming President, Masorti Olami  
Dr. Stephen Wolnek, President, MERCAZ Olami  
Joanna Kubar, President, Masorti Europe  
Daniel Cohn, President, Masorti AMLAT  
Doron Rubin, President, MAROM Olami

## Professional Staff

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Avigail Ben Aryeh, Director, MAROM Olami  
Rabbi Chaim Weiner, Director, Masorti Europe

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World Zionist Organization

Masorti Olami acknowledges major funding from the World Zionist Organization, which allows us to strengthen the Zionist and Israel orientation of Masorti Judaism around the world



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World Zionist Organization



ק"ל ונלכה כאחד  
ק"ל - JNF