



Beth Tzedec  
ברוכים  
הבאים *Welcome*

# Media Release

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## 2011 UJA ADDRESS TO THE CALGARY BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION

(CALGARY, AB – September 29, 2011) – My name is Micah Libin. I am the Chair of the 2011 UJA Campaign. I would like to thank Rabbi Osadchey for being supportive of including a UJA message in shul today. While I speak, similar messages are going out in every synagogue in Calgary as each congregation felt that our work as a united community should be highlighted in synagogue at Rosh Hashanah.

On Rosh Hashanah each Jew looks back. How did I do last year? Was I a good person? Was I a good Jew? Each of us was blessed with another year of life. Did we make the most of it? Did we take it for granted?

These are the most personal moments of soul searching. But we, Jews, do not do this in private. We could. We could stay at home or go to a quiet place of solitude and look inward.

But we don't. We go to synagogue.

Why do we choose to engage in intense, humbling, sometimes awkward personal reflection in public?

Because Judaism is not a mental exercise.

Judaism is a People. The Jewish People. We are an old and proud tribe. There are two ways in. You can be born in. Or you can choose to come in through conversion. But once you are in, there are very high expectations.

We have a covenant with God – the Rabbi can talk about that. But we also have a covenant with our People. To treat each other with kindness and dignity, to make the most of our time on Earth and to be a credit to our People.

The Jewish People of Calgary are represented by the Calgary Jewish Federation. It is our community council of volunteer leaders. A modern day Vaad Ha'lr. I am honoured to serve on the board. We represent and care for the entire Jewish community of Calgary. Conservative, Orthodox, Reform, secular and every type of Jew in between.

We work hard each year to identify the priorities of the community. These are the things that must be taken care of if we are to be proud of our Jewish community in the present and confident that we will be strong and capable in the next generation.

We provide some of the basics of Jewish life. This year we funded the mikveh. The mashgiach. The community chaplain.

We look after our seniors so that they do not feel isolated. Last year we worked with the JCC to help 80 seniors enjoy social and recreational programs every month.

Did you know that 10% of Jewish Calgarians live below the poverty line? We look after the poor to make sure our vulnerable Jews have a warm and safe place to sleep. Last year we worked with Jewish Family Services and the Kupat Tzedakah program to provide emergency funds for 35 families including 43 children.

We make sure that no child is denied a Jewish education for lack of money. Last year, we helped send 68 children to the Calgary Jewish Academy and Akiva Academy who would not have been able to afford to go. That's 21% of total enrolment at the schools.

We help preserve the memory of the Holocaust. Last year, we helped send 2,700 Jewish and non-Jewish high school students to the 27th annual Holocaust symposium.

We fight anti-semitism. Last year, we worked with the Calgary police and our justice system to make sure an appropriate sentence was given to the perpetrator of the anti-semitic graffiti at our Jewish Centre, Holocaust Memorial and two of our synagogues, the House of Jacob and Chabad.

We make sure that Calgary maintains a strong and supportive relationship with Israel. We have established a link with the communities in the north of Israel in a region called Etzba HaGalil. Last year, we helped families with special needs children get treatment for their kids.

And we are there when humanitarian aid is needed. Last year, we provided aid to victims of the earthquake in Japan, the famine in Somalia and the fire in Slave Lake, Alberta.

We have six exceptional partner agencies: Jewish Family Service, the JCC, Camp B'nai Brith-Riback, Akiva Academy, Calgary Jewish Academy and Calgary Kollel. Federation and the agencies work year round to make sure that being Jewish in Calgary means we used our year as a Jewish community as best we could. To make sure our community continues to be a wonderful and important contributor to Calgary and the world.

We are able to do this important work because the Jewish People of Calgary give. They give of their money and they give of their time. This room is filled with generous and committed volunteers and donors. It is because of you that Calgary's Jewish community continues to do a world of good. Thank you.

If you have not contributed yet this year, or if you have never contributed before, don't miss out. This is your chance to be a part of something special. Something Jewish. Now is your opportunity to take

a piece of all that good work and make it your own. Federation's annual UJA Campaign is on right now. This is when all our money is raised. If each of us steps up and makes a meaningful contribution, we can take care of our priorities and play our part as one of the most wonderful Jewish communities in the world.

Please make UJA an important part of what it means to you to be an involved Jew this year and in the years to come.

Donations can be made online, by phoning the UJA office or in a one-on-one conversation with one of our wonderful volunteer canvassers. If you would like to join us and volunteer, please let me know or call the office.

When each of us does our best, together we can do a world of good and make a world of difference.

On behalf of Federation and our partner agencies and on behalf of my family, Shana Tova to each of you and your families. May the coming year be a sweet year and a year of peace.

Thank you.