

The Charlotte JEWISH news

Vol. 42, No. 5

Sivan-Tamuz-Av 5780

June-July 2020

Even in Uncertain Times, We Are Better Together Donate Today to the 2020 Annual Campaign

The Greater Charlotte Jewish community has a strong culture of philanthropy and as the 2020 Annual Campaign continues, it is a time to think about Rabbi Hillel's famous quote, "If I am not for others, what am I? And if not now, when?" The time is now to think of our collective identities as Jewish people and our need to support each other. These last few months have seen an incredible outpouring of support for our Jewish community. Thanks to many of you, we have been able to sustain our beneficiary agencies through the challenges they are facing. However, there is more work to be done as the Jewish Federation's Annual Campaign continues on the Road to \$5 Million.

As our community begins to reopen, we will be looking to you to provide the support our community needs as the recovery process ensues. Many depend on local Jewish organizations to provide social and economic services. Those organizations depend on Federation for support. We of course depend on you. The Road to \$5 Million is not just a number. It is what we need to continue the work that we do.

If you have not already done so, please make your 2020 Annual Campaign commitment today at www.jewishcharlotte.org or mail your donation to Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, 5007 Providence Rd., Ste. 101, Charlotte, NC 28226. ✪

CAMPAIGN 2020: AT A GLANCE



as of May 19, 2020



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

Jewish
Community
Relations
Council

The JCRC promotes the interests of the Charlotte Jewish community by creating working relationships with our neighbors and serving as the collective voice of the Jewish community.

Temple Israel Welcomes New Rabbi

From Long Island via Louisville, Rabbi Michael Wolk Will Come to Charlotte in July

By Amy Krakovitz

Michael Wolk recognizes the uniqueness of Shalom Park. As the new senior pulpit rabbi at Temple Israel, he is looking forward to working in a community that is already accustomed to working together. "There's a great deal of value for a smaller community to recognize that our way of being Jewish is not the only way, and that we have so much in common with other Jews."

Born and raised in Plainview, NY, he grew up in a household

where his father was the Cantor of the local Conservative shul. "My Jewish upbringing was very intense," he admits. "We were Shomer Kashrut and Shomer Shabbes. I attended a Jewish day school till I graduated high school and I spent many years visiting relatives in Israel."

After receiving dual Bachelor's degrees from Columbia and the Jewish Theological Seminary, Wolk spent several years in Jewish communal work at synagogues in Ohio and New York state. He was ordained by JTS in

2012 and has served at Keneseth Yisrael in Louisville, KY ever since.

His move from a small metropolitan area to Charlotte affords him the opportunity to establish allegiances to professional sports franchises. "I am really a baseball fan, I love the Mets. As far as basketball goes, I am a Knicks fan and I'm grateful to find a new team in the Hornets." He understands, too, the graceful balance in supporting college teams. "I carefully navigated between University of Louisville and University of Kentucky. I think I understand the delicacy needed to weigh allegiances to UNC and Duke," he joked.

And has all his time in Kentucky given him a favorite bourbon? Not surprisingly, his choice is a small batch label whose brand evokes Biblical connections, Noah's Mill.

But more seriously, Wolk is fully cognizant of the challenges ahead for him during a time of Shelter In Place and a dangerous pandemic. "My wildest and craziest wish is that we can all be back together inside the shul,"



Rabbi Michael Wolk

he says, "but at this point we just don't know when we'll be back to normal."

The synagogue leadership is looking forward to Rabbi Wolk's arrival. "Temple Israel is eager to welcome Senior Rabbi Michael Wolk, his wife, Heidi, and children, Klara Rose and Julia to our community," said Temple Israel's president, David Rosenthal. "As Temple Israel's 21st Rabbi, against the backdrop of COVID-19, our kehillah anti-



pates a renaissance and renewed energy under his rabbinic leadership, inspiring all to enjoy meaningful relationships with one another, the broader community, Torah, and God through traditional and innovative expressions of Judaism."

"My initial goal for the first year was to learn about the congregation and not make a lot of changes," Wolk tell us. "But this new situation is going to be a journey for all of us."

"My hope is always to see people leading very Jewish lives, but if there is one thing we've learned during this time of COVID-19, it's that synagogue is what you take home with you. We can make our Jewish lives at Temple Israel more meaningful, when we take what we get there home with us." ✪



Like us on Facebook:
Charlotte Jewish News

PRRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT # 1208
CHARLOTTE, NC

5007 Providence Road, Suite #112
Charlotte, NC 28226
Change Service Requested