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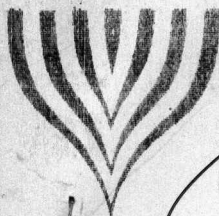
MS-630: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler Digital Collection, 1953-1996.
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Outreach [Northern California/Pacific Northwest], 1979-1990.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
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איחוד
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באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
703 MARKET STREET, SUITE 1300, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94103-2193 (415) 392-7080

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AND PACIFIC NORTHWEST COUNCILS

Rabbi Morris M. Hershman
Regional Director

November 19, 1990
2 Kislev, 5751

URGENT

Dr. Sandra Edwards
Koret Foundation
33 New Montgomery Street
Suite 1090
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Dr. Edwards,

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To EDIE MILLER	From LINDA FELDMAN
Co. UAHC	Co. UAHC
Dept. President's Office	Phone # 415 392-7080
Fax # (415) 392-7863	Fax # (415) 392-1182

We are pleased to enclose the Final Report of the Outreach Project of UAHC Northern California Council for the years 1988-1990. Since this Project is a continuation of the Koret Grant of the prior year, we will include references to the 1987-1988 period as well.

Also enclosed is the Outreach Project Budget Summary for the years 1988-89 and 1989-90.

We are grateful to the Koret Foundation for its support and encouragement throughout the period of this two-year Grant, and for the prior Grant as well. The response to the Outreach Project has been significant, involving literally dozens of congregations and many hundreds of individuals and families, strengthening Jewish commitments and identity and helping to provide for Jewish community needs.

If you wish any further information, I will be pleased to provide it.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Morris M. Hershman

MMH:sc

cc: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Lydia Kukoff
Lisa Bennett, Ph.D.

Chairman
Allen B. Goldman
President
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President
Northern California Council
Jack J. Kodesh
President
Pacific Northwest Council
Sanford M. Gibbs

Final Narrative Report

Union of American Hebrew Congregations NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL

Outreach Project 1987-89

Background

The Union of American Hebrew Congregations has been a pioneer in the development of programs to meet the needs of individuals who have converted to Judaism or may be interested in doing so, as well as to those who are intermarried and their families.

The UAHC Northern California Council has been the recipient of grants from the Koret Foundation which has made possible an expanded program of Outreach activities during the past three years. The UAHC is grateful for the support of the Koret Foundation in this important work.

Throughout this period, Lisa Bennett, Ph.D., has served as Outreach Coordinator, working with Lydia Kukoff, Director of the UAHC Commission on Outreach, and Rabbi Morris M. Hershman, Director of the UAHC Northern California Council.

This report will review the development and impact of the UAHC Northern California Outreach program which has been made possible by the Koret Foundation.

Congregational Participation in Outreach Programming

In the summer of 1987 six regional UAHC congregations were developing Outreach committees and/or programs. By the summer of 1990, at least 26 of the 40 member congregations were actively involved in Outreach activities. This high level of participation is directly attributable to the seminars and programs, consultation, personal contacts, and materials made possible by the Koret-sponsored Outreach project.

Outreach Seminars and Events

Twice during the past year seminars were held entitled, "How to Begin Outreach." These seminars have been extremely effective in encouraging congregations to conduct their own activities, most notably "December Dilemma" programs, and Holiday Workshops, particularly for Shabbat and Pesach. In addition, several congregations have developed Jews-By-Choice support groups.

Over the three year period of the grants we conducted two training sessions for facilitators of "Times and Seasons" groups. The first drew 25 participants from 15 congregations, and the second had 12 trainees from 6 additional congregations.

In response to a growing need, we offered a seminar to train

facilitators for "Parents of Interfaith Couples Support Groups." This session was led by Sherri Alper, L.C.S.W., of Philadelphia. Sherry is highly regarded in national Outreach circles as a specialist in this field.

We also pioneered in working with adolescents around issues of interdating, intermarriage, and Jewish identity. Lisa Bennett has conducted numerous training sessions relating to adolescent concerns, a field which has been of special interest to her. Largely as a result of these efforts, the UAHC has published a manual on this subject, including material which Lisa Bennett has contributed.

Dr. Lisa Bennett has often addressed congregational meetings, served on panel programs, and has conducted Outreach seminars throughout the region. She led a series of four workshops at UAHC Camp Swig for college youth and single adults, dealing with issues of interdating, intermarriage, and Jewish identity. Attendance at these seminars ranged between 40 to 60 participants, who came from as far away as San Diego and Washington State. These programs were co-sponsored by our UAHC Outreach Project, the UAHC College-Education Department, and the Israel Department.

UAHC Biennial Conventions

Regional UAHC Biennial Conventions were held in February, 1987, and February, 1989, each attended by more than 250 persons. Outreach speakers and seminars occupied an important place in each of the biennial programs. In addition, Outreach materials were distributed in the convention packets to all of the delegates. Workshops were offered in which people from various congregations shared their experiences and gained encouragement to develop their own Outreach activities.

Each year an Outreach Questionnaire was sent to congregational rabbis, presidents, and Outreach committees, to determine the effectiveness of our programs and to offer assistance. The response has been excellent. In addition, Regional Outreach Newsletters were also sent on a quarterly basis to share programming ideas, provide encouragement, and to promote forthcoming seminars and activities.

Regional Outreach Committee

A regional Outreach Committee was formed in January, 1989, with representatives from the North Bay, East Bay, and South Peninsula. The committee members tasks included personal contact with congregational leaders to help in the development of Outreach programming and involvement in the planning of regional Outreach events. In addition, the committee assisted in the creation of brochures which were distributed to all congregations for use with congregational members, explaining Outreach issues and encouraging participation in the local community.

KORET OUTREACH PROJECT

Narrative Report

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What Did Not Work

While we have had an excellent response to our regional programmatic offerings and we have been very successful in nurturing congregational Outreach committees, it has been difficult to develop an active regional Outreach committee. Apparently people prefer to put their energies into their own congregations and to work directly with the Outreach population. It seems that the need for a regional committee was diminished to some degree because of the effectiveness of our support system and networking activities.

Although we have offered to provide teacher training workshops to sensitize religious school teachers to Outreach situations, we were not able to develop such a program. The primary reason is that the Bureau of Jewish Education in San Francisco and the Agency for Jewish Education in the East Bay have arranged for such training within their own programs. While we would have welcomed the opportunity to address Outreach issues with the Religious School faculties, we were satisfied that the teachers were receiving the necessary guidance.

Yet another concern must be addressed. There are not yet sufficient programs to meet the needs of the parents of interfaith couples. It has been difficult to bring such parents to articulate their concerns in the context of our Outreach activities. This is an area that is currently being researched on a national basis. It is clear that the resistance which we have found in the Bay Area is characteristic of this population throughout the country.

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UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL

KORET OUTREACH PROJECT
1988-1989 BUDGET SUMMARY

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
(I) SALARY AND BENEFITS		
A- Outreach Coordinator (Half-time, \$30,000 basis)	\$ 15,000	15,000
B- Benefits (estimated 12%,)	1,500	1,377
C- Secretarial Services	3,700	3,620
(II) PROGRAM		
A- Travel, incl. two training sessions, New York, and local	2,500	2,776
B- Communications, (i.e., telephone, postage, mailings)	1,600	1,637
C- Facilitator Training	2,500	2,480
D- Consultation and Program Support (UAHC Outreach staff, etc.)	3,750	3,750
E- Materials (Books and Media)	950	825
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TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 31,500	\$ 31,465
<u>INCOME</u>		
A- Grant from Koret Foundation	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
B- UAHC Outreach Funding	6,000	6,000
C- Program Fees	500	465
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 31,500	\$ 31,465

KORET OUTREACH PROJECT
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UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL

KORET OUTREACH PROJECT
1989-1990 BUDGET SUMMARY

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
(I) SALARY AND BENEFITS		
A- Outreach Coordinator (9 Months, Half-time, \$30,000 basis)	\$ 15,000	15,000
B- Benefits (estimated 12%,)	1,500	1,344
C- Secretarial Services	2,500	2,350
(II) PROGRAM		
A- Travel, incl. two training sessions, New York and local	2,000	1,955
B- Communications, (i.e., telephone, postage, mailings)	750	920
C- Training and Seminars	1,250	1,435
D- Consultation and Program Support (UAHC Outreach staff, etc.)	3,000	3,000
E- Materials (Books and Media)	500	356
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TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 26,500	\$ 26,360
<u>INCOME</u>		
A- Grant from Koret Foundation	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
B- UAHC Outreach Funding	6,000	6,000
C- Program Fees	500	360
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 26,500	\$ 26,360

Oshroff
Bac NWcc: Al ✓ (R1)
Lb Quin
to 8/4/87

Conservative, Reform sign conversion agreement

by Craig Degginger

Conservative and Reform rabbis in Western Washington have signed a historic agreement on mutual acceptance of converts between their respective branches of Judaism.

The agreement was reached after months of meetings between the rabbis, and both sides say it represents a significant first step toward Jewish unity.

"This is a step for a closer community and solidarity for the Jewish people," said Rabbi Earl Starr of Temple De Hirsch Sinai, a Reform congregation.

"It was an important step forward," said Rabbi Norman Hirsh of Temple Beth Am, also Reform. "There was a genuine spirit of cooperation and compromise."

Compromise was the key ingredient to creating the document. Both sides gave a little, but all the rabbis say they are now comfortable with the requirements for mutual acceptance of converts.

The agreement, as described by Rabbi James Mirel, acting president of the Western Washington Rabbinic Group, is a "flexible" one, designed to give as much discretion to the individual rabbi as possible while maintaining religious standards.

For instance, under "education and commitment," it says each prospective convert "will receive instruction in the beliefs of obligations of Judaism which include theology, prayer, history, ethics, holiday and Sabbath observance, life cycle events and Hebrew."

But how much of each of these will be taught, and for how long, will be up to the individual rabbi, Mirel said.

Along with the education component, converts would be required to participate in a traditional immersion, either in a mikveh or other appropriate site. This step represents a compromise by Reform, which generally doesn't require its con-

verts to do so.

The Reform rabbis also compromised in requiring circumcision for all male converts, but their Conservative colleagues agreed that for those already circumcised, the drawing of a symbolic drop of



Rabbi Ira Stone

blood will be optional. Conservative rabbis have traditionally required the drop of blood.

"There have to be some compromises," said Rabbi Ira Stone of Congregation Beth Shalom, a Conservative synagogue. "We've achieved a lot when the Reform agree to circumcision and the mikveh."

But more importantly to Stone, the agreement "agrees to recognize the right of Reform rabbis to be rabbis."

Many in the Conservative movement do not recognize the rabbinic authority of Reform rabbis, but Stone, who is currently the only Conservative pulpit rabbi in Seattle, does.

Consequently, in the agreement, each movement or rabbi will constitute a Bet Din or "rabbinic court" of three members who will interview the convert and assess his or her readiness to become a Jew. The rabbis have agreed to abide by the Bet Din's decision in each convert's case.

"Each rabbi will do his own conversions," Hirsh explained, "and each will

constitute his own Bet Din."

Upon successful completion of the requirements, the convert will receive a certificate indicating that his or her conversion is accepted by the Reform and Conservative rabbinates of Western Washington.

The agreement was drafted by Hirsh and Stone, regarded as perhaps the area's most scholarly rabbis and close personal friends as well.

"Our friendship and the trust established between Ira and me did help make this possible," Hirsh said.

After Stone and Hirsh drafted the agreement, it was worked on at monthly meetings of the rabbis and a consensus reached.

Stone said that originally some thought was given to trying to include the Orthodox in the conversion agreement, but it was decided to join the Conservative and Reform first.



Rabbi Norman Hirsh

A meeting was held with the Orthodox rabbis after the agreement was reached, but there was little common ground to be found.

Continued on page 13

"There wasn't much chance, but it was certainly worth trying," Hirsh said of the meeting with the Orthodox. "I hope some day we can all find a way to work out the problems."

Stone termed the Orthodox reaction to the agreement as "cordial," and said the doors remain open to their future participation.

Rabbi Simon Benzaquen of Sephardic Bikur Holim, an Orthodox congregation, said he could not participate in such an agreement but welcomed dialogue at future meetings on the subject of Jewish unity.

"I would be untrue to my principles,"



Rabbi James Mirel

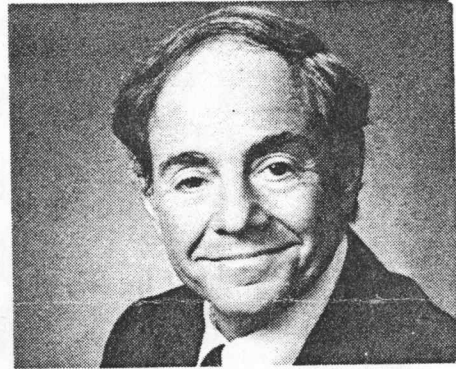
Benzaquen said, to join such an agreement. "We have our own way of thinking."

Joint conversion agreements among Reform, Conservative and Orthodox have been rare.

Such a program existed in Denver from 1977 to 1983, during which time several hundred men and women were converted according to halacha. A joint conversion board interviewed the candidates and recommended them for conversion and were approved by a layman's Bet Din of

shomrei mitzvot, or observant persons, not necessarily rabbis.

The Denver Orthodox eventually withdrew for several reasons, one of which was that the Reform were allowed to have an "out." In other words, if someone didn't want to go through the rituals, the Reform rabbis reserved the right not to have them do so.



Rabbi Earl Starr

The Seattle Reform-Conservative agreement is not binding upon any of the rabbis involved. Any convert who wishes may choose not to follow the requirements, but that person would not receive a certificate. Stone and Hirsh, the architects of the agreement, say they hope it will be used by all the rabbis.

"I hope they feel as strongly about this as I do," Stone said. "I hope they will push their converts to do this."

Starr, spiritual leader of the region's largest congregation, said he will offer the conversion agreement to all prospective converts at his temple.

Mirel said it will take some time but that he expects most converts will want to participate. He added that any person converted before this agreement may apply to his or her rabbi to receive certification by meeting the requirements.

July 16, 1987

CONVERSION

Continued from page 1

Agreement on Mutual Acceptance of Converts Between the Reform and Conservative Rabbinates of Western Washington

I Preamble

In order to enable our converts to find acceptance in a wider Jewish community, in order to remove a source of conflict between our movements, and thus to alleviate some of the divisions in contemporary Jewish life, the Conservative and Reform rabbis of Western Washington have reached the following agreement. It is our prayer that the agreement will be a step on the road toward a unity respectful of diversity which will advance Shalom Bayit in our community. Even though this agreement has been difficult to develop, we offer the success of our endeavor as a token of hope to the entire Jewish community.

II Requirements for Mutually Acceptable Conversions

A. Education and Commitment—Recognizing that Jewish life requires both knowledge and practice each prospective convert will receive instruction in the beliefs and obligations of Judaism which include theology, prayer, history, ethics, holiday and Sabbath observance, life-cycle events and Hebrew. Through this process the prospective convert will identify with the people of Israel in covenant with God and accept upon himself or herself the obligations of Jewish life.

B. Tevilah—a traditional immersion.

C. Milah—For the uncircumcised milah is required.

For those already circumcised, the drawing of a symbolic drop of blood will be optional.

D. Bet Din—Each movement or rabbi will constitute a Bet Din of three members acceptable to the standards of his or her movement. This Bet Din will interview the conversion candidate and assess his or her readiness to embrace Judaism and its obligations. The decision of each Bet Din will be respected by all the signators of this agreement.

III Universality of Practice

A. Signators agree to strongly urge all their candidates to fulfill all the requirements of this agreement.

B. A brochure will be created outlining this agreement and its ramifications for distribution by all signators to all candidates.

IV Certification

A certificate will be drawn up by the participating rabbis stating that the convert in question has been converted according to the agreement on Mutual Acceptance of Converts Between the Reform and Conservative Rabinates of Western Washington.

V Regarding Those Already Converted

Any person converted prior to this agreement may apply to his or her presiding rabbi to receive certification by meeting the requirements of this agreement.

Signed by Rabbis Kerry Baker, Earl S. Starr, James L. Mirel,
Ira A. Stone, Moshe Pomerantz, Norman D. Hirsh, Richard Rosenthal,
Anson Laytner, Yitzhak Nadler

*Delivered
Northern Cal.*

August 12, 1981

Gerda Fischer-Darosci
3930 Noriega
San Francisco, CA 94122

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your letter the enclosures which were very helpful.

I appreciate your words of encouragement.

With warmest best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Gerda Fischer-Darosci
3930 Noriega
San Francisco, Ca. 94122
Tel. (415) 665-1153

August 3, 1981 #1

To the
Hon. Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President, Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Attention: Ms. Edith J. Miller

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

Enclosed please find some "ammunition" to assist you in your remarkable and worthwhile endeavor to change the law.

Should you need further material, I hope that my book manuscript "Gateway to my Mind" (Rabbi Sanford Seltzer has copies of some of the excerpts) will provide it. At present I have approximately two-thirds of the manuscript finished.

Also attached you will find an article and study by Rabbi Steven S. Schwarzschild entitled "Mixed Marriages and Conversion in Post War Germany" of which unfortunately one page, i.e. page 3, is missing, I got the article that way. I understand Schwarzschild presently teaches at the Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

A copy of all these attachments is also being sent to the Hon. Rabbi Sanford Seltzer.

Let me thank you Rabbi Schindler, along with present and future millions of Jews for your efforts to give all of us identity.

Most sincerely,

Gerda Fischer, Vera Darosci
Gerda Fischer aka. Vera Darosci

P.S. Please excuse the quality of the xerox copies but I had a defective machine to work with and the repair of the copy machine will take several days. The copies are still readable.

Outreach

January 5, 1981

Ms. Gerda I. Fischer
Vera Darosci
1827 48th Avenue
San Francisco, CA. 94122

Dear Ms. Fischer:

Your letter of December 20 and the pages from your manuscript, Gateway To My Mind, have just reached me. I do recall our telephone conversation of September and was distressed to hear that you had been ill. I hope your surgery was successful and that you have been returned to full health and strength.

Rabbi Schindler will be traveling a great deal during the next few weeks. I am, therefore, taking the liberty of forwarding your manuscript pages to Rabbi Seltzer for review. He will study your work and contact you directly with his comments and/or suggestions.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Edith J. Miller
Assistant to the President

cc: Rabbi Sanford Seltzer

Gerda I. Fischer
VERA DAROSCI
1827 48th Avenue
San Francisco, Ca. 94122
(415) 566-1607

December 20, 1980

To the Honorable Rabbi Schindler
Pres. of the Union of American Hebrew Congregation
838 Fifth Avenue
New York City, N.Y. 10021
Attention: Mrs. Edith Miller

To the Hon. Rabbi Sanford Seltzer
"OUTREACH TASK FORCE"
UAHC Chabel Shalom
1187 Beacon Street
Brookline, Mass. 02146

In Support of the Outreach Task Force:

Re: "GATEWAY TO MY MIND" - The auto biography of a
half-Jewish orphan surviving World War II alone
by VERA DAROSCI

Dear Mrs. Miller:

I hope you remember our brief telephone conversation just before
begin of the holidays in September. I could not fulfil my promise
earlier - since I had an emergency Gallbladder surgery during the
Holidays.

The attachments should speak for themselves. I have also enclosed
~~a list with certain incidents which happened to me in San Francisco~~
~~in my Synagogue.~~ I have meanwhile tried to contact another Rabbi
- without much result. He saw me for an hour - and never called
me back.

I am presently living and working on a very small disability pension
and since the attachments are one hundred and fifty five pages, I
can send only one copy. It would give me great pleasure Edith, if
you or Rabbi Schindler would comment on the proposed book and also
if you would be so kind and forward the package to Rabbi Seltzer
for his advice and/or comment.

The attached letter will be sent to Literary Agents and/or Publishers.
Thank you very much.

S h a l o m,

Vera Darosci
Gerda Ilona Fischer

P.S. Should you like further excerpts, i.e.
Part One - of my Childhood, etc. please
write !

Retain Pink
Send Yellow &
Blue to Shipping

NO SALE

N? 0017

ADMINISTRATION

DEPARTMENT

Ordered by EDITH J. MILLER

Date of order JANUARY 5, 1981

TO

PLEASE SEND THE ATTACHED MANUSCRIPT TO:

RABBI SANFORD SELTZER
TEMPLE OHABEI SHALOM
1187 BEACON STREET
BROOKLINE, *MA*. 02146

LABEL IS ATTACHED.

FILLED BY _____ DATE SHIPPED _____

CHECKED BY _____

SENT BY _____ EXP. _____ P.P. _____ UPS _____

CHARGE TO _____ COST _____

To Rabbi's,

Please send me
all Information about
Rabbi (Schlerner's)?

I Miss ~~an~~anarism in
reform movement.

Immediately,

Dan Rosenberg
17159 Celtic St.
Granada Hills Ca.
91344.

Reconstructivist
jew

Jul
11/10/79