

THE CAI ANNUAL WALKATHON STRENGTHENS MASORTI CONGREGATIONS IN ISRAEL AND ENABLES THEM TO FURTHER DEVELOP CREATIVE JEWISH PROGRAMMING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

We are so pleased that once again our annual CAI Walks For Israel Walkathon was a great success with over 250 people, (children, teens, adults and seniors), walking the Caldwell streets in support of programming in Israel. The majority of the funds pledged have already been directed to specific programs in each Masorti community in Israel. It is our great honor to continue to join with and support the important work being done by the Rabbis, congregations and programs at these Masorti congregations.

This year funds have been allocated for the following programs:

- Kibbutz Hannaton for their spiritual and environmental education programs, lead by Rabbi Yoav Ende, our scholar-in-residence during our Walkathon Weekend.
- Kehillat Moriah, Haifa NOAM (youth program based on peer leadership training) through the Doppelt Memorial Fund.
- The Bayit Cham (Warm Home) Program (a Jerusalem-based, SCEEP-like program); providing a healthy meal and tutoring assistance by a dedicated group of volunteers at Moreshet Avraham, under the leadership of Rabbi Barry Schlessinger.
- The Chalom (dream) program in which children participate in a weekly activity experiencing and learning about Jewish traditions and their heritage. Rabbi Tzvi Berger, spiritual leader of the Masorti Family Community in Kfar Vradim, a village in the Western Galilee, is also promoting interfaith cooperation in the north.
- The new nursery school program in French Hill, Jerusalem, being organized by an inspiring Rabbi Chaya Baker. This fledgling early childhood education program is the recipient of a Legacy Grant, as is our own CAI Nursery School. Rabbi Chaya Baker returned to Israel after joining us as the scholar-in-residence for our annual Conservative Jewish Women's Weekend, sponsored by Judy and Jon Craig in January 2010.
- Work in the Tali schools, NOAM and a new environmental program, under the leadership of Rabbi Mauricio Balter at Kehillat HaKrayot.
- Kehillat V'Ahavta in Zichron Yaakov, under the leadership of Rabbi Elisha Wolfen for work with a local Ethiopian community.
- Kehillat Netzach Yisrael in Ashkelon, under the leadership of Rabbi Gustavo Suraszki for work together on a Purim Megillah project (bonding together our 4th graders with a local 4th grade class in Ashkelon). Individually they will learn about the holiday of Purim and small groups in both communities will illustrate parts of the text. The artwork created by the participants in Caldwell and in Ashkelon will be shared through e-mail and YouTube videos, connecting the children to each other. Additional funds will be used for NOAM teen camp scholarships.

- Providing for the needs of five children participating in the Special Needs Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project. The Masorti movement believes that every child, regardless of ability, deserves this chance to shine – and take his or her rightful place as a Jewish adult, embraced by community. What began in one school for children with special needs today includes up to about 300 youngsters a year who attend 40 special education schools throughout Israel. Participants include children with a variety of physical and developmental challenges, such as cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, ADD-ADHD, autism, blindness, hearing impairments and learning disabilities. The program welcomes children of every religious and ethnic background, many of them new immigrants.
- NOAM scholarships for underprivileged teens, educational programs for conversion and Bar Mitzvahs, and welcoming new immigrants

While in Israel on the Masorti Mission at the end of January, members of CAI will be meeting with the leadership in many of the communities we support. We look forward to working together on these and additional programs, strengthening the bonds between our community and Masorti communities and programs throughout Israel.