

USCJ and the Rabbinical Assembly Agree to Deepen Joint Partnership

A NOTE FROM NED GLADSTEIN, INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT, USCJ

Hevre,

I am writing to share exciting news about how USCJ and the Rabbinical Assembly will “Seek Meaning Together” as never before, how we will together bring our Torah to more people in more places, and become greater than the sum of our parts. Together, we have identified initiatives to achieve common goals in our respective strategic plans and have built on the success of our collaborative 20/20 Judaism convention. We have collectively recognized the potential of deep collaboration, and are now planning a new framework of cooperation that will enable us to strengthen Conservative/Masorti Judaism in North America and around the world.

USCJ and the RA have agreed to a partnership in which Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal will serve as the CEO for both organizations beginning July 1, 2020.

New Joint Partnership: 3 Goals

Surely, our two organizations share the same aspirations for our constituents and the Conservative/Masorti Movement. While we will remain two separate entities in the near future, with separate governances and finances, our new joint partnership has three goals:

- ▶ To strengthen the movement by rethinking how our organizations operate, breaking down the silos of the past between clergy and lay leadership, and learning how we can be more effective in bringing our Torah to more people.
- ▶ To continue to implement the [USCJ Roadmap](#).
- ▶ To continue to implement the [RA Vision Plan](#).

Benefits for Synagogues and Clergy

We expect this joint partnership and closer collaboration to yield many benefits, including:

- ▶ Strengthening collaborations between clergy, professionals, funders, and lay leaders -- critical for growth and relevance in the 21st century. We will model the partnerships that need to become universal in our synagogues, schools, Hillels, innovative ventures, and all the other venues where we work to engage community members.
- ▶ Using a more holistic approach in addressing big issues related to managing the careers and roles of our clergy, professionals, and lay leaders.
- ▶ Tackling challenges facing synagogues and clergy, such as creating engaging prayer experiences, developing new models for communities, and engaging with disruptive change.
- ▶ Delivering on a key aspect of our mission: to strengthen kehillot (Jewish communities inside and outside the walls of a synagogue).
- ▶ Bringing the entrepreneurialism and creativity that is found in the work of our colleagues across North America and beyond to more of our conversations and shared spaces.



The leadership of both organizations understand our commitments to supporting rabbis wherever they are, strengthening synagogues and communities of Jews committed to our Torah, and better engaging our teens and young adults.

Cross Movement Communication

The other Conservative Movement institutions around the globe have been consulted in the development of this plan, and we have promised to exemplify a model of cooperation that engages them, while respecting their independence and unique missions.

Separate Entities with a Shared Purpose

This new plan is not a merger -- while we will share a CEO, we will have separate bank accounts, budgets, and boards. However, over the three years of this agreement, we will explore our shared purpose, determine areas for joint operation, and explore new models of integration or a possible merger.

This is a big step, and we expect our member colleagues to have questions and concerns. Our leadership is committed to carrying out each of our individual strategic plans. We will support rabbis wherever they are and continue to invest in supporting synagogues and youth engagement.

Zoom Calls with Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal Scheduled

We have scheduled Zoom conversations with incoming CEO Jacob Blumenthal on the following dates:

Monday, March 9th at 12:00 PM EDT

[Click here to join](#)

Wednesday, March 11th 1:00 PM EDT

[Click here to join](#)

You are also welcome to share your [thoughts, questions, and comments here](#).

We are always grateful for your ongoing commitment to USCJ and our movement. We will keep you informed, and look forward to your continued engagement and leadership in this process as we bring our Torah to more people in more places in more ways in the years ahead.

Warm regards,



Ned Gladstein

International President, USCJ