

# Midreshet Yerushalayim

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## Midreshet Yerushalayim – Israel

### Numbers and Programs 2010-11

Midreshet Yerushalayim adult education has expanded to include Batei Midrash for the general Israeli public in partnership with Masorti congregations. Batei Midrash operated this year in Karmiel and Haifa. **Looking ahead:** A Bet Midrash program for Neve Schechter in Neve Zedek will open in the fall, under the able direction of **Rabbi Roberto Arbib**, with a rich array of activities for residents of Neve Zedek and the greater Tel Aviv area.

- ⦿ Altogether 28 Jewish studies courses were conducted in eight cities including Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Karmiel, Neshet, Nazareth Iit, Maale Adumim and Ashdod, with over 900 participants
- ⦿ **NEW!** Three new MILI clubs opened in Ashdod, Bat Yam and Rishon LeZion bringing the total number of MILI Jewish Culture clubs in Israel to 11, with over 350 participants
- ⦿ **NEW!** A MILI International club opened in Kharkov, Ukraine. It joins the veteran Vinnitsa club which continues to meet on a regular basis, led by **Leonid Kantor**, a Legacy Heritage graduate of the MILI OLAMI Jewish leadership course
- ⦿ 3 MILI National Competitions took place on Hanukah, Purim and Jerusalem Day, drawing 125-150 participants each time, with “virtual” participation allowing up to 1,000 game enthusiasts to join in from around the world
- ⦿ 30 fieldtrips throughout Israel
- ⦿ 24,000 visitors per year go to the Midreshet Yerushalayim Jewish studies resource website in Russian, [www.mili.org.il](http://www.mili.org.il), with MY publications, *Ask the Rabbi* column, Weekly Torah Portion, calendar of events and more
- ⦿ 35 regular participants in the weekly “Heritage Trail” (*Shvilei Moreshet*) seminar and fieldtrip on *Jerusalem Epigraphics: Ancient Manuscripts, Alphabets and Epigraphic Inscriptions*

## Initiatives 2010-11

### Schechter Batei Midrash Reaches Wider Audiences

*Midreshet HaKerem for Jewish Culture*, affiliated with Karmiel’s **Masorti Kehilat Hakerem**, completed a second year of pluralistic Jewish programming for Israel’s north with attendance up 20%. Developed in partnership with the Masorti Movement and Schechter graduate **Rabbi Reuven Resnick** of Kehilat Hakerem, the midrasha offered five weekly Jewish studies classes in Hebrew, Spanish and Russian with over 80 weekly participants and a bi-monthly special lecture attended by 50-100 people. The varied program also included field trips.

*Midreshet HaCarmel*, the Bet Midrash of **Masorti Kehilat Moriah in Haifa**, led by Schechter graduate **Rabbi Dubi Haiyun**, offered seven weekly courses taught in Hebrew and Russian with 125 participants as well as special workshops planned around the holidays. A Hebrew ulpan was started for 20 new immigrants to learn Hebrew and basic Judaism. The success of Bet Midrash programming has had a positive impact on synagogue membership, and has led to an increase in the number of participants in the congregation’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah program. (See profile, page 20).

### MILI Jewish Culture Clubs Continue to Innovate

The MILI program conducts intellectual games and quizzes on Jewish heritage, modeled on the *What? When? Where?* Russian TV game show format. The program which draws adults in their 20s and 30s both in Israel and Ukraine, offered new programming, including:

- ⦿ *Quest*, a game that turns quiz questions about Jerusalem into a treasure hunt between competing teams all around the city. Altogether, 140 contestants participated in two separate *Quest* events
- ⦿ Over the summer, a competition for the “Best MILI Question” was publicized around the world and the three winners will be announced at an international game competition in November 2011
- ⦿ A special “Ashdod Trophy” event is planned for October 2011 to put the spotlight on MILI’s newest club

- ⦿ A special MILI workshop for TALI-Ukraine teachers was held in June (see page 19).

## Midreshet Yerushalayim – Ukraine

### Numbers and Programs 2010-11

1,200 children and their families participated in Midreshet Yerushalayim programs, the only Conservative Jewish educational network in the former Soviet Union, in the following frameworks:

- ⦿ **Five TALI Family Education Centers** in Kiev, Donetsk, Chernivtsi, Berdichev and Kharkov, with Chirkasi and Nikolaiyev Family Centers receiving pedagogical support
- ⦿ **Chernivtsi TALI Day School**, 320 pupils, with more than 300 children and parents attending Shabbat services and weekly programming
- ⦿ **Kharkov TALI Day School**, with 100 students (grades 1-10) joined the TALI school network in 2009
- ⦿ **Kiev Cultural Center** programming seven days a week, attracting 200 participants weekly with Armon (Chestnut) Community Sunday School, Kiev Bet Midrash, weekly Kabbalat Shabbat, a teenage leadership development program, clubs in Jewish Film, Drama and Literature and Poetry
- ⦿ **Armon (Chestnut) Community Sunday School celebrates a decade** of Jewish education for the Kiev Jewish community
- ⦿ **Chanukah Shabbat Retreat for Kiev Families** organized in December 2010
- ⦿ **19th Annual Ramah-Ukraine Summer Camp:** 160 children and 35 staff (See profiles, page 21) came together for 9 days of camp fun and Jewish learning
- ⦿ **9th Annual Family Camp**, 45 participants (parents and children), were exposed to the importance of Jewish education and the beauty of living Jewish values together; strengthening their commitment to the year-round family learning centers
- ⦿ **Rabbi David Clayman Memorial Resource Library** received a number of new acquisitions this year on the subject of the Five Books of Moses for adults and children. This mobile resource center services both Camp Ramah-Ukraine and the Kiev Cultural Center during the school year



1. *Midreshet Hakerem* Bet Midrash in Karmiel hosts Schechter lecturer Dr. Einat Ramon 2. Reuven Stamov (left) leads morning prayers with campers from Ramah-Ukraine. 3. National Jerusalem Day MILI competition at Schechter 4. MILI competition in Vinnitsa, Ukraine 5. Studies at TALI Chernivtsi Day School, Ukraine 6. Berdichev veteran educator Sasha Frenkel with students 7. Dr. Rafi Kassimov explores Jerusalem with Tel Aviv students 8. Study session at *Midreshet HaCarmel* Bet Midrash in Haifa 9. New *Quest* game takes MILI students on a treasure hunt of Jerusalem's secrets 10. Teachers and youth counselors at the Kiev Cultural Center 11. Opening event of the MILI international competition in Eilat 12. Study session in Kiev Cultural Center with Dr. Rafi Kassimov

**Seven-day teachers' training seminar** In June 2011, a seven-day teachers' training seminar focused on the study of Hebrew through Jewish tradition and literature. 35 teachers from *Midreshet Yerushalayim* schools and family centers were treated to high-level academic lectures by **Dr. Rafi Kassimov**. MILI game coordinator **Leonid Kantor** gave a workshop on using the MILI Jewish culture quiz as a pedagogical tool in the schools and led a game with the teachers. It is hoped that the MILI model will be introduced into the school network in 2011-12.

**Shabbat Retreat for Kiev Young Families** A "mini-camp" for parents and children of the Kiev Kehilah took place over Shabbat Chanukah in December 2010. Over 40 participants joined the 4-day retreat sponsored by *Midreshet Yerushalayim* and *Masorti Olami*. The retreat is part of a comprehensive Jewish education program being developed to enrich Jewish family life of this nascent *Masorti* community in Kiev.

**Turetsky Rabbinical Scholar to become first *Masorti* rabbi in FSU** Schechter rabbinical student **Reuven Stamov** will be installed rabbi of the *Masorti* Kehilah in Kiev and the first *Masorti* rabbi in the former Soviet Union in a festive event scheduled to take place at the Ramah-Ukraine Family Camp in mid-July 2012. Organized by *Midreshet Yerushalayim* and *Masorti Olami*, the installation will bring Schechter and *Masorti Olami* leaders from around the world to celebrate this exciting milestone. For more information, contact: [pr@schechter.ac.il](mailto:pr@schechter.ac.il).

## A Letter from Kharkov

*"Gila Katz's 5-day working visit to our school included monitoring classes, giving master classes, teacher consultations, contributing teaching materials and more... We already see results... lessons in our Jewish subjects are more lively, informative and of a deeper nature. The children are showing increased interest in the material and in their motivation to delve deeper into questions pertaining to Jewish life. We are most grateful to *Midreshet Yerushalayim* for bringing us successfully into our 2nd year of collaboration."*

**Prof. Eugeny Persky**, Principal TALI Day School, Kharkov

# Israel

## Bet Midrash: New Model to “Grow” the Learning Community



*“I am trying to create an intellectual and spiritual home for one and all, so that when they enter, they feel like they are returning to family.”*

- Rabbi Dubi Haiyun

For Rabbi Dubi (Dov) Haiyun, 49, a Bet Midrash (Study Hall) must be open from early morning until late at night. And so it is at *Midreshet HaCarmel*, where on any given morning, one finds Rabbi Dubi greeting students at 7:30 a.m. when he opens the doors, and at 10:30 p.m., when he locks up most nights.

Over the last few years, Midreshet Yerushalayim has expanded its educational mandate to include Batei Midrash for the general Israeli public in partnership with Masorti congregations. *Midreshet HaCarmel*, the Bet Midrash of Masorti *Kehilat Moriah* in Haifa which opened almost two years ago, follows in the footsteps of Karmiel’s *Midreshet Hakerem*, the flagship for this new model of community outreach.

“Success brings success,” beams Rabbi Haiyun. He established the Bet Midrash in 2009 with a clear purpose: “The Bet Midrash must open up new intellectual vistas, bring in new people and new life to the Kehilah.” Dubi feels that Haifa is still in the beginning stages of a Jewish renaissance and *Midreshet HaCarmel* is well positioned to “bring the world of Jewish tradition to the average Israeli.”

This past year, Dubi introduced a rich array of learning options into *Midreshet HaCarmel*, including seven weekly courses taught in Hebrew and Russian with 125 participants, as well as special workshops planned around the holidays which drew as many as 150 people per event. A Hebrew ulpan was started where 20 new immigrants learned Hebrew and basic Judaism. “My mission is to let every person who enters our gates find his or her niche within our learning community,” says Dubi.

Rabbi Dubi is a whirlwind of ideas combined with non-stop action. His long-term plans for *Midreshet HaCarmel* are ambitious. He would like the Bet Midrash to serve as an educational hub to train teachers from the Ministry of Education. He hopes that one day, it will serve as the northern branch of the Schechter Institute, where students from the north would take one year of academic study in Haifa, completing their M.A. in Jerusalem. “I maintain a high academic level at the Bet Midrash, but one that has a Jewish message,” he adds.



To keep pace with its expanding study program, Dubi is training a community coordinator who has already begun to work with him. In addition, *Midreshet HaCarmel* is expanding its premises. When complete, a new annex will add an additional 52 sq. meters to existing space. “We have a thriving community that lives and breathes,” says Dubi. As if to make his point, he relates the most recent project he’s taken under wing: 24 young Russian immigrants adopted by Kehilah members, just started a 3-month morning Hebrew ulpan in the Bet Midrash, following which they will enter the Israeli army.

# Ukraine

## Turning Our Children into Jewish Leaders



The “Israeli delegation” of counselors that made their way to the annual Camp Ramah-Ukraine in August, was, by and large, returning to the home of their mother tongue and to childhood memories that remain sweet. The Israeli *mishlach*, as it is called in Hebrew, also attests to the success of Midreshet Yerushalayim in the former Soviet Union.

These are kids that grew up with a solid Jewish background, be it through a family education center, the Chernivtsi Day School or Camp Ramah summers in the Ukraine. As proud Jews, they opted to move to Israel. Now as proud Israelis, they return to Ukraine to pass on this pride and knowledge to a new generation seeking a connection to their Judaism.

*“We don’t want our brothers and sisters overseas to forget they are Jews and that they are part of a glorious Jewish tradition. Camp Ramah is the perfect classroom ‘without walls’ to instill this message.” – Yoel Russu*

**Eyal Riazanov, 25**, made aliyah only eight months ago from Chernivtsi, where as a teen he attended the TALI Chernivtsi Day School. He first went to Camp Ramah at age 15. There he bonded with Reuven Stamov, who was his counselor at the time. Eyal returned twice as a counselor. This was his third year at camp, but the first, returning as an “Israeli.” “I’ve wanted to come to Israel for such a long time. Only now could I fulfill my dream.” For the immediate future, Eyal is committed to a full tour of duty with the IDF. (Front row)

**Polina Yurkovetsky, 25**, made aliyah in 2009. She grew up in Uzhgorod . At 13, she found her “Jewish home” at Midreshet Yerushalayim’s Family Education Center. From that moment on, Camp Ramah became an integral part of her life, first as a camper, and then as a counselor. “I have missed only one year of camp...and that was the summer I made aliyah!” she remembers with a smile. Today, Polina lives in Jerusalem, where she works with Russian-speaking students through the Jewish Agency’s MASA program. Returning to camp this summer was important to her. “Many children know they are Jewish, but they don’t ‘feel’ their Judaism. Camp is a unique way for them to ‘feel’ a part of a larger Jewish family.” (Second from left)

**Yoel Russu, 27**, immigrated to Israel in 2003 with his mother and brother. Today, he is married with a new baby, living in Ma’ale Adumim. He remembers walking to the new Jewish school that had opened in his hometown of Chernivtsi. The date was September 16, 1991; and the school, TALI Chernivtsi: the jewel in the crown of Midreshet Yerushalayim’s educational network: “If there was a Jewish school, we would attend,” remembers Yoel. In Israel, Yoel served in an IDF combat unit and hopes to study for a Masters Degree in Public Policy. He is thrilled to be working at Camp Ramah this summer. “My Jewish identity and who I am today were totally shaped by the Jewish education I got in Chernivtsi,” he says.(Far right)