

# HELP US BE





#### **Minute With Moshe**

#### **Great Miracles Happen Here**

In this Minute with Moshe, I'd like to elaborate on the Federation's 2022 Annual Campaign theme, Here for Good! What does Here for Good mean?

I asked this question to a group of people recently. As we went around the room, I heard good but typical responses.

#### Here for Community. Here for **Connection. Here for Support.**

I feel in my bones that I have a responsibility to dig a bit deeper into the meaning of Here for Good. In searching for this more significant "actionable" meaning, what if we viewed the Here for Good concept through a more agile, futureoriented, and hyper-focused communitybuilding lens.

In striving to become an agile Here for Good organization, I envision the Fed collaborating with other communal leaders to identify and critically analyze the vital issues facing the community and its future health. Rather than clamping down on substantive conversation over the many problems of interest and concern to us, we can build bridges of respectful dialogue, allowing even firmly held differences of opinion to be aired without personal insult.

Under this scenario, Here for Good means we are a Federation capable of adapting to change and continuous improvement. We can break through established

attitudes, roles, and thinking and seize the opportunity to abandon programs, policies, and outdated or ineffective strategies.

Here for Good is our rallying cry for renewal and growth. Our brighter Jewish future is defined by our community's long-term aspirations and immediate and longer-term options arising from current and emerging conditions.

Since joining the community, I've heard from many of you. "This is a great community, our future challenges are apparent, and the leverage points with each passing year to influence our future becomes more evident." If we aim to be a strong, vibrant, and sustainable community, we need more dialogue about what matters most.

Presently, what matters most is to be agile and courageous in our planning. I'm confident our community-building conversations will lead to a new synthesis of information resulting in new patterns of interaction, connections, and structures that will propel our Jewish community forward. To me, this is the essence of being Here for Good!

Kol yisrael arevim zeh bazeh (all of Israel are responsible for each other) captures the notion of communal responsibility in Jewish law that all Jews are responsible for each other. Likewise, this collective responsibility entails using our

best effort to see the future as it is emerging.

The Federation Team, guided by Jewish values, is excited to embark on this journey with you using SMART goals.

#### **SMART Goals:**

Specific

Measurable

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Relevant

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As you think

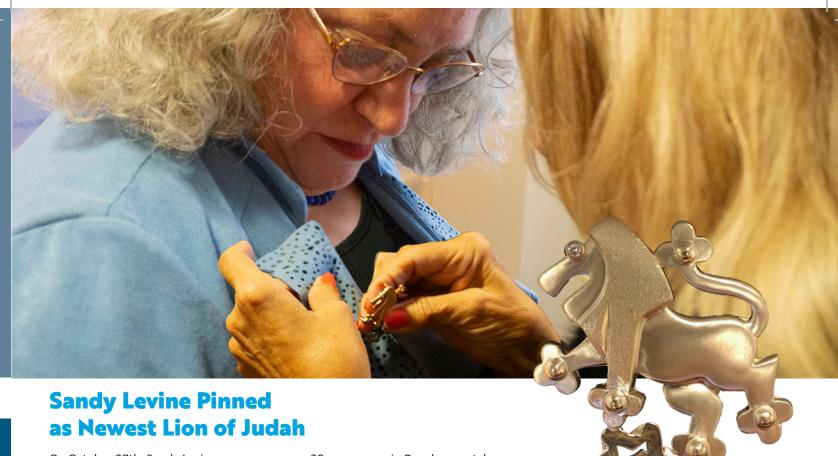
about our Jewish future, please do not hesitate to reach out to share with me. I would love to join you for a cup of coffee or a phone call, or send me an email. I have much to learn from you and welcome your thoughts and insights.

Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, reminds us the light of the Jewish people endures and glows. May we go forth loving our neighbor as ourselves. Together, we can make a positive impact on our community for generations to come.

May we all prosper on this journey beyond the horizon.



**Moshe Kruger Executive Director** 574-233-1164 x1802 MKruger@TheJewishFed.org



On October 27th, Sandy Levine, our Federation's Jewish Family Services Director, received her Lion of Judah pin in recognition of her generous donation to our Jewish Federation. At the ceremony, Sandy was joined by her husband Danny and previous Lion of Judah recipients, Terry Feldbaum and Ann Silverman.

When asked why she decided to make this donation, Sandy said, "My father loved the Federation." When Sandy's father died, according to his wishes he had requested that donations be made both to Temple Beth-El and the Jewish Federation. Sandy said, "The Lion of Judah donation was an extension of his wishes."

Moreover, Sandy says that by becoming a Lion of Judah, she hopes to create a Jewish legacy for future generations.

According to the JFNA website, "The Lions of Judah are the most dynamic philanthropic Jewish women in the world. We are strong women of all ages, an international sisterhood of thousands of global activists who care deeply about the Jewish future".

Sandy Levine definitely fits this description.

Last January, Sandy took on the position of Jewish Family Services Director following

a 30 year career in Developmental Disabilities, culminating in a Directorship at Woodlands in Cass County, Michigan.

When asked what it is about her job that gives her the most satisfaction, she thinks about how her father benefited from the Federation's services. Sandy has fond memories of how her father appreciated the "care packages" that the Federation brought to senior citizens living in longterm care facilities for the Jewish holidays. During the difficult period of isolation of Covid, this project was very important to our local Jewish senior citizens.

One project that Sandy is especially proud of are the 22 Passover meals that Jewish Family Services delivered last spring. As Moshe Kruger wrote in the April OCN, "Jewish Family services launched their annual Passover appeal and our community was able to help the Hebrews cross the Red Sea. Together we were able to raise over \$3,000 to ensure no one in our community should have to deal with food insecurities this Passover."

Our Federation family extends a hearty mazel tov to Sandy and her family for her Lion of Judah recognition and for her outstanding work at the Jewish Federation.

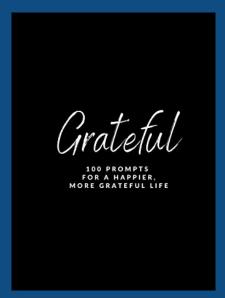


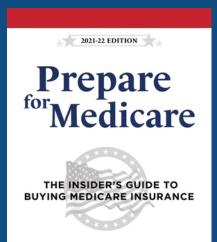


#### **Bob Feferman**

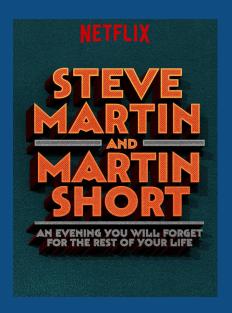
**Community Relations Director** 574-233-1164 x1815 RFeferman@TheJewishFed.org







**Matt Feret** 



#### **Caring Connections**

Hanukkah has already started! We light candles each night and see increasing joy as each night brings more flames. This year, JFS is bringing flame-less candles to some of our seniors, putting safety first. We also sent out Hanukkah gifts to our pantry families, with candles, dreidels and gelt. Lunch 'n' Learn will resume in January. Meanwhile, we're finishing up the year with over 500 wellness contacts and over \$10,000 in pantry assistance provided.

Come find Friends of JFS Greater St Joseph Valley on Facebook; see you there! We post some Federation news there, and we also post health and wellness information.

#### **Finding Joy**

Sometimes joy is easy and obvious. A grandparent kvells over the new baby. A fat envelope arrives from a desirable university. A holiday gift sparkles in its wrapping. The bride-to-be finds her

perfect dress. These moments might be fleeting, but they are also memorable. If captured in a photo, the joy can be re-experienced again and again.

There are many words in Hebrew that denote joy. So many words must mean that joy is important in Judaism, just as the many Innuit words for snow demonstrate how important snow is to the Innuit. Here are some examples, some remarkably familiar, others, less so. We may all know the joy of a Simcha (שמחה), a celebration. Less familiar is the word Osher (אושר), a deep lasting happiness. There is Orah (אורה), which is the happiness of light. I feel that one when I light Friday night candles. Another word is Gila (גילה), an exuberant joy or the happiness of discovery. Then there is Ditza (דיצה), a sublime joy. That is what I felt at my daughter's wedding! There is Sasson (ששון), sudden unexpected happiness. I felt that when my other daughter found her career in Occupational Therapy, which had been the career of a favorite aunt. That would lead to her feeling Tzahala (צהלה), happiness or dancing. Finally, we have Chedva (חדווה), the joy of being together.

I find joy in giving the perfect gift and in nurturing others. Laughing with others brings immense joy as well. In difficult moments, such as when I am klutzy, I can

## "There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward." -Khalil Gibran

Other times, joy is not so apparent. How do you tap into joy when feeling blah? Or when life presents difficulties? You might need to scrabble in the dirt to examine it for buried treasure. Like an archaeologist at a dig, you might unearth tidbits of joy in sifting through daily life. Savor the smell of a rose, the taste of your morning cup of joe. Look at old photos. Wonder in the beauty of a single snowflake.

laugh at myself and feel better than I would if I were crying. This idea is upheld in the Hasidic teachings, in which we are taught to overcome sadness. According to the Baal Shem Tov, anger and fury disappear when love and joy enter.

Sandy Levine, MA
Jewish Family Services Director
574-233-1164 x1806
SandyL@TheJewishFed.org

#### **A Program Update**

Hanukkah Sameach! Happy Hanukkah to everyone in our community, both close and far this Hanukkah season! With all the marketing we have been doing for upcoming events, I hope you already know what to look forward to this month. With the first days of Hanukkah already behind us, we will be closing our holiday programing with our annual Vodka & Latke event Dec. 5th, a NEXTGen event that always brings a good crowd. Make sure to register in advance to ensure that we fry up enough latkes for you.



At the end of this month, we also have Winter Camp! Many of you know me as the Camp Ideal Director, so you know this program is close to my heart. Winter Camp has been done before yet some years it slipped by less noticed. This Winter we

have tons planned for your kids, to engage them with Winter activities, Jewish lessons, and so much more. At the time of writing this I cannot confirm everything, but we are working on things such as Snow Shoeing the Federation trails, sledding trips, and the story behind the origin of Cholent which we can then make together. Truly an experience I would like to share with all, but unfortunately our places are limited, so register ASAP to save your place.

In my last few articles, I began to open up about my passions and my goals in my position as program director of the Jewish Federation. With the new calendar year coming up, I thought it would be appropriate to take the time to share with you what my goals are for the new year, as well as how I intend to meet them. Education and Jewish identity discovery are at the core of my thought process

when creating programs here at the Federation. But these concepts can have completely different connotations from one person to the next. To

be precise, I want to provide programs that bring to light new ways in which one's Jewish identity relates to their life here in South Bend. I intend to illuminate how Jews from all corners of the world celebrate their Judaism, and how they have been doing so for thousands of years. Education starts with questioning, so I intend to use the Federation as that meeting place where we can ask questions and together find answers. This cannot be done alone, and requires people of different mindsets to do so. This year, I want to rededicate programing to this cause. Hanukkah, what a perfect time to share the light together, and rededicate ourselves to the journey that is our Jewish Identity.

As always, if you have suggestions on ways to travel this journey together, my door is always open.







#### For the Sake of Mahloket

In January 2021, I was struggling to hold on to a fundamental belief that had informed my behavior in areas spanning from my social interactions to the way I taught writing: the belief that if you made an effort to ethically and consciously engage with people's ideas and opinions, even (and especially) those which were different from yours, you could improve yourself, and—in a larger sense—you could improve society.

My trust in the power of ethical rhetoric was strongly influenced by the writing of then-Director of First Year Writing at Notre Dame, John Duffy, for whose Writing & Rhetoric program I taught from 2017-19. In an Inside Higher Ed article entitled "Virtuous Arguments," Duffy initially writes, "To say that the current state of public discourse is abysmal seems selfevident. Toxic rhetoric has become a fact of everyday life, a form of entertainment, and a corporate product," but then goes on to highlight the transformative ethical practices inherent in the student writing (and thinking) process. Duffy contends, "When they (students) consider seriously opinions, facts, or values that contradict their own, they practice the most radical and potentially transformative behavior of all; they sacrifice the consolations of certainty and expose themselves to the doubts and contradictions that adhere to every worthwhile question. In learning to listen to others, students practice the

virtues of tolerance and generosity." In other words, listening to other people doesn't just help you argue against them better, it also helps you change into a better person and a better member of society.

My experience in the small sample size of the Notre Dame university writing classroom supported Duffy's theory. In class discussions, in their papers, and in their general interactions in the classroom, students were indeed able to face and grapple with opinions and ideas that differed from their own and. from what I witnessed, to grow ethically and intellectually through doing so. The problem, for me, was that when I left Notre Dame in 2019 and looked outside the classroom, things didn't look quite so bright anymore.

I spent 2019-20 in Israel on a Dorot Fellowship in which I engaged in conversation with people from all facets of Israeli society, from the religious to the secular and from the politically left to the far right, from Muslim to Christian to Jew, but, in fact, the divides in Israeli society weren't what shook my faith in the transformative power of ethical rhetoric.

Instead, it was the news coming out of the United States that did me in. After spending a year in a place geographically and culturally distant enough to lend me the sort of perspective that you can't

achieve while living inside a situation, I was very nervous about returning to America in June 2020. Everything I was seeing in the news and on social media pointed to a country divided by the pandemic, failing to engage in a constructive national reckoning with ongoing racism, and beset by general mutual disdain. And then there was the obvious deep failure of national leadership to set any other example for how to engage in discourse than the one described by Duffy—abysmal, toxic, used as a form of entertainment without any thought spared for how such destructive rhetoric would impact the lives and behavior of Americans.

In short, I thought we were doomed. I felt that the country was going to break apart, and no amount of small-scale ethical engagement on a person-to-person level was going to be able to fix things at this point. It was with this dejected, skeptical mindset that I nevertheless applied to the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies' Mahloket Matters Fellowship, a cohort of Jewish people from across the United States who would get together over the winter and spring months of 2021 to learn from Jewish sources about productive disagreement and then bring what they had learned back to their own home communities. At that point, I think I just wanted someone to convince me that there was still hope.

In explanation of the purpose of this fellowship, Pardes's website states: "We live in a moment of unprecedented breakdown in civil discourse. Yet, our Jewish tradition upholds the principle that constructive disagreement for the sake of heaven (Mahloket L'Shem Shamayim) is not only imperative but the holy work needed to repair what can feel like irreconcilable differences that permeate within our Jewish communities." My motivation to participate in the Mahloket Matters Fellowship was reinforced by this reminder that the principles of ethical and constructive disagreement were, in fact, a key part of my own religious tradition.

Still, I came to the first Mahloket Matters meeting with no small amount of hopelessness. I felt like I'd been around this block before, initially believing that if we just threw one or two starfish back into the ocean it would make a difference (for those individual starfish, at least), then becoming jaded by the reality I saw around me on a communal, local, and national level. I wasn't sure if I could go back to the way I used to see things. And yet, after a few meetings, the door started to crack open for me again. I was inspired by this cohort of wonderful individuals who were unsure how to make things better in their communities but were still willing to keep trying, to keep finding different angles from which to approach the problem. In fact, the former president of the Tree of

Life Congregation of Pittsburgh was in my cohort, and I felt that if she could be there and still have hope left to give, then I could too.

After a few months of biweekly meetings and discussions, the fellows were tasked with implementing events and discussion groups centered around constructive disagreement, or Mahloket L'Shem Shamayim, in our own communities. I chose to use the curricular materials provided by Pardes to start a Mahloket Matters discussion group in my backyard over the summer, and I asked around to see if people were interested in participating or knew anyone who was. The people who decided to join were lively and intelligent Jewishly-affiliated humans from across the religious and political spectrum in South Bend, and we spent 5 weeks diving into Pardes's materials together. We examined Biblical and Talmudic sources, asking questions about topics like why G-d gave us a Torah that allows for so many different interpretations and whether it was correct for Moses to demand that Korach meet with him after Korach attempted to foment rebellion, which led us to consider whether we ourselves should be meeting in conversation with people who deeply disagree with us. Ultimately, I'm really glad we did.

Today, in our South Bend Jewish community, we have what I would like to

suggest is a blessing in the form of people who embody a multitude of beliefs and backgrounds. Jewish tradition, rather than attempting to homogenize us, believes that differing opinions can lead to positive results, as long as we are willing to engage with one another in an ethical and constructive manner, rather than letting these differences break our communities apart. I'm still not sure whether smallerscale conversations will help us fix the divides in our country at large, but when my mind goes to a place of skepticism, I do my best to think of another phrase from Pirkei Avot, or Ethics of the Fathers: "It is not upon you to finish the work, but nor are you free to refrain from it." In other words, we have to try.

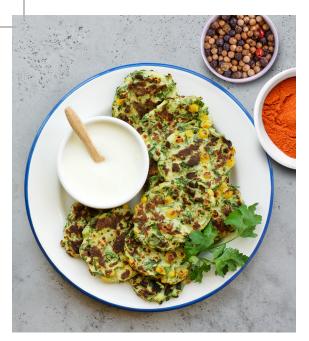
For those who are interested in engaging in active discussion on topics that bridge communities and will foster greater connection and understanding, you are invited to come to Controversy Café, a monthly initiative of the Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley and the Midwest Torah Center.

For more information, please contact Shirlee Greenwald at Israel@TheJewishFed. org or 574-233-1164.

#### Sarah Snider

Community Contributor





#### **Curry Vegetable** Latkes

From Our Community Table Happy Holiday Greetings, dear readers! By the time this newsletter goes to press, we will be in full on celebratory mode with family and friends as we banish the darkness with beautiful light and celebrate the holiday of Hanukkah. While Hanukkah is not the

most important of our Jewish holidays, that doesn't mean it can't be the most delicious!

"Dedication" is one of the meanings of the word, Hanukkah. Which makes a lot of sense given that one of the central themes we commemorate during this holiday is a re-dedication. The Maccabees discovered, during their rebuilding, purifying, and re-dedicating of the Second Temple, that the pure olive oil necessary to light the lamps within the Temple had all but been destroyed...except for one tiny bowl that was found, its wax cover bearing the seal of the signet ring of the High Priest from the days of Samuel the prophet, perfectly intact. And so, the Miracle of Hanukkah, that this tiny little bowl of olive oil, which should have only been enough to last for one night, somehow lasted for eight... exactly the amount of time necessary to have new, pure olive oil pressed and made ready. I love miracles! And good olive oil! And holidays!

Last Hanukkah, I designed a latke bar with 5 or 6 latke variations for a cooking demonstration with the Chicago Council for Jewish Elderly. When all was said and done (and eaten), there were two clear favorites -- a cilantro-jalapeño latke with a

dressy chipotle cream, and a bursting with flavor curry vegetable latke that had a rich labne side. The curry vegetable latke was the fan favorite, and my favorite... but it was close! And so, my Hannukah gift to you is Tory Avey's recipe for her extremely delicious Curry Vegetable Latkes. This recipe does not call for potatoes, as most traditional latke recipes do...only zucchini, onion, and carrots, with a "choose your own" binder and a flavor wheel of amazing spice. These would be wonderful any time of the year with their cheerful, golden color, their crispy crunch, and their gentle kiss of spice, but are especially lovely, I think, for Hanukkah, when we commemorate our history in the tastiest

That's a holiday wrap for Our Community Table. Sending you all wishes for a holiday filled with happiness, love, light, and latkes!

#### **INGREDIENTS**

3 medium zucchini

2 large carrots

1 onion

1 cup matzo meal or bread crumbs or Panko

2 large eggs, beaten

1 1/2 Tablespoons potato starch

1 3/4 teaspoons curry powder

1 1/4 teaspoons salt (or more to taste)

1/2 teaspoon allspice

1/2 teaspoon cumin

1/4 teaspoon cayenne (optional - adds spice)

1/4 teaspoon pepper

Peanut or canola oil for frying

Labaneh, tzatziki, Greek yogurt or sour cream for topping

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Before you begin making the latkes, place a wire cooling rack close to the area where you will be frying the latkes. Place a layer of paper towels below the cooling rack to catch excess oil.

Wash and remove ends from the zucchini, then grate using a hand grater or food processor shredding attachment with fine holes (small shreds). I really recommend using the food processor, it saves a ton of time and will help you avoid onion tears when grating the onion. Remove and set

Wash and peel carrots, then grate using a hand grater or food processor shredding attachment with fine holes (small shreds). Remove and set aside.

Grate the onion using the same grater or attachment you used for the zucchini and carrots (fine holes for small shreds).

Place zucchini shreds and grated onion in the center of a clean tea towel or multiple layers of cheesecloth. Wrap the shreds up in the cloth, twisting the cloth to secure the bundle, and squeeze firmly to remove excess liquid from the shreds.

Place zucchini and onion into a large clean dry bowl. Stir the shreds with a fork to make sure the grated onion is evenly mixed throughout the zucchini shreds.

Place carrot shreds in the center of a clean tea towel or multiple layers of cheesecloth.

Wrap the shreds up in the cloth, twisting the cloth to secure the bundle, and squeeze firmly to remove excess liquid from the shreds.

Place the carrot shreds into the bowl with the zucchini and onion.

Heat oil in a large skillet. Add enough to reach a depth of 1/8 inch. Heat slowly over medium to about 325 degrees F.

While oil is heating, use the fork to stir the matzo meal, beaten eggs, potato starch, salt, curry, allspice, cumin, cayenne and pepper into the zucchini, carrot and onion shreds. You can sprinkle on more salt to taste after cooking, if desired. Take care to make sure the egg and seasonings are fully mixed throughout the zucchini shreds.

Scoop ¼ cup of the vegetable latke mixture and shape into a flat, compacted disc.

Place the disk carefully into the hot oil. Latkes can break apart at this point, they're very delicate. If you can get them into the hot oil in one piece, chances are they will stick together - frying them is like the "glue" that holds them together. It takes a gentle touch, and it may take you some practice to get the "feel" for it.

The oil should sizzle, but not pop when the latke hits it; if the oil jumps wildly or smokes, it is too hot. If it only bubbles weakly, the oil is not hot enough. Use the first latke to test the oil temperature, and don't fry a whole batch until the temperature is right.

Continue shaping the latkes in this way. Fry in batches of 4-5 latkes at a time for 2-3 minutes per side until brown and crispy. Note: If your latkes aren't holding together, stir more matzo meal into the mixture, 2 teaspoons at a time, until the batter "holds". You can also add another egg to the mixture if needed.

Remove the latkes from the pan using a metal spatula and place them on the wire cooling rack to drain. Sprinkle with more salt to taste, if desired.

#### **Cristyne Porile**

Community Contributor

#### **Raven Black by Ann Cleves**

Although the TV series, *Shetland* has veered away from the original books by Ann Cleeves, the author approves of the changes and has expressed a wish that she had created the lovable character, Tosh. The map to the right shows how far north the Shetland islands are located from the mainland of Scotland. This is a hint as to how the location creates an atmosphere perfect for unique characters and plotlines that might haunt you forever.

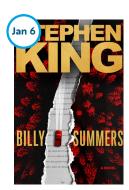
Currently, there are eight *Shetland* books in this mystery series. If you're already a fan of Ann Cleeves, you must know she's the author of the eight books in the *Vera Stanhope* series as well, also available on TV. Now a third series, *The Long Call* has recently been released.

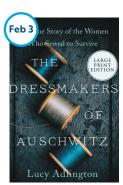
Our upcoming list of books is a mix of non-fiction, historical fiction, novels, and crime novels. We have one by none other than Stephen King.

The Federation Book Club meets via Zoom at 4 PM for 1-2 hours on the first Thursday of every month. Visit TheJewishFed.org/Events to sign up.

#### **Upcoming Books:**







**Beth Buechler**Community Contributor





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#### STAFF

Sheri Alpert Administrative Associate SheriA@TheJewishFed.org 574-233-1164 x1820

**Emily Benedix Director of Operations** EmilyB@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1801

Dan Cossman

**Facilities Associate** DCossman@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1810

**Bob Feferman** 

**CRC Director** 

RFeferman@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1815

Shirlee Greenwald Israel Program Director

Israel@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1807

Nancy Kennedy

JFS Associate

JewishFamilyServicesBH@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1020

Sandy Levine

JFS Director

SandyL@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1806

Dan Ravitch

**Program Director** 

DRavitch@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1819

Allen Stenberg

**Director of Community Engagement** Astenberg@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1811

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Michael Kirsch President

Moshe Kruger

**Executive Director** MKruger@TheJewishFed.org

574-233-1164 x1802

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