

Israel's 60th Anniversary and ARZA's 30th Anniversary

So long as still within the inmost heart a Jewish spirit sings, so long as the eye looks eastward, gazing towards Zion, our hope is not lost — that hope of two millennia, to be a free people in our land, the land of Zion and Jerusalem.

(Hatikvah, Tr. Gates of Prayer: The New Union Prayer Book, 1975)

The sixtieth anniversary of the State of Israel, May 2008, offers the opportunity to celebrate the miracle of Israel's birth and existence, to applaud her accomplishments, to marvel at her future potential, and to remind ourselves of the dangers of powerlessness.

In this same year the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of ARZA, the Association of Reform Zionists of America, provides us with an opportunity to consider anew the place of Israel and Zionism in the sacred life of Reform Jews.

Reform Zionism represents a commitment to love of Israel. This is a love that is in no way incompatible with constant, honest efforts to help Israel become the society that her founders and her citizens have dreamed she can be, based on sacred values of universal human dignity, uncompromising justice, and Jewish sovereignty.

This is the time for Reform Jews to proclaim Israel and Jewish peoplehood to be core components of their personal and communal Jewish identities, no less so than God, Torah, personal spirituality, or a commitment to tikkun olam.

Therefore Women of Reform Judaism calls on its sisterhoods to:

1. Join in reaffirming our commitment, as Reform Jews, to the security and welfare of the State of Israel and to all ongoing sacred efforts to make her a more just, pluralistic, and democratic state,
2. Urge their congregations to participate in a weekend-long program, May 9 - 11, 2008, of Israel engagement to help all rejoice in, reflect upon, and renew our mutual commitment to Israel and the Jewish people, and
3. Encourage their members to voice their support for, and love of Israel by joining ARZA, the Israel arm and voice of the Reform Movement in the United States, or ARZA Canada, its counterpart in Canada.

For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit www.wrj.org/social-justice-home