



Spirituality | Learning | Culture

Makom – meaning place in Hebrew – is an inclusive community fusing Jewish tradition and progressive values through spirituality, learning and culture. Makom inspires diverse participants to explore together how Judaism can meaningfully enrich our lives.

Annual Report 2021-22

While the pandemic continued to prevent a return to “normal life,” we found creative and memorable ways to **celebrate holidays** together, from Tishah be-Av services in a (dry) wading pool to lighting Hannukah candles in a fish tank in the rain!

We held regular **Shabbat services**: in a quiet courtyard in the summer and fall; in the spacious Wolfond Centre during the winter; and on a Friday night in June, we welcomed people back to our College Street storefront for the first time since early 2020.



Makom families regularly gathered outdoors – through all seasons and all weather conditions – to celebrate upcoming holidays with other downtown Jewish families.



“I wish we had had such good Jewish education programming when I was a kid.” –Gerald



We welcomed more than 250 people to outdoor **High Holiday services**. With higher pandemic capacity limits and a larger outdoor space, we were able to accommodate more people at each service than the previous year. We welcomed back Carrie Watkins to lead traditional services alongside Rabbi Aaron under tents in the beautiful courtyard of St. Peter's Church.

“The best Kol Nidrei I had ever been to”
–Micah

“I loved all the beautiful, soul-filled singing!”
–Sara

“Totally magnificent”
–Geoff



Kol Nidrei services under tents in the courtyard of St. Peter's

Throughout the year, we offered a variety of **adult education** classes taught by Rabbi Aaron. From one-off mini classes to months-long courses, there was something for everyone!

The study tonight was fantastic! Thank you so much! –Zainab

Thanks for your wonderful classes. I've really enjoyed them. –Maxine

Classes we ran this year:

- Weekly Wisdom
- Jeremiah
- Takeout Torah
- Understanding the Seder
- 8 prophets in 8 weeks
- Jewish Sources on Abortion
- What's Owed? Canadian Reparations, Jewish Sources



Rabbi Aaron teaches at the Lag Ba-Omer picnic

We also went on a **Scarborough Bluffs winter hike**, hosted online **neySHEV Jewish meditation** sits twice per week, and featured the opening of the **FENTSTER** window gallery exhibition, Parchment.

Thank you for a beautiful hike on Sunday. It was so great to get out into nature. –Susan



Building on the success of programming specifically for **interfaith and intercultural couples** that we began the prior year, we offered regular opportunities to gather online to meet each other and learn together.

I very much enjoyed the Purim event and the couples I was paired up with that evening were absolutely great! I look forward to attending the next events! –Erika

75

couples

Thank you for your commitment to including 'Jewish&' families; it means so much. –Lauren

I appreciate the invite and value this type of programming so much! –Sara

This year, we offered the following sessions:

- Rosh Hashanah
- Hanukkah
- Tu bi-Shvat
- Passover
- Lag ba-Omer
- What's Torah?
- Ask the Rabbi Anything

Despite the many challenges of a constantly evolving public health situation, we provided **Hebrew and Jewish education** to **32 students** in JK through grade 5.



MAKOM AFTERSCHOOL
Jewish Learning Reimagined

Makom Afterschool Flex took advantage of the flexibility and personalized attention possible with online learning, individually or in pairs. Our fantastic teachers, all native Hebrew speakers, helped the students develop their Hebrew conversational, reading, and writing skills.

With **generous support from Makom donors** and UJA federation, we provide need-based bursaries to students who would otherwise be unable to attend Makom Afterschool. We never turn away a student due to lack of funds.

“Isaac genuinely looks forward to his Hebrew sessions and really likes his teacher. We are thrilled he feels so encouraged and engaged.” –Kate



Makom ATID offers substantive, nuanced, pluralistic Hebrew and Jewish Learning to students in grades 6-8.

In September 2021, Makom ATID returned to in-person learning! We began the year meeting outdoors in a student's family's backyard. When the weather got too cold, we moved indoors to Makom's storefront, where masks and distance helped keep everyone safe.

Through in-depth text study, classroom discussion and multimedia resources, Rabbi Aaron taught the students about Jewish history, heroes and books, from ancient to modern times.



ATID students learned about Torah scrolls



MAKOM ATID
Afterschool Torah Im Derekh-Eretz



ATID students sitting distanced and masked at Makom

Students who opted into Hebrew language learning worked on their Hebrew conversational, reading, and writing skills through weekly online tutoring sessions, either 1-on-1 or in pairs.

This year, we launched **Downtown Jewish Teens**! High school teens gather together to celebrate holidays, learn, hang out with Jewish peers, and have fun!



40
teens in
community

This year's events:

- Hanukkah Candle Lighting & Campfire
- High Park Winter Hike
- Ice Skating & Bonfire
- Multimedia Holocaust Education
- Post-Passover Mimouna & Iftar with Muslim Teens
- Lag ba-Omer Dinner & Bonfire



While pandemic considerations meant we weren't running programs in our **College Street storefront**, we partnered with other local charities to put our space to good use.

In July 2021, Makom hosted a **vaccine clinic** for clients of Fort York Food Bank.

"All of the clients we served had major access concerns: they lacked identification, didn't speak English or had struggled to take off work to go to a clinic. They felt comfortable in your space and were thrilled to get their shots after all this time. I truly can't thank you folks enough."

—Timothy, Fort York Food Bank

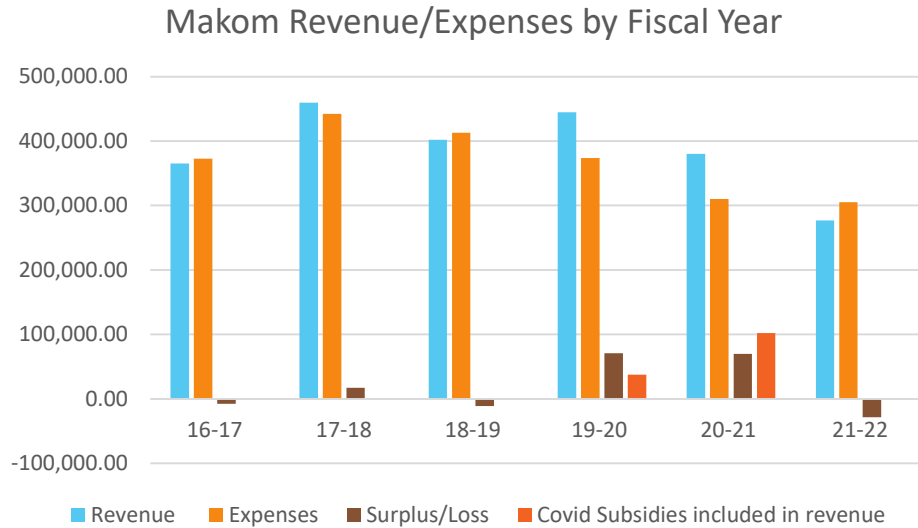


Local organization **Food Not Bombs** stored food, packaging, clothing and toiletries at Makom. Every week, their volunteers came by to assemble care packages to distribute to those in need.

The Makom storefront piled high with food and toiletries to distribute to those in need

Financial Information

Makom's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.



Government Covid subsidies received between March 2020 and October 2021 have helped Makom continue to operate, and even resulted in a larger-than-usual surpluses in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. These funds will be spent through our recovery as we return to in-person programming and Afterschool after years of disruption.

Makom operates on a tight budget; your contributions really do make a difference!

Registered Charity Number 828311712RR0001

I am glad to support Makom and to show my appreciation of all the ways you enrich the downtown Jewish community. –Dorothy

Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

\$147,703

Total donations

207

Adult members

Makom relies on the support of our generous donors. Thank you to everyone who donated this year!

www.makomTO.org/donate

Makom's team is overseen by the Board of Directors, who are responsible for the strategic direction of the organization.

Staff Members



Aaron Levy
Founding Rabbi



Adina Gamse
Managing Director



Ariel Zaltzman
Director of Youth
Education and
Programming
Since May 2022

Board of Directors

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Daphne Jackson
Since Nov 2021

Alan Sless
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Barry Gang
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Josh Patlik
Since Nov 2021

Lily Ohana
Afterschool Liaison
Until Nov 2021

Lea Zeltserman
Afterschool Liaison
Since Nov 2021

Tae Hart

Reuben Klein
Since Nov 2021

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