



URJ BIENNIAL 2019

DECEMBER 11 - 15 • CHICAGO, IL

**Learning, Networking, Worship,
Entertainment, Inspiration,
and So Much More**

What is the URJ Biennial?

- It's the largest Jewish gathering in North America.
- The most recent URJ Biennial in 2017 was the biggest one ever, with nearly 6,000 attendees.
- In addition to thousands of participants onsite, many more joined the plenary sessions and worship services via livestream.
- Delegates came from nearly every U.S. state (plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), six Canadian provinces, Israel, and a dozen other countries.

Why attend the URJ Biennial?

- Biennial attendees take their newly acquired resources and tools back to their congregations to create positive change with a huge and lasting impact.
- Worshipping together with 6,000 Reform Jews is an extraordinarily powerful spiritual experience, and an opportunity to "recharge your Jewish batteries."
- Entertainment! Enjoy the best Jewish music line-up anywhere, including four dozen leading musicians and groups, and the Biennial choir, featuring conference participants from across North America.
- Visit one hundred and fifty exhibitors, including emerging Jewish artists, organizations, and vendors from all over the world.
- Vote! Resolutions approved at Biennial determine Reform Movement positions on social, economic, and humanitarian issues.

Who is at the URJ Biennial?

- Five hundred rabbis, 150 cantors, and 200 congregational presidents
- Leaders of NFTY, the Reform Jewish Youth Movement
- Dozens of clergy and lay leaders from the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism
- Hundreds of leaders from World Union for Progressive Judaism congregations in 12 countries
- Previous attendees and speakers have included leaders of major Jewish organizations: Birthright Israel, PJ Library, KESHET, HIAS, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, Shalom Hartman Institute, ADL, AIPAC, InterfaithFamily, Michael J. Fox Foundation, Jewish Federations, and dozens of other partner organizations.



Program Highlight | Extensions

Four URJ Biennial Extensions are designed to inspire, challenge, and motivate our thinking as congregational leaders. Sponsored by Reform Movement partner organizations and led by experts in the field, the extensions will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday and Sunday of Biennial.

Wednesday, December 11

- ***Jewish Education and Engagement***, sponsored by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Association of Reform Jewish Educators (ARJE), and Program and Engagement Professionals of Reform Judaism (PEP-RJ)

Sunday, December 15

- ***The Experience of Women in the Rabbinate***, sponsored by the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ), and the Women's Rabbinic Network (WRN)
- ***Reform Judaism in Israel*** and organizing for the upcoming ***World Zionist Congress Elections***
- ***The Future of Synagogues***, with a look at current societal trends, ancient guidance, and opportunities to begin revisioning Reform congregations for the next decade

Program Highlight | Music Lab

This innovative space combines music and teaching: learn from emerging Jewish artists, discover new music, and explore how music can strengthen synagogue programming during Music Lab workshops.

Program Highlight | Intensives

The 2019 Biennial will include four distinct learning intensives specially designed with specific audiences in mind. Throughout the five days of Biennial, participants will choose from more than 125 sessions whose content will enable them to return home prepared to implement meaningful change in their congregations.

- The ***Social Justice Leadership*** intensive will orient attendees to the Religious Action Center's new campaign and provide tools to effect meaningful change.
- In the ***Leadership Development*** intensive, Northwestern University's Center for Leadership will offer a training program designed to help congregations implement leadership development curricula.
- The ***Membership Engagement and Development*** intensive will differentiate between programming and meaningful engagement—and how to open new doors for funders.
- In the ***Early Childhood and Youth Education*** intensive, participants will explore the critical place of education in a congregation's portfolio.

Featured Speakers

2019 speakers to be announced. Previous URJ Biennial speakers have included Senator Elizabeth Warren, Governor Charlie Baker, Reverend Dr. William J. Barber, Danny Meyer, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, and more.

