



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

Annual Report

2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

Message from Our Leaders

11

Shifra Shed

03

Infographic: 2024

13

Miriam's Center

05

Re-Entry Services

14

Shifra After-School Program

06

**Alternative Sentencing
Program**

16

Financial Highlights

07

Religious Services

17

Board

10

Shifra Program

18

Acknowledgements

MISSION

The Aleph Institute is a non-profit Jewish organization offering religious, educational, and humanitarian services to incarcerated people and their families, as well as to struggling families in the local Orthodox Jewish community.

5804 Beacon Street | Pittsburgh, PA 15217
412-421-0111 | AlephNE.org

MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

Over the past year, the need for Aleph's services has remained high. Our prison programs continue to support incarcerated Jewish men and women, with prison visitations, inmate advocacy, providing the inmates and the institutions with religious materials, and more. Meanwhile, we continue to support both those entering and those exiting the correctional system, with our Alternative Sentencing Program providing alternatives to prison time, and our Reentry Programs supporting those who have completed their sentences, ensuring they don't recidivate. Additionally, our Shifra Program continues to support the previously unmet needs of the local Orthodox Jewish community, with services including the Shifra Shed, a food bank which provides Kosher food for those in need, as well as an afterschool program, and Miriam's Center, for mothers to relax, learn, and socialize in a culturally appropriate setting.

Across the US, incarceration rates continue to rise. Our ongoing prison visitations, from both Aleph rabbis and rabbis whom we work with, provide critical support for incarcerated Jewish men and women in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, and across the northeastern states, across local, state, and federal levels. Our religious material, including our Torah Weekly newsletters and our video sermons from Rabbi Vogel, are viewed every week by inmates in institutions across the country. And we have expanded and enhanced our religious services for reentrants, allowing them to participate in Jewish life in a setting comfortable for them.

Our Shifra Program has also expanded, in some areas limited only by the spaces currently available to us. The Shifra Food Shed, through collaboration with local organizations, businesses, and foundations, including the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank and 412 Food Rescue, continues to provide over one ton of Kosher food to around 180 families weekly in a dignified manner. We also provided extra food packages for families ahead of the Sukkot and Passover holidays, when Jewish law mandates festive meals. Our afterschool program provides homework help and a hot meal for children in the community, while our Miriam's Center continues to provide classes, workshops, and a safe, culturally appropriate socializing space for women in the community. Our case workers also work with families to help them through crises and connect them with available resources. As the only organization in Pittsburgh focused on providing for the needs of the Orthodox Jewish community in Pittsburgh, Aleph Institute's Shifra Program is vital for ensuring that the needs of this community are not overlooked.

With blessings,

Rabbi Moishe Mayir Vogel
Executive Director, Aleph Institute

RE-ENTRY & ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING PROGRAM



Re-entry Services

230

Sessions



12-Step Programs

2,184

Attended



Alternative Sentences

15



Community Integration
Programs

180

Attended

SHIFRA SHED



Ready Meals Distributed

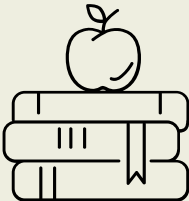
3,120



Families Served

9,620

SHIFRA AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM



Children Served

1,820



Family Members Attended

4,836

IN PRISON PROGRAMS

Incarceration isolates Jewish individuals and deepens despair across the Northeast. In 2024, Aleph's In-Prison Programs delivered compassionate support to counter these challenges, with rabbis logging thousands of hours visiting prisons to provide counseling and religious materials like Torah Weekly, easing loneliness while holiday supplies for Shabbat and Passover enabled observance, fostering hope. Partnerships with regional rabbis and volunteers amplified our reach, supporting dozens and proving small acts of compassion transform lives by strengthening Jewish identity. Aleph's 2024 efforts showed care shines in dark places, ensuring no one faced incarceration alone, but rather with hope and dignity.

RE-ENTRY SUPPORT

Returning from prison leaves ex-inmates without stable housing or jobs, often leading to reoffending, with Pennsylvania's 64% recidivism rate costing \$1.2 billion yearly. In 2024, Aleph's Reentry Programs in Pittsburgh provided free assistance to dozens, securing housing, healthcare, and employment to break this cycle. Our staff offered counseling to rebuild confidence and arranged religious programs to reconnect participants with Jewish traditions, fostering a sense of belonging. Partnerships with local agencies helped find apartments and job opportunities, ensuring practical steps toward independence. Aleph's 2024 work went beyond logistics, providing emotional support to mend family ties strained by incarceration. We saw parents reunite with children and workers regain stability, proving consistent aid transforms lives. Volunteers played a key role, connecting ex-inmates to community resources. This program reduced the community's social and economic strain, demonstrating that structured support can pave the way for lasting freedom. By addressing immediate and long-term needs, Aleph built a model for recovery, ensuring no one faced reintegration alone and giving ex-inmates the tools to thrive with purpose and connection. Our 2024 efforts showed that practical care can rewrite futures, strengthening the community one life at a time.

ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING PROGRAM

Incarceration disrupts families and costs taxpayers over \$60,000 per inmate annually, blocking rehabilitation paths. In 2024, Aleph's Alternative Sentencing Program supported five individuals directly and over 20 through local partners, collaborating with courts to arrange community service instead of jail, preserving families and job opportunities while reducing public expenses. Our team provided ongoing guidance to ensure participants avoided prison's lasting harm, working closely with Pittsburgh organizations to advocate for fairer outcomes that prioritized recovery over punishment. Aleph's 2024 efforts kept parents at home and futures intact, showing that tailored justice can heal communities. Each successful case—people serving society rather than time—proved second chances work when grounded in practical support. Volunteers and court allies helped craft plans that restored lives with stability. This program eased the financial and social toll of incarceration, offering the country a blueprint for humane sentencing that fosters growth rather than division. By keeping families together, Aleph strengthened the community's fabric, demonstrating that care-driven justice not only saves costs but also builds a stronger, more cohesive future for all involved.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

The isolation of incarceration often severs Jewish inmates from their faith, intensifying abandonment in Northeast prisons. In 2024, Aleph's Religious Services program countered this by providing spiritual support, with rabbis delivering counseling and Torah Weekly newsletters to dozens, while video sermons by Rabbi Vogel offered inspiration. Holiday supplies, like Shabbat candles and Passover Seder items, enabled observance, and Aleph's library of Jewish books provided access to Jewish texts. Partnerships with regional volunteers ensured broad reach. Aleph's 2024 efforts fostered resilience, showing faith can provide solace in confinement, ensuring inmates felt connected.



Dorothy's Program

Institutionalization in Northeast state hospitals isolates Jewish patients, compounding their distress. In 2024, Aleph's Dorothy Program provided dedicated support, with staff and volunteers offering regular visits and spiritual care to dozens, ensuring dignity amidst confinement. By delivering counseling and religious resources, we helped patients maintain their Jewish identity, fostering a sense of connection. Partnerships with regional organizations expanded our reach, reflecting Aleph's commitment to care. In 2024, the Dorothy Program showed that empathy can alleviate the loneliness of hospitalization, offering comfort and hope to those often overlooked.

12-Step Programs

Addiction isolates individuals and fuels re-incarceration, but 12-Step Programs, including Aleph's, help individuals achieve sobriety nationwide through peer support. In 2024, Aleph hosted six weekly meetings at our center, aiding dozens in recovery with free, empathetic aid in a safe space, supported by local organizers to promote sobriety and mend family ties. Aleph's work strengthened communities, showing structured support can rebuild lives. Partnerships ensured accessibility, proving care transforms through recovery.

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Aleph facilitates community programs that ease the pressures on households within Pittsburgh's Jewish community. Through coordinating a food pantry, women's support groups, and an after-school program, Aleph offers stabilizing resources for those in need. These initiatives work together to uplift entire families, enhancing their quality of life by addressing diverse challenges. In 2024, our programming supported dozens, fostering resilience and connection, ensuring every family member benefited from practical and emotional care.

SHIFRA PROGRAM



Named for a Torah midwife dedicated to nurturing life, the Shifra Program supports mothers in Pittsburgh's Jewish communities, established with Allegheny County's Department of Human Services funding. Aleph channels Shifra's legacy into community programs, including the Shifra Program, Shifra After-School Program, and Shifra Shed food pantry, offering vital resources. Caseworkers aided about 150 women and families in 2024, connecting them to employment, housing, food pantries, school supplies, childcare, mental health resources, and women's support groups. For assistance, contact shifra@alephne.org or 412-421-0111 Ext. 115, to ensure families thrive with dedicated support.



SHIFRA SHED

Food insecurity challenges Pittsburgh’s Jewish community, with kosher options often scarce and costly. In 2024, Aleph’s Shifra Shed, supported by grants from the Charles M. Morris Charitable Trust and Opportunity Fund, served over 140 families weekly with kosher food. Partnering with 412 Food Rescue, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, Elegant Edge Catering, Giant Eagle, and others, we provided fresh produce, baked goods, and 40–50 ready-made meals, distributing over 1½ tons of food weekly. This discreet pantry ensured dignified access, easing hunger and supporting faith practices, fostering healthier lives in Squirrel Hill.

MIRIAM'S CENTER



Pittsburgh's Orthodox Jewish women often face isolation with a lack of culturally acceptable spaces. In 2024, Aleph's Miriam's Center provided a welcoming social setting for dozens of women, offering culturally sensitive counseling, workshops, and gatherings to build community ties, with caseworkers tailoring support to address challenges like financial stress. Meanwhile, the Shifra Afterschool Program aided community youth daily with free homework help, activities, and hot meals in a nurturing environment, fostering academic progress and easing parental burdens. Local partnerships ensured access to resources, strengthening both programs. Aleph's 2024 efforts empowered women and children, proving appropriate social and practical support fortifies Pittsburgh's Jewish families, creating a resilient community through care and connection.

Financial Statements

FOR THE TWELVE-MONTHS ENDING
DECEMBER 31, 2024

REVENUE

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Private Donations | \$187,749.88 |
| Foundations | \$51,588.46 |
| Government Contracts | \$266,294.97 |
| Other | \$12,920.10 |

Total Revenues

\$518,553.41

EXPENSES

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Family Programs | \$74,280.79 |
| Hospital Programs | \$75,283.74 |
| In-Prison Programs | \$146,412.24 |
| Training Programs | \$14,362.27 |
| Re-entry Programs | \$28,287.46 |
| General Admin and Fundraising | \$136,168.96 |
| Shifra Programs | \$85,309.08 |

Total Expenses

\$560,104.45



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Board



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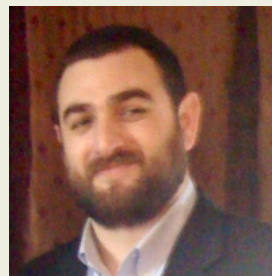
Neil Notkin



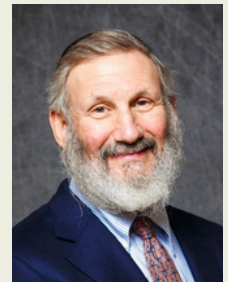
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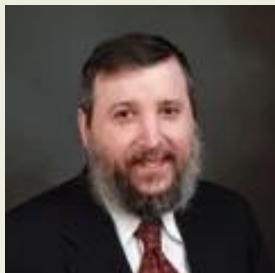
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**Rabbi Moishe
Mayir Vogel**



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Thank you !

Aleph Institute extends heartfelt gratitude to our supporters and donors.

Your steadfast dedication over 35 years has built essential resources for Squirrel Hill's Jewish community and incarcerated Jewish individuals across the Northeast. In 2024, your generosity drove meaningful change, supporting programs that uplift lives with care and dignity.

Thank you for standing with us in this vital mission, making a lasting difference.