



Rabbi Jeremy Parnes is the Spiritual Leader of the Beth Jacob Synagogue.

Jeremy was educated in England where he specialized in creative approaches to community development. His past involvement in community service began in London when he volunteered as a community development advisor with a non-profit. The Mulberry Housing Trust was a unique concept in low income social housing in inner-city London and modelled after the work of Octavia Hill (1838-1912) who was a woman ahead of her time. An artist and a radical, she was a pioneer of affordable housing and can be seen as the founder of modern social work. He was retained by the trust for a number of years in which was founded Arc Industries providing employment for the mentally challenged. A rental housing project providing affordable housing and counselling for unmarried mothers in the early 1970's and a half way house designed to introduce rehabilitated individuals back into the community after recovering from drug related addictions.

Jeremy continued his work in community development in Canada and specifically in Regina in the early nineties as a member and chair of his Rotary Club's Community Development Committee. The committee was looking for an appropriate project and Jeremy's next door neighbour at that time introduced him to the work of Habitat for Humanity. The committee agreed to to help fund the first build of the newly forming Regina chapter of Habitat and in 1992 Jeremy joined the Board of Habitat for Humanity, taking on the role as Building Chair. The first Habitat Regina House was built in North Central Regina in 1993. Jeremy went on to assist with future builds and became Vice-Chair and ultimately President of Habitat Regina in 1997. In August of 1998 Habitat Regina brought the Ed Schreyer Work Project to Regina under the auspices of then Governor General Ed Schreyer

and his wife Lilly, the local chapter built 6 houses in 5 days. Jeremy became fund raising chair in 1999 and went on to raise in excess of \$100,000 per year for the next three years before stepping back from Habitat.

In 2000 Jeremy became chair of the Inner-City and Social Housing Committee reporting to the Mayor's Task Force on Housing and serving on the Regina Housing Advisory Committee. He subsequently went on to chair the Homelessness Committee.

In 2002 he became the facilitator of the North Central Community Partnership. As a partnership of the three levels of government, this was a unique project designed to take a community development approach to understanding the needs of this inner-city community. The goal was to empower the residents of the community to speak out not just about the problems of the neighbourhood but also to offer creative and effective ways to improve their way of life.

This provided an opportunity to hire and train an inner-city team to undertake its own community development projects, develop an inner-city businesses association, advise a local business on how best to create a positive environment that would encourage successful indigenous employment opportunities and lead to the community's own local newspaper. Local youth organizations such as Street Culture Project were also engaged in aspects of this work.

Mr. Parnes has been a member of the Regina Multi-Faith Forum for a number of years and is particularly interested in building bridges of understanding and mutual respect between faiths. He is the chair of the recently formed Refugee Committee of the Forum and is happy to be one of many volunteers helping refugee families to settle and become a part of the rich communal fabric of Regina.

Mr. Parnes also sat on a number of other inner-city boards including Youth Connexions and The Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada. He is currently the chair of the Prison Chaplains Committee of the Regina Correctional Facility.

Aside from his work within the Regina community, Jeremy is Past Chair of the board of ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal an international Jewish outreach organization, which also houses the seminary from which he ordained as Rabbi and Spiritual Coach in 2012.