



**JACOB'S LADDER**  
**Jewish Legacy Program**  
*Congregation B'nai Jacob, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania*



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### ***Why should I consider leaving a legacy gift?***

Your will is your lasting partnership with the Jewish community, your sacred covenant with the Jewish people. Your bequest allows you to support those organizations that have been meaningful to you during your lifetime and ensures future generations will do more than just remember you — they will remember what you cared about and how important the future of the Jewish community was to you.

### ***When should I fund my legacy gift?***

Depending on your assets and goals, you can fund your legacy now or after your lifetime. For example, if you feel there is compelling reason help launch our endowment, you can begin now and direct your estate to complete the balance of the funding. Alternatively, you can designate your entire legacy to be funded after your lifetime, if that is more appropriate for you.

### ***How should I fund my legacy gift?***

With the help of your professional advisors, you will carefully choose the source of your dollars to help fund your legacy. Examples include percentage of estate bequests, retirement funds, insurance policies, appreciated stock, and real estate.

### ***What is the difference between a bequest and an endowment? How does an endowment work?***

A bequest is a legacy gift, distributed from your estate after the end of your life. If not designated, it can be spent in the year that it is received. An endowment is a fund that provides an annual income or a tailored stream of payments to support programs, projects or initiatives as designated by you. You may establish an endowment through a gift of cash, securities or other property. You also may use other assets including life insurance, charitable remainder trusts, charitable remainder annuities, retirement accounts or philanthropic fund recommendations.

### ***How does an endowment work?***

CBJ is establishing an endowment fund through a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. Members' gifts to this endowment ensure that the Congregation you have supported so generously during your lifetime continues to thrive for years to come

### ***How can I get started?***

Simply contact the **Jacob's Ladder Jewish Legacy Program** team for a confidential meeting. We look forward to working with you to ensure the Jewish community in the Phoenixville area is strong and vibrant for generations to come.

### ***What is the wording I should use in my will or trust?***

A donor's will or trust can simply name Congregation B'nai Jacob as beneficiary of the bequest. A donor will complete an endowment fund agreement to coordinate all aspects of his or her charitable plan. *Please consult your attorney in connection with any changes to your estate plan. Committee members cannot offer legal advice.*

***What if I've already drafted my will or trust agreement?***

If you have already drafted your will or trust agreement, your attorney can prepare a simple codicil or amendment to provide for your charitable gift.

***Who can participate in the legacy program?***

Anyone at all, young or old, rich or not-so-rich. Everyone's gift--no matter the size--will help ensure a vibrant CBJ for years to come!

***Is there a minimum legacy gift required?***

There is no minimum promise level to participate in the program. A legacy gift of any size is graciously accepted. Many people leave a percentage of their estate, or a specific dollar amount.

***Will a donor's name be associated with the legacy gift?***

Donors will be recognized publicly for their commitments, unless they choose to remain anonymous.

***Is a promise to leave a legacy legally binding?***

No, it is a commitment to provide for future generations. Donors may change their plans at any time.

***What kind of documentation of the legacy gift is needed?***

The **Jacob's Ladder Jewish Legacy Program** does not require any legal documentation of a legacy gift. However, we encourage donors to share a copy of the relevant portion of their wills or trust documents to ensure that their charitable wishes are properly carried out.

***When should donors start to think about leaving a legacy?***

Jewish tradition teaches that one of our key duties is to make the world a better place for future generations. Just as trees were planted for our food and shade years before we were born, so must we plant for the generations yet to be born. The time is always right to think about how one wishes to be remembered (and it's a good excuse to finally get that last will and testament written!).

***Who tracks the legacy promise?***

Upon notice of a bequest intention, the **Jacob's Ladder Jewish Legacy Program** team at Congregation B'nai Jacob will complete a legacy intention form and record it in the program database. An acknowledgement will be sent to confirm the completion of the process.

***What about the donor's professional advisors?***

The **Jacob's Ladder Jewish Legacy Program** team can work with donors and their professional advisors, if you wish.

***Must I have an estate in order to leave a legacy gift?***

Everyone can leave a legacy. "Estate" is simply a word used to describe any money, property, or personal belongings that you own at the time of your death. Most people leave an estate when they die, even though they may not have a great deal of wealth. Every gift of any size creates a link to our Jewish future.

***Do I have to include my wish to leave a legacy gift to a specific organization in my will?***

Yes. A charitable bequest will not take effect unless you state your intention in your will or living trust.

***How can my legacy gift inspire the community?***

Your legacy gift lets your name be remembered as a blessing in the Jewish community. Your promise to provide for Congregation B'nai Jacob after your lifetime sends an inspirational message to current and future generations. With your permission, we will share your story with the Congregation and others.

**For more information email:**

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