

## ALEPH Statement of Principles

By ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal

### FOUR WORLDS, EIGHTEEN AFFIRMATIONS, ONE COVENANT: ALEPH STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We of ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal strive to open ourselves to awareness of the sacred in all of existence. We strive to create Jewish paths of prayer and meditation, study, communal life—practice, and public action that embody this outlook.

We see ourselves in a crucial position at these times of paradigm shift and are committed to help develop a spirituality through which Judaism can transform itself to continued viability in the service of tikkun olam—the healing and balancing of this planet. Together we affirm principles and values that flow together from the Four Worlds of Being, Knowing, Relating, and Doing:

In the world of Atzilut, Being:

1. We are committed to the search for a deeper and higher understanding of the spiritual realities in our lives and of our cosmic purposes.
2. What/Whom the traditions experienced as transcendent God we meditate on and worship in ways that honor both the tradition and our intuition as to how we are addressed by that God in the present.
3. We see the human spirit and the Divine as one evolving process that calls upon us all for the interaction we call Godwrestling (“Yisrael”) and “Gathering the Sparks.”
4. We intend to open ourselves to the transformation of consciousness and action that is resulting from our living in a time when the Feminine is emerging.

In the world of Briya, Knowing:

5. In the sacred texts of the Jewish people and the writings of Jewish spiritual teachers of previous generations we find enormous wisdom and insight that draw on Eternal truth and continue to have great potential to aid human beings in their quest for personal growth, empowerment, and healing—as well as those elements that are historically limited and need to be transcended. We will study, teach, and make accessible these texts and writings with all



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those who wish to encounter them, wrestle with their content and meaning, and decide what to draw on and what to leave behind.

6. Among our guides to interpretation of Torah are the Prophetic, Kabbalistic, and Hassidic traditions as they are now being transformed in the light of contemporary feminist spirituality, process theology, and our own direct experience of the Divine.

7. We are committed to consult with other spiritual traditions, sharing with them what we have found in our concerned research and trying out what we have learned from them, to see whether it enhances the special truths of the Jewish path.

In the world of Yetzira, Relating—

8. We are committed to foster a safe environment for spiritual growth in which what we are learning about the human psyche and spirit is honored, and through which we enable the self to embody the Presence.

9. Our communities strive to be collective and egalitarian in leadership and decision-making.

10. Women and men are full and equal partners in every aspect of our communal Jewish life.

11. ALEPH welcomes, includes and recognizes the sanctity of every individual regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We recognize respectful and mutual expressions of adult human sexuality as potentially sacred expressions of love, and therefore we strive to create communities that include and welcome a variety of constellations of intimate relationships and family forms—among them gay, lesbian, and heterosexual relationships as well as single life-paths.

12. We will reach out toward including all who seek but have not yet found a spiritual home in the Jewish community or a satisfying connection to the Jewish people and its traditions and teachings.

In the world of Asiyah, Doing:

13. In order to heal the world, we seek to re-balance the power relationships among human beings and all other species and aspects of the Earth, as well as among races, peoples, faith-communities, classes, genders, age groupings, and other human groups so that each can live in shared peace and dignity. We will ourselves treat with respect and open-mindedness those who belong to other peoples and walk other paths than our own, even if we feel compelled to oppose their actions in the world. These efforts we view as integral to Jewish spirituality and action.



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14. We believe that the healthy expression of Jewish people requires a vital self-governing Jewish community in the Land of Israel (which in our generation has taken the form of the State of Israel); Jewishly vital, varied, and creative communities in many places throughout the world; and a continuous and open-hearted interchange between all these communities. We will try to embody such connections in our individual lives and in building the networks of our communities.

15. We welcome with surprise and excitement the discovery that God's will for our generations of Jews is that we learn to live in what we understand as the Land of Israel face to face with our cousins the children of Abraham and Hagar through Ishmael. We support every effort to do so in mutual recognitions of each other's right to freedom, self-determination, security, and peace - as part of our own share in the task that all peoples face in this generation, of learning to share in peace and freedom the great unboundaried earth.

16. We intend to treat with respect other Jews and other Jewish communities whose approaches to Jewish life differ from our own, even if we feel compelled to oppose their statements or their actions.

17. We are committed to applying all of these values and principles to the renewal and revitalization of our personal and communal ceremonies, liturgies, rituals, life-paths, and spiritual practices, and to our processes for collective decisions-making and collective actions.

18. We will help in the formation of communities based on these values and principles.



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