



# Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South

*The Sumner Levine Speaker Series*  
*presents*

## **Robert Goldsmith: "The Dothan Story"**

**Memphis Jewish Community Center**  
**Sunday October 11, 2015 2:00 PM**



Eight years ago Larry Blumberg, a Jewish businessman, was worried that his synagogue in Dothan, Alabama, was dying. He decided to put up \$1 million to finance a program to recruit fellow Jews to move there. The \$1 million recruitment plan offered Jewish families \$50,000 in relocation assistance to move to Dothan and remain for at least five years. The deal stipulated that the family would need to get involved in the local Jewish community, which was rooted around Dothan's floundering Temple Emanu-El.

Robert Goldsmith will speak about his "labor of love" as the Executive Director of the Blumberg Family Jewish Community Services of Dothan. A native of Baltimore, Robert earned his MBA from the University of Kentucky followed by a 30 year career in higher education finance and administration. He worked at the University of Kentucky, several colleges in New York State, then at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.

One night during 2001, while folding laundry and watching *Law and Order*, life changed when his wife Lynne asked him, "What would you think if I applied to HUC's Rabbinical School?" Robert answered, "It's about time," and thus began a great new adventure for Rob, Lynne, and their two sons Michael and Daniel. Immediately upon Ordination, August 2007, Rabbi Lynne was honored to accept "her first and last pulpit" at Dothan's Temple Emanu-El.

With humor and anecdotes, Robert Goldsmith will share with us "The Dothan Story." He also promises to answer the question that he knows will be asked "So is this guy related to the department store Goldsmiths?"

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