



Publication: Jewish News
Date: 23.04.2020

NJEWISH News

Tributes to Kenton rabbi

Tributes have been paid to Zalman Kossowsky, a former rabbi at Kenton United Synagogue, who has died aged 80.

The Iranian-born former chief rabbi of Zurich was head of congregations on three continents during a career that spanned many decades.

Kossowsky's synagogue in Florida said he died on Sunday of natural causes unconnected to the coronavirus pandemic.

He led the north London community from 1986 to 1991, with the shul saying: "Both he and his wife Danna were very caring and popular during their time with the Kenton community and were involved with all aspects of community life."

The United Synagogue added: "We wish the family a long life, and that they will be spared further suffering."

Born in Tehran to Lithuanian refugees fleeing the Soviet takeover of their country, Kossowsky was raised in South Africa.



Zalman Kossowsky

He went to Israel for his rabbinic studies before emigrating to the United States, where at one point he served as a chaplain in the US Marines and working on his doctorate in sociology.

He served as a congregational rabbi of Kenton, before accepting the role of chief rabbi of the ICZ, a communal umbrella organisation in Switzerland's largest city, which he led from 1991 to 2007.

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, said: "His biggest accomplishment was he kept the community together."

Kossowsky was a scholar who toiled to find solutions for agunot, women trapped in marriages because their husbands refused a get.

Rabbi Noam Hertig, current chief rabbi of Zurich, recalled Kossowsky as "very kind and always smiling", adding: "He was my Rav. He was the one who encouraged me to become a rabbi."

