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Task Force on the Unaffiliated, 1989-1993.

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Religion

Drive for National Health Care Launched

■ Medicine: For the first time, a broad range of religious groups have joined forces to push for the program.

From Associated Press

Churches, historically trailblazers in providing hospitals, clinics and personnel to care for the sick, are joining forces to press for a national comprehensive health care plan.

It is an old proposition, but with a new push behind it.

It has been argued since the 1930s when it was disparagingly called "socialized medicine." Most industrialized countries have established some form of it except the United States, which has resorted to lesser measures.

But it is now on the U.S. agenda, politically and otherwise. For the first time, a broad coalition of religious leaders and organizations is pooling its influence to work for basic health care for all.

The present system is a "moral outrage," with conditions showing a "massive breakdown" in it, said the Rev. Thom White Wolf Fasset, general secretary of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society.

That church was among 15 national religious bodies and 30 state ecumenical organizations whose leaders this month launched an "Interreligious Health Care Access Campaign" to promote the cause.

The campaign aims both at educating religious constituencies across the country and putting the coalition's findings and proposed principles before Congress, where more than 30 bills on health care are pending.

They seek various approaches such as requiring companies to insure employees, or expanding Medicare and Medicaid or tax credits to the poor, or other partial steps on up to nationalized universal health insurance plans.

Some are modeled after Canadian or European systems.



The campaign for health benefits 'is rooted in our religious understanding that everyone . . . has a right to health care.'

LEONTINE T.C. KELLY
Retired United Methodist Bishop

With the issue also bound to figure in this year's political campaigns, the religious organizations have spent more than two years studying proposals and developing their health care platform.

"Many Americans are realizing that the current health care system is no longer working," said Sue Thornton of Austin, Tex., head of a 15-member interreligious steering committee that drafted the drive's working principles.

Thornton, of the United Church of Christ and also drive chairwoman, said the goal "is access to primary and acute health care for every person living in the United States."

"It is time," she added, "to use some stones from the old walls to build a new structure that will provide a healthier population for generations to come."

In starting their drive, religious leaders cited numerous facts as indications of the country's rickety health care, such as:

More than 34 million people have no health insurance. Another 65 million lack adequate coverage, exposing them to out-of-pocket costs threatening family economic survival—a main cause of personal bankruptcy.

Although the United States, the world's richest country, is recognized as having the best medical facilities and personnel, and spends most per capita on health care, it ranks 19th in infant mortality rates. And 15 million people annually do not get needed medical care because they cannot afford it.

Calling the present system a "moral scandal" and "national disgrace," Rabbi Alexander Schindler of New York, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said:

"By 'pricing out' one-fifth of this country's population from health care coverage, we mock the image of God and destroy the image of God's work."

The Rev. Teri T. Taylor, Washington executive of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), said the present system is neither equitable nor accessible, and added:

"It fails the American dream of compassion and justice. Corporate society is squeezed by its high costs. Morally sensitive individuals are scandalized by its inequity. A growing number of individuals are suffering and dying because of lack of access to health care."

Most major mainline Protestant denominations, including their ecumenical body, the National Council of Churches, and Reform Judaism back the drive. Roman Catholic bishops also have supported the cause for two decades.

Although the coalition is not endorsing any of the specific plans before Congress, pending developments about them, it has worked out a consensus on principles essential to reform, including:

That the plan serve everyone, that it provide comprehensive benefits, that it draw financial support



'By 'pricing out' one-fifth of this country's population from health care coverage, we mock the image of God and destroy the image of God's work.'

RABBI ALEXANDER SCHINDLER
President, Union of American Hebrew Congregations

from the broadest possible resource base, that it guarantee access to care in all areas, that it reduce unnecessary care, malpractice litigation and current rapid inflation in medical costs.

"We must stop the piecemeal approach to health care reform," the Rev. James Bell, a United Church official in Washington, told a recent House committee hearing. "Now is the time to develop and deliver a fully comprehensive reformed health care system."

Retired United Methodist Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly of San Diego, president of the coalition's drive, said it "is rooted in our religious understanding that everyone . . . has a right to health care."



COPY

Unaffiliated

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

December 16, 1993
2 Tevet 5754

Ms Raquel H. Newman
945 Union Street #6W
San Francisco, CA 94133

Dear Racky:

I agree with you that the young adult population (23 to 40) is one which ought to be targeted by us, and the fact of the matter is that we have been trying resolutely to reach this group which is so important to Jewish continuity.

I don't know whether you know this, but we have a Department of Outreach to the Unaffiliated headed by a most competent professional, Rabbi Renni Altman, who has been well received, and who has developed some exceedingly helpful materials.

In her work, she has focused on the 20-30 generation, and our UAHC Privilege Card Project has proved to be a successful tool. I enclose a small brochure for your perusal which will give you some idea of what is involved.

Unfortunately, our resources will not permit us to go further in this area, and so I have been endeavoring to raise some extra-budgetary resources to allow us to do more. Specifically, I have been trying to persuade a major donor to sponsor a center for young Jewish adults in the New York area. Don't be misled by the word "center". It is a thematic rather than geographic designation; it refers to a program rather than a building. In effect, I want to have some program for Jewish singles every single night of the week here in New York to draw them closer to our community.

I enclose a copy of the proposal which will give you some idea of what we have in mind. Why not try and fund a venture like this in your neck of the woods? That would be preeminently worth while.

Happy Chanukah to you and yours.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

RHN ASSOCIATES

November 15, 1993

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Alex:

At the Biennial, I thought about your remarks on new levels of outreach and inclusion of non-Jews married to Jews in synagogue life. I am upset by your remarks, but not for the reasons that you are getting negative feedback. Let rabbis determine which rituals are appropriate for non-Jews to participate in that affect the synagogue's role.

What ticked me off is your emphasis on the non-Jewish population for inclusion with the scope of the Reform Movement's activities. What I believe you should have been concentrating on is the lack of involvement of our children, now in the population group age 22 to 45; the young, often single, or young marrieds who have been educated in the Reform tradition, who avoid any contact with institutional Jewish life - and especially the synagogue. Here are untold thousands of Jews who are not being embraced by our Movement. As leader of the UAHC, you need to look at what is alienating this huge population. Why are they not attracted to synagogue programming. What is to ensure Jewish continuity for this population group, when over 90% have nothing to do with Judaism currently, yet are living and working as independent adults. Reform Judaism appears not to offer good enough reasons to reconnect via the synagogue or camping. Should these people only be Jewish when the UJA calls, or if Israel is in crisis? Or when they need a rabbi for marriage, brit millah, baby naming or bar mitzvah? It is imperative to remedy lack of outreach to our very own Jews.

Sincerely,

Raquel H. Newman • Public Affairs Consultant
945 Union Street, #6W • San Francisco, CA 94133 • (415) 885-2963 • FAX (415) 885-1488

RHN ASSOCIATES

November 30, 1993

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021-7064

Dear Alex:

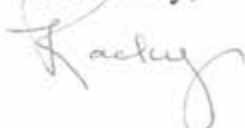
Many thanks for your letter of November 23, and the points made in it. I do not disagree with what you say.

However, your correspondence and mine do not mesh. Maybe I did not make myself clear to you. Permit me to try once again.

What I think is a prime concern for our movement is not the money or attempts at outreach. What is not happening is inreach, to our own Reform adults, ages (roughly) 22 to 45. This huge population, in whom we have already invested by way of religious school, life cycle events, camping, etc. are gone - or at best, distanced - from living Jewishly in terms of Reform's offerings via the synagogue.

We cannot back away from this tough reality! We must find out what turns our Reform Jewish adults off, and what they need and how they see themselves as Jews in today's world. If we ask and do the necessary study, we may be both surprised and shocked at what we are told, or the UAHC may be validated in its efforts and plans. I refer you back to my letter of November 15th. Lest you think what I describe is unique to the Bay area, I suggest that our movement consider a national discussion of this vital subject. Please do not say that the UAHC cannot afford such a project; money is not the issue. If you care to pursue this matter, I am available until December 16th. If I do not hear further, I will assume that this subject is closed for pursuit at this time. My very best wishes to you and Rea.

Sincerely,



Raquel H. Newman • Public Affairs Consultant

945 Union Street, #6W • San Francisco, CA 94133 • (415) 885-2963 • FAX (415) 885-1488



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

November 23, 1993
9 Kislev 5754

M. Newman
Ms Raquel H. Newman
945 Union Street
#6W
San Francisco, CA 94133

Dear Racky:

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. I don't mind your adverse reactions in the slightest. The truth of the matter is that I wanted to evoke a discussion. I want people to think about their Judaism and how much they value it, and whether they value it sufficiently to offer it to others in the market place of ideas.

I am amazed by the implication in your letter that we are not concentrating on the involvement of our children. That is what the bulk of the money of the Union goes to - camping programs, education program, youth programs.

Moreover, I consider our Outreach effort itself a unity of a threefold concern:

- a. Outreach to the religiously non-preferenced.
- b. Outreach to the non-Jewish partners of our many intermarried children.
- c. Outreach to unaffiliated Jews.

In strengthening one aspect, I strengthen the others as well.

In any event, a minuscule sum is involved. As you well know, when we do get the full five million dollars for such a fund, it will throw off perhaps two hundred fifty thousand dollars and that expenditure out of a total budget of some twenty seven million dollars is scarcely disproportionate in terms of our central mission.

Hopefully we will have a chance to be together one of these days. I would really like to engage you in this dialogue, perhaps I can even "convert" you to the rightness of my approach.

I am sorry that I didn't get a chance to see you in San Francisco. I will make remedy when next I am in your community or when you come to New York. Perhaps we will encounter each other in Israel.

Cordially,

Alexander M. Schindler

RHN ASSOCIATES

November 15, 1993

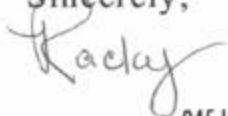
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Alex:

At the Biennial, I thought about your remarks on new levels of outreach and inclusion of non-Jews married to Jews in synagogue life. I am upset by your remarks, but not for the reasons that you are getting negative feedback. Let rabbis determine which rituals are appropriate for non-Jews to participate in that affect the synagogue's role.

What ticked me off is your emphasis on the non-Jewish population for inclusion with the scope of the Reform Movement's activities. What I believe you should have been concentrating on is the lack of involvement of our children, now in the population group age 22 to 45; the young, often single, or young marrieds who have been educated in the Reform tradition, who avoid any contact with institutional Jewish life - and especially the synagogue. Here are untold thousands of Jews who are not being embraced by our Movement. As leader of the UAHC, you need to look at what is alienating this huge population. Why are they not attracted to synagogue programming. What is to ensure Jewish continuity for this population group, when over 90% have nothing to do with Judaism currently, yet are living and working as independent adults. Reform Judaism appears not to offer good enough reasons to reconnect via the synagogue or camping. Should these people only be Jewish when the UJA calls, or if Israel is in crisis? Or when they need a rabbi for marriage, brit millah, baby naming or bar mitzvah? It is imperative to remedy lack of outreach to our very own Jews.

Sincerely,



Raquel H. Newman • Public Affairs Consultant

945 Union Street, #6W • San Francisco, CA 94133 • (415) 885-2963 • FAX (415) 885-1488

Unaffiliated

November 16, 1993
2 Kislev 5754

From: Rabbi Alexander . Schindler

To: Rabbi Renni Altman

Enclosed is my response to RIAL. Thank you for your guidance.

You should know that we pay but \$6,000. to the Presidents' Conference, NJCRAC and the work in behalf of Soviet Jewry. We simply cannot send more than a \$1,000. subvention to RIAL and I do not wish to ask for a reduce fee. \$10,000. per annum is steep!

November 16, 1993
2 Kislev 5754

The Rev. Nicholas B. van Dyck, President
Religion in American Life
2 Queenston Place, #200
Princeton, NJ

08540

Dear Dr. van Dyck:

Thank you for your congratulations on my recent UAHC President's Message. I appreciate your having taken the time to write and reiterate your invitation to share in the work of RIAL.

From time to time, I do see the materials produced by RIAL. They are most impressive and I congratulate you and the organization for providing such excellent resources.

Your 1992 success in increasing worship service attendance at participating congregations is heartening news. We congratulate you and support your work in seeking increased affiliation with religious institutions as well as your efforts on behalf of freedom of religion. Alas, however, as much as we would wish to participate in the work of RIAL, I fear we simply do not have the financial means to contribute in accordance with the financial requirements for membership in RIAL. The UAHC gains funding from dues contributions of member-congregations and special gifts from individuals and/or foundations. We must husband our resources with great care and while we do provide subventions to a few umbrella organizations with whom our work is allied, none of them require the substantial annual contribution which RIAL requests. We simply cannot undertake such an expenditure.

I much regret this negative response and continue to wish you well in the fine work of RIAL.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7054 (212) 249-0100

November 12, 1993
28 Cheshvan 5754

MEMORANDUM

To: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

From: Rabbi Renni S. Altman

Re: RIAL

Thank you for sharing the letter from Nick Van Dyck with me. Prior to suggesting a response, let me bring you up to date on the most recent discussions on the Task Force regarding UAHC participation in RIAL.

1. At the summer Executive Committee meeting of the Task Force, Mel shared with us his desire to urge our members to ask their friends to join synagogues and he asked the Task Force to prepare a brochure that would support that effort. In the discussion that followed, we revisited the possibility of joining RIAL and participating in their "Invite a Friend" program, as it accomplishes exactly what Mel wants to do. We recalled that when Joe Glaser presented RIAL to the Task Force four years ago, we declined because the materials appeared "too Christian" in tone. RIAL redesigned them to be more inclusive of synagogues. The major stumbling block that remained was cost -- a contribution of some \$10,000 (RIAL's funding comes from foundations and denominations' fair share contributions). The Task Force decided not to participate in RIAL and the UAHC made a contribution of \$1000 to support their efforts. At our meeting this summer, the Executive Committee recommended that we take another look into the possibility of joining RIAL.
2. After the meeting I spoke with Joe Glaser, who was thrilled at the response of the Executive Committee of the Task Force, and Joe confirmed that this was a one-year contribution. After speaking with Nick Van Dyck, however, it turned out that Joe was working under a misconception and, in fact, the \$10,000 is

Director of Programs
Rabbi Renni S. Altman
Chairperson
Myra Ostroff
Co-Chairperson
Rabbi Steven E. Foster
Vice-Chairs
Sheila Thau
Geraldine Voit

*I like your
answers 1-3
No need to ask for
lower participation -
Just say you secured funds
we gave Pres. Conf 6,000 -
UAHC 6,000 -
Solved your 6,000 -
how
can we save
RIAL
more than
\$10,000 -*

an annual contribution. I told Nick that I thought that was way beyond our means. He suggested that the increase in members that congregations are experiencing as a result of this program would quickly pay for the annual fee. I explained to him that we, the UAHC, would not see the revenue from those additional memberships.

4. After discovering that the \$10,000 was an annual contribution, I spoke with Dan Syme. It was apparent that the UAHC does not have the funds for such a contribution and we never went any further with the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

Thus, it appears that the limitation on our participation in RIAL is a financial one. Do you have any philosophical issues in participating in this organization? Is there a financial level at which we would be able to participate on an annual basis? Would you envision money from the \$5 million Outreach project being made available for our participation in RIAL?

Personally, I would like to see us part of RIAL, but their fair share system -- as it stands -- makes it prohibitive for us. Congregations do have access to the Invite A Friend Program and Joe sent out information about it to all CCAR rabbis over the summer. Denominational participation makes a statement and helps to underwrite production of materials and advertisements so that the cost to congregations is minimal. I don't quite understand it, but they do have the UAHC listed as a supporter (it may be because of Joe's and Ron Sobel's personal involvement and financial contributions). The Orthodox, Conservative and Reconstructionists movements are also listed as supporters on their brochure.

Given the current situation, the following are my suggested points for a response:

1. We think that the work RIAL is doing, the materials they have produced and the resources they offer congregations are excellent.
2. We applaud their success in 1992 in increasing attendance at worship services in participating congregations.
3. We support RIAL's efforts, both on behalf of freedom of religion and on increasing affiliation, but we do not have the financial means to participate in the level that they require.
- [4. Alex, do you want to open the door for our participation at a lower level?]

I would be happy to discuss this with you further.

Lesni

MEMORANDUM

November 10, 1993

COPY

FROM: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

TO: Rabbi Renni Altman

Would you please review the enclosed from RIAL and let me have a suggested response.

Thank you.



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

Religion In American Life
2 Queenston Place - Room 200
Princeton, NJ 08540
609 921 3639



*Are we
to suggest
disorder*

November 3, 1993

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Manager, Worship Directory

Jane Kelly

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

President, Union of American Hebrew Congregations

838 Fifth Avenue

New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

Congratulations on your October 23rd sermon at the annual meeting of the UAHC in San Francisco.

As soon as you feel you and your colleagues can be serious about outreach to the unaffiliated, I would be very happy to resume conversations with the UAHC about ways of helping UAHC congregations to capitalize on the \$20 million worth of public service advertising that RIAL provides the religious community. These public service ads as well as congregation-based activities are all focused on the most effective way of involving unaffiliated people in the life of a congregation--namely, inviting them.

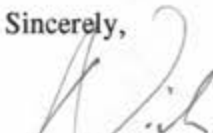
Although this is a habit that is strange to many current members, we have developed gentle and friendly ways of inviting people into the discovery of what a joy it can be to invite a friend to share something they believe is meaningful in their own lives.

Yes, RIAL will need financial support in order to print and distribute the materials to your congregations. Needless to say, it is worth it.

You may be interested in the fact that participating congregations throughout the United States in 1992 averaged an 11% increase in attendance at worship services. We would be pleased to help this happen in UAHC congregations, as well.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


Nicholas B. van Dyck

NBVD:sl

cc: Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

Unaffiliated

Synagogue Affiliation: Implications for the 1990s

Gary A. Tobin, Ph.D.
and
Gabriel Berger, Ph.D.
Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
Brandeis University

Research Report 9

September 1993



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Synagogue Affiliation: Implications for the 1990s

Gary A. Tobin, Ph.D.

and

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Brandeis University

Research Report 9

September 1993

Sylvia Barack Fishman, Ph.D.

Editor

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 1990s

INTRODUCTION

Empirical analysis of synagogue affiliation and dropout of American Jews has rarely been published. While much scholarly work has explored the historical development and sociological dynamics of the American synagogue as an institution (Goldstein, 1955; Heilman, 1982; Jick, 1976; Kaploun, 1973; Sklare, 1975; Wertheimer, 1987), few empirical assessments have appeared focusing on factors influencing synagogue affiliation, involvement, and activities. It is no coincidence that two volumes dedicated to methodological issues in the study of denominations and congregations -- one published in 1979 and the other ten years later -- (Wuthnow, 1979; Welch, 1989) include no articles about the study of American Jews, their religious behavior, or their congregations. While some studies have been published about the determinants or the consequences of synagogue affiliation (Cohen, 1988, 1985; Himmelfarb, 1980, 1979, 1975; Himmelfarb and Loar, 1984; Huberman, 1985; Lazerwitz, 1988, 1978, 1973; York and Lazerwitz, 1987) by and large they tend to focus either on the broader acculturation-assimilation debate or on the study of religious identification among American Jews, treating synagogue affiliation as one of its indicators. In both cases, the published analyses of synagogue affiliation do not delve as deeply as studies of congregational affiliation in other religions. In addition, previous empirical analyses of synagogue affiliation have been based on data sets collected either for local community studies or for the 1970 National Jewish Population Study, raising the issues of limited coverage and currency. In contrast, the large data set of the recently completed 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS, Kosmin et al., 1991) offers a unique opportunity to explore synagogue affiliation on a national basis at the beginning of the nineties.

A true picture of synagogue membership is complicated by conflicting notions of what membership means, and by the tendency of members to cease paying dues. The 1990 NJPS asked respondents whether they themselves or any other member in their households were currently (at the time of the interview) a member of a synagogue;¹ thirty-nine percent of Jewish households reported that they include someone who is currently a member of a synagogue. The concept of synagogue affiliation measured by this question differs from that of synagogue membership as seen by officials of Jewish religious congregations. While synagogues by and large consider membership to mean dues-paying, individuals may say that they belong to a synagogue if they attend services on occasion, such as High Holidays, or if they once belonged to a synagogue. Current affiliation rates already seem low, but actual synagogue membership rates may be even lower (Tobin et al., 1988).

¹ It is interesting to mention that Gallup and Castelli report that 44 percent of American Jews (with a +/-7% margin of error) say that they are members of a synagogue or temple, which is not statistically different from the percentage reported in this paper --39%--.

The minority of Jewish households would seem to be affiliated with a synagogue at the beginning of the nineties; however, six out of ten Jewish adults have been members of Jewish religious congregations at some point in their adult lives.² This implies that 21 percent of Jewish adults have been members of synagogues at some point in their adult lives, but have dropped out from synagogue life. Put another way, 35 percent of people who ever affiliated with Jewish congregations became synagogue dropouts. In sum, four out of ten Jewish adults say that they currently belong to a synagogue, two out of ten have previously been members of synagogues during their adult life, and four out of ten have never been members of Jewish religious congregations as adults.

In terms of attendance at organized Jewish religious services, American Jews can be divided into four groups: 19 percent say that they never attend religious services, 23 percent claim that they only attend on special occasions related to rituals of passage --bar/bat mitzvah, wedding, etc. -- or once or twice a year, 33 percent attend on the High Holidays or a few times a year, and another 25 percent attend at least once a month or more often.

Compared to other religious groups, American Jews tend to be "unchurched." These statistics provide evidence of what Gallup and Castelli note in their study of religion in America (1989, p. 116): "Religion is a relatively low priority for American Jews, who lag behind the general population in membership in a congregation, worship attendance and the importance they place on religion in their lives." In this light, Gallup and Castelli (1989) found in an analysis of aggregated national polls conducted in the 1986-1988 period that while 55 percent of all Americans say that religion is "very important" in their lives, only 30 percent of American Jews make this statement. Conversely, one-third of American Jews (35 percent) say that religion is not very important in their lives, compared to only 14 percent of the general population.

Yet synagogue affiliation is positively associated with nearly all measures of a stronger Jewish identity, greater participation in Jewish ritual and practice, and participation in organizations and other Jewish institutions. While associative patterns can be noted, the causal relationships are difficult to define. It can be argued that belonging to a synagogue leads to higher ritual observance, or that higher levels of ritual observance lead to synagogue affiliation. It is only known for certain that synagogue membership is positively associated with most measures of higher participation, activity, and identity with the Jewish community both in organizational and religious terms.

The communal and religious value of synagogue membership, of course, cannot be evaluated only in terms of other positive relationships between synagogue membership and other religious or communal factors. Synagogue membership also has intrinsic value for two other reasons. First, synagogues are themselves community-building institutions. They serve as

² The NJPS included the following question: "Aside from membership your parents may have had, since you have been grown, have you ever belonged to a synagogue or temple?"

central gathering places that help organize social, political, and cultural activities. Synagogues help strengthen group identity and provide a focus for joint activity. As many analysts have noted, the congregation offers a communal structure beyond family or clan that gives coherence and meaning to an expanded group and individual identity. Synagogues also offer a location for vital life cycle events such as baby namings, weddings, and funerals. The synagogue also serves as an educational center, both for children and adults. Bar/bat mitzvah training serves several purposes. It is a valuable ritual practice in itself, a rite of passage for younger Jews, and also serves as a ceremony that integrates Jews into the fabric of the religious community.

Furthermore, synagogues can provide a moral and ethical framework which contextualizes life in the broader, general society as well as the individual religious group. Therefore, strengthening the synagogues of the Jewish community also benefits society as a whole.

Synagogue members within all branches of Judaism volunteer more hours for Jewish organizations, are more generous to religious philanthropies, give their children more religious instruction, and are more likely to participate in public prayer and private Jewish home rituals. While it is obvious that the religious consciousness that involves them in these activities also motivates them to affiliate with synagogues, there are strong indications that the influence works in the other direction as well: belonging to synagogues reinforces involvement with social action, civic responsibility, and with contemporary religious life. Ultimately, we would argue that these benefits constitute an overall increase in the quality of life, and bolster the positive strength of Jewish tradition.

The synagogue is one of the most important ways in which Jews become involved in the life of their community. Its critical role stems from the fact that while participation in organized religion originates as a private matter, it leads progressively to an expanding concern and commitment to the larger community of Jews.

Synagogue members are much more likely to contribute time and money to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and causes. In the early seventies, it was proposed that religious involvement was a major gateway to increasing participation in general voluntary associations. In the case of Jews, religious involvement seems to lead both to involvement in Jewish organizations and to participation in other general organizations. In other words, the synagogue socializes American Jews into further voluntary participation in other Jewish organizations, which in turn socializes them into participation in general voluntary associations. Synagogue membership and frequency of synagogue attendance have been found to be strong predictors of philanthropic contributions to non-Jewish organizations. Frequency of attendance at synagogue services is one of the strongest predictors of volunteering for Jewish organizations.

This paper begins with a description of the data source of this analysis--the 1990 NJPS--and a discussion of the data that were analyzed in this study. The second section discusses basic parameters of synagogue affiliation of American Jews. The third section of this paper looks at variations in synagogue affiliation rates by different groups defined in terms of socio-

demographic variables, background factors, and Jewish identification indicator levels. The final section of this paper presents the results of a multivariate analysis of synagogue affiliation. It then discusses the data from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, presents policy implications, and concludes with a discussion of a new research agenda for the study of synagogues in contemporary Jewish life.

DATA SOURCE AND SAMPLE

The data set analyzed here comes from the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey conducted by the Council of Jewish Federations and the North American Jewish Data Bank at the City University of New York (Kosmin et al. 1991a). This survey has already become a landmark study in the sociological analysis of American Jewry, and will probably serve as the main source for analyses for years to come. The final sample of the NJPS includes 2,441 completed interviews conducted during 1990, after a year-long process of screening over 125,000 randomly selected adult Americans. The data were collected through phone interviews by the ICR Survey Research Group of Media, PA during late spring and early summer of 1990.

The design of the NJPS called for a sample of 2,500 households drawn from a qualified universe of households containing at least one person identified as currently or previously Jewish. In order to obtain this sample, the 1990 NJPS included three stages: 1) a screening process on religious preferences of the adult American population (125,813 interviews) in which 5,146 households were identified as containing at least one person who qualified as Jewish; 2) an inventory stage in which qualified respondents from the first stage were re-qualified, the purpose of the study was explained, and basic demographic information about household composition was obtained (attempts were made to re-qualify 4,208 households previously qualified in the screening); and 3) a final interviewing stage of the study which yielded 2,441 completed interviews. In this third stage, respondents were asked about the current religion of each household member (Kosmin et al. 1991; Marketing Systems Group, 1991).

The analysis presented in this report is based exclusively on those households in which at least one household member was identified as Jewish by the respondent (the adult interviewed) in response to the question on current religion during the final interviewing stage. Of the 2,441 households included in the CJF/Data Bank analysis, only 1,794 cases meet this criterion (see Berger, 1992 for a thorough discussion of the redefined sample). As a result of the redefinition of the sample, 97 percent of the respondents identify themselves as currently Jewish by religion, while 2 percent are either Christian or have "other" religions, and 1 percent responded "none." The analysis reported in this paper is based on a weighted sample. The sample (or sub-set of the NJPS data set) included in this analysis represents over 2,160,000 households with over

5,300,000 members, and the respondents represent over 3,930,000 adults of current Jewish religion, and 4,130,000 adults.³

³ Given that the utilization of weight factors which yield a higher number of cases than the original number included in the sample, the use of tests of significance are problematic. Therefore, the original weight factors were recomputed to yield the same number of cases as the number of cases in the unweighted sample. In this manner, the relative frequency distributions obtained using the recomputed weighted sample size (1794), or the original weighted sample size (2,160,000 for households or 4,130,000 for adults) are equal.

LOOKING AT VARIATIONS IN PATTERNS OF CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND DROPOUT AMONG AMERICAN JEWS

In this section we examine differences in rates of current synagogue affiliation, synagogue affiliation ever, and synagogue dropout along multiple segmentations defined by socio-demographic characteristics (regional location, distance from the immigrant generation to the United States, length of residence in the community and at the present address, age, marital status, and family composition), socio-economic dimensions (level of educational attainment and income), level of Jewish socialization, extent of Jewish social networks, and degree of religious involvement. This analysis reveals which characteristics can be considered to affect Jewish congregational affiliation.

Regional Variations: Rates of affiliation with synagogues show significant differences by region of the country. Jews living in the Midwest are the most likely to be affiliated with synagogues, followed by Jews living in the East (the synagogue affiliation rate is 43 percent for the 46 percent of Jewish households located in the East). Jews living in the South and in the West are less likely to be affiliated with a synagogue (35 and 29 percent respectively). The percentage of adults who have ever been affiliated with synagogues is lowest in the West (51 percent) and is highest in the South (65 percent). This implies that Jews living in South are the most likely to be drop-outs from synagogues. The fact that Jews living in the South (mainly in Florida) are more likely to be dropouts could be related to very specific reasons: since a large proportion of Jews in Florida are senior citizens who have moved there after retirement, the dropout rate of Jews in the South is a result of their relocation and the abandonment of their institutional affiliations in their previous places of residence. It is quite possible that patterns among Jews in the South would be different without the Florida data.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY REGION

Region	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
North East	42.5	57.5	61.0	39.0	30.3	69.7
Mid-West	48.0	52.0	63.0	37.0	23.8	76.2
South	35.4	64.6	64.8	35.2	45.3	54.7
West	29.0	71.0	50.5	49.5	42.3	57.7
N	693	1101	1072	720	378	693

Length of Residence in the Community and At the Present Address: Respondents who have moved to their current communities since the eighties are the least likely to be affiliated with a synagogue. Similarly, those who have lived in their community for 10 years or less are less likely to have been affiliated during their adult lives. Similar patterns can be seen relative to the length of residence at the present address, except that those who moved into their present address before 1965 show a rate of ever-membership (and as a result of dropout) between that of those who moved in the decade of the eighties and that of those who moved earlier.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY YEAR MOVED TO CITY OR TOWN

Year	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1985 - 1990	29.9	70.1	49.5	50.5	39.6	60.4
1980 - 1984	29.4	70.6	52.0	48.0	43.5	56.5
1975 - 1979	47.1	52.9	68.0	32.0	30.3	69.7
1970 - 1974	44.6	55.4	67.5	32.5	34.0	66.0
1965 - 1969	43.2	56.8	68.1	31.9	36.6	63.4
1964 or before	44.3	55.7	64.9	35.1	31.6	68.4
N	685	1086	1058	711	373	685

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY YEAR MOVED INTO CURRENT RESIDENCE

Year	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1985 - 1990	30.9	69.1	50.1	49.9	38.3	61.7
1980 - 1984	33.2	66.8	57.4	42.6	42.1	57.9
1975 - 1979	51.8	48.2	74.4	25.6	29.8	70.2
1970 - 1974	45.8	54.2	72.6	27.4	36.9	63.1
1964 - 1969	63.0	37.0	80.4	19.6	21.6	78.4
before 1965	45.1	54.9	63.4	36.6	28.9	71.1
N	1089	686	1057	717	371	686

Generation in the United States: Affiliation with a synagogue is higher among those who were born abroad (51 percent), it decreases to 43 percent among those born in the United States, but who have one of their parents born abroad, and seems to stabilize after the third generation in the United States. Similar patterns can be seen when looking at rates of ever-affiliation. However, dropout rates are highest among the second generation Jews (those who were born in the U.S., but whose parents were born abroad), with a 39 percent dropout rate among those ever-members of synagogues.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY GENERATION IN THE U.S.

Generation	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Foreign Born (first)	50.9	49.1	72.2	27.8	29.6	70.4
One Parent US Born (second)	42.7	57.3	69.6	30.4	38.6	61.4
Both Parents US Born (third)	36.3	63.7	53.9	46.1	32.4	67.6
3 or 4 Grandparents US Born (fourth)	38.7	61.3	51.9	48.1	25.5	74.5
N	716	1065	1077	701	361	716

Age: By looking at the relationship between respondent's and spouse's age (when the spouse is present in a household) and the household affiliation with a Jewish congregation, we see that those in the 25-34 age group have a lower rate of affiliation than older adults (28% versus 41-45%). Percentages of affiliation with synagogues during adult life increase with age: from 42 percent among those aged 25-34 to over 70 percent among those 55 and older. As a result, given the relative stability of rates of current affiliation after the middle of the forties and the linear increase in ever-affiliation rates with age, older individuals exhibit higher dropout rates than younger adults. The lowest dropout rate corresponds to the 35-44 age group (26 percent of ever-affiliated). This is due to the fact that the prime affiliation period (in which households join synagogues, but have not yet begun dropping out) occurs in these years.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY AGE*

Age	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
18 - 24	45.7	54.3	58.5	41.5	21.9	78.1
25 - 34	27.5	72.5	41.8	58.2	34.2	65.8
35 - 44	40.8	59.2	54.9	45.1	25.8	74.2
45 - 54	44.3	55.7	67.9	32.1	34.7	65.3
55 - 64	44.7	55.3	73.6	26.4	38.9	61.1
65 - 74	41.8	58.2	71.1	28.9	40.9	59.1
over 75	45.2	54.8	79.0	21.0	42.6	57.4
N	1108	1681	1695	1090	587	1108

* by respondent and spouse

Family Composition: The extent to which synagogue affiliation is determined by family life cycle is shown by increases in its rate from 29 percent among respondents who have never had children to 39 percent among those having children under age 6, to 53 percent among respondents having children between the ages of 6 and 9, 50 percent among respondents with children 10 to 13 and no older children, reaching a peak of 73 percent for households with both children 10 to 13 years old and children 14 to 17. Rates of synagogue affiliation drop when children in the household are older or leave home, but not so sharply as to reach the level of households with children under 6. Ever-member rates follow a similar pattern. However, the complete story is told when looking at rates of synagogue dropout by family life cycle. Dropout rates tell an interesting story: they begin at a high level among those who never had children (35 percent) and then begin falling, reaching a floor among households with more than 1 child at home, including a child 10-13 years old and a child 14-17 years old (13 percent). Dropout rates rise again when children pass their Bar/Bat Mitzvah years, being highest in households whose children have already left home, or if at home are 25 years old and older.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY FAMILY COMPOSITION

Family Composition	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Never Had Child	29.1	70.9	45.0	55.0	35.4	64.6
Child Under 6 at Home	39.2	60.8	52.7	47.3	25.7	74.3
Child 6 to 9 at Home	52.9	47.1	65.0	35.0	18.6	81.4
Child 10 to 13 at Home	49.5	50.5	61.3	38.7	19.3	80.7
Child 10 to 13 and 14 to 17 at Home	73.3	26.7	84.6	15.4	13.4	86.6
Child 14 to 17 (none 10 to 17)	53.4	46.6	67.6	32.4	21.0	79.0
Child 18 to 24 at Home	55.9	44.1	75.1	24.9	25.5	74.5
Had Child but none at Home or 25 and Older	42.0	58.0	77.5	22.5	45.6	54.4
N	807	1188	1214	778	408	807

Marital Status: Married respondents and widowed respondents show the highest percentages of affiliation with a synagogue or temple (43% and 44% respectively). Never married individuals show a lower percentage, while divorced and separated respondents are the least likely to be affiliated with Jewish religious congregations. However, since the ever-member rates are highest among widowed respondents, they show as high a dropout rate as divorced/separated respondents.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Never Married	36.5	63.5	50.5	49.5	27.8	72.2
Married	42.9	57.1	64.0	36.0	32.8	67.2
Divorce/ Separated	31.4	68.6	54.7	45.3	42.7	57.3
Widowed	41.9	58.1	74.8	25.2	44.1	55.9
N	716	1056	1078	691	362	716

Household Income: Affiliation with a synagogue is higher among households in the higher income categories: 43 percent among those in the \$60,000-\$79,999 income group and 49 percent among those in the \$80,000 or above income category. Households in the \$50,000-\$59,999 income group are the least likely to have ever been members of synagogues, while those with incomes of \$80,000 or more are the most likely to have been ever-members. Finally, households with incomes between \$20,000 and \$39,999 are the most likely to have adults who have dropped out of congregations, while those with incomes over \$80,000 are the least likely to have adults who have dropped out of synagogues.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household Income	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Less than \$19,000	35.1	64.9	55.1	44.9	36.3	63.7
\$20,000-\$29,999	34.6	65.4	59.3	40.7	41.7	58.3
\$30,000-\$39,999	30.5	69.5	54.3	45.7	43.5	56.5
\$40,000-\$49,999	38.0	62.0	57.7	42.3	34.2	65.8
\$50,000-\$59,999	31.1	68.9	48.1	51.9	35.4	64.6
\$60,000-\$79,999	42.7	57.3	58.9	41.1	27.5	72.5
\$80,000 or more	49.1	50.9	68.0	32.0	27.8	72.2
N	576	952	884	642	308	576

Secular Education: Contrary to some popular misperceptions, higher educational levels are related to higher rates of synagogue affiliation. While 35 percent of respondents and spouses who completed high school or less are currently affiliated with a congregation (who, incidentally, comprise 27 percent of all heads of households), 45 percent of those with graduate degrees are affiliated with synagogues. However, those without college degrees are as likely as those with them to have been affiliated with synagogues at some point in their adult lives, and as a result they are more likely to be synagogue dropouts.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT*

Highest Degree Completed	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
High School or Less	34.5	65.5	58.7	41.3	41.1	58.9
BA Not Completed	36.0	64.0	61.8	38.2	41.5	58.9
BA	41.7	58.3	58.7	41.3	28.8	71.2
Graduate Degree	45.3	54.7	64.3	35.7	29.6	70.4
N	1086	1659	1664	1078	576	1088
* by respondent and spouse						

Enrollment in Jewish Education: The degree to which synagogues are rooted in the family is reflected in the relationship between synagogue affiliation and having children enrolled in formal Jewish education programs. As one observer noted, "education is the magnet that draws Jews to synagogue life," given that one of the primary functions assigned to Jewish congregations is to socialize children into the Jewish religion. Almost all (94 percent) households with children enrolled in Jewish education programs are currently affiliated with a synagogue. The percentage drops to 34 percent among households without children enrolled.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY CHILD ENROLLED IN JEWISH EDUCATION

Child Enrolled in Jewish Education	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No	33.7	66.3	56.5	43.5	40.2	59.8
Yes	93.5	6.5	96.5	3.5	3.1	96.9
N	693	1101	1072	720	378	693

Jewish Social Networks: Greater social involvement with other Jews seems to be related to synagogue affiliation, either as an antecedent or as a consequence of it. Through relationships with synagogue members, individuals are encouraged to affiliate with synagogues. If we consider Jewish social networks as a consequence of affiliation with religious congregations, we see that affiliation at some point during adult life leads to larger Jewish networks. Only 15 percent of those having no Jews among their closest friends are affiliated with a synagogue, as compared to 51 percent of those who report that most of their closest friends are Jewish, and 58 percent of those who report that all of their friends are Jewish. Dropout rates among those who have been synagogue members at some point in their life decrease with the extent of Jewish social networks, from 60 percent among those with no Jewish close friends to 25 percent of those who report that all of their closest friends are Jewish.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY NUMBER OF JEWS AMONG FRIENDS

Friends	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
None Jewish	15.0	85.0	37.4	62.6	59.8	40.2
Few Jewish	23.1	76.9	41.9	58.1	44.7	55.3
Some Jewish	34.3	65.7	54.5	45.5	37.0	63.0
Most Jewish	50.8	49.2	73.0	27.0	30.4	69.6
All Jewish	57.8	42.2	78.0	22.0	25.4	74.6
N	710	1070	1078	699	368	710

Denominational Differences: Rates of synagogue affiliation are determined to a great extent by the denomination of the household. The majority of Orthodox Jewish households, but by no means all of them (65 percent), are affiliated with a synagogue. Orthodox Jews may not have formal affiliations, but still pray in less institutional group settings. Conservative Jewish households follow Orthodox Jews in their rates of affiliation: half of them are affiliated with a synagogue. Of the three main Jewish denominations, Reform Jewish households are the least likely to be affiliated: four out of ten claim to be synagogue members. Finally, households which identified themselves using non-denominational labels (Just Jewish, secular Jews, traditional, etc.) are less likely to be affiliated with synagogues than those identified with any of the three main Jewish denominations. The 1990 NJPS did not ask about involvements with Havurah-style group worship and study.

When focusing on ever-member households, Orthodox Jews and Conservative Jews are just as likely to affiliate with synagogues at some point during their adult lives, with three-quarters of them claiming to be currently affiliated with a synagogue, or to have been personally affiliated during their adulthood. However, in contrast, Conservative Jews are almost three times as likely to drop out of their congregations as Orthodox Jews (29 percent versus 10 percent). Reform Jews lag behind members of these two more traditional denominations in their ever-member rates. In addition, they show the highest dropout rate of the three main branches of Judaism (38 percent). It is interesting to note that one-third of those households which identify themselves as Just Jewish or Secular Jews have been affiliated with synagogues. This is probably a manifestation that synagogue affiliation is not only the result of religious commitment, but in the context of the American Jewish community synagogue affiliation serves the purpose of expressing Jewish ethnic identification, or people switching their denominational labels. By affiliating with a synagogue, American Jews maintain and feed their ethnic networks, socialize their children in the Jewish tradition and culture, and participate in a number of ritual practices that are considered central to Jewish life, even by those who define Judaism in non-religious terms.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY HOUSEHOLD DENOMINATION

Household Denomination	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Orthodox	65.4	34.6	73.2	26.8	10.1	89.9
Conservative	52.2	47.8	73.5	26.5	29.0	71.0
Reform	40.0	60.0	64.7	35.3	38.1	61.9
Just Jewish/Secular	13.4	86.6	38.0	62.0	64.6	35.4
Other	21.1	78.9	36.2	63.8	41.2	58.8
Non-Jewish	5.6	94.4	23.3	76.7	75.7	24.3
N	691	1033	1052	669	361	691

Jewish Religious Socialization: The number of years of formal Jewish education that a person has had seems to directly affect the likelihood of membership in a religious congregation. One-quarter of those who have not received a formal Jewish education are affiliated with a Jewish religious congregation. The percentage increases to 38-39 percent among those with 1 - 4 years of formal Jewish education, jumps to 48-49 percent for those with 5 - 8 years of Jewish education, and increases another 10 percent among those with 9 or more years of Jewish education. When looking at rates of ever-membership in a synagogue we note a similar relationship with years of Jewish education, although the increase does not seem to be as linear

as in the case of rates of current synagogue affiliation. Altogether, there seems to be a clear distinction among those who have not received Jewish education, those who have received between 1 and 8 years of Jewish education, and those who have received 9 or more years: 45 percent in the first group have ever been adult members of religious congregations, between 64 and 67 percent in the second group have been synagogue members, and over 76 percent in the third group have been synagogue members as adults.

Another component in the religious socialization of American Jews is determined by the denomination in which individuals have been raised. Jewish denominations are differentiated not only by their traditions and rituals and the ways in which they interpret Jewish sacred texts, but also by the importance attached to participation and active involvement in the activities and affairs of a religious community. The denomination in which respondents have been raised would have influenced whether they belonged to or attended a Jewish religious congregation when they were growing up, and previous participation during childhood should have an impact on adult participation in synagogue. Therefore, affiliation with synagogues will not only be influenced by the current denomination of the respondents, but also by the religious tradition in which they were raised. The influence of Jewish denominations during childhood in adult synagogue affiliation can be analyzed in a number of ways. First, we can look at rates of affiliation by denomination in which someone was raised: fifty-six percent of those raised as Orthodox Jews, 42 percent of those raised as Conservative Jews and 30 percent of those raised as Reform Jews belong to a synagogue. The same pattern in the impact of the main three denominations emerges when looking at the ever-member rates. In addition, those raised as Reform Jews show the highest dropout rate of any of the three main denominations in American Judaism (42 percent), while Orthodox Jews show the lowest (29 percent).

A more refined way of looking at the influence of denominational identification on congregational affiliation is obtained by looking at the percentage of Jews raised in a particular denomination and identified with the same denomination as adults who are affiliated with synagogues. This analysis confirms the same patterns observed previously: the more traditional the denomination -- of origin as well as choice -- the more likely someone is to affiliate with a congregation, and the less likely to drop out from congregational life. In addition, the difference between rates of synagogue affiliation ever between Orthodox Jews and Conservative Jews is minimal. Finally, the data indicate that there is about a fifteen percent difference in rates of affiliation among the "product" of the three major Jewish denominations and those raised and identifying as Just Jewish or Secular Jews: 67 percent of the raised-current Orthodox, 53 percent of the raised-current Conservative, 36 percent of the raised-current Reform, and 20 percent among the raised-current Just Jewish/Secular Jews.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY YEARS OF JEWISH EDUCATION*

Age	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
None	25.0	75.0	44.9	55.1	44.2	55.8
1-2 Years	39.3	60.7	66.3	33.7	40.7	59.3
3-4 Years	38.0	62.0	64.0	36.0	40.5	59.5
5-6 Years	48.6	51.4	67.3	32.7	27.8	72.2
7-8 Years	51.6	48.4	67.3	32.7	28.1	71.9
9-10 Years	59.5	40.5	75.6	24.4	21.4	78.6
11 or More Years	60.7	39.3	79.8	20.2	23.4	76.6
N	1033	1596	1577	1047	544	1033
* by respondent and spouse						

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY DENOMINATION RAISED

Denomination	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Orthodox	56.0	44.0	79.2	20.8	29.1	70.9
Conservative	41.8	58.2	63.4	36.6	34.1	65.9
Reform	29.6	70.4	51.3	48.7	42.1	57.9
Just Jewish/ Secular	32.4	67.6	47.8	52.2	32.2	67.8
Other Jewish	19.8	80.2	44.5	55.5	55.5	44.5
Non-Jewish	41.2	58.8	49.3	50.7	16.6	83.4
N	715	1044	1080	676	365	715

**SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY DENOMINATION RAISED AND CURRENT
DENOMINATION**

Denomination Raised and Current	Current Synagogue Affiliation	Synagogue Affiliation Ever	Synagogue Dropout
Orthodox	67	75	9
Conservative	53	71	26
Reform	36	56	37
Just-Secular	20	40	51

Religious Involvement: Affiliation with a synagogue can be thought of as emerging from someone's previous level of religious involvement and commitment. This does not exclude the possibility that by participating in a congregation people in turn increase the level of their religious involvement. At one level we can surmise that synagogue affiliation is triggered -- among other things -- by a more frequent participation in religious services. People who attend services more frequently tend to formalize their relationship with the institution in which they worship. Thus, 84 percent of respondents who attend services about once a month or more often are affiliated with a congregation as compared to 16 percent of those who attend a couple of times a year. Also, some may pray through non-institutional services such as *havurah* or *shtiebel*.

Another manifestation of religious involvement is measured by the number of Jewish religious practices observed: keeping kosher (defined here as having separate sets of dishes for dairy and meat products), lighting candles on Friday night, lighting Hanukkah candles, and participating in a Passover seder. Synagogue affiliation increases with the number of religious practices observed by household members: while 80 percent of those observing these four rituals are affiliated with a synagogue, 9 percent of the households not performing any of these four rituals claim affiliation with a synagogue.

A third dimension of religious involvement which may be used to look at variations in synagogue affiliation is the importance which the respondent said s/he attached to being a Jew. Synagogue affiliation increases with the degree of importance of being Jewish: 18 percent of those for whom being Jewish is not very important are affiliated with a congregation, 29 percent of those who say that being Jewish is somewhat important, and 57 percent of those for whom being Jewish is very important.

A final dimension of religious involvement which is available in this analysis of the NJPS relates to whether people define being Jewish in religious terms or in ethnic/cultural terms. The NJPS asked a sub-set of respondents (about a third of the original sample) if they thought that

being Jewish in America means to be a member of a religious group, an ethnic group, a cultural group, or a nationality group (respondents could agree with more than one category).⁴ Those defining being a Jew as being a member of a religious group were clearly more likely to be affiliated with a congregation: 50 percent of them are. In contrast, 31 percent of those defining being a Jew as being a member of an ethnic, cultural or nationality -- but not as a religious -- group were affiliated with a congregation. It is interesting that the difference between these two groups -- those defining Jewishness in religious terms and those defining it in secular terms -- in their rates of ever-affiliating with a synagogue are smaller (66 percent versus 58 percent).

This may be an indication that people's understanding of what it means to be Jewish changes over time from a religious perspective when they are (or were) affiliated with a synagogue to a secular perspective, which characterizes non-members. The NJPS showed that 51 percent of non-members consider that being a Jew in American means being a member of an ethnic, cultural or nationality group versus 38 percent who defined Jewishness in religious terms and 11 percent who chose neither categorization.

⁴. The NJPS included the following question: "When you think of what it means to be a Jew in America could you say that it means being a member of ...(A religious group?; An ethnic group?; A cultural group; A nationality?) Each respondent was asked to respond yes or no to each of the four items. A new variable was created for this analysis using responses to these four items, taking three possible values: 1) yes to religious group; 2) no to religious group, but yes to ethnic group, cultural group or nationality; and 3) no to any of the four items.

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY SYNAGOGUE ATTENDANCE

Synagogue Attendance	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do Not Attend at All	8.0	92.0	40.2	59.8	79.9	20.1
Once or Twice a Year/ Special Occasions	15.7	84.3	36.2	63.8	56.7	43.3
High Holidays	47.7	52.3	71.9	28.1	33.5	66.5
About Once a Month or More	83.6	16.4	94.3	5.7	11.4	88.6
N	711	1001	1078	631	367	711

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A JEW

How Important	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Not Important	6.3	93.7	15.3	84.7	59.0	41.0
Not Very Important	18.3	81.7	45.1	54.9	59.4	40.6
Somewhat Important	29.1	70.9	50.0	50.0	41.7	58.3
Very Important	57.1	42.9	78.8	21.2	27.6	72.4
N	238	348	361	225	123	238

SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION BY DEFINITION OF JEWISHNESS

Jews are Members of	Current Synagogue Affiliation		Synagogue Affiliation Ever		Synagogue Dropout	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Religious Group	52.0	48.0	69.0	31.0	22.0	78.0
Secular Group	31.0	69.0	58.4	41.6	47.0	53.0
Neither Religious Nor Secular	25.3	74.7	52.1	47.9	51.4	48.6
N	238	348	361	225	123	23

PREDICTORS OF CURRENT SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION, SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION EVER, AND CONGREGATIONAL DROPOUT

The analysis presented in the previous section suggests that synagogue affiliation varies along many different characteristics. For example, it showed that synagogue affiliation is higher among those living in the Midwest and is lower in the South and in the West. Similarly, current synagogue affiliation seems to be affected by income level, being higher among those with incomes over sixty thousand dollars. Additionally, many other characteristics would seem to be associated with synagogue affiliation (e.g. identifying with a more traditional denomination, residing in the same community since before the eighties, being foreign born or first generation in the US, etc.), with synagogue affiliation ever (older age, having older children, being widowed, etc.) or with synagogue dropout. However, this examination does not reveal which of these relationships reflect independent effects and which are the result of confounding factors. In order to establish which are the variables having predictive power on current synagogue affiliation, synagogue affiliation ever, and synagogue dropout we need to take the analysis one step further.

We have conducted a multivariate analysis using a technique called logistic regression, which allows us to assess which variables have an independent effect on a dichotomous dependent variable (one taking only two values).⁵ A variable has an independent effect on another when it maintains a statistically significant relationship with a dependent variable, even after controlling (through analytical manipulation) for the effects of the other independent variables in the analysis. In technical terms, one goal of multivariate analysis is to statistically adjust the effects of each variable included in the model for differences in the distribution of and associations among the other independent variables. A confounding relationship between an

⁵. This analysis was conducted using the SAS computer package (Harrel, 1988) on a VMS environment.

independent variable (e.g. length of residence in a community) and an outcome variable (e.g. synagogue affiliation) may exist when there is another independent variable (e.g. age) which is associated with both the first independent variable (in this case, length of residence) and the outcome variable (synagogue affiliation). Multivariate analysis permits adjustment of the relationship between length of residence and synagogue affiliation for the confounding impact of age. Therefore, we can assess whether the noted relationship between length of residence and synagogue affiliation is still found after controlling for the effect of age. In multivariate analysis, we can in fact introduce several independent variables at the same time in the same model, and study the relationship between any of the independent variables included and the outcome variable, adjusting for the effects for all the other independent variables in the model (Aldrich and Nelson, 1984; Hosmer and Lemeshow, 1989).

The following table presents the independent variables included in the multivariate analysis and their basis statistics (mean, standard deviations, minimum and maximum values). This list includes variables measured in an interval scale (such as age), ordinal scale (such as how many of the closest friends are Jewish), and discrete, nominal scale variables (such as child enrolled in Jewish education). It should be mentioned that a few of the variables were originally multinominal scaled, that is, measured using several mutually exclusive categories, which have neither numeric relationship nor order among themselves. In the multivariate analysis, these multinominal variables have been introduced as a series of "design variables": dichotomous variables for each of the categories of interest which indicate the impact of a particular characteristic relative to that of a "control" or "referent" group which is not included in the multivariate model. For example, generation in the United States was measured using the categories "first generation," "second generation," "third generation," and "fourth generation," but in the multivariate only the last three categories are included as dichotomous variables. As a result, the coefficient obtained in logistic regression analysis for each of these three variables indicates the effect on the likelihood of affiliating with a synagogue of being a "second," "third," or "fourth" generation American relative to being "first" generation.

The multivariate analysis of synagogue affiliation reveals that the likelihood of being a member of a Jewish congregation is affected by the following:

- It increases with older age.
- It is higher among those living in the Midwest than it is among those living in the Northeast. However, there are no significant differences among those living in the South and in the West relative to those living in the Northeast.
- It is less likely among those who have moved to the current town or community during the eighties.
- It is more likely among households with incomes of eighty-thousand dollars or more. However, there is no difference in the probability of affiliating with a synagogue between households with incomes in the \$60,000-\$79,999 group and those with lower income levels.

- Households with children between the ages of 6 and 9 are less likely to affiliate with a synagogue relative to empty nester households or those with children over 24 years old at home.
- Contrary to what might be expected, never-married individuals are more likely to be affiliated than individuals with other status (when controlling for other factors).
- It increases with the number of years of formal Jewish education received. Those with 5 to 8 years of Jewish education are more likely to be affiliated with a synagogue than those with 4 years or less, or with no Jewish education at all. In the same vein, those with 9 or more years of Jewish education are even more likely to be affiliated with a synagogue.
- It is higher among those identified with any of the three main denominations than among those self-defined as "secular or Just Jewish."
- It increases with the number of Jewish religious practices observed.
- It is affected by having children enrolled in formal Jewish education. In fact, the size of its coefficient indicates that this is the strongest predictor of synagogue affiliation.

The logistic regression analysis of whether or not someone has been a synagogue member at some point during adult life reveals several similar patterns to those observed with regard to current synagogue affiliation and some distinctive relationships. The likelihood of ever belonging to a synagogue is affected by the following:

- It increases with age.
- It is higher among those living in the South relative to those living in the Northeast. There are no significant differences between those living in the Midwest, in the West, and in the Northeast.
- It is higher among those living in households with incomes over \$80,000.
- Individuals with graduate degrees are less likely to have been members of synagogues than those without advanced degrees.
- Those with children under the age of 14 or who have never had children are less likely to have ever been members of synagogues than those who are empty nesters or who have children over 24 years old at home.
- It increases with the number of years of formal Jewish education received.
- It increases with the number of religious practices observed.
- It is higher among those identified as Conservative Jews or as Reform Jews than among those identified as "Secular or Just Jewish." However, when controlling for other factors, there do not seem to be differences between Orthodox Jews and non-denominational Jews in their likelihood of ever-affiliation.
- Having children enrolled in formal Jewish education maintains its character as the strongest predictor of synagogue affiliation, even when taking an adult life horizon.

Finally, the multivariate analysis of factors affecting synagogue dropout shows findings consistent with those presented above. This analysis reveals that the likelihood of dropping out from synagogues is affected by the following:

- It decreases with older age.
- It is higher among those who moved into their current communities in the eighties.
- The likelihood of dropping out of congregations decreases with the more traditional character of the denomination of the individual. Orthodox Jews are the least likely to drop out relative to Secular Jews, followed by Conservative Jews and Reform Jews.
- It is lower among those with incomes over \$80,000 relative to those with incomes under \$60,000.
- It is lower among those who have never had children or who have children under the age of 6 (and who have been members of synagogues as adults) relative to those who are empty-nesters. Similarly, it is lower among those having children enrolled in formal Jewish education.
- It is lowest among those who had 9 years or more of formal Jewish education relative to those who had 4 years or less.
- It decreases with the number of Jewish religious practices observed.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The data in this monograph clearly indicate that the factors that are negatively associated with synagogue affiliation are becoming more widespread. For example, the data indicate that current synagogue affiliation is considerably lower in the South and West than the Midwest and Northeast. Yet the same data indicate that Jewish population has shifted geographically, as have other American populations, with increasing proportions of Jews living in the South and West as opposed to the Midwest and Northeast. Given this regional association, one may expect that geographic contextual factors will continue to impinge negatively on synagogue affiliation. Similarly, data indicate that the synagogue dropout rate is highest in the South and West. As Jews continue to relocate from the Northeast and Midwest, the dropout rate should continue to increase if the institutional status quo is maintained.

One might have expected that synagogue affiliation would decline with each successive generation. However, there is no statistical difference between the affiliation rates of third and fourth-generation Jews. Nor is there any significant difference by age, with the exception of 25 to 34-year-olds, who are less likely to have a current affiliation. This seems to be more a function of family composition and life cycle than age. As the proportion of singles, never-marrieds, empty nesters and other "non-traditional" families continues to grow, these contextual factors will also continue to negatively affect synagogue affiliation as long as the institutions remain in their current form.

The biggest differences are recorded between those who rank the importance of being Jewish as very important, as opposed to not important. Only 6 percent of those who say being Jewish is not important belong to a synagogue, as opposed to 57 percent of those who say it is very important. Clearly, synagogue affiliation is closely associated with one's definition of Jewishness and the importance of religion in one's life. This presents the greatest challenge for the synagogue as an institution to appeal to the ever growing number of Jews who do not see religion or being Jewish as very important or even somewhat important in their lives. Equally telling, even 43 percent of those who consider being Jewish to be very important in their lives do not have a current synagogue affiliation. Therefore, the central role of the synagogue as either a community institution or a religious institution is in question for both Jews who consider religion and Judaism important and even more so for those who do not.

Both institutional and contextual factors will affect synagogue affiliation. Contextual factors include both demographic and cultural factors. Demographic factors include population growth and decline surrounding a particular congregation or the population growth or decline of a particular religious group. Racially changing neighborhoods often have a negative impact on the growth of a particular congregation. Racial change is often accompanied by change in income, and declining income often has a negative impact on the size and positive or negative growth of the synagogue. The demography of subgroups surrounding the congregation, whether those subgroups are defined by age, marital status, family composition, or other factors may have a positive or negative influence on the congregation as well.

Cultural factors affect affiliation as well. A growing trend to consumerism, in which individuals shop for congregations as they shop for other consumer goods, including organizations and institutions, affects synagogue affiliation and loyalty to the institution. Individuals are more likely to drop out of or join the synagogue depending on their own particular needs or the needs of their family. The institution is viewed as a service to the individual rather than a communal obligation.

Cultural consumerism is combined with other culturally influenced factors, and with an overall movement among Jews as well as other Americans away from organizations. For example, the overall loss of authority of organized religion has some influence. Individuals may feel no particular need to join the synagogue and it may have no legitimacy or authority in their everyday lives. This lack of authority and legitimacy may also encourage individuals to drop their membership at any given time. They may feel no communal or other sanctions from their decision to disaffiliate.

Perhaps the position of the synagogue would be improved if the institutional role of the synagogue were used to affect contextual factors. The synagogue might be a place, for example, where single Jews would meet to find marriage partners. If the synagogue could serve this function of creating new Jewish families, then in some sense it would create future constituencies. Perhaps the synagogue should adapt its education curriculum and aim to increase the number of 18 to 30-year-olds who attend. Such individuals would then be more likely to have active involvement in the Jewish community as a whole and in the synagogue in particular.

In the end, synagogues cannot make Jews live in New York, raise their incomes, or provide them with a secular education. But synagogues can facilitate trips to Israel, improve the quality of Jewish education, provide programs for Jews to meet other Jews, or encourage trips to Israel. Such actions strengthen the Jewish community.

Perhaps the strategic location of satellite synagogues in locations in low density suburbs could provide an institution around which Jews could make locational decisions. Perhaps synagogues can, as in the Orthodox community, anchor particular communities. Serving as a communal-based institution can strengthen the vitality of the Jewish family.

All of these ultimately are contextual factors that are not outside the institutional influence of the synagogue. Altogether, the internal restructuring of the synagogue can influence the immediate membership and have a long-term positive effect on the contextual factors as a whole. Given affiliation as a vital and intrinsic value to the continued vibrancy of the Jewish community, the active role of the synagogue in these endeavors is critical.

The countervailing forces against synagogue affiliation, both demographic and identity factors, necessitate a much more aggressive set of policies and actions on the part of synagogues to increase membership. Even though the institution has evolved in a variety of ways over the

past generation, the current data indicate continuing need for adjustment. While one may debate the relative importance of contextual versus institutional factors, it is clear that contextual factors have an overall negative influence on synagogue affiliation. Therefore, the institutional factors become even more critical, and whatever variance in membership can be ascribed to institutional versus contextual factors requires a more in-depth institutional examination and approach.

The individual culture of the synagogue may cause growth or decline. Is it a large institution or a small institution? Is it friendly or cold? Does the synagogue actively promote or discourage involvement? All of these are cultural aspects of the institution which may appeal or not to specific subgroups of Jews.

Impressionistic and anecdotal data from individual synagogues and from the umbrella organizations of the Reform and Conservative denominations, for example, indicate that special programs in outreach, a new rabbi, or other special efforts can produce rapid growth in synagogue membership, particularly in synagogues that have had no growth or decline due to institutional stagnation. It is not clear whether or not one synagogue pulls members from another or there is a net gain due to institutional innovation, but it can be assumed that in most cases there is a net increase in the total synagogue membership when innovative institutional efforts are undertaken. Given the communal importance of synagogue affiliation, special efforts to expand the number and type of membership recruitment programs or programs that are inherently interesting or needed by larger proportions of the Jewish population would seem to be a top priority on the Jewish communal agenda.

One of the implications of the data rests in the differences between respondent definitions of synagogue membership and affiliation and the institutional definitions of membership. As indicated before, much higher proportions of the respondent population indicate that they belong to a synagogue, that is to say they are dues-paying members, than are actually on the rosters of the individual institutions. Membership is more broadly defined by the respondents to include infrequent attendance, former affiliation, or some psychological or geographical tie to the institution. Part of the explanation for lower affiliation has to do with the institution's social and financial barriers to formal membership. Given the relatively low levels of religious identification of many Jews, institutional barriers of any kind are likely, and indeed have been shown to have a serious negative impact on synagogue membership. The predilection not to join or be active is already strong enough from the change in contextual factors, so that any institutional barriers will have a multiple compound negative effect for many Jews who are already predisposed not to have formal synagogue affiliation. Recruiting members and participants in synagogues is difficult under the best of circumstances in contemporary Jewish life and the data indicate that demographically these are not the best of circumstances. Therefore, synagogues must make extraordinary efforts in order to increase membership.

The structure of the organization in terms of lay/professional roles also may influence membership. Are the committee structure and board equipped to achieve change in an evolving society? Are the roles of the rabbi and the congregants clearly enough defined that each plays a productive role in the life of the synagogue? Is there a working partnership or an adversarial

relationship? All of these questions also influence the overall structure of the organization and the institution's ability to increase affiliation.

The sense of congregant control and the level of democracy in the synagogue also is an institutional factor that may attract or deter potential affiliation. With the growing culture of individual empowerment and greater levels of participation, individuals may or may not join a synagogue depending on whether they feel integrated into its decision-making processes and part of the overall decision-making process to guide the synagogue. Others, of course, may want no part in these processes. The synagogue must provide a sense of control to some subgroups who otherwise may not want to be part of the institution.

The same may be said for whether or not the synagogue is family oriented and presents a family feeling. Since one of the central roles of the institution is to provide support beyond family or clan, or in addition to family and clan, the extent to which the institution serves the individual or the family may have a great deal to do with its stability or growth.

At the same time, the role of the rabbi and the image of the rabbi can be quite influential. Is the rabbi young and dynamic, old and wise? Does the rabbi relate well to children or to young people in general? Is the rabbi giving and warm and accessible, or does he present an image of aloofness? The rabbi's role in the congregation and the image that he or she presents to the congregation can have a critical impact on rates of growth and decline.

The synagogue serves communal, educational and group-building functions. Many American Jews feel, however, that its most important function remains communal worship. The intrinsic value of the synagogue as a gathering place for Jews to engage in communal worship cannot be substituted by any other Jewish institution. While religious services may be held in other locations, or communal worship may take place in individuals' homes or in other settings, the organizational structure of the synagogue remains a key institution for communal worship in the Jewish community. Aside from whatever benefits derive from the organizational and institutional structure of the synagogue, a gathering place where Jews find unique collective expression in their relationship to God reinforces the importance of synagogue affiliation as a subject for inquiry and social scientific analysis.

Given the essential mission of the synagogue as a place of worship, a very critical examination of worship services is necessary at both the national and local level. If the synagogue holds the unique place in the constellation of Jewish organizations and agencies and institutions as a house of worship, and this purpose is to be a primary reason for people to join and a primary reason for people to stay affiliated, then worship services must be interesting, fulfilling, or provide some personal meaning or purpose or gratification that is not likely to be achieved elsewhere. If worship services do not meet the expectations and needs of many Jews, then the ability of the synagogue to fulfill its central mission is limited. While liturgies undergo

change, a more radical examination of how services are conducted, the content, and whether or not they are a primary motivator for synagogue membership needs to be explored.

The synagogue also must convey a sense of holiness that appeals to individuals looking for something beyond everyday life. Some synagogues are more successful in promoting this sense of holiness than others. In a time when some individuals are searching for deeper meaning in their lives, the question of whether or not the synagogue will serve this role is vital.

This, of course, is necessary for those Jews who identify themselves as religious and are looking for religious purpose. But the data indicate that large proportions of Jews are not looking for religious meaning. Therefore, the role of the synagogue as a communal institution, a gathering place, and serving multiple purposes in community building is necessary if the synagogue is to attract other constituencies. Given the high proportion of Jews who identify themselves as "just Jewish," "not very religious," "ethnic," or other variations, the synagogue may serve community, social, outreach, volunteer, fundraising, and a whole host of other activities that bring Jews to the institution but not necessarily to worship. In the same way, the synagogue can provide essential human services such as day care, preschool, or programs for the elderly. Only by fulfilling both a religious purpose and an essential community-building purpose is the synagogue likely to be an institution that attracts a diverse Jewish population. Last but not least, the financial structure of the synagogue is a very important institutional factor. Can the synagogue afford innovative membership recruitment programs? Can it experiment with new human services or social services that may attract groups of the disaffiliated? Does the synagogue place too heavy a financial burden on its current congregants or on its potential congregants? All of these financial questions are vital in understanding the institutional influence in membership growth and decline.

One of the most obvious policy implications of the data is the need to remove institutional barriers to membership. One can only assume, given the propensity of higher income households to belong to a synagogue and lower income households not to belong, that dues structures and the financial burden of the synagogue are a deterrent to membership. Indeed, data from different population studies in the Jewish community indicate that cost is a factor. More broadly, synagogues need to be more responsive to the multiplicity of family types. The data indicate that families with children of school age are the most likely to belong to a synagogue. Yet the data also indicate that this particular population subgroup is a minority of all Jewish households. If the synagogue is institutionally primarily designed to serve this population, then its ability to reach most other constituencies may be limited.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

A thorough understanding of the current scene, evaluation of existing programs, research and testing for new programs, and dissemination and implementation of the results can substantively increase affiliation rates over the next decade. A new research agenda can help lead to improving levels of membership and current affiliation through focused study, building model programs, evaluating successes and failures, and creating a careful strategy for disseminating the findings.

There are no "quick fixes" for the kinds of problems that the Jewish community faces in terms of synagogue affiliation. Time for extensive testing and evaluation has been lacking in most practical research on affiliational patterns. It is necessary to know over time what works, what does not, and why. A patient and systematic approach to the study of these critical issues is essential.

In addition to demographic changes which affect patterns of affiliation with churches and synagogues, as detailed above, attitudinal factors also have a profound impact on affiliation. Attitudinal factors reflect perceptions of the synagogue. These problems of perception range from overt problems, issues such as costs of membership and locations of religious institutions, to more subtle issues such as feelings of alienation at prayer services or the possible lack of friendliness among congregants.

In order to increase and maintain affiliation levels with synagogues, carefully designed research is necessary to analyze attitudinal reasons for non-affiliation. Preliminary research based on population studies indicates that attitudinal issues may well deter more potential members than had been previously suspected. The adverse impact of negative perceptions of synagogues may be widespread.

Some attitudinal issues are more significant for particular populations. Households with limited incomes, such as singles, single parents, young marrieds, and the elderly are the most likely to be deterred from membership by financial matters, such as the perception that dues schedules are too substantial for their income. It is possible that such persons may be unaware that scholarships or sliding scales exist, or they may feel uncomfortable with what they imagine will be a process of personal interrogation to qualify for such scholarship aid. Focused research is needed to discover just how financial considerations work to impede membership, to devise techniques which can alleviate these concerns, and to map out methods of publicity to increase membership among population groups with limited income.

Location of religious institutions and transportation to and from those institutions are not only logistical issues but attitudinal as well. For some households and in some cities, twenty minutes is "too far" to travel; in other cities, any time under a half-hour is acceptable; in some areas, ten minutes is the optimum traveling time. It does seem that location and distance are primary considerations for many of the same groups which struggle with limited income as well. Further research is needed to pinpoint just how significant a role attitudes toward location and transportation play, and how best and most cost-effectively to deal with these issues.

More subtle, but at least as important in terms of people joining and staying with religious institutions, are spiritual, emotional and social factors. For some non-affiliates, this discomfort with the religious nature of the institution may not be primarily spiritual in nature but focuses instead on some very concrete worries, such as ignorance of liturgical skills. Many among the respondents in the preliminary research who did not affiliate regarded the synagogue

as a place which demanded certain levels of knowledge and background in history, customs, and prayer skills. Jews may perceive themselves as being "not religious," and therefore potentially inappropriate for membership in a religious institution. Although many such self-proclaimed secularists may in fact have highly developed moral codes and spiritual sensibilities, they may not perceive the synagogue as providing a forum for the expression of their spirituality and morality. Carefully planned and constructed new research is needed to explore the attitudes of non-affiliates toward their own spiritual lives, as well as their attitudes toward the synagogue.

Social factors also may play an extremely important role in membership patterns. Non-members may have perceptions of cliquishness or unfriendliness in synagogues. Persons who do not join synagogues sometimes perceive the religious institution as being a closed social circle. Research should be planned which investigates how such attitudes are formed and propagated, and what can be done to create an image of religious institutions as more warm, welcoming, and socially supportive places to gather.

Many questions arise: How can mainstream Jewish families most effectively be attracted to and be served by synagogues? How great a communal mandate exists among the unaffiliated for synagogue-sponsored singles programs, professional networking, or all-day child care? Might synagogues offer activities, programs, and services that would encourage singles, childless couples, and parents of pre-school children to join temples ten to fifteen years earlier? The answers to these questions are crucial to all those concerned with synagogue affiliation.

In addition to those who have not yet affiliated, households that have allowed their affiliation to lapse represent the second large group of currently unaffiliated. In order to understand why they are currently disaffiliated, we must begin by understanding why people join religious institutions in the first place. Presumably, when synagogues do not meet the needs of their clientele -- or when these particular needs cease to exist -- disaffiliation results. Assembling and analyzing the answers to the affiliation-disaffiliation patterns, is a crucial first step in devising methods to enhance satisfaction with synagogue affiliation and thus increase the longevity of the relationship.

Other questions emerge. What successful programs are being conducted today? How could these programs be adapted and disseminated to differing religious communities? What role do national institutions play?

We feel that in order to predict membership, evaluation of models is more fruitful in analyzing the causes for membership than merely looking at the direct answers respondents give for why they do or do not join a religious institution. It will be critical to investigate whether the direct reasons respondents give for joining or not joining the synagogue correspond to the variables revealed from the contextual background.

Synagogues interested in understanding the causes for affiliation and the reasons for disaffiliation need to be able to obtain information from their constituents about why they

affiliate or disaffiliate. This information must be gathered in a manner which serves both the interests of the institutions and the concerns of their congregants.

Some congregations conduct intake interviews and membership surveys. New members are asked a series of questions when they first decide to join so that congregations can ascertain why members join and what particular needs they have, while obtaining important demographic information concerning the make-up of the household.

Synagogues must also have mechanisms for collecting data from those who do not renew their membership. These data focus on the reasons for non-renewal as well as the reasons the persons originally joined. Were there unmet expectations? Were there particular reasons motivating them to join which are no longer operative? How do they feel about the congregation? Since families disaffiliate at different times in their life cycles, it is important to examine these data.

Information from and about current members is also critical. What are the reasons people joined? Are they pleased with the congregation? By combining reasons for joining (e.g., providing a religious education for their children) with demographic information, congregations can make plans for their schools and other services knowing the profile of the congregation. All of these together help define an overall research agenda in better understanding synagogue affiliation.

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APPENDIX I
VARIABLES INCLUDED IN MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

Variable Name	Content	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
AGE	Respondent's Age	46.01	17.03	18.00	95.00
MIDWEST ¹	Live in the Midwest	0.11	0.31	0.00	1.00
SOUTH ¹	Live in the South	0.23	0.42	0.00	1.00
WEST ¹	Live in the West	0.22	0.41	0.00	1.00
ORTHRSD ²	Raised as Orthodox	0.24	0.42	0.00	1.00
CONSRSD ²	Raised as Conservative	0.40	0.48	0.00	1.00
REFRSD ²	Raised as Reform	0.31	0.46	0.00	1.00
EIGHTIES	Moved to Current in the Eighties	0.42	0.49	0.00	1.00
SECOND ³	Second Generation in U.S.	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
THIRD ³	Third Generation in U.S.	0.46	0.49	0.00	1.00
FOURTH ³	Fourth Generation in U.S.	0.13	0.33	0.00	1.00
ORTH ⁴	Orthodox Denomination	0.06	0.24	0.00	1.00
CONS ⁴	Conservative Denomination	0.40	0.48	0.00	1.00
REFORM ⁴	Reform Denomination	0.47	0.49	0.00	1.00
SIXEIGHT ⁵	Household Income of \$60,000-\$79,999	0.13	0.33	0.00	1.00
EIGHTYUP ⁵	Household Income of \$80,000 or Higher	0.19	0.38	0.00	1.00
GRADUATE	Completed Graduate Degree	0.26	0.43	0.00	1.00
NEVERU ⁶	Never Had Child or Is Under 6	0.54	0.49	0.00	1.00
CHILDU10 ⁶	Has Child 6-9 year old	0.11	0.30	0.00	1.00
CHILDU14 ⁶	Has Child 10-13 year old	0.09	0.28	0.00	1.00
CHILDU18 ⁶	Has Child 14-17 year old	0.06	0.24	0.00	1.00
CHJEWED	Has Child Enrolled in Jewish Education	0.08	0.27	0.00	1.00
NMARRIED	Respondent Never Married	0.23	0.41	0.00	1.00
YJED5TO8 ⁷	Has 5 to 8 Yrs of Jewish Education	0.30	0.45	0.00	1.00
YJED9UP ⁷	Has 9 Yrs or More of Jewish Education	0.22	0.41	0.00	1.00
JRITUALS	Number of Religious Practices Observed	1.74	1.06	0.00	4.00
JFRIENDS	Number of Jewish Friends	3.33	1.09	1.00	5.00

Notes:

¹ Reference category is Northeast² Reference category is Raised as Just Jewish or Secular³ Reference category is First Generation in the U.S.⁴ Reference category is Currently Just Jewish or Secular⁵ Reference category is Household Income Under \$60,000⁶ Reference category is Had Child but is not longer at home or Child over 24 year old at home⁷ Reference category is Less than 5 Years of Jewish Education

LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF CURRENT SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION,
SYNAGOGUE AFFILIATION EVER, AND SYNAGOGUE DROPOUT

Variable	CURRENT AFFILIATION			AFFILIATION EVER			SYNAGOGUE DROPOUT		
	Parameter Estimate	St. Error	P ¹ Estimate	Parameter Estimate	St. Error	P ¹ Estimate	Parameter Estimate	Std. Error	P ¹
INTERCEPT	-6.8032	0.9405	***	-2.9882	0.7536	***	5.0250	1.1696	***
AGE	0.0331	0.0078	***	0.0315	0.0074	***	-0.0203	0.0093	*
MIDWEST	0.5660	0.2548	*	0.4805	0.2518		-0.6105	0.3300	
SOUTH	-0.0290	0.1988		0.4328	0.1930	*	0.3882	0.2339	
WEST	-0.0823	0.2179		-0.1037	0.2013		0.0236	0.2696	
ORTHRSD	0.2609	0.5346		0.4783	0.4606		0.1285	0.6646	
CONSRSD	-0.0824	0.5141		0.0446	0.4317		0.4363	0.6408	
REFRSD	-0.4907	0.5298		-0.3547	0.4379		0.5745	0.6556	
EIGHTIES	-0.4570	0.1762	**	-0.1344	0.1652		0.4924	0.2170	*
SECOND	-0.2911	0.3212		-0.4199	0.3487		0.1136	0.3636	
THIRD	0.1573	0.3354		-0.4915	0.3477		-0.2479	0.3924	
FOURTH	0.3069	0.3942		-0.4189	0.3921		-0.5239	0.4925	
ORTH	1.4786	0.6723	*	-0.5899	0.4888		-2.6788	0.8671	**
CONS	2.2659	0.5923	***	1.0806	0.3625	**	-2.3085	0.6983	***
REFORM	1.9832	0.5906	***	1.0632	0.3532	**	-1.9224	0.6925	**
SIXEIGHT	0.3494	0.2465		0.2182	0.2318		-0.4513	0.3138	
EIGHTYUP	1.0015	0.2097	***	0.7674	0.2110	***	-0.8606	0.2596	***
GRADUATE	-0.3609	0.1850		-0.3822	0.1763	*	0.2361	0.2328	
NEVERU6	0.0672	0.2252		-0.7342	0.2096	***	-0.7452	0.2724	**
CHILDU10	-0.9267	0.4076	*	-1.1098	0.3332	***	0.5735	0.5280	
CHILDU14	-0.6246	0.4499		-0.9090	0.3843	*	0.3266	0.5534	
CHILDU18	0.6555	0.4042		0.3134	0.4034		-0.7438	0.4857	
CHJEWE	4.0740	0.5742	***	3.8364	0.6751	***	-3.3097	0.7094	***
NMARRIED	0.6282	0.2352	**	0.3080	0.2062		-0.5555	0.3227	
YJED5TO8	0.3985	0.1867	*	0.3648	0.1775	*	-0.4365	0.2261	
YJED9UP	0.9051	0.2061	***	0.9864	0.2087	***	-0.5872	0.2562	*
JRITUALS	0.9945	0.0956	***	0.8191	0.0896	***	-0.7105	0.1131	***
JFRIENDS	0.0910	0.0865		-0.0002	0.0802		-0.1415	0.1076	
Correct	77.1%			75.6%			71.9%		

n	1219	1219	764
Initial LLR	1572.67	1599.37	916.50
Final LLR	1046.81	1126.79	692.66
Model Chi-Square	426.99 (27 df)***	385.71 (27 df)***	183.26 (27 df)***

¹ * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

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Ceraffile

MEMORANDUM

✓

October 30 , 1992

From: Edie Miller

TO: Dru Greenwood & Renni Altman

Alex is eager to have a report on the Think Tank on
Congregational Affiliation you attended earlier this week.
How did it go?

Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation



Maurice and
Marilyn Cohen
Center
for Modern
Jewish
Studies

Brandeis University
415 South Street
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617-736-2060
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617-736-2070 FAX

October 14, 1992

Dear Dru :

*John -
Please get me
a report on
Cohen
Center*

The Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation is drawing near and the planning committee, from the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, is looking forward to welcoming you to Brandeis University. I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you some final information related to our work.

Enclosed are two articles to set the stage for our initial conversations at the Think Tank: "Restructuring the Contemporary Synagogue" by Gary Tobin, Director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and "Reinventing the Congregation" by Loren Mead, President of the Alban Institute. These articles are intended merely as an introduction, a starting point. As they were written with specific constituencies in mind, they may require you to "translate" into your own experience as you read. In this way, we will begin our active work together.

Also enclosed is a draft of the schedule of the Think Tank and a list of Think Tank members.

As you can see, we will begin at 7:00 pm, Sunday evening. If you are staying at the Newton Marriott or the Susse Chalet, a mini-bus will pick you up by 6:45 pm to bring you to the university. Please wait in the lobby near the front door for the driver.

If you are driving to Brandeis (directions enclosed), stop at the Main Entrance for a parking permit. You will be directed to the left, to Lot T. The Hassenfeld Conference Center, where we will be meeting, is a short walk from the parking lot.

Fall in New England can be a beautiful season and we have allotted time on Monday for a walk through the hills of the Brandeis campus. We suggest that you bring comfortable shoes for this "walk and talk."

And finally, if you have not as yet returned the survey on definitions of key terms, please do so as soon as possible or bring your questionnaire with you to the Think Tank. We would like to compile a full set of responses from all participants.

If you have any last minute needs concerning arrangements for the Think Tank, do not hesitate to call me. I can be reached at 617-736-2060.

Sincerely,

Amy L. Sales, Think Tank Coordinator



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Restructuring the Contemporary Synagogue

Gary A. Tobin, Ph. D., Director, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies,
Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Synagogues are faced with the harsh realities of contemporary Jewish life. The Jewish community is characterized by high mobility, both within communities and between metropolitan areas. The structure of the Jewish family has undergone radical changes. The traditional Jewish family, that is, two parents with children, is now a distinct minority in the constellation of American Jewish households. Later marrying age, higher rates of divorce, higher rates of labor force participation among Jewish women, and the emergence of formerly atypical family types, such as gay couples or single parent families, are now an integral part of the landscape of the Jewish family. Furthermore, rates of intermarriage have soared in the last generation. High proportions of Jews are now marrying non-Jews, and conversion rates have plummeted. Synagogues must now serve constituencies that are unlike the Jewish family that synagogues once considered to be the core of their membership. At the same time, religious patterns have changed as well. Jews are less likely to observe rituals such as lighting Shabbat candles, celebrating Hanukkah. Such ritual practice is often a function of child raising years, but is not necessarily an ongoing part of religious life. For most American Jews, religion has become peripheral to everyday life, and Judaism has become a part-time activity at best.

Yet, the synagogue remains at the core of contemporary Jewish life. Rates of membership in other Jewish organizations, support for Israel, and participation in Jewish volunteerism and philanthropies are all linked to synagogue membership and participation. Jews who belong to a synagogue are far more likely than non-members to be active in other dimensions of Jewish life. Rates of synagogue affiliation, however, are very low. In most communities, less than half of Jewish households have a current synagogue membership, while in other communities, particularly in the South and West, affiliation rates dip below 30% and in some cases below 20%. The vast majority of Jewish households do not have a current synagogue membership. Other data show that many younger Jews intend to belong to a synagogue in the future, while many Jews whose children have already grown used to belong to a synagogue in the past. Younger Jews are more likely to join a synagogue a little later in life as they form families, but they are also likely to drop their membership as they age. While synagogues are

successful in attracting most Jews at some point in their life cycle, they are becoming less and less successful in attracting them sooner and holding onto them longer.

Much of this phenomenon can be linked to the demographic and religious changes that have swept the American Jewish landscape, changes which themselves create new challenges for the synagogue. If synagogues continue to operate as they did in the past, the net result will be continued decline in synagogue affiliation and participation. Recognition of these changes must lead to reform within the structure of the synagogue. The synagogue must institutionalize the administrative response to the changes in the Jewish community. Merely acknowledging that radical differences characterize today's Jewish community without an equally radical response on the part of the synagogue, may result in temporary elimination of certain problems, but such acknowledgment does not systematically address the issues. Two fundamental areas are in need of radical reform: committee and task force structure of the synagogue, and the professional staff configuration of the synagogue. Both the lay and professional components of the synagogue need to be reorganized and restructured to address the problems facing the Jewish community.

The following recommendations must be considered in the context of the individual synagogue. The size of the synagogue has an important bearing on which of the recommendations should be implemented, and to what extent. Furthermore, whether or not a congregation is in a period of decline or growth may also have some influence. Some synagogues may have already instituted a number of these changes to one degree or another. The issue is, of course, to what degree and how effective is further change. Close examination must take place to ascertain whether or not these recommendations are already being done—often the claim of many synagogues—and whether they are being done correctly, competently, and to the degree necessary to achieve the requisite changes.

It must also be remembered that not all changes can be implemented simultaneously. A plan might call for some changes to be initiated within a year, others within three years, and still others within five or more years. While a long-range planning process may find all of the changes listed below to be stated as goals over a given time period, some of the

changes can be made immediately while others will take more time and effort.

Not all ideas are workable for every synagogue. Particular histories, demographic constellations, staff requirements, or other elements make some of the suggestions more desirable or realistic than others; however, all of the changes should be considered, or encourage other areas of change.

Finally, the particular demography of each synagogue will influence the rate and direction of change. For example, a synagogue with a high proportion of young families may wish to institute some of the structural changes suggested, while a synagogue with a population primarily over the age of 65, may want to concentrate on others. A particular demographic mix, however, should not necessarily be a deterrent to instituting many of the suggested changes. An older congregation is often thought to be synonymous, for example, with an inactive congregation. However, congregations with populations that are primarily over the age of 65 or that have static or even declining population bases, should not be hesitant to institute new structures.

The following task force structure which either complements or replaces existing committees within the synagogue, should be instituted.

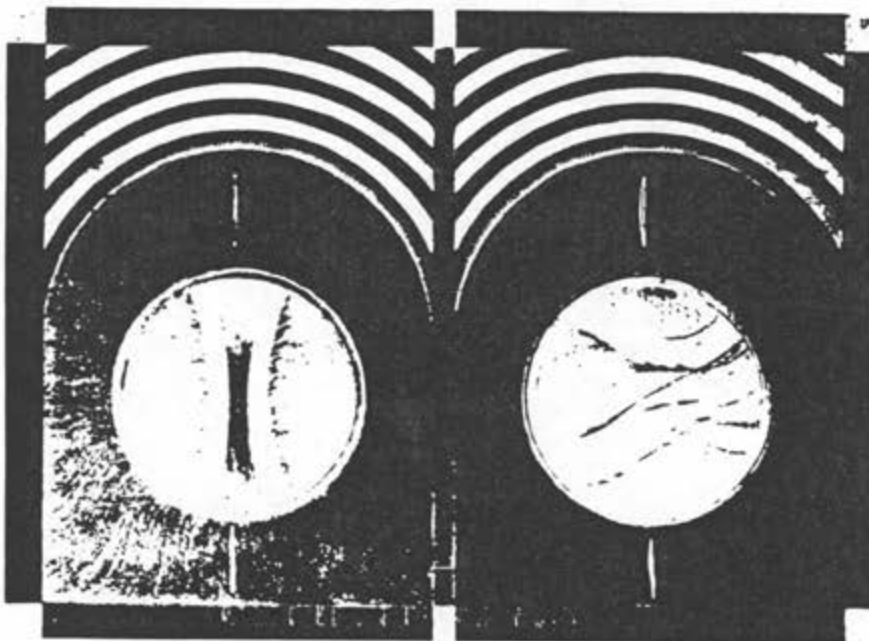
1. Long-Range Planning Committee

This committee is responsible for the creation of the long-range plan for the synagogue. **The long-**

range plan should include a mission statement of what the synagogue would like to accomplish and goals and objectives, as well as strategies and tactics to achieve such goals and objectives. Evaluative measures should be instituted by the synagogue to test how well changes are being implemented and whether or not they are successful. The Long-Range Planning Committee should be responsible for the synagogue's research efforts. This would include, for example, a *needs assessment*, a *survey* of what programs and services congregants would like to see offered at the synagogue, *membership surveys* of all kinds, and other research and development functions. The Long-Range Planning Committee should not be an ad hoc entity. Often synagogues engage in a long-range planning effort and create a written plan, but fail to do follow-up in terms of seeing that the plan is implemented. **A permanent Long-Range Planning Committee has the task not only of continually assessing the synagogue's mission and goals and objective, but of creating and modifying new plans every year as well.** The Long-Range Planning Committee is essential to map out a blueprint for the operation of the synagogue as a whole.

2. Leadership Development and Training Committee

The development of leadership in the synagogue must be an ongoing function. New board members, committee chairs, and volunteers need to



"Creation #4"

22" X 30"

Silverpoint, gold leaf and acrylic

Susan Schwalb

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be formally recruited and trained to serve the synagogue. The Leadership Development and Training Committee should plan board retreats, for example, for in-depth training in management and decision making. Programs in creative thinking and brainstorming should be part of all board and committee meetings. The utilization and encouragement of creative activity on the part of lay leadership can bring the synagogue into a much more fruitful management system. Other responsibilities of this Committee may include missions to Israel or week-end retreats that revolve around planning issues facing the synagogue as well as in-depth education in Jewish ethics or Jewish history. Other aspects of leadership development and training may include formal training for ushers at the High Holidays to ensure that they are courteous and instructive about the synagogue. The various elements of leadership development and training are designed to bring more sophisticated management and decision making to the lay leadership, educate them about Judaism, increase their commitment to the synagogue, and provide avenues for creative thinking and action at the lay level.

3. Interagency Planning Committee

Synagogues must work increasingly with other Jewish organizations, agencies, and institutions to fulfill their mission. This includes cooperation with Jewish Community Centers, other synagogues, Jewish organizations, non-Jewish organizations within the community, other non-profits, the private sector, and a whole array of civic organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce. The synagogue which must play a central communal role, needs lay and professional liaisons to both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities as a whole. It is also necessary for the Interagency Planning Committee to have formal connections with national organizations that serve synagogues. For example, each reform synagogue should have an official representative who is a liaison to the United Synagogue. These representatives should be responsible for transmitting information from the national organization to the synagogue and vice versa. They should also monitor what services are available from the umbrella organizations, such as planning assistance or national speakers. The national umbrella organizations, provide many resources that are often unknown to individual synagogues because there are no active avenues of communication. It is necessary to link with the rest of the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community as well, so that more services can be provided, higher quality services can be provided, and larger constituencies can be reached through cooperative efforts.

4. Financial Resource Development Committee

The Financial Resource Development Committee is responsible for planning and coordinating the financial needs of the synagogue. It should include the traditional fundraising mechanisms of the synagogue, such as High Holiday appeals, bingo, and the rabbis' discretionary funds, and it should expand to meet the financial realities of the coming decade, which would include annual giving campaigns. Congregants should be solicited for gifts above and beyond membership dues. They should also be formally solicited by one another for specific programs and purposes within the synagogue. The annual fund raising campaign should involve formal solicitor training, where congregants who develop leadership roles learn how to conduct face-to-face solicitations of one another. Many Jewish organizations actively engage in this successful form of fund raising, and synagogues should be no exception. The Financial Resource Development Committee should also be responsible for endowment and planned giving funds. More and more Jewish organizations and agencies rely on these mechanisms to ensure their future. **Major efforts in synagogues are also necessary to create larger endowments for particular purposes and programs within the synagogue.** Without large endowments, many synagogues will be unable to provide, with certainty, the range and quality of programs and services that they wish to offer in the coming years.

5. Membership Recruitment Committee

This is a pro-active committee that helps to recruit new members and retain current members. It utilizes experimental techniques, including phonathons and personal one-on-one recruitment for non-affiliates, as well as other mechanisms to recruit and maintain members. It is also responsible for experimenting with new marketing strategies for membership recruitment and retention, which may include offering High Holiday services free of charge for all non-members, and utilizing the lists of people who attend to recruit members for future years. It also may include evaluating current screening procedures for financial need of potential members to ensure that these procedures are neither embarrassing nor likely to discourage potential members from joining.

6. Communications and Marketing Committee

The Communications and Marketing Committee actively promotes the synagogue both to non-members and current members. It is designed to develop an overall strategy to promote the

synagogue. The Communications and Marketing Committee can engage in the innovative production of materials for the synagogue through Desk Top Publishing. It may create interesting and informative materials about the synagogue, which can be distributed during the High Holidays when nearly all the congregants are likely to have some contact with the synagogue. *Individuals are more likely to read materials that are handed to them, than they are to read materials that come through the mail.* The Communications and Marketing Committee may also use *alternative media*, such as suburban newspapers, the radio, or posters in supermarkets to encourage people to attend certain events, join the synagogue, or to promote a particular program. The use of alternative media is *essential in reaching the non-affiliated population who do not receive the temple bulletin*, and are not likely to receive the local Jewish newspaper. Reliance only on these vehicles is likely to be very limiting. Therefore, the Communications and Marketing Committee must examine all potential media opportunities to reach the Jewish population.

7. Special Events and Projects Committee

This committee is in charge of **creating at least one new and innovative event or project per year**. This may include, for example, *programs with recreational components* such as an innovative Jewish educational and weekend recreational package. Or it may include offering *religious services in geographically dispersed areas*. *Experimental liturgy or multiple services* within the congregation to serve different constituencies, might also fall under the purview of the Special Events and Projects Committee. It is essential to have an administrative entity within the synagogue that is responsible for developing exciting events and programs. Utilizing the same old breakfasts, dinners, and adult education formats, is not likely to increase participation.

8. Community Service Committee

This committee organizes **community service projects** and **recruits volunteers to serve the general community**. The synagogue must be a vehicle for community service. Jews *need to be actively involved in tzedakah and the performance of mitzvot*. If the synagogue is going to be a conduit for living Judaism, the Community Service Committee should develop volunteer opportunities for Jews to work in soup kitchens, serve the homeless, volunteer in hospitals, and otherwise service their fellow human beings. **The Community Service Committee looks outward as opposed to inward. Congregants are given the opportunity to serve through the synagogue as opposed to serving**

the synagogue itself. This is especially important to attract younger Jews who wish to have social action and community service as part of their Jewish identity.

9. Human Services Committee

This committee is responsible for providing **essential human services** to the congregation. These services may include day care and preschool programs for children, social and recreational programs for the elderly, transportation programs for children, and other human services needed by the congregants. The synagogue must be viewed as a place that meets the needs of its members. Jews look to synagogues to help them. ***If the synagogue cannot provide necessary services, individuals may look to other organizations, agencies, and institutions to do so, and they may shift their loyalties and allegiances elsewhere as well.*** The provision of human services is an essential function of the synagogue and the Human Services Committee should assess which services are required, establish priorities for such services, and help to initiate and implement human service programs.

10. Adult and Family Education Committee

Many synagogues have Jewish education committees. They are devoted primarily to the education of the young, particularly pre-bar/bat mitzvah children. The synagogue needs an **Adult and Family Education Committee to concentrate solely upon the educational needs of young adults, young families, and those who are interested in continuing their education as Jews once they are adults.** The Adult and Family Education Committee can organize trips to Israel, special Shabbat weekends, lecture series, seminars, and other programs designed for both formal and informal education of adults and family units. Much of the future of Jewish education rests upon the ability to educate young families and adults. The special attention required of this committee is key to the future of Jewish continuity.

11. Interfaith Programming Committee

A special committee is necessary to meet the **needs of intermarried couples**, the fastest growing group of Jews in the United States. They are the least likely of any group of Jews to belong to a synagogue. Without special attention in terms of *counseling programs, outreach efforts, conversion classes, and other special programs*, these individuals may stay on the periphery of synagogue life. Interfaith programming cannot be left to chance. Furthermore, the Interfaith Programming Committee does more than outreach. It also does inreach

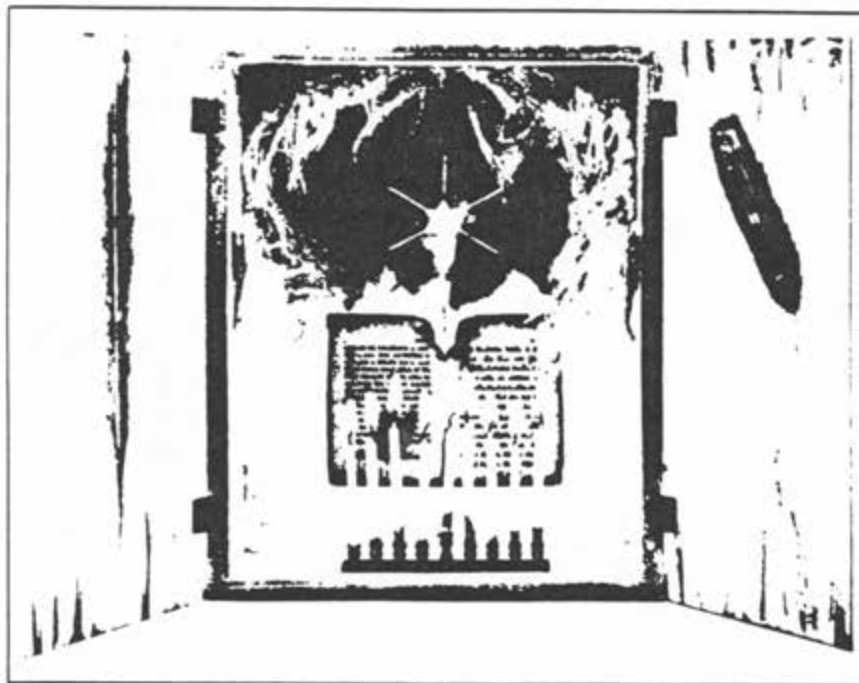
and ensures that once interfaith couples are a part of the synagogue, they are encouraged to participate in all aspects of synagogue life.

12. Personal Touch Committee

This committee is designed to **create a warm and friendly atmosphere at the synagogue.** Reaching out to people must be systematically incorporated into the everyday workings of the synagogue. *Frequent telephone calls* should be made to congregants for feedback regarding how they feel about particular issues within the synagogue. *Telethon projects* should be organized to personally thank people for their contributions no matter what the size or purpose of the contribution. This is much more effective than a line in the temple bulletin thanking them for their contribution. The committee should *organize lay people to visit and counsel families in need, or families in transition* to ensure that families in divorce have a place to go on the High Holidays, or that hospitalized individuals receive either a card or a visit from another congregant. The committee should organize *Shabbat dinners* and have new congregants invited to other individuals' homes. Individuals who are apparent newcomers on the High Holidays should be openly and warmly welcomed. The Personal Touch Committee adds a human dimension to the synagogue.

All of the changes mentioned above require appropriate staff. It is **essential that the synagogue have enough staff and that they be assigned reasonable work loads.** Most synagogues are understaffed with a rabbi, an assistant rabbi, an educator, and perhaps an administrator. Synagogues need to have larger staffs, which may include *program directors, fund raising specialists, communications and marketing staff,* and so on. This assumes, of course, that the synagogue can successfully engage in innovative financial resource development, develop proper membership pricing systems, engage in cooperative planning with other organizations and agencies, and generally implement the structure outlined above. **Growth creates growth and proper committee structure and staffing will lead to greater financial resource development and vice versa.**

The agenda of the synagogue must be broad and comprehensive. By reassessing its current structure, the synagogue can approach the future from a position of strength and creativity. The health and **well-being of the Jewish community depends upon the willingness of the synagogue to take risks and create new systems** within its current structure. The future depends upon the synagogue's willingness to acknowledge the changes that have occurred in Jewish life and respond boldly through new ways of thinking and acting. ❖



"Portable Altar"
12" X 10" X 5 3/4"
Silverpoint with Mixed Media.
Susan Schwulb ©1980

action information

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For all church leaders: Another article in Loren Mead's series—why the mission, the organization, and the theology of the congregation need reinventing. Amy Beveridge paints a picture of Jesus as a "self-differentiated person." Readers' thoughtful responses on clergy, congregations, and codependency. John Fisk's research findings on faith development in middle adulthood.

Especially for clergy: "Old Problems . . . New Insights," a new column by Donna Schaper. In this issue: Why clergy can't worship in their churches, and what to do about it. How do people see the pastor's role? George Davis describes the expectations parishioners bring from daily life and work.

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Celia Allison Hahn, editor



MAY/JUNE 1990

Reinventing the Congregation

by Loren B. Mead

The people who read this are discovering that their task within religious systems is bigger and deeper than any of us imagined a few years ago.

The problems are not cosmetic things that one can "problem solve" or outflank. They go to the heart of our institutions.

Instead of tampering with congregations or polishing them up a bit, I believe we are engaged in reinventing them, no less.

Let's put that in context, though. Many of the systems of our world seem to be flying apart—technological, environmental, economical, political, financial. There is an urgency about the tasks in those arenas, too. And many of the people who feel a call to work at reinventing congregations are simultaneously working at the redesign and repair of other systems they touch.

Those of us called to the religious systems, however, feel the foundational dimension of our task. The religious systems have provided a core of meaning, direction, and value to human life and undergirded community life and community institutions of all sorts.

We see the call to reinvent congregations as a centrally important task for human beings, for families, for communities, and for the social order.

This article, like almost everything we do at Alban, is addressed to the people engaged in trying to rebuild our religious systems, especially the congregation. That's our work.

First, I think we need to recognize what an extraordinary thing congregations—with all their faults—have *been*! The congregation has been a remarkably stable institution, able to establish its roots and grow in all kinds of environments—able to exist in thousands of forms—urban and rural; center city and suburban; rich and poor; for white and brown, black, red and yellow people. It has been able to carry important traditions through many generations in many cultures. It has provided men and women and children with a community larger than family or clan. It has been the place to celebrate and to grieve the joys and sadnesses of living. For many more than a thousand years the congregation has shaped individual lives and given transcendent grounding to the hopes and fears of people both simple and great. Congregations float through storms of theological debate, revolutions and reformations as balsa wood rides the waves of a storm at sea. They are at home in almost every neighborhood—I've seen one list that counts 394,000 of them in the United States alone. Congregations are tenacious and stubborn, hard to change and harder still to kill. Many of them go on living for years, defying

RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT CONGREGATIONS

all rationality and frustrating the wisdom of the bureaucrats.

Their strengths are sometimes weaknesses. Their stability allows them to communicate religious tradition across the generations, but it makes it possible for them also to nurture prejudice and pass it across the years. Their tenacity makes it difficult for them to change even when their old patterns have ceased to give life. They maintain obsolete structures, sometimes spending all their energy just to survive.

At The Alban Institute, we approach congregations both as critics and as lovers. We are aware of the shortcomings in the best of them; but we see powerful potential for good in the worst of them. Indeed, we often find extraordinary grace and love in the most unlikely places. And among the finest congregations we find pettiness, double-dealing, and destructive relationships. The negative powers have always been there (read Corinthians if you doubt my word), but congregations have brought meaning to millions through the generations.

The severe stresses and strains upon congregations and clergy, the paralysis of national denominational support systems, the financial crunches, and the erosion of membership in mainline denominations are outward signs of the dislocation of our religious institutional structures from the life-giving power those structures once provided. The shape of mission has changed. The environment within which the churches minister has changed. The definitions of ministry and mission have changed. To search for

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the life-giving power of our traditional structures is to be called to reinvent those structures—especially the congregation.

What is happening is somewhere between evolution and revolution. The outcome is not entirely in our hands, yet we are called to act responsibly while our institutions move toward their futures.

The congregation needs to be reinvented in three areas—missional, organizational, and theological.

A. Reinventing the Mission of the Congregation

Congregations now increasingly recognize their primary mission as existing at their doorsteps, not far off across the ocean. They know mission involves direct engagement, not a distant activity their members only cheer and support. They *know* this, but they have not yet found how to live the new way. This change means that each member of each congregation is being called from "support service" to "active engagement." It is as different as it is to move from being an annual subscriber to the symphony to realizing that you and your friends have to pick up the oboes and bassoons and violins and make music. Different? You bet. If there is going to be music, you have to make it. You are no longer a spectator. And maybe we will have to get used to quite a different kind of music!

Ministry in the past age was the task of the professional in the pulpit or overseas. The people generously supported that ministry. The new ministry is the task of the people where they are involved with life—at work, at play, at home—wherever. Clergy, who used to *BE* the ministry, and were trained to be the ministry, do not know how to train the new ministry, are unsure how to support it, and often cannot even get out of its way.

Similarly the people are not universally enthusiastic about the new responsibility that is theirs, are not clear what they are to be and do, and are often afraid to get started.

In the present age, if there is going to be ministry, the people of our congregations will have to do it. It is no longer the prerogative of the professionals.

The words used to describe this new way of living are becoming commonplace: the ministry of the whole people; the diaconal ministry; the ministry of the baptized; the apostolate of the laity. Each word-set struggles to go beyond an idea to a change of behavior, but so far the major change has been a gradual change of consciousness. Not much else has changed.

If a congregation is to be reinvented for this mission, it will be a congregation turned on its head. Roles of clergy and laity will be revised and changed, sometimes reversed.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, American churches recognized a need to build a class of clergy, edu-

cated for leadership and ministry in a new nation. The theological seminary was the result. Funded and energized by laity, seminaries served the predominant model of ministry inherited from Europe—the clergy.

Now that the primary model of ministry has become the laity, a new kind of invention is called for to support laity in their leadership and ministry to the new world. I call this new invention the congregation. Not the kind we have grown up with—a reinvented congregation.

As seminaries generated leaders of ministry for the age of Christendom, *congregations* are called on now to be generators of a new ministry.

Congregations are called to be life-long centers of mission and ministry development. Part of that requires attention to *two* kinds of catechumenate, in distinction to the *single* catechumenate that prepared members in the Apostolic Age for life in the religious community.

The first is the catechumenate for membership, preparation for initiation. It is a sign of the growth of the consciousness that I describe here that programs for "catechumenate" have become growth industries in many of the denominations. Clearly new energy and imagination is called for to bring people out of the ambiguous culture into an apostolic community now that the culture no longer even pretends to be "religious." These catechumenates are modeled on those of the Apostolic Age. (There is a danger in too close an identification with first-century concepts of the catechumenate. The world from which the candidate comes to the congregation is not a first-century world, nor is the congregation a first-century congregation.) Clergy have a central role in this catechumenate, helping laity engage the power of their tradition and the biblical story.

The second catechumenate is something new. Bits and pieces of it have grown up here and there, but it is fragmentary and undeveloped.

The key to it is the system that sends the congregational member out from worship to the world, then receives her or him back a week later. Congregations have relatively passive systems that nurtured laity in an age in which their participation in ministry and mission was passive. Those systems of worship and pastoral care worked fairly well. Although those systems may need to be augmented, they will play a central part in nurture and formation of the new laity. But they are not enough.

There are at least three new dimensions of a second catechumenate that must be developed:

1. Education in the religious story and the heritage takes on a new dimension. Our traditional approach to Bible study and the story of our heritage has been—to expand my metaphor—like a class in music appreciation. Not a bad thing at all. But the class member looks for something



more when she holds a trombone and realizes that the conductor is pointing at her!

How do we move from where we are to that kind of education? How do clergy contribute to this learning, and where do their skills fall short of what is needed?

2. Our new ministry needs a system of field education. We must reinvent our educational systems in congregations for this kind of catechumenate. What we used to call "your job," or "your community responsibilities," or "your political life," or "your family/neighborhood life," need to become areas of training in ministry.

Congregations need systems that help laity enter these areas of life as a vital engagement in mission. Laity need tools and perspectives with which to differentiate, there in the ambiguous environment, between the servants of God and those who resist God. How do laity develop coalitions with those of other groups or faiths—or no faith at all—who serve God? (In the "old" world, one of my faith would ordinarily find little in common with Muslims; however to address the seriously inhuman prison systems of my town, I need to understand how to find common ground with Muslims).

How do congregations support laity's need to *see* what God is doing? To be able to look at land use problems and think "stewardship"? To look at economic planning and think "creation"? To look at personal and corporate budgets and grapple with prophecy and forgiveness?

In the past age, the Church expected to be able to handle things like that through telling laity what was what in one way or another. It did not work well very often. Only a few laity "caught on" to the concern. In the coming age the responsibility for that ministry and the sensitivity to those issues needs to flow from the laity. Our congregations have not invented ways to help laity grasp the responsibility and achieve the sensitivity their new role requires.

Another way of saying this is that laity are called upon to become theologians, not listen to a study of theology. They are to engage the world, watching expectantly to see and participate in God's work there, by whatever name it is called. Congregations know how to help laity study the-



Each member of the congregation is being called from "support service" to "active engagement." It is like moving from being an annual subscriber to the symphony to realizing that you and your friends have to pick up the oboes and bassoons and violins and make music.

ology, but our attempts have not helped them to do theology. They keep asking the pastor to play the trombone.

Please note that *this* kind of theology is not what clergy are trained in—it is a new thing. Training laity in schools or methods of clergy theology may be counterproductive. It is more likely to turn out second-rate clergy-type theology or, worse, convince laity to go to seminary to get the real thing.

3. The return from mission must also be addressed for the new age in a new way. This is a critical new frontier for every congregation—the movement of laity "back" from mission to community. What's new is to see the opportunity for reflection, for review, and for re-education.

By reflection I mean debriefing. Perhaps more, but at least debriefing. What laity have seen and done on the frontiers of their life is the very stuff of mission. As for centuries they have been taught to bring into their prayers the hurts and concerns they've met "out there," now they are called to bring their engagement books, job descriptions, and volunteer commitments. In those activities they have engaged in ministry. The congregation needs to help others tell how it has gone in God's mission in their corner of the battle.

Review brings a dimension of critique. Congregations need to help people learn to raise questions about ministry, to analyze and probe each other's experience. To challenge one another to deeper ministry.

"Re-education" points to the way that reflection and review, done well, open the door to going deeper into the faith. Indeed, in many cases, reflection and review will lead to a demand for deeper education of more familiar kinds.

Going forth, living in the world, then returning to the congregation are *parts* of the age-old systems our faiths have for grounding us in our tradition and in community. The *old* part of "receiving back," particularly worship, can only be strengthened in its pivotal role at the center of receiving and sending.

A reinvented congregation needs new systems for receiving its people from the culture, engaging them in an apostolic community, then sending them back to affect the culture. The second catechumenate is needed to feed the congregation with the theology discovered at the laity's frontier. That catechumenate may be the most important ingredient in reinventing the congregation.

B. Reinventing the Organization of the Congregation

The churches have done a good job of developing organizational structures that support the old model in which ministry was done by clergy, with laity as auxiliaries or helpers. It worked, and we should be grateful for it. We need to respect and honor it when it still works.

I see a powerful continuing need for the authority of the ordained (but let me note—I *am* ordained, and what I say I see *may* be wishful thinking: my bias may be leading me astray). The functions of the ordained, however, need to change. The congregation is going to need at its center one who nurtures the structures of the community, who cares for the broken-spirited and weary, and who leads the community in prayer, in celebration, and in discerning the Spirit. She or he must be a congregation-builder, a tradition-bearer, and a storyteller, one who serves the people, the community. These ordained leaders need primarily to serve the religious community, releasing and empowering laity to engage the systems of the world where their primary ministry is carried out.

The authority *needed* from the clergy is religious authority: the ability to lead people in their searching for God and in responding to God's search for them.

This is not what most current clergy bought when they signed up. It is not what they are trained for. Some clergy do not want this role. Many, many are struggling hard to live into it.

C. Reinventing the Theology of the Congregation

This reinvention of the congregation presumes a new and different understanding of the locus of theology. The theology understood as authentic in the past was judged so because it participated in a long tradition and met standards of academic testing and analysis. The new theological tasks and explorations will be undertaken by laity engaged in ministry at work and home. They will be in touch with God's activity in the world, and they will be reflecting on it and learning from it. Of course most of us do not yet know how to do any of this. Nothing so clearly indicates the size of the task lying ahead for congregations.

Tomorrow's theology will not emerge primarily from libraries and studies. It is revealing itself in encounters of congregation members (and others!) working at city hall or against city hall, in university laboratories and classrooms,

How Do Pastors Worship?

by Donna Schaper

One of the key problems for a parish minister is how to worship. We lead worship frequently enough. But leading is different than worshipping, and everyone knows it. While leading, we are concerned about our performance and the experience of others. No matter how genuine our petitions to God, or our interpretation of texts, we are still in that artificial land known as leadership. Authentic prayer and praise are steps removed.

Here I try to diagnose the problem and offer a few remedies. The problem is a no-fault problem. We are not the ones responsible for our distance from worship. We signed up for leadership. Our attention legitimately focuses on our voice, our posture, our robes, their eyes, their coughs, their mood. Our leadership, more than in most professions, has to do with turning our bodies, mind, and souls into an instrument through which others may turn to God. We know when we are "on" and when we are "off." Before the sermon is over, we know if it is doing what we wanted it to do or not. By the middle of the pastoral prayer we have remembered someone else we should have prayed for and are about to mispronounce the name we are just pronouncing. Our self-consciousness is on behalf of the congregation's worship. It is a legitimate self-consciousness.

We also count the crowd. We notice who is there and who is not and regret that we prepared a sermon "just" for an absentee and also one which is guaranteed to offend someone who is present but hasn't been for two months. It is common for parish ministers to be buoyed by good attendance and depressed by a bad one. Never believe anyone who tells you that numbers don't matter. They do matter and usually they matter much more than they should. They are an outward sign of an inner grace just like all the better sacraments. It takes enormous courage for a pastor to return to a pulpit the week after Mrs. McGillicutty has pounded him or her for a grammatical mistake or what she considers a theological mistake. There she is again, week in and week out, in the front row, licking her chops, getting ready for the so-called handshake at the end of the service. Sometimes avoiding eye contact with Mrs. McG is all anyone can manage in any one hour of "worship." Our self-

in shelters for the homeless, in conferences about building plans and land use, in family encounters, and in all the thousands of ways that people go about their lives. *There* is where theology is happening. There is where new truth about God is being revealed.

Clergy are trained to tell people what God has done or may be doing; they do not know how to help the people recognize God in the stuff of life and work.

Clergy will have a critical, but difficult new role—bringing theological *questions* to laity, not answers. Their training in the traditional language and shape of faith will be an enormous asset to the new tasks of theology. But it will block the task of theology if they use it in the old ways.

The theological task must move from the seminary to the congregation. Otherwise "ministry of the laity" is just another buzz-word, another new program to reinforce the old ways.

Every congregation must be nothing less than a new kind of seminary, helping its people engage in a lifelong search for God's meaning in their lives and community.

Conclusion

I think the reinvention has begun. It involves hard work at many levels. My bet is that anybody who has read this far in this article is already engaged in it.

In such a change we must be sensitive to those who feel they are losing something important. Some of them will be bitter and angry. Some will leave for quieter pastures. Or they will opt to live in a never-never land of Victorian antiquities.

It will take time, too. Perhaps several generations. We must be impatient, but also able to hold steady. We must be able to seize the teachable moment when it comes and do what we can do. We need to recognize that people can only do what they can do, and that each has her or his own pace. We need to build institutions that can hold steady, keep a long-term focus, and be reference points for us through the changes we face.

In The Alban Institute we want to work with people on that reinvention. In my next article I want to point to some of the places where we see it happening. The good news is that you *can* do something about it. The scary news is that it is not predictable or controllable. The best news of all is that history—of society, of the religious institutions, and of ourselves—is in hands that can be trusted.

(Part 3 of a series on "The Three Ages of the Church." See articles in March/April and July/August, 1989, issues of Action Information).

Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation

PROGRAM

October 25 - October 27, 1992

Hassenfeld Conference Center, Brandeis University

Sunday, October 25

7:00 pm Registration

7:30 pm Convocation

Dr. James P. Wind, Lilly Endowment
Rabbi Renni S. Altman, Union of American Hebrew Congregations

8:00 pm Defining the Issues

Member Growth: The Larger Picture
Loren Mead, President and Founder, The Alban Institute, Inc.

Defining Membership, Affiliation and Strategies for Growth
Gary Tobin, Director, Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for
Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

9:00 pm Refreshments and Informal Discussion

Monday, October 26

9:00 am The Unaffiliated

Reaching Out to the Unaffiliated
Steven E. Foster, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Emanuel (Denver);
Co-Chair, UAHC Task Force on the Unaffiliated

A Typology of Protestant "Marginal Members"
C. Kirk Hadaway, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries

Why do Young Adults Join Churches? Why do They Drop Out?

Dean R. Hoge, Sociology Department, Catholic University of America

10:30 am Coffee Break

10:45 am A Conversation with the Unaffiliated

Panel of the Unaffiliated, Moderated by Bernard Reisman, Director,
Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service

11:30 am Small Group Discussions

1:00 pm Luncheon

2:00 pm A Dialogue on Programmatic Innovations

Luria Conference Room

Hosting a Homeless World: The biblical/theological motif of 'welcoming the stranger' in the hostile environment of urban USA

John F. Steinbruck, Pastor, Luther Place Church

The Researcher's Response

Samuel C. Heilman, Professor of Sociology, Queens College and
the Graduate Center of CUNY

Levine Conference Room

*Building Bridges: Failures and successes in reaching out across boundaries
of social class, ethnicity and race*

James A. Scott, President, American Baptist Churches USA

The Researchers' Response

James Davison Hunter, Department of Sociology, University of
Virginia

4:00 pm Walk and Talk

5:00 pm Hors d'oeuvres

6:00 pm Dinner

7:00 pm *Welcome*

Jehuda Reinharz, Provost, Brandeis University

Leadership, Ministry, and Integrity Amid Changing Lay-Professional Relationships

James R. Wood, Department of Sociology, Indiana University

8:00 pm Dessert and Discussion

Tuesday, October 27

9:00 am *A Framework for Understanding Congregation Affiliation: Suggestions from research within the Christian tradition*

David Roozen, Director, Center for Social and Religious Research,
Hartford Seminary

9:45 am Coffee Break

10:00 am National Religious Institutions

The Role of National Jewish Religious Institutions in Congregational Life

Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun

What Effect, if Any, Do National Religious Institutions Have on Congregational Affiliation?

William McKinney, Dean and Professor of Religion and Society,
Hartford Seminary

11:00 am Small Group Discussions

12:30 pm Luncheon

1:30 pm Looking Toward the Future: Setting new agendas

Reflections moderated by Jim Wind, Lilly Endowment

3:00 pm Adjournment

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Union of American Hebrew Congs.*

James P. Wind
Lilly Endowment

James R. Wood
*Department of Sociology
Indiana University*

Rabbi Michael Zedek
*Congregation B'nai Jehudah
Kansas City, MO*

October 10, 1992

Draft

November 23, 1992
27 Heshvan 5753

Mr. Fred Brand
31 Island Way, #1407
Clearwater, FL 34630

Dear Mr. Brand:

Thank you for sharing with me your concerns regarding the inability of young people, such as your own children and many, many others in the same situation, to become members of synagogues because of financial constraints. Believe me when I tell you this is a segment of the population which we as a Union are well aware of and we are ever seeking ways and means to bring them into the synagogue family.

Our Task Force on Outreach to the Unaffiliated is wrestling with this very problem and has created a Privilege Card for unaffiliated Jews in the 20 to 30 years of age category. It provides incentives for affiliation such as a one or two year free or reduced membership, or in some instances free high holyday tickets are offered. For anyone over the age of 30, the majority of our congregations will provide a reduced membership for those unable to meet the costs. Granted, such a person wishing to affiliate but unable to meet the financial commitment, must speak with the membership chair and/or rabbi, depending on the particular congregation. Very often accommodations are made, even for the not-so-young. I realize that isn't always pleasant, but it can be done with dignity. Certainly when a younger person volunteers some contribution I would hope our temple officials would seek to work out a way to provide them with membership.

We must always remember that not every synagogue has the physical plant which will allow for additional persons to be seated on the high holydays. Nonetheless, synagogues welcome any and all comers for services throughout the congregational year. But we know we must do more, we must make certain they feel welcome and wanted. Thus, many temples program for young singles and in larger communities we are suggesting that temples link hands and resources to do joint programming for the very age group about which you write. They are, as you know, an age group it is very

Fred Brand
November 23, 1992
Page -2-

difficult to reach but I assure you we keep trying!

I am taking the liberty of sharing your letter with the director of the Task Force on Unaffiliated, Rabbi Renni Altman and am asking her to give you fuller details on the Privilege Card and the congregations involved. Along these same lines, we have an Access Card for college age young people and this is proving to be quite successful.

Let me assure you all of us of the Union wrestle with this complex problem. We are ever seeking and searching for ways and means to touch the lives of those who might well be lost to us if we cannot bring them into the circle of Reform Judaism. And if we lose them, what of their children?

Would that our financial situation might allow us to do as much as we would wish to do with and for this specific group of our people. But even given financial constraints, we do not drop the challenge, we are ever seeking ways and means to attract and retain this important part of our population.

With repeated thanks for your thoughtful comments and with every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbi Renni Altman

Fred Brand,
31 Island Way, Apt 1407
Clearwater, FL # 34630

November 17th, 1992

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler,
President, UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY # 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler :

In the introduction to the fall issue of Reform Judaism you said : ... only the synagogue creates Jews. Let there be no doubt that the synagogue-affiliated Jews stand as guardians of the future." I fully and whole-heartedly concur with this statement.

I think that if young Jews are locked out from the temple on the high holidays because they lack a ticket, we are acting against our own long-term interests. Indirectly we are supporting intermarriage, a problem more serious than antisemitism.

Let me be specific : I have three daughters and a son and they range in age from 26 to 35 years. All are over 1000 miles away from me, two on the westcoast and two on the east - coast, none are married and all are still trying to establish themselves in business without having reached adequate incomes to make ends meet.. I am retired and a dues-paying member of the local synagogue. Every year I ask them to attend services and am told that they are not being admitted without a ticket and are ashamed to ask for favors because as yet they cannot make a meaningful contribution.

I would like to make the following suggestions :

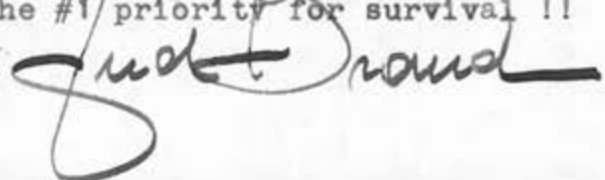
(1) The younger, struggling, unmarried out-of-town sons and daughters of UHC members should be admitted to temple anywhere until they can pay their own memberships.

(2) Congregations should not exclude them but make them feel at home, welcome them to their homes and involve them in community affairs, religious activities, lectures, etc.

(3) A special effort should be made to involve them with other Jewish youngsters socially through agranging dances, parties, get-togethers, etc.

In this huge, increasingly diverse melting-pot of a nation, where we are a mere 2% minority and where the chances of finding a Jewish mate are practically nil, it is incumbent upon us all to give this matter the #1 priority for survival !!

Sincerely yours



November 23, 1992
27 Heshvan 5753

Mr. Fred Brand
31 Island Way, #1407
Clearwater, FL 34630

Dear Mr. Brand:

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November 23, 1992
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With repeated thanks for your thoughtful comments and with every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbi Renni Altman

MEMORANDUM

COPY

September 23, 1992

Unaffiliated

FROM: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
TO: Rabbi Renni S. Altman

Thank you for sending me a report concerning last Tuesday's meeting at Rodeph Shalom. Your high estimate of the programs were confirmed by many others from whom I heard concerning this session, and of course, from my children also. I hope that what started so well will, in fact be continued and then replicated in other regions. Nor should we limit ourselves to a single effort in the Manhattan area. There are literally hundreds, if not thousands, of lonely young people in the greater New York area and they desperately need places where they can encounter others. We have no higher mitzvah.

I understand that my son told you that I prepaid. I sent you a note on to him with the request that you be paid forthwith. Just in case he doesn't, I am attaching a check for \$14.00 to cover for him. When his check comes along, endorse it over to me and I will be repaid. I trust you more than I trust him.



TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

September 17, 1992
19 Elul 5752

MEMORANDUM

To: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler and Rabbi Daniel B. Syme

From: Rabbi Renni S. Altman

CC: Rabbi Steven Foster, Arthur Grant, Dru Greenwood, Myra Ostroff, Sheila Thau and Geraldine Voit

Re: "Being Jewish: So What?"

I just want to let you that our program for Jewish New Yorkers, age 22-35, was a tremendous success. It was held this past Tuesday at Rodeph Shalom and attracted some 200 people. The room was filled with young people and energy. They were so appreciative that we had arranged this evening for them to meet other Jews, explore issues of Jewish identity and learn about opportunities for involvement.

The evening began with a wine and cheese reception before the program. The program involved a panel presentation by members of Reform congregations who are prominent professionals in various fields (law, medicine and business) speaking about why being Jewish is important to them and why they are involved in synagogue. Al (Vorspan) served as moderator and was absolutely terrific. Some of the panelists were a bit too preachy and pushy on why these people should join synagogues and Al brought it back to the focus on why be Jewish. Following the panel, discussion continued in small groups over dinner. More than a dozen HUC rabbinic students served as facilitators for these discussion groups (they were also great). The evening ended with some schmooze time to music by a jazz pianist (a New American from Russia) and the opportunity to talk to representatives from the Manhattan Privilege Card congregations and sign-up for more information.

Director of Programs
Rabbi Renni S. Altman
Chairperson
Myra Ostroff
Co-Chairperson
Rabbi Steven E. Foster
Vice-Chairs
Sheila Thau
Geraldine Voit

In their packets, participants received materials about Reform Judaism ("Reform Judaism and You", the most recent issue of RJ, a UAHC Press Catalogue and excerpts from The Jewish Home on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) along with Privilege Cards and a schedule of on-going and upcoming activities at the participating congregations, especially highlighting those programs geared for young adults.

We are very excited about the success of the program. I spoke with Allen Kaplan and John Stern the next day. They are going to talk about it at their next presidents' meeting and discuss ways to continue what was started. There was strong interest expressed at the program in having more events such as this.

This program was organized as a pilot program with the hope that other communities around the country will replicate it. My next step is to write it up and to promote it in the regions and around the country. As a pilot project the Task Force was able to subsidize the program, primarily paying for the advertising (which was costly, but well worthwhile). Contributions from participating congregations helped to cover additional expenses. We do not have the funds to do this on a regular basis, however.

This program was more than just a wonderful way for the Reform movement to reach out to young, unaffiliated Jews. It was a good example of how congregations in one community can work together.



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

May 6, 1992
3 Iyar 5752

Unaffiliated

Gary A. Tobin, Director
Cohen Center for
Modern Jewish Studies
Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02254

Rabbi Renni Altman, Director
Programs for the Unaffiliated
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Gary and Renni:

I am delighted that plans have moved forward for the Think Tank on Church/Synagogue Affiliation sponsored by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It pleases me that the Lilly Endowment has determined to provide a grant to permit this very critical gathering from which I am certain that important information will come forth.

While I much appreciate the invitation to participate in the Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation, I regret that I am unable to be with you. The Jewish Agency will be meeting in Israel at the very time of the Think Tank. My presence at that meeting is most important for the Reform movement, therefore, I must decline your kind invitation to be with you at Brandeis.

Needless to note, I will be very interested in learning how the program develops and certainly what transpires during the October sessions.

With warmest regards and every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation



Maurice and
Marilyn Cohen
Center
for Modern
Jewish
Studies

Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, Mass.
02254-9110
617-736-2060
617-736-3009 TTY/TDD
617-736-2070 FAX

April 30, 1992

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President, UAHC

Dear Rabbi Schindler: *Alex:*

A critical challenge to religious life in America in the 1990s is the low level of church and synagogue affiliation. Researchers, clergy, and community professionals are all grappling with issues of individual motivation, needs of new target populations, and ways to respond to social trends which influence involvement in congregations.

The Lilly Endowment has awarded a grant to the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations to convene a think tank on church/synagogue affiliation. The Think Tank is designed to generate a creative dialogue among scholars, clergy and community professionals from across the spectrum of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish denominations. Participants will have a unique opportunity to learn together about the latest practice and knowledge in the field and to develop new insights for future research and program initiatives.

The Think Tank will be held at Brandeis University from Sunday evening, October 25, through Tuesday, October 27, 1992. We are holding the number of participants to a select group of forty people to create the interactive environment necessary for a Think Tank.

We would like to invite you to participate in the Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation. You have been recommended as someone who would bring a rich perspective and invaluable experience to this work. Given the limited number of places, we are asking for a response by June 15.

Enclosed is further information on the Think Tank. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Tobin
Gary A. Tobin, Director
Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Renni Altman
Rabbi Renni Altman, Director
Programs for the Unaffiliated
Union of American Hebrew Congregations



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקרבות
באמריקה

Union of
American
Hebrew
Congregations

Serving
Reform Judaism
in North America

Funded by
Lilly Endowment, Inc.
Indianapolis private
family foundation
with a long-standing
interest in American
religion.

THINK TANK ON CONGREGATION AFFILIATION

The Lilly Endowment has awarded a grant to the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations to convene a Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation. The over-arching purpose of the Think Tank is to fashion links between research and practice, to ensure that each enlightens the other.

The broad questions which frame this effort are: Who are the unaffiliated and how are they reached? What factors -- social, organizational, and individual -- influence participation in congregations? The Think Tank intends to examine current knowledge in this arena and to extend our understanding so that we might identify possibilities for further scholarly exploration and program development.

The Program

Dates. The Think Tank begins Sunday evening, October 25, 1992, and continues through Tuesday, October 27, until approximately 3:00 p.m.

Location. Meetings will be held at the Hassenfeld Conference Center at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts (15 miles west of Boston). The Conference Center, set on a New England hillside, promises to be surrounded by brilliant fall foliage in October.

Participants. The number of participants is limited to 40 people. Invitations are being extended to researchers, clergy, and community professionals whose work has focused on understanding and enhancing religious affiliation. Participants will represent diverse denominations from Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish organizations.

Resource People. Key presenters will provide a framework for our deliberations and material to stimulate our thought and discussion. Among others joining the Think Tank are:

Gary Tobin -- Director, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, author of numerous community studies undertaken for Jewish federations and congregations across the U.S.

Loren Mead -- Executive Director of the Alban Institute and a founding member of the Project Team for Congregational Studies.

William McKinney -- Dean and Professor of Religion and Society at Hartford Seminary, co-author of the Handbook for Congregational Studies.

Dean Hoge -- Professor at Catholic University of America, principal investigator of a study of the religious journeys of Presbyterian "baby-boomers."

C. Kirk Hadaway -- Director of Research for United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, co-editor of a forthcoming collection of essays on new research on church growth.

Steven Foster -- Rabbi of Congregation Emanuel in Denver, Colorado, Co-Chair of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' Task Force on the Unaffiliated.

Working Sessions. Formal presentations by the key resource people will provide "grist for the mill" for small group working sessions. These working sessions will provide ample opportunity for open discussion and exchange among Think Tank participants.

Registration Fee. The registration fee for the Think Tank is \$125. This includes admission to all formal presentations and working sessions, meals, materials, and copies of any products which emerge from this work.

Transportation and Accommodations. Participants will be responsible for their own transportation and lodging. Accommodations are available at a special conference rate at the Boston Marriott Newton (\$90 per night) or the Susse Chalet (\$49 per night). Lunches and dinners will be served at the Conference Center and are included in the registration fee.

Participation in the Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation will be on a "first-come first served" basis while maintaining a balance by religious denomination and professional practice. Please let us know of your interest in participating in the Think Tank by returning the response form by June 15, 1992.

Response Form

___ I would like to take part in the Think Tank on Congregation Affiliation at Brandeis University, October 25-27, 1992.

___ I am unable to take part in the Church/Synagogue Affiliation Think Tank.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Please return this form by June 15, 1992 via mail or fax to:

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
Brandeis University
Waltham, MA 02254

FAX: 617-736-2070

Thank you for your early response.

MEMORANDUM

COPY

March 18, 1992

FROM: Edith J. Miller
TO: Rabbi Renni Altman
COPY: Rabbi Norman Kahan, Joseph Bernstein *mm*

Alex and I correspond with a woman from Marion, Iowa who is a Jew-by-Choice although I am not even certain that her conversion was ever formalized - - no one else in her family follows our faith. But she is exceedingly dedicated. She is also very devoted to her home congregation and undertakes many special responsibilities.

We just received a letter which she sent while on a journey west. Let me note the following comments she wrote on arriving in a community in Oklahoma, I believe, which shall remain nameless inasmuch as she did not want us to know the particular congregation, but she did want to share what happened to her. I am not even sure it was one of our congregations.

"Also, arriving in _____ early, we were able to go to services, though another mixed blessing. On arriving, I carefully introduced myself to the greeters, explaining I was a visitor from Iowa and that my (gentile) hostess from _____ had kindly brought me, but we were as semi-invisible and not much relevant! I think I've always been good with visitors (and regulars!) in Cedar Rapids, but trust me, I shall return home and watch for and welcome strangers with deep empathy from now on!"

I am sure you agree her message is a sad one - - perhaps we can find a way to once again remind our congregations to welcome the stranger in their midst.

I am going to share this memo with Norm Kahan and Joe Bernstein so that perhaps they can make use of it in one or another of their publications.

Many thanks.

all other
visits went
PERFECT!

AND HOPE they AREN'T shingles
but some reaction to my FX
friends' cat!

Also, arriving in ~~early~~
early, we were able to go
to services, though another
mixed blessing! On arriving
I carefully introduced myself
to the greeters, explained I was
a visitor ^{from TX} & that my (Gentile)
hostess from ~~the area~~ had
kindly brought me, but
we were as semi-invisible
& not much relevant! I
THINK I've always been good
^{with visitors (or regulars)}
that way in Cedar Rapids
but, trust me, I shall
return home and watch for
& welcome strangers with
DEEP empathy from now
on!

We managed to sort of
ignore it, however, & the
best of the time was worshipful:
beautiful ^{sanctuary, especially} windows, sung
service, & lay speaker on
ORT (new to me). Perhaps
someone would have greeted us
at the org, but my friend
wanted to leave. ~~At the~~
already found where the
nearest synagogue is from
Port Isabel, & have hopes for
(20 miles away in Brownsville)

where I am now

3/10/92
Shalom Edie & perhaps Rabbi
Schindler, unless he's still
"on the road" ...

While I was driving yesterday,
I heard the news about Mr. Begin.
However you might have felt
about some of his politics, you
may even have known him
personally, so I especially send
you my condolences... (Green
ink is all I have & a soft pencil;
I'm sorry.)

You said, Edie, you hope all
the plans we made work out
well & the weather is with me.
My answer has to be one of
those is it 's empty or 's full
kind. For example, when I
arrived at my friends' in
Okla. for the evening, I had
to drive on, as they had
just come down with
shingles!

Although I had driven 2
days to see them, I visited
only briefly with the woman
as her husband's dr. thought
I might be vulnerable. On
the other hand, I ended up
staying a memorable place
in Okla. City, plus I on arriving
in ~~Okla. City~~ early, I got to
see my friends' place of work
etc. I have come down with
some odd spots, but we think

censored;
you'll see why
later!



I hope this finds you
both VERY WELL & HAPPY!
I hope you missed your
predicted snow storm, Edie.
But, there's hope, ^{if we just wait} In Kansas,
daffodils were blooming,
in OK quince bushes &
pear trees, & in TX
(as early ⁱⁿ as ^{the} redbuds & even
many trees had leafed
out.

Love,
4:50
maubyn

a more joyous than that
THIS week!

Enclosed is a postcard
that's proof I made it
here, Edie. Yesterday I
actually wore shorts &
a sleeveless blouse &
was ^{very} pleasantly warm
even with bare feet
in the Gulf (across the
causeway). So, hold
the post card to you,
& you should feel
warmth!

Today has been ^{cold} cool & very
windy, so I went to
Mexico! (a first for me)
also climbed to the top of
the lighthouse (very
s-l-o-w-l-y!) for a
fantastic view - ^{papers about blew off!} also
visited schools -

Enclosed are several
copies for you. Frank &
Ernest originally were from
my banker to me when
he learned I was "low."
(over-busy before vacation
& then ^{my} "Aunt" died!)
The Abby & Calvin & Hobbes I
originally copied for friends
in Des Moines & then made
an extra for you two.



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
 PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

February 11, 1992
 7 Adar I 5752

Mr. Robert Geskin
 c/o Rabbi Allen I. Freehling
 University Synagogue
 11960 Sunset Blvd.
 Los Angeles, CA 90049

Dear Mr. Geskin:

Rabbi Freehling has shared with me your letter in response to my comments on national health care. You raise an interesting parallel between "pricing out" individuals from health care coverage and "pricing out" unaffiliated Jews from synagogue membership.

I am pleased to inform you that the Reform movement has already begun developing responses to this matter through our Task Force on the Unaffiliated. One of the first projects of the Task Force has been the creation of the UAHC Privilege Card for unaffiliated Jews in their twenties. By opening synagogue doors to our young people through financial incentives such as time-limited free or significantly reduced memberships and creating appropriate programs for them, we hope to bring unaffiliated Jews into the synagogue at an earlier stage of their lives than they might otherwise have joined. (Please see the enclosed program description for more background on the Privilege Card.)

In the process of developing this program, we have learned that many of our congregations do offer reduced membership rates, most often for people in specific age categories, such as those under 35, or for new members. One of the goals of the Privilege Card program is to encourage congregations to publicize these dues reduction programs. Typically, they are one of a congregation's best kept secrets.

Mr. Robert Geskin

-2-

February 11, 1992

One of the goals of the Task Force is to encourage congregations to review their current dues structures and seek out ways to be more flexible and, therefore, more inviting to the unaffiliated. While virtually all of our congregations will respond positively to those in financial need, I do agree that such arrangements are not appealing to most people and will not encourage the unaffiliated to join synagogues.

The Task Force is only three years old and continues to learn and explore the different ways in which we can encourage our congregations to be more welcoming and to actively reach out to the unaffiliated. The influence of the cost of synagogue membership on affiliation is a matter that is of major concern to the Task Force and to the Reform movement as a whole.

I trust this information responds to your concerns.

With every good wish I am,

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

MEMORANDUM

February 11, 1992

COPY

FROM: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
TO: Rabbi Renni Altman

Thank you very much for the very fine draft in response to Allan Freehling's correspondent, Robert Geskin. I am grateful to you.



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

February 5, 1992
Rosh Hodesh Adar I

MEMORANDUM

To: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

From: Rabbi Renni S. Altman

Renni

Enclosed is a draft of a response to Allan Freehling's friend with regard to the cost of synagogue membership. I am including with it a copy of the program description of the Privilege Card, should you choose to send it to him.

I hope that this is helpful.

*(1) Thank Renni
for enclosed letter*
*(2) Process letter
cc: to Freehling*

Director of Programs
Rabbi Renni S. Altman

Chairperson
Myra Ostroff

Co-Chairperson
Rabbi Steven E. Foster

Vice-Chairs
Sheila Thau
Geraldine Voit

Mr. Robert Geskin

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UAHC PRIVILEGE CARD

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

October 91/Heshvan 5752

Statement of Purpose:

Current studies of the Jewish community indicate that, while 60 - 70% of the Jews in the United States and Canada are currently not affiliated with any synagogue, 85% of North American Jews do affiliate with a synagogue at some point in their adult lives. One of the challenges facing us, then, is to encourage membership for a longer period of time, by bringing people into congregations at earlier stages of their lives and by developing ways to maintain that membership throughout their lives.

It is generally accepted within congregations that people will affiliate when their children are ready for religious school. However, with the changing demographics of the Jewish community, with people delaying marriage and having children later in life, people may not affiliate until they are in their mid to late 30s, if at all. In an effort to attract Jews to the synagogue at an earlier stage in their lives, the UAHC Task Force on the Unaffiliated created the UAHC Privilege Card program for young Jewish adults in their twenties.

Discussions with both unaffiliated Jews and leaders of our congregations indicate that one of the obstacles keeping many younger members of the community from affiliating with congregations is the perception that it is expensive to belong to a synagogue. Even if affordable, synagogue membership is generally not considered a high enough priority for young Jewish adults who may feel that "there's nothing there for us." It is our belief that by offering both financial and programmatic incentives to join congregations, we will encourage more Jews to choose earlier affiliation. The result will be a strengthening of our congregations as more and more Jews feel enfranchised and empowered to participate actively in the life of the community, and a strengthening of Jewish identity and spiritual life for all the members of our Jewish community - the very reason our congregations exist.

Program Format:

A UAHC Privilege Card, entitling the bearer to certain rights and privileges at participating UAHC congregations, is available to every Jew, age 22-30, who so requests. In addition, upon graduation from college, every student on the UAHC College Education Department's mailing list receives the card. The Card is valid for any one year through the cardholder's thirtieth birthday and is subject to renewal or extension at the congregation's discretion. Ideally every UAHC congregation will participate in this program in some way. (As of this date, over 350 congregations are registered in the program.) It is vital that

participating congregations offer some kind of concrete program or service for card holders so that the card does not engender expectations that will be disappointed.

Possible Options for Congregations:

The following is a suggested range of incentive options for congregations to consider. The Task Force recommends the choice of one of the first three options in order to send the strongest message of welcome to young Jews. The UAHC is extending a one year's exemption from MUM dues to CAP congregations for those Privilege Card holders to whom they extend free memberships, providing that the congregation submits lists of those names to the UAHC.

- A. Full membership for two years, at no charge
- B. Full membership for one year, at no charge
- C. Non-voting membership, at no charge
- D. Admission to High Holy Day services, at no charge
- F. Invitations as congregation's guests to programs and special cultural and social events
- G. Invitations as congregation's guests to special "under -30" events, such as Shabbat dinners, comedy night, etc.
- H. Reduced membership dues (even "fair-share" congregations could offer nominal or reduced dues for "under-30s")
- I. Reduced rates for High Holy Days
- J. Reduced rate membership in "Young People's Congregation" or other ongoing program for younger congregants.
- K. Other

Implementation and Distribution:

UAHC congregations register by indicating one or more of the menu items listed above. Upon registering, participating congregations receive the UAHC Privilege Card Program Idea Book, which includes programmatic ideas, suggestions for involving Privilege Card holders in congregational life and camera ready ad copy and press releases for publicizing the program on the local level.

Participating congregations are listed in a directory that is sent out to all UAHC Privilege Card holders. The directory will be updated periodically and will include the name, address and phone number of each congregation, along with the name of a liaison for the program and the privileges the congregation offers. Card holders can also obtain information about participating congregations by calling 800-359-UAHC.

Distribution of the card is multi-faceted. One group of UAHC Privilege Cards is distributed each year in the early spring to college seniors identified through the UAHC College Department. Other cards are distributed through the UAHC Task Force on the Unaffiliated to those whose names have been collected from congregations, from other card holders and through national promotions within the Reform movement and in the general community.

Dear Rabbi Dr. Freckling,

Hi! Rabbi Schindler is certainly correct to be concerned about the "pricing out" of one-fifth of this country's population from health care coverage -- though I oppose shaping a U.S. system upon the Canadian model.

However, we both know at least 20% of the Jewish community will not affiliate with a synagogue for financial reasons. The option of appealing for a lower rate based upon "financial need" is unattractive to many Jews. What if anything has the Reform Movement proposed to do about this?

Cordially,

Robert M. Glickin (B.A.)

P.S. An interesting thought: The L.A. Unified will now distribute condoms to high schoolers. Last time I heard it, a 16yr. old boy having intercourse with a 16yr. old girl had just committed statutory rape! RMG



איחוד
ליהדות
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באמריקה

Commission of Reform Jewish Outreach

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS—CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

838 fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

December 11, 1988
4 Tevet 5752

MEMORANDUM

To: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler and Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
From: Rabbi Renni S. Altman *lexxi*
CC: Dru Greenwood, Mel Merians
Re: Howard Kaufman's letter

I read Howard's letter with great interest. I can certainly understand his frustration as a leader of the Reform movement that his sons should find their answers in Orthodoxy. The issues that he raises are very much in concert with the goals of the Task Force and the Commission: exciting people about being Reform Jews, strengthening Jewish identity and educating for Jewish literacy.

The model that Howard suggests -- sending teachers from Aish HaTorah into different communities for "Discovery Days" -- reminds me of the activities of CLAL and the Wexner Heritage Foundation. As a model, I do not think it works for us, as we are a synagogue based movement and such a program does not foster any connection to the synagogue. However, the essence of what he suggests, providing more Jews with opportunities to learn about Judaism in an exciting and relevant way, is the direction in which the efforts of the Task Force are moving.

We should look to the synagogue as the center for such educational programs. One of the ideas that we suggest to congregations in our new resource book, The Life Cycle of Synagogue Membership: A Guide to Recruitment, Integration and Retention, is to begin a "Lunch and Learn Program" to bring Jewish education into the business community. In this kind of program the rabbi meets on a regular basis with congregants in a central downtown office for serious study. This program can be an effective way to reach out to unaffiliated Jews and will help them initiate a relationship with

Chairman
Melvin M. Sarns
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Leslie Y. Guttman
Director
Dru Greenwood

the synagogue through the rabbi. We could also look to the model of the National Jewish Outreach Program which offers basic Jewish literacy programs through local synagogues to anyone in the community. Such programs would not be difficult to design or promote, but they would involve far more financial and human resources than are currently available to our department.

The following are some ways in which we are currently addressing the concerns that Howard raises which you might want to share with him:

Avi Chai Grants

Six congregations in our movement received grants from the Avi Chai Foundation for programs directed towards the unaffiliated that focus on strengthening Jewish identity and providing opportunities for Jewish learning. These congregations are developing new and exciting ways to reach out to the Jews in their communities and bring them into the synagogue. (You may want to include a summary of some of the grant proposals.)

Privilege Card

The Privilege Card program addresses the population which is of major concern to Howard -- the lost generation between NFTY years and settling down. Through participation in this program, more and more congregations are developing programs to attract young adults. The nature of these programs varies from synagogue to synagogue: many groups are social-action oriented; others are mini-congregations that encompass all aspects of synagogue life; and others, such as the Young Congregants group at Wilshire Blvd. Temple, have a serious study component.

We are currently working on a new and very exciting piece of the Privilege Card Program. Under the directive of the Task Force, we are planning to follow the model of the very successful "Wondering Jew" program, held in Denver a few years ago (brochure is enclosed), and promote it as a Privilege Card event in major cities throughout the country. We are planning such a program for the early fall in Manhattan as a model which will then be replicated elsewhere. Such a program will bring unaffiliated Jewish young adults together for a day that will focus on Jewish identity and connect them with the local congregations, who will offer follow-up programs.

National Kallah and Zimmerman Institute

These two programs address the goal of providing opportunities for high quality adult education but they work in reverse of the Aish HaTorah system -- in our programs, the people travel to the teachers. While the number of people who can reach those programs is somewhat limited, we could reach more people by sponsoring more kallot on a regional basis, as is being done in several regions - e.g., Northeast, Chicago/Great Lakes.

G.T.
Unaffiliated

✓

July 25, 1991
14 Av 5751

Dr. Gary Tobin
Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02130

Dear Gary:

As you know, Dan Syme shared with me his response to your letter of July 16 and I concur with his view. If you let me have a summary of the conclusions, we will be in a better position to see just how to present the full survey results to our people.

Gary, I want you to know I am very grateful for all your good work. If there is anything special you need or feel I should know, please don't hesitate to call upon me.

With appreciation and warm good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Maurice and Marilyn Cohen
Center for Modern Jewish Studies



Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, Massachusetts
02254-9110

617-736-2060
617-736-3009 TTY/TDD
617-736-2070 FAX

16 July 1991

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex:

Enclosed is a copy of the UAHC questionnaire. We are just finishing the analysis and the data are revealing interesting things about the Reform movement.

It would probably be appropriate to have this information somehow introduced at the Biennial. I think it would be useful to have Gabriel Berger, who has been supervising the study, make a presentation at the Biennial. If it does not fit into the schedule we should look for another appropriate forum.

Sincerely,

Gary
Gary A. Tobin

GAT:sjr
encl.

cc: Rabbi Daniel Syme
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer

File - respond as follows
Dear Gary -
I have a copy of your's
response, and will write.
Let me see a summary of
these conclusions, & then
we can decide if we
should present it.
Thanks for all your good
work. If there is any
special you need a full
I should know, please
call on me
M.

Survey of Reform Congregations

**Created by
The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
Brandeis University
in conjunction with
The UAHC-CCAR Task Force on the Unaffiliated**



This short survey is part of a research project on congregational affiliation that is being conducted by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. Your participation in this survey is very important in order to understand what kind of information Reform congregations utilize to learn about their members' characteristics, opinions, and needs. If you have any questions about how to respond to this survey please contact Rabbi Renni S. Altman, (212)249-0100.

Please return survey by March 1, 1991

To: Rabbi Renni Altman
Task Force on the Unaffiliated
838 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10021-7064
(212)249-0100

1. Name of Congregation _____

2. Mailing Address

Street _____

City _____

State or Province _____

Zip Code _____

3. Phone Number _____

4. Name of Respondent _____

5. Position or Job Title of Respondent _____

6. Year of Establishment of Congregation _____

7. Size of Congregation

a. Number of Member Units _____

b. Estimated total number of individuals in member units _____

8. Congregation's Employees (including professional, educational, administrative, clerical, and maintenance staff)

a. Total Number of Full-time Employees in your congregation _____

b. Total Number of Part-time Employees in your congregation _____

9. How many rabbis, administrators, and secretaries/clerical workers are employed by your Congregation on full-time and part-time bases? .

	Full- Time	Part -Time
a. Number of Rabbis _____	_____	_____
b. Number of Administrators _____	_____	_____
c. Number of Secretaries/clerical workers _____	_____	_____

10. How many people would you say attend all Shabbat Services combined in your Congregation in a typical week?

_____ persons

11. Does your Congregation have a Religious School, Sunday School or Hebrew School for children (not including pre-school or nursery school)?

a. Yes _____

b. No _____ (go to question 15).

12. If yes, how many students are currently enrolled? _____

13. Does the school have an employee working as a principal or educational director of the school?

a. Yes _____

b. No _____ (go to question 15).

14. On average, how many hours a week does this person work running the school during the school year?

_____ hours

15. We are interested in learning about activities and programs conducted by your congregation. For each of the following activities or programs please indicate whether or not your congregation has engaged in the activity or program during the year 1989-90.

	Yes	No
a. Adult Jewish/Religious education classes or programs _____		
b. Jewish Day School _____		
c. Subsidized or Free Meal Services (unrelated to religious services) _____		
d. Full-time Day care (infant or pre-school age children) _____		
e. Pre-school program or Nursery School _____		
f. Day care for elderly or other senior citizen programs _____		
g. Summer day camp _____		
h. Youth programs _____		
i. Social-Civic action programs (women's rights, minorities, disabled, homeless advocacy) _____		
j. Arts and cultural programs _____		
k. Interethnic or Interfaith programs with non-Jewish groups _____		
l. Collection of funds or goods for distribution outside the Congregation (Tzedakah collective) _____		

16. During the period 1985-1990, has your congregation used any kind of membership information forms for new members?

- a. Yes _____ (please attach a copy of each form to this survey)
- b. No _____

17. Has your congregation had any committee, task force or commission during the last five years with a specific purpose or focus in any of the following areas?

	Yes	No
a. long range planning _____		
b. strategic planning _____		
c. marketing _____		
d. membership recruitment _____		
e. membership retention _____		
f. Outreach to interfaith couples or Jews by choice _____		
g. needs assessment _____		
h. financial problems _____		

18. During the period 1985-1990, has your congregation utilized any kind of forms, surveys or any other methods to gather information about current, past, or potential congregants? Please enclose a copy of each with this survey.

	Yes	No
a. About current members _____		
b. About past members _____		
c. About potential members _____		

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ALL THREE OF THE ABOVE (items A, B and C), PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 19 AND 20. OTHERWISE GO TO QUESTION 21.

19. In your opinion, how useful for your congregation would it be to collect information about or to conduct surveys of current, past or potential members?

- a. Very useful _____
- b. Somewhat useful _____
- c. Not useful at all _____

20. What are the main reasons that your congregation has not gathered such information at all? Please check all that apply.

- a. never considered the possibility _____
- b. not considered important _____
- c. lack of professional guidance _____
- d. lack of financial resources _____
- e. information needed was already available _____
- f. other (please describe) _____

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ITEMS A, B, AND C IN QUESTION 18, YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEY. PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ALONG WITH ANY MEMBERSHIP FORMS THAT YOUR CONGREGATION MAY USE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

21. Which of the following methods and instruments have been used to gather information about current, past, or potential members?

	Yes	No
a. mail back survey _____		
b. phone survey _____		
c. personal interviews _____		
d. membership forms _____		
e. focus groups _____		
f. synagogue records _____		
g. data collected by other organizations _____		
h. other. Please specify: _____		

22. All in all, how satisfied were you with the experience that your congregation had collecting membership information?

- a. Very satisfied _____
- b. Somewhat satisfied _____
- c. Somewhat unsatisfied _____
- d. Not at all satisfied _____

23. Has your congregation produced any written materials with that information, such as summaries, reports, or planning documents?

- a. Yes _____ (please enclose a copy of each with this survey)
- b. No _____

24. Did your congregation use any of the following in collecting information or preparing written materials about current, former, or potential members?

	Yes	No
a. paid consultants _____		
b. in-house professional staff(rabbis, teachers, administrators) _____		
c. specialists or consultants who volunteered their services _____		
d. other lay members of the congregation _____		
e. Other. Please specify: _____		

25. Has your congregation used funds coming from any of the following sources to support any of these projects?

	Yes	No
a. Congregation's operating budget _____		
b. Donation from a congregant _____		
c. Grant from private foundation _____		
d. Grant from local Jewish federation _____		
e. Other. Please explain: _____		

26. Altogether, how many people would you say were involved in designing, planning, carrying out, and interpreting the information collected about current, former, or potential congregants?

_____ persons

27. In your opinion, what are the reasons that motivated the initiation of these projects?

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

28. In your opinion, how useful for your congregation would it be to collect additional information about or to conduct new surveys of current, past or potential members?

- a. Very useful _____
- b. Somewhat useful _____
- c. Not useful at all _____

29. What are the main reasons that your congregation has not collected such information more often? Please check all that apply.

- a. never considered the possibility _____
- b. not considered important _____
- c. lack of professional guidance _____
- d. lack of financial resources _____
- e. information needed was already available _____
- f. Other (please describe) _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY. PLEASE SEND BACK YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DO NOT FORGET TO INCLUDE A COPY OF EACH MEMBERSHIP FORM AND SURVEY USED, OR ANY REPORT PRODUCED BY YOUR CONGREGATION. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT RABBI RENNI S. ALTMAN, (212) 249-0100, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SURVEY.

Please return survey by March 1, 1991

To: Rabbi Reni Altman
Task Force on the Unaffiliated
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021-7064
(212)249-0100

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE--JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

July 23, 1991

Dr. Gary Tobin
Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, Mass. 02130

Dear Gary,

Thank you for your letter regarding the UAHC questionnaire.

It is a bit early to discuss how to present the data. At the very least, we would like to review a summary of major findings. Once we have a sense of what the data indicates, we can determine how best to share it with our people.

I will look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Vice-President.

DBS/e

cc: Rabbi Sanford Seltzer
Ms. Dru Greenwood
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

Unaffiliated

September 26, 1991
18 Tishri 5752

Mrs. Martin Morhar
13400 Weddington Street
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Dear Mrs. Morhar:

Many thanks for your gracious contribution towards our work. It was heartening to learn of your deep gratitude for our Privilege Card program for young Jewish singles and I am grateful to you for your tangible expression of appreciation and support.

The Privilege Card program stems from our Task Force on Outreach to the Unaffiliated. One of the major groups we seek to reach is the large community of younger Jews, couples as well as singles, who are out of college and in the work force but not yet ready to fully affiliate with a synagogue. Many of these younger Jews are still getting settled in their jobs and/or communities and we feel it is important for them to know we welcome them into our congregations at all times, including during the High Holyday period when it is often difficult for them to connect, as was the case with your daughter's friends.

Thank you for your good wishes on the New Year, they are fully reciprocated.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

September 20, 1991

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

In appreciation of your program giving Young Single Jewish Adults membership in Temples, I am enclosing a small contribution.

My daughter had tried to purchase a ticket for the holidays while she was in Syracuse and then in New Jersey. Altho she told the Temples she was only there temporarily, they told her she had to join the Temple. Our Temple in North Hollywood wrote so that she was able to attend Services.

She did not like going alone and sitting alone as she was the only one of her friends who could obtain tickets through another Temple membership.

This year she attended with a friend from Hadassah and was most happy. Her Temple and Jewish roots are very strong. She was Bat Mitvah and confirmed, attended Camp Swig four summers and both my sister and I have been most active in Sisterhood on the local and District level. My brother-in-law was a Temple president and on the UAHC national board.

However, what about other young adults who did not have this background, until your new program? I do hope it will be well publicized.

Thank you very much and my best for a very Happy, Healthy New Year.

Sincerely,

Elaine Morhar

Elaine Morhar (Mrs. Martin)
13400 Weddington Street
Van Nuys, Ca. 91401

ccm

ELAINE J. MORHAR
KAREN JEAN MORHAR
13400 WEDDINGTON ST. 784-7940
VAN NUYS, CA 91401

3638

Sept 20 1991

16-7001/3220

BY THE
DEPOSIT OF *Reform Jewish Appeal*

\$50.00

2 after 4 no/00

DOLLARS

CALIFORNIA FEDERAL BANK

North Hollywood Office
4821 Laurel Canyon Boulevard
North Hollywood, California 91607

Elaine Morhar

MEMORANDUM

September 26, 1992
18 Tishri 5752

From: Edith J. Miller

To: Joan Greenberg

Please note the enclosed check for \$50.00, payable to RJA, and the accompanying letter. Mrs. Morhar will receive a note from Alex. In view of the fact her gift is sent in appreciation for our Privilege Card program, should this gift really go to the RJA?

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joan Greenberg", written over a diagonal line.

MEMORANDUM

CC: MIT, ABG
3/12

From Rabbi Bernard M. Zlotowitz
To Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Copies
Subject

Date 3/7/91

Dear Alex:

Upon your excellent suggestion that temples encourage the acceptance of the ~~unaffiliated~~ and admit their children to the religious school without charge, the New York Federation conducted a survey, the results of which are enclosed.

We believe that this confirms that your message had an impact and as your message sinks in it will have even more far-reaching results.

The fact that 83 out of 100 congregations responded is of itself a tremendous achievement, as we never had this overwhelming response to any questionnaire.

I wish you to know that my secretary, Ruth Melchet, tabulated the results. I am very proud of the job which she accomplished.

BMZ:rbm

Bernie



TABULATION OF SURVEY ON UNAFFILIATED FAMILIES
IN N Y F R S CONGREGATIONS - as of March 7, 1991

Compiled and analyzed by Ruth B. Melchet, Admin. Assistant, NYFRS

TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES SENT OUT: 100
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES RECEIVED: 83

Question # 1: Does your congregation permit children of
unaffiliated families to attend Religious School?

Response: YES: 36 NO 47 NO RESPONSE: 0

a) If so, for how long?

Response: Answers range from "immediately" to
"as long as it takes". Majority seem
to think that six months to one year
is the proper length of time.

b) Into which grades?

Response: Answers range from "K" through 2 years
to "Before Bar Mitzvah". Most
say: "From K through 3rd grade".

c) What are the charges?

Response: Answers range from "Only for Bar Mitzvah"
all the way up to \$760.00. Most say
\$150.00 to \$300.00/year.

d) Do your members pay less?

Response: YES - 11 No - 8 No response - 64

Question # 2: Can a child of an unaffiliated family
become Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Response: YES- 5 NO - 48 No response or N/A -30

Question # 3: Can a child of an unaffiliated family become
a member of the youth group?

Response: YES - 70 NO - 11 No response or N/A 2

a) If yes, can that child be an officer?

Response: YES - 37 * NO - 22 No response -24

b) Can that child get scholarships to camp, etc.?

Response: YES - 17 NO - 36 No response 30

* Some noted that they could not be "President" of the youth group.

TABULATION OF SURVEY ON UNAFFILIATED FAMILIES,
continued

Question # 4:

- a) If you accept children of unaffiliated families when is the family required to join the Congregation?

Response: Answers range from "K" all the way up to "Before Bar Mitzvah"

- b) Do you offer them any special inducements?

YES - 15 NO - 20 NO RESPONSE 48
(see note below*)

Question # 5: Do you differentiate between children of unaffiliated Jewish families and those of intermarried (where one parent is not Jewish)?

Response:

YES 1 NO 27 NO RESPONSE 55

* Comments range from: "Unaffiliated do not enjoy membership, regardless if they are intermarried"; if they are affiliated the children are treated exactly the same; if they are members they have to make a commitment to the child's Jewish education and to being a part of the Jewish community"; "special inducement to all new members: 2 years one half dues cost throughout all 3 Fair Share Dues categories."



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100 FAX# (212) 734-2857

NEW YORK FEDERATION OF REFORM SYNAGOGUES

SAMPLE

Rabbi Bernard M. Zlotowitz

Director

December 1990

Rabbi Allen S. Kaplan

Associate Director

TO: Rabbis of NYFRS Congregations (copies: Presidents and
Educators of Congregation)
FROM: Rabbi Bernard M. Zlotowitz

Dear Colleagues:

This survey will be helpful for us to inform our congregations as to the practices relating to the religious education and groups of children of unaffiliated families.

Please take a few moments to fill this out and return to my office. Thank you.

- 1) Does your congregation permit children of unaffiliated families to attend Religious School? _____
 - a) If so, for how long? _____
 - b) Into which grades? _____
 - c) What are the charges? _____
 - d) Do your members pay less? _____
If so, what is the differential? _____
- 2) Can a child of an unaffiliated family become Bar/Bat Mitzvah? _____
- 3) Can a child of an unaffiliated family become a member of the youth group? _____
 - a) If yes, can that child be an officer? _____
 - b) Can that child get any scholarships for camp, trips to Israel, etc.? _____
- 4)
 - a) If you accept children of unaffiliated families, when is the family required to join the Congregation? _____
 - b) Do you offer them any special inducements? _____
- 5) Do you differentiate between children of unaffiliated Jewish families and those of intermarried (where one parent is not Jewish?) _____
If so, how? _____

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NAME OF CONGREGATION _____

NAME OF RABBI _____



איחוד
ליהדות
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באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

January 25, 1991
10 Shevat 5751

MEMORANDUM

To: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

From: Rabbi Renni S. Altman

CC: Mel Merians, Rabbi Steven Foster, Rabbi Daniel B. Syme, Lydia Kukoff

Re: Lilly Project

As the first step of the research project, we are preparing to send a survey out to all congregations. This survey has been prepared by the people at Brandeis, with our suggestions included. We will send the survey to all rabbis and to presidents where the congregation has no rabbi. We will also send a note to all presidents informing them of the project and asking for their support. We believe that our request will have the greatest impact if it comes from you. I have drafted the enclosed letters for your approval and signature. I have also included a copy of the survey for your information (it is in draft form and will be formatted properly).

Following the suggested guidelines from Brandeis, and in order to meet the deadline of getting all the information to them by June 1st, we need to send out the surveys by the beginning of February. We will follow that initial letter with a reminder a week later. We will send a second set of surveys to congregations that have not yet responded at the end of February and we will follow that up with a reminder letter at the beginning of March. By the middle of March we will begin making follow-up phone calls to congregations that have not responded and to those who may not have included the requested materials. We will then catalog all of the information and pass it on to Brandeis. They will then write up a report to be presented at a scholarly conference on affiliation that they will organize.

Director of Programs
Rabbi Renni S. Altman
Chairman
Melvin Merians
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven E. Foster

I would appreciate your response to the enclosed letters as soon as possible so that we can have the materials duplicated and mailed out by our deadline. Thank you.

Renni

(3)
attached

February 4, 1991
20 Shevat 5751

Dear Colleague:

The UAHC is currently embarking on a very exciting research project on synagogue affiliation with the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University, under the direction of Dr. Gary Tobin. The Lilly Foundation has awarded a \$150,000 planning grant for this 15-month joint-research project, which is only the first phase of a longer program development project on reaching the unaffiliated. Our movement as a whole, and each Reform congregation in particular, will benefit from our participation in this project, which will help us develop better ways to bring unaffiliated Jews into our congregations.

While the Brandeis study will encompass both synagogue and church affiliation in general, our partnership means that Reform congregations will be the focus of in-depth research. Therefore, all Reform congregations have the opportunity to play a key role in this research venture. The manner in which we complete the first part of this project will influence our ability to obtain the \$850,000 grant necessary to complete the long-term program implementation project. Your immediate response to the enclosed questionnaire is critical for the project's success and our receipt of the \$850,000 grant.

Please take the short time necessary to fill out the questionnaire yourself or pass it on to the appropriate person, and return it to Rabbi Renni S. Altman, UAHC, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021-7064 by March 1, 1991. If you have any of the materials requested -- forms, surveys or reports -- please be sure to include them. Your help in this effort is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

letter being sent to
Presidents where
There is a full-time
Rabbi

February 4, 1991
20 Shevat 5751

Dear Temple President:

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While the Brandeis study will encompass both synagogue and church affiliation in general, our partnership means that Reform congregations will be the focus of in-depth research. We are asking your congregation to participate in this exciting project by completing a questionnaire regarding your efforts in various membership activities. As the information requested involves both staffing and programmatic areas, we thought it most expedient to send the questionnaire directly to your congregation's rabbi.

I am writing to inform you of this project and to ask for your support. The manner in which we complete the first part of this project will influence our ability to obtain the \$850,000 grant necessary to complete the long-term program implementation project. If you have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to call our Director of Programs for the Task Force on the Unaffiliated, Rabbi Renni S. Altman, at (212) 249-0100.

Your support of this effort is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

letter being sent
with survey to
Presidents where there
is no full time
rabbi.

February 4, 1991
20 Shevat 5751

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Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Survey of Reform Congregations

This short survey is part of a research project on congregational affiliation that is being conducted by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. Your participation in this survey is very important in order to understand what kind of information Reform congregations utilize to learn about their members' characteristics, opinions, and needs. If you have any question about how to respond to this survey please contact Rabbi Renni S. Altman, (212) 249-0100.

1. Name of Congregation

2. Mailing Address

Street

City

State or Province

Zip Code

3. Phone Number

4. Name of Respondent

5. Position or Job Title of Respondent

6. Year of Establishment of Congregation

7. Size of Congregation

a. Number of Member Units

b. Estimated total number of
individuals in member units

8. Congregation's Employees (including professional, educational, administrative, clerical, and maintenance staff)

a.Total Number of Full-time Employees in your Congregation

b.Total Number of Part-time Employees in your Congregation

9. How many Rabbis, administrators, and secretaries/clerical workers are employed by your Congregation on full-time and part-time bases?

	Full-time	Part-time
a.Number of Rabbis		
b.Number of Administrators		
c.Number of Secretaries/clerical		

10. How many people would you say attend all Shabbat Services combined in your Congregation in a typical week?

11. Does your Congregation have a Religious School, Sunday School or Hebrew School for children (not including pre-school or nursery school)?

1. Yes

2. No (go to question 15)

12. If yes, how many students are currently enrolled?

13. Does the School have an employee working as a principal or educational director of the School?

1. Yes

2. No (go to question 15)

14. On average, how many hours a week does this person work running the School during the school year?

15. We are interested in learning about activities and programs conducted by your congregation. For each of the following activities or programs please indicate whether or not your congregation has engaged in the activity or program during the year 1989-90.

Yes No

- a. Adult Jewish/Religious education classes or programs
- b. Jewish Day School
- c. Subsidized or Free Meal Services (unrelated to religious services)
- d. Full-time Day care (infant or pre-school age children)
- e. Pre-school program or Nursery School
- f. Day care for elderly or other senior citizen programs
- g. Summer day camp
- h. Youth programs
- i. Social-Civic action programs (women's rights, minorities, disabled, homeless advocacy)
- j. Arts and cultural programs
- k. Interethnic or Interfaith programs
- l. Collection of funds or goods for distribution outside the Congregation (Tzedakah collective)

16. During the period 1985-1990, has your congregation used any kind of membership information forms for new members?

1. Yes (please attach a copy of each form to this survey)

2. No

17. Has your congregation had any committee, task force or commission during the last five years with a specific purpose or focus in any of the following areas?

Yes No

- a. long range planning
- b. strategic planning
- c. marketing
- d. membership recruitment
- e. membership retention
- f. outreach to interfaith couples
or Jews by choice
- g. needs assessment

h. financial problems

18. During the period 1985-1990, has your congregation utilized any kind of forms, surveys or any other methods to gather information about current, past, or potential congregants? Please enclose a copy of each with this survey.

Yes No

- a. About current members
- b. About past members
- c. About potential members

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ALL THREE OF THE ABOVE, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 19 AND 20. OTHERWISE GO TO QUESTION 21.

19. In your opinion, how useful for your congregation would it be to collect information about or to conduct surveys of current, past or potential members?

- 1. Very useful
- 2. Somewhat useful
- 3. Not useful at all

20. What are the main reasons that your congregation has not gathered such information at all? Please check all that apply

- a. never considered the possibility
- b. not considered important
- c. lack of professional guidance
- d. lack of financial resources
- e. information needed was already available
- f. Other (please describe).....

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ITEMS A, B, AND C IN QUESTION 18, YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEY. PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ALONG WITH ANY MEMBERSHIP FORMS THAT YOUR CONGREGATION MAY USE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

21. Which of the following methods and instruments have been used to gather information about current, past, or potential members?

Yes No

- a. mail back survey
- b. phone survey
- c. personal interviews
- d. membership forms
- e. focus groups
- f. synagogue records
- g. data collected by other organizations
- h. other. Please specify:

22. All in all, how satisfied were you with the experience that your congregation had collecting membership information?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Somewhat satisfied

- c. Somewhat unsatisfied
- d. Not at all satisfied

23. Has your congregation produced any written materials with that information, such as summaries, reports, or planning documents?

- 1. Yes (please enclose a copy of each with this survey)
- 2. No

24. Did your congregation use any of the following in collecting information or preparing written materials about current, former, or potential members?

Yes No

- a. paid consultants
- b. in-house professional staff
(rabbis, teachers, administrators)
- c. specialists or consultants who
volunteered their services
- d. other lay members of the congregation
- e. Other. Please specify: _____

25. Has your congregation used funds coming from the following sources to support any of these projects?

Yes No

- a. Congregation's operating budget
- b. Donation from a congregant
- c. Grant from private foundation
- d. Grant from local Jewish federation
- e. Other. Please explain:

26. Altogether, how many people would you say were involved in designing, planning, carrying out, and interpreting the information collected about current, former, or potential congregants?

27. In your opinion, what are the reasons that motivated the initiation of these projects?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

28. In your opinion, how useful for your congregation would it be to collect additional information about or to conduct new surveys of current, past or

potential members?

1. Very useful
2. Somewhat useful
3. Not useful at all

29. What are the main reasons that your congregation has not collected such information more often? Please check all that apply;

- a. never considered the possibility
- b. not considered important
- c. lack of professional guidance
- d. lack of financial resources
- e. information needed was already available
- f. Other (please describe).....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY. PLEASE SEND BACK YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DO NOT FORGET TO INCLUDE A COPY OF EACH MEMBERSHIP FORM AND SURVEY USED, OR ANY REPORT PRODUCED BY YOUR CONGREGATION. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT RABBI RENNI S. ALTMAN, (212) 249-0100, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS SURVEY.

t.o.h
Associates, Ltd.

1415 Barclay Circle, Suite A • Marietta, Georgia 30060 • Telephone: (404) 429-9220

January 8, 1991

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Alex:

Last Sunday the Atlanta Reform Synagogue Council (of which I am now serving as president) and the UAHC sponsored a Workshop on the Unaffiliated for the members of the Atlanta Council. Rabbi Renni Altman was the facilitator.

I wore several hats at this workshop and I can tell you that the heads under each were swelling with pride and pleasure at the wonderful job that was done. As president of the Atlanta Reform Synagogue Council, I was pleased and delighted at the wonderful program that was offered to leaders and members of the seven Atlanta congregations who are interested in membership recruitment and retention. I was excited by their enthusiasm and response and I think that it will have meaningful impact on all of their recruitment and retention programs.

As a member of the Union Board and of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated, I was very proud of the job done by Renni Altman, as well as the work of the Task Force. Renni's presentation was superb and she and the work that has gone on with the Task Force created the excitement of the participants.

At the end of the meeting, one of the synagogue presidents indicated what a great job they thought we were doing with the Atlanta Reform Synagogue Council and another said that he really thought we should have at least two workshops on UAHC activities every year. I was pleased to tell him that the second is already arranged with Joe Bernstein on synagogue financial management for October 6th.

On behalf of the Atlanta Reform Synagogue Council, let me, through you, thank the Union of American Hebrew Congregations for its wonderful cooperation on this and all other programs and by copy of this letter to Mel Merians and Renni Altman, my thanks to the Task Force.

Sincerely,

Arthur Heyman

AH/je

cc: Rabbi Renni S. Altman
Melvin Merians

Unaffiliated

*cc ABG
sent 1/15
[initials]*



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021 (212) 249-0100

April 27, 1990
2 Iyar 5750

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated
From: Mel Merians and Rabbi Steven Foster
cc: Rabbi Alexander Schindler

Greetings! We hope that each of you had a wonderful Passover celebration.

As participants are aware, the Task Force meeting in late March was very fruitful. It is hard to believe that only a year has passed since our first meeting and so much has been accomplished. So many of you have given so much to our efforts and we are very grateful.

Minutes of the meeting are enclosed along with meeting materials for those of you who were not able to join us. In addition an update on the Privilege Card is enclosed.

The brainstorming session on ways to implement our program was a most helpful beginning. Please take a few minutes at your earliest convenience to look over the sheet entitled "Communication of Task Force message and materials." This is a preliminary result of the brainstorming session. Your ideas, suggestions, comments, disagreements and musings are essential to furthering the process of disseminating our work. Please make notations directly on your copy and return it to Dru by May 30. We need to hear from you.

The next meeting of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated will take place on Sunday, October 21, 1990 in New York. We look forward to seeing you at that time and, in the meantime, to continuing to work together toward the fulfillment of our sacred task. oc

National Coordinator of Programs
Dru Greenwood
Chairman
Melvin Merians
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven E. Foster

Communication of Task Force message and materials

Part of the Task Force meeting was spent brainstorming ways to

- 1) communicate the work of the Task Force,
- 2) make use of the strengths and minimize the weaknesses inherent in the national character of the Task Force and
- 3) delineate responsibilities of Task Force members.

The following ideas were recorded:

Communications:

- * Work with Rabbi Norman Kahan's Small Congregations Department - newsletter and conference
- * Index publications for specific types of congregations
- * Train members of TF to work in field
- * Use membership committee chairs in synagogues
- * Choose membership chairs for periodic conference calls re new publication
- * Regional meetings w/membership chairs
- * Anticipate negatives or questions before sending out materials ("free" programs - Pre-planning)
- * Utilize regional Rabbinic Kallot to examine and encourage strong rabbinic role in reaching the unaffiliated
- * Target presidents of large/small/medium congregations
- * Target small congregations
- * Also target NATE and cantors
- * Utilize CCAR conferences
- * Package program for regional Biennials and conferences
- * UAHC should take an active role in reaching members

Using national character of Task Force:

- * Communicate and work through different levels in regions:
 - Regional directors
 - group of membership chairs
- * Task Force and committees should meet all over country
- * Elicit feedback from all members of Task Force
- * Regionalize separate tasks (subcommittees)
- * Utilize conference call with Task Force to train in use of retention publication

Responsibilities:

- * Task Force members attending meetings might commit to call Task Force members who are not able to attend meetings to discuss decisions and elicit input. A letter would be sent in advance to prepare them for the call.
- * Create cadre that can fan out to specialize in different types of congregations: dying congregation, university town, small congregations, etc.
- * Utilize Task Force to do workshops in regions
- * Task Force membership should require a willingness to take on tasks and follow through
- * When inviting people to be on TF, ask "can you come?"
- * Solicit grant applications for pilot programs (limited - \$1000-\$3000)

- * Train Task Force members as speakers for how-to-do workshops
- * Use Task Force members to contact regional directors and presidents and to bring TF materials to regional Board meetings etc.
- * Task Force members might pre-commit to tasks defined by staff and Task Force
- * Caution: Do not set up too many "requirements." Expense is an issue and the Task Force needs people with varied experiences both for its work and to provide a broad base of support for the Biennial agenda.

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
March 25-26, 1990
House of Living Judaism, New York

MINUTES

Participants: Mel Merians, Chair; Rabbi Steven Foster, Co-Chair; Joseph Bernstein, Bernice Brussel, Vicky Farhi, Rabbi Ronne Friedman, Judith Hertz, Martin Hertz, Frances Hyman, Rabbi Howard Jaffe, Barry Kugel, May Mass, Rabbi Dennis Math, Rabbi Bernard Mehlman, Myra Ostroff, Dr. Richard Plumb, Ruth Reidbord, Rabbi Frank Sundheim, Rabbi Daniel Syme, Audrey Wilson, Pamela Winter, Rabbi Bernard Zlotowitz

Staff: Dru Greenwood, Lydia Kukoff

Guests: Sue Hochberg, Rachel Lebowitz, Joy Weinberg, Barry Zeveloff

Sunday, March 25

Welcome: Mel Merians opened the meeting by welcoming participants and asking for introductions around the table. He then announced pending staff changes. Rabbi Nina Mizrahi, Associate Director of Outreach, is at home awaiting the birth of her second child and will be moving to St. Louis. Dru Greenwood will become Associate Director of Outreach as of July 1. Interviews are currently underway for a replacement for Dru to work with the Task Force on the Unaffiliated.

Devar Torah: Ruth Reidbord gave the Devar Torah (attached).

Coordinator's Report: Dru Greenwood gave the Coordinator's report (attached). The discussion following the report focused on the following points:

* There was considerable discussion of the concept of giving away "free" synagogue services to attract the unaffiliated. We need to document in a concrete way the affiliation occurring in conjunction with "free" programs. Rabbi Steve Foster will be writing an article for Reform Judaism that gives such evidence and also speaks in terms of investing in the future, of responding to the complaint of the unaffiliated that everything has a price tag, and of the time limited aspect of "free" programs. We need to develop a vocabulary for selling such access programs both internally and externally in Jewish life. Ideas proposed were "complementary," "investment in future," "trial subscription," "loss leader." Alternatively a very small fee, such as a "book fee" could be used.

* Several members stressed the vision needed to take positive steps toward the future, that "all who are hungry may come and eat." The sense of the meeting was that a combination of a business perspective (showing how such programs fit into the fixed and variable costs of the temple) and a mission perspective (encouraging a personal approach by temple members) is needed.

Committee Update on the Privilege Card: Rabbi Howard Jaffe reported on the progress of the committee developing the UAHC Privilege Card.

(Task Force members have received notes on the committee's working proposal.) The committee felt that college-age youth are not necessarily unaffiliated; they are affiliated with the synagogue of their parents. Therefore, the College Department is currently distributing an Access Card to all graduating high school seniors. The Privilege Card committee is focusing on connecting with post-college young adults, ages 22 - 30.

Vicky Farhi presented a proposal for sending ad slicks to all congregations. The 5 pages of ads would be both generic and coordinated with holidays. Temples could also mix and match to create their own ads. Tips would be provided for using radio and TV as well. National press releases would coordinate with the seasonal advertisements placed by temples. There was a very enthusiastic response to this idea for use with the Card (as well as for other uses.) Rabbi Frank Sundheim mentioned the President's Book that is being prepared in binder form as a possible format. Others suggested such a binder for temple Membership Chairs. The pros and cons of direct mail were discussed. Pamela Winter mentioned that her congregation had no response to its direct mail campaign, but did have a good response to other methods.

Dissemination of the Privilege Card should begin at 1990-1 regional Biennials. It was suggested that regional Presidents as well as Directors be contacted.

Congregations need to be provided with a resource book of ideas to use with the Privilege Card. The focus should be on "Jews," not specifically "Unaffiliated." The latter is a negative way of identifying people. Perhaps congregations should set the specific age for their program, or provide a step structure of dues for people whenever they join.

We need to change the image of our congregations from family- and religious school-oriented to encompass a broader range of Jews. We are trying to demonstrate that the door is open, a hand is out to welcome people. Sixty percent of "families" are non-traditional now. Ruth pointed out that the Task Force itself is not representative and that we tend to think in traditional ways. We need more representation and regionalization of the Task Force.

Cost Committee Update: Rabbi Frank Sundheim, standing in for Rabbi Gary Glickstein who is in Israel, reported briefly on the meeting of the Committee on the Cost of Synagogue Membership. (Task Force members have received minutes of this meeting in the preparatory mailing for the Task Force meeting.) Dru Greenwood also reported on a meeting, "The Cost of Living Jewishly," held the prior week at the American Jewish Committee. (Notes attached.) The following discussion points were made:

- * Nursery schools seem to be a particular boon to membership.
- * It is important to stress the importance of short-term investments for long-term success in bringing unaffiliated Jews into temple life.
- * Frank Sundheim mentioned in particular two pilot programs in Florida that seem to be making a major impact. Hollywood offers

a 2-year free membership for those with school-age children. School fees must be paid. The school has grown from 12 to 60 kids. The temple in Plantation offers free membership to anyone under age 30. It was pointed out that these examples need to be tracked over time to see if members attracted in this way stay.

Panel Discussion: Making the Connection

Rabbi Steve Foster introduced the four panelists in turn.

Joy Weinberg, an editor of Reform Judaism and a young single woman living in New York, described her sense of personal connection with other Jews during her college years that made it easy to meet people and to learn in small groups and her frustrated search for that same sense of community afterwards. There are no young people at Shabbat services and people rarely approached her after services to greet her. She was very impressed with one synagogue when she was warmly greeted, the president called her and sent material. However, the temple was too far away and not in a neighborhood where she felt safe at night. She gets numerous calls at the UAHC from people asking which synagogues cater to single people. She expressed the need to feel part of a community with some people the same age. She took the Hebrew Reading Crash Course and found other Jews seeking greater knowledge and a welcoming atmosphere. She also reported that many of her friends didn't join because they didn't want to pay building fund twice. Suggestion: Perhaps there should be a NYC young people's synagogue or summer program to make it easy to meet others and to network.

Rachel Lebowitz, a young single woman living in suburban New Jersey, described her membership in one congregation that she joined because she wanted to be connected Jewishly. There was nothing for a single person and in 10 years she "never met anyone." She feels that the rabbi sets the tone for the congregation. She has since joined another congregation where she received a very warm welcome both from the rabbi, who answered the phone, and from other congregants who continue to make special efforts to involve her in everything from classes to the dinner dance.

Barry Zeveloff, married, father of two young children and living in suburban New Jersey, described his Jewish commitment growing up as a Conservative Jew and his need to be connected to a synagogue, particularly for the High Holy Days. That was his first need. He and his wife became involved with their current Reform synagogue when their daughter entered nursery school there. He felt that the restrictive policies of temples in his area requiring membership for tickets for High Holy Day services set a negative tone. However, since joining they liked the temple very much. Barry agreed with Rachel that the rabbi sets the tone. His rabbi "is warm, listens and comes into the school for all kinds of functions. He's there." Steve commented that all three panelists had come from a Conservative background and asked Barry if there had been a negative stigma attached to "Reform" when he was growing up. "Only my father." He felt that he was compromising with his wife who is less "religious" in joining a Reform congregation. She did not feel comfortable in the Conservative synagogue in town.

Sue Hochberg, immediate past Membership VP of Temple Emanuel in Lynbrook, NY, spoke of her experiences with prospective members. The

most frequently asked questions: "What does it cost?" "How long do you have to belong before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah?" "What is Reformed? (sic)" She said that most people have no idea of what they are joining. They think because it's Reform they don't have to do anything. Many of those who do become involved at Temple Emanuel do so by example through the volunteer religious school. Many others are never touched and participate in the revolving door syndrome. They have found the required bar/bat mitzvah class for parents and kids as well as their preschool and nursery programs to be effective. Further, opening religious school to unaffiliated families at low cost seems to be effective since the kids do not want to switch schools later.

Discussion and Suggestions:

- * Too many Reform Jews validate the "do-nothing" image;
- * Barry and several committee members echoed the need for a basic course in Reform Judaism or Basic Judaism. "Reform is the best kept secret."
- * The UAHC should undertake general publicity about Reform;
- * Investigate beginning a Young People's Synagogue. Pros and cons of locating in a particular synagogue in NYC or at HUC-JIR (area synagogues already feel some competition from that quarter.)
- * Since rabbis set tone for congregation, work with rabbis to focus on importance of positive reaching out to unaffiliated should be undertaken;
- * The problem of alienation (no one being greeted) needs to be addressed;
- * The concept of "community" seems to be hard to define, but also seems to be a vital component of what people are looking for;
- * Several suggestions were made for addressing needs of young adults, including a new subcommittee getting young people together to brainstorm solutions; using program directors in congregations that have them; holding parlor meetings with young adults, Task Force members and rabbi to do fact finding.
- * If rabbi is seen as setting the tone, there may be conflict with the Membership Committee that sees itself as primary in bringing in new members. We need to search out good working models. Perhaps a letter from the rabbis of the Task Force to other rabbis would be useful, or a letter in the CCAR bulletin or newsletter. A packet from the UAHC should contain training material for lay leadership.

Using Scenarios: Invite a Friend

After a focusing exercise that compared personal reasons for originally joining a temple, for not joining previously and for current affiliation (and drawing parallels with research findings of Gary Tobin), Task Force participants were divided into two groups to work on a role play. (Attached) The sense of the group was that the role play was effective in helping members to identify different styles of approaching potential members and would be useful for temple boards and membership committees. Suggestion: Include a sheet of tips with the role plays. The role plays might be included with the retention workshops in our first publication.

Monday, March 26

Text Study: Developing Our Mandate

Rabbi Ronne Friedman introduced our text study by focusing attention on what has been an ongoing concern of the Task Force: the mission of the synagogue. He compared the three traditional purposes of the synagogue, bet ha-t'fillah, bet ha-k'nesset and bet ha-midrash (house of prayer, house of assembly or community, and house of study) with their potential dilution, bet ha-va'ad (committee), bet ha-am (clubhouse), and bet ha-sefer (elementary school). Texts provided distinguished among these missions and were discussed in small groups. (Attached)

Using Scenarios: Executive Committee Meeting

A second role play, dealing with the introduction of a new plan to attract unaffiliated Jews, was conducted in small groups. (Attached) A number of changes were suggested as a result, but the sense of the group was that the role play would be useful, particularly in training board members and new leadership.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Task Force Members

This brainstorming session focused on the ubiquitous problem of disseminating information and programs in a national organization. Questions included: How can we best get the word out about the work of the Task Force? How can Task Force members be helpful in this regard? How can we use the wide geographic representation of the UAHC and of Task Force members to advantage? How can we minimize the disadvantages? Suggestions were wide-ranging and will be sent to all Task Force members for their further additions and suggestions. (The unedited list is attached.)

Committee Update: Retention

Audrey Wilson reported on the latest additions to the workshops developed by the Retention Committee: an expanded tool for examining integration and retention of members; an exit poll; an idea supplement for the original recruitment and retention assessment scale. Audrey had just used the expanded integration and retention scale for a sub-regional meeting in the Northeast Council with excellent results.

Training Session

Audrey Wilson and Dru Greenwood trained the Task Force members present in using the assessment scale and associated materials for use in congregations with the idea that this workshop could then be replicated in more congregations and regions. Several suggestions were made for inclusion in the upcoming publication:

- * The assessment scale could be used by individual committees (as committees) to help them look at their work and to plant seeds for thought.

- * The scale could be used at a congregational meeting, with one or two questions sent out in advance to raise curiosity. It should be done with the Board first and results compared with the general congregation.

- * Include specific directions for the focusing exercise and include a synopsis of Gary Tobin's findings for comparison.

- * Include page of quotes relating to the various purposes of a synagogue.

- * Provide an outline in bullet points of introductory material, including statistical graph (pie chart).

* Provide notes on using the assessment scale and train presidents in regions to use it with their congregations.

* Add to the idea supplement: training workshop for ushers; host and hostess for the evening during Oneg.

Good and Welfare

Get well wishes to Leonard Spring.

Mazal tov to Vicky Farhi on her new affiliation with Temple Emeth, Teaneck, NJ.

Welcome to new members of the Task Force, Rabbi Ronne Friedman and Rabbi Stuart Celler.

Mazal tov to Rabbi Donny Rossoff, who will be moving to Morristown, NJ, where he will be rabbi of Temple B'nai Or.

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

D'var Torah for the Task Force on the Unaffiliated
March 24, 1990
Sedra - Vayakhel - Pekude, Exodus 351-40 38, 1-20

"Moses then convoked the whole Israelite community and said to them, "These are the things the Lord has commanded you to do."

However, the word, "convoked" can also be read to be "community." And another word for community is Kehilla. That is what we had throughout our history and that is what we are struggling to sustain today. Judaism is a religion of community. It is not enough to worship God privately, although we certainly consider personal prayer an essential part of our life. Rather, we must pray together as a community. To do this we need to draw all those outside the community who do not have a community, into our "tent." God has given Torah to the Jewish people. Now God invites all "whose heart so moves (her) him to bring gifts to build the Tabernacle." This is a welcoming gesture. It says people have varied gifts and talents, each different and each special. Let them contribute - each in his own way and so feel they truly are building the Tabernacle. When we reach out and welcome everyone we will be amazed at the results. "Men and women, all whose hearts moved them came with their possessions. If they did not have gold or silver, they contributed a skill. They spun goats hair and linen." This is how we should welcome the unaffiliated. "Let us build the Tabernacle of the Lord together." Not that the task is easy. We learn that Moses had great difficulty in creating this community. We know how awesome this task is because we still struggle to build it. But, like Moses, we must accept the differences within the community and encourage people to coalesce around a common goal. This Sedra emphasizes the importance of a physical place of beauty to house our community. Many people today are turned off by what they perceive to be an inordinate emphasis on the material aspects of Temple life. But look at the emphasis our forefathers placed on this task. Just as they were urged to use their creativity, we must be creative today in bringing our people to the Temple. As we meet today and tomorrow we must stretch ourselves, develop our own creativity to accomplish the task we have assumed, in partnership with those Israelites - "all the men and women whose hearts moved them to bring anything for the work that the Lord, through Moses, had commanded to be done."

Let our creativity be based on the wisdom, understanding and knowledge that the Midrash for this Sedra says has been an essential ingredient of creation; of the building of the Tabernacle, and of the building of the Temple.

Because, as the Midrash says, when the Temple will be rebuilt, it will be with these three things.

So let us begin - with wisdom, understanding, knowledge
.....and creativity?

Ruth Reidbord

Coordinator's Report
Task Force on the Unaffiliated

3/25/90

"Though your beginning be small,
In the end you will grow very great." Job 8:7

During this past year, the Task Force on the Unaffiliated has made a small beginning toward relieving a stubborn, multi-faceted problem of great proportions: reaching unaffiliated and marginally affiliated Jews and bringing them closer to participation in Jewish life. Our dream is to strengthen our covenant community by enriching their lives and by offering access to those whose access has been eroded or denied. In accomplishing this we will grow very great.

In many ways reaching the unaffiliated is a motherhood and kugel issue. Of course everyone loves it. Of course we should be engaged in it. As Jews who care passionately about living Jewishly, how can we not communicate that passion to others? Jews need synagogues to enable and deepen the Jewish life of each individual Jew within the community; synagogues need Jews to continually renew their vitality and to fulfill their functions. The question is how to make this happen.

This Task Force has attracted many dedicated, talented lay leaders, Jewish professionals and rabbis to engage in its work. I have been blessed in working with each one of you during this first year and, even though I will not be as intimately involved, I plan to follow closely the progress you will continue to make. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge especially my gratitude for the unstinting support of three people: Mel Merians, Rabbi Steve Foster and Lydia Kukoff. It is their combined energy, commitment and even good humor that have gotten us over the rough spots and successfully through our

first year. Mel's generosity of time, support and spirit combined with his persistence have provided our backbone. Despite the distance between NY and Denver, Steve has given us balance and perspective along with his vision and energy. And Lydia has nurtured this fledgling effort with her extraordinary deftness and grace. I could not have done without any one of you.

Together as a Task Force we have learned a tremendous amount, not only about who the unaffiliated are (not a monolithic group), but also about what synagogues are (likewise not a monolithic group), and about the process necessary for connecting Jew and synagogue. We have begun to conceptualize, define and organize our work, giving shape to what seemed formless and overwhelming. We have asked alot of questions: Who are the unaffiliated? How do "we" feel about "them?" Are there particular populations that are underrepresented in synagogue life? How can they best be approached? How can synagogues engage in the process of assessing their mission in terms of those "out there?" Is the cost of synagogue membership a barrier to participation? What is the role of the UAHC in helping congregations to develop the will and the skills to reach beyond their traditional membership? Is programming the answer? How can we change attitudes and provide needed programming for maximum effectiveness?

What I'd like to do for the next few minutes is to bring you up to date on some of the particular paths we have been pursuing and to discuss what I see as the next steps for the Task Force. Setting priorities as we have been trying to do this year is always difficult, especially when the nature and scope of the problem being addressed is unclear. Our priorities to date have been established by consensus

and a combination of problem definition, time and opportunity.

Although some worthy objectives are on the back burner at present, I am very proud of the initiatives we have taken. At later points during this meeting you will hear in detail about three of our most important initiatives: the UAHC Privilege Card that targets young adults under the age of 30; workshops and tools to help congregations with the process of recruitment, integration and retention of members; and preliminary examination of ways to circumvent or ease the problem of inaccessibility due to the cost of synagogue membership. Each committee of the Task Force responsible for these areas has put in countless hours and taken substantial steps forward on our behalf. Each of these programs holds the promise of a major impact in reaching the unaffiliated.

A. Biennial Resolution: Early childhood education, redefined from strictly daycare, can be a major area of expansion for UAHC synagogues. Demographically, there is a clear need for childcare for families of the baby boom generation, many of whom have two parents in the workforce. From the point of view of reaching the unaffiliated, it is important to form Jewish connections with families at an earlier age than has become increasingly the case. There is evidence to suggest that families whose children are involved in Jewish parenting centers, nursery programs or daycare are more Jewishly active at home and give more to Jewish causes. We can respond to their needs and at the same time increase their synagogue connections as well. The Departments of Education, Synagogue Management and the Unaffiliated have been working together to plan a study of a variety of existing programs in order to produce a manual for congregations to use in offering early childhood programs.

The resolution also called for congregations to offer a free or reduced-rate introductory education for young children in religious schools. Some congregations already offer such incentives with very positive results. Rabbi Steve Foster will be writing an article for Reform Judaism ("Giving Away Membership") that will advocate such financial incentives for early synagogue membership and participation.

B. Joint UAHC-Brandeis project. The final edit, hopefully, has been done on the proposal and it will be submitted officially to the Lilly Foundation shortly. They seem positively disposed to the project and are waiting for a new staff member to begin April 1 before moving on the proposal. (concerns with "evangelism" and eagerness to make available research instruments that have been used successfully with Protestant and Catholic institutions) Even in modified form this project would give us the opportunity to focus efforts on reaching unaffiliated Jews and to test a wide range of strategies in a relatively controlled way to determine effectiveness. Hopefully we should have an indication shortly.

C. Adult Access programs and New Member Classes. Discomfort and the embarrassment of "not knowing" have been identified as an important reason for non-affiliation with synagogues. Despite not working with NJOP, these kinds of positively-framed, user-friendly programs are something that we need to develop and implement. They are conceptually simple, whether basic Hebrew reading, basic Judaism, learners' services, "Wondering Jew" or new member classes. Their cost is not high in terms of financial outlay. They do, however, require commitment of time and energy on the part of temple staff, a not inconsiderable cost. However, their payoff seems to be high. NJOP

classes, UAHC Intro classes, new member classes all provide an easy step across the threshold for ambivalent or unsure Jews. Several exciting examples are referred to in your folders or mailings, particularly the Mitzvot of Membership developed by Rabbi Sally Priesand, the Introduction to Judaism class that is free for new members offered by the temple in Westmount, Quebec, Mitzvah Shelanu (an adult bar/bat mitzvah program in Boston for unaffiliated young single Jews), and the several new member classes described in your folders under the heading of Anshe Emeth, New Brunswick. Our retention problems would be eased by helping to make early connections. We need to identify pilot sites to develop, implement and evaluate these programs.

D. Communication. Congregations within our Movement are wonderfully diverse. There are congregations, some of them represented by Task Force members, that are succeeding in reaching a variety of unaffiliated Jews in a variety of ways. We are beginning to find out about them, sometimes serendipitously. The Task Force is gathering information, gaining insights, creating programs that need to be disseminated within our movement. One of the major efforts of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated needs to be focused on how to impart the vision inherent in our mission to congregations, empowering them to actively reach beyond themselves to accomplish this work, and to support them by getting the word out to the general public. Communication is the vital link we need to establish in order to begin changing attitudes both within congregations and among the unaffiliated and to successfully implement needed programs. We must find ways to strengthen this area. Sometimes the best UAHC programs

are also the best kept secrets. We will be spending some time later this morning brainstorming ways to accomplish this.

All of these efforts, including the work of our committees, will be ongoing. My goal before July 1, when I officially change positions, is twofold: to produce a small handbook including the workshops and tools developed by the Retention Committee to help congregations begin to examine their strengths and weaknesses in the recruitment, integration and retention process; and to put the finishing touches on the privilege card project. I intend to frame the first card off the press! I will of course continue to be available to the Task Force and to my successor.

The task we have undertaken is not a simple one. If it were, it would already be done. As a Task Force, working together, we will continue to struggle with the hard, existential questions that our work entails. (When we stop asking the questions is when we need to start worrying.) Although this process can be uncomfortable and even painful, prompting us to seek high ground and search out easy fixes, our real engagement with the process will enable us to promote growth and change in our congregations. Returning to Job, and paraphrasing Danny Siegel, "Though our beginnings have been small, May the end result be exquisite."

American Jewish Committee
"The Cost of Living Jewishly"
March 20, 1990

Highlights

Dr. Rela Geffen Monson was the keynote speaker, reporting on her recent study of the cost of living Jewishly in Philadelphia. The study has not yet been released, but following are some salient points:

1. The study did not address the value of affiliation, only the cost.
2. Of 98 synagogues sent questionnaires, 31 responded. The sample seemed representative. In every category (Reform, Conservative, "traditional" synagogues, as well as dayschool or nursery school) there is a range of cost.
3. Reform congregations seemed to favor "fair share" dues, that depend on trust and commitment. Including building fund and school fees, the annual cost of belonging to a Reform synagogue could reach \$2200.
4. Conservative congregations tended to have fixed fees, again with a range, and Orthodox-traditional were considerably lower cost since they do not maintain schools.
5. The cost of early childhood education also varied from \$750 - \$1120. Only Federation's program allowed variable fees according to income level.
6. Some synagogues have endowed classes in Hebrew school, thereby lowering the cost to parents.
7. There is a basic difference in philosophy between the Orthodox and Liberal movements with regard to Jewish dayschool education: the Orthodox assume that every Orthodox child is entitled to a Jewish education; Reform and Conservative assume that those who would consider private school for their children should consider dayschool. The fee structure is set accordingly with the latter schools setting fees to be competitive with private schools and not generally allowing sibling deductions and the former being more heavily subsidized by the community.
8. Only Federation has responded to the changing demographic profile of the American Jewish family: "young leadership" programs go through age 45, the median age of the Jewish population. Synagogues have not adapted. Lower dues brackets often end at 30 or 35. Dues by age no longer makes sense. Fair share dues or "parents of

young children" may be more viable categories.

9. Policy implications of the study are that a community priority should be placed on a rhetorical and PR effort to raise awareness of the variety in the spread of costs within and among categories. Data should be collected on a local level and publicized. The community should be seen as an interlocking Kehillah, so that membership in one organization might provide a discount on membership in others. Fair share should be expanded with the realization that "middle income" needing some relief may go quite high. Those employed by the community who expect and are expected to participate in many areas of Jewish life and education may need special consideration.

Respondents and conference participants added the following comments:

1. Building fees: These create an initial high hurdle. Additionally, for those who move beginning with new building funds may be a significant barrier to affiliation. A universal "Jewish Express Card" might enable those who move to carry credit with them from a previous location, rather than be penalized for moving.
2. Vouchers: Perhaps the use of school vouchers in private schools should be reexamined.
3. Middle Class: Experience with past studies indicates that federation decision makers, both lay and professional do not believe in need of middle class or near poor to receive subsidy and do not pick up on the policy implications of such studies. Discretionary income rather than gross income should be the measure. Perhaps some mechanism such as the "Princeton Plan" (for college tuition aid) should be used so that subsidies could be allocated equitably and without stigma.
4. Cost: The cost of operating a synagogue is soaring partially due to ineffective management, inefficient-sized schools.
5. Being a serious Jew costs serious money is a given. Costs will rise. Two ways of dealing with rising costs are to deprofessionalize or to cut services. Only 10% of donors give 80% of funds to federation. 12,000 households give 50%. Although it has been effective for federation to target large donors, we seem to be on the verge of a radical change in funding. Young Jews raised on the ethos of democracy see an oligarchy in federation and are turned off. Synagogues are funded to a great extent by those in the middle income bracket. Those who need the most often have the least: elderly, immigrants, single families, young families. With shifting

demographics there will be increasing competition for community funds among Israel, the elderly and educating young Jews. Suggested strategies:

- * Princeton Plan, uniform means test
- * solicit elderly to give portion of estate
- * expand Jewish Free Loan system (middle class)
- * require Board members to take out term life insurance payable to organization
- * seek endowments from those without children
- * synagogues seek greater access to federation funds

Role Play 1: "Invite a Friend"

Goals: To explore ways of inviting individuals and families to join congregations;

To see synagogue affiliation as a person-to-person process that requires listening, empathy and response to individual concerns;

To empower temple members to do the work of reaching out to unaffiliated Jews.

Instructions for the Facilitator:

Provide a brief introduction that includes the following points:

- * Congregations need new members for many reasons. New members bring new ideas, energy and a broadened financial base.
- * Congregations also have a responsibility to serve the variety of needs of the Jews in their communities for study, worship, social action and community.
- * Often recruitment of new members is seen as the job of the Membership Committee. However, congregations that are most successful in attracting people have members who are excited about their synagogue and talk about it with their friends.

Introduction to role play:

Divide participants into groups of 6 or 7. One person will act as director to keep the group on track, assigning roles as needed, helping people to stay in role and leading discussion. The director should point out that there is no "right" way to develop the scenario. The purpose of role playing is to "stand in the other person's shoes" so that we can learn to respond in more sensitive and helpful ways.

When the roles have been played out for about 5 minutes, ask each of the observers to choose a role and step into it. During discussion the comparison of different approaches and different styles may be useful.

Role Play 1: "Invite a Friend"

Setting the Scene: The Membership Committee of Temple Temple in a town near you has inaugurated a special membership recruitment campaign. Enlisting the help of the Board of Trustees and the entire temple membership, the Committee is hoping to increase the rate of affiliation in the area and bring the added vitality of new members to the temple. In this context Temple Temple member Michael (or Michelle) has decided to invite new neighbors David and Nancy, who have two small children, to join the temple.

Temple Member

You are a long-time member of Temple Temple, very active in the past, but now active only in the rabbi's study group and the annual Bazaar. Your children are grown and live in a nearby city, but have not joined a synagogue. Your congregation, Temple Temple, has initiated a membership recruitment drive and is encouraging all Temple Temple members to speak with their friends and neighbors about joining the congregation. You have new neighbors, David and Nancy, who recently moved in across the street, so you decide to give it a try. Your goal is to invite the couple to join.

David

You and your wife, Nancy, have recently moved to a new area with your toddler and newborn. You have a new job, new house and new baby. In your opinion, religion should be a private affair; organized religion only creates strife in the world. When you were growing up your family lived in a Jewish neighborhood, but never belonged to a synagogue.

Nancy

You and your husband, David, and two babies have recently moved to a new area. The neighborhood seems attractive and the neighbors have been friendly, but somewhat distant. You are hoping to get settled quickly and begin looking for a part-time job. You were raised and confirmed in a Reform temple which you visit when you visit your family. You expect that you will join a temple later when your children are ready for religious education.

Role Play 1: "Invite a Friend"

Questions for discussion:

1. Did the role play seem realistic? Why or why not?
2. Questions for Michael/Michelle: how does it feel to introduce the idea of joining the synagogue? Does it seem awkward? Why? What is the worst scenario you can imagine? How might you respond?
3. Questions for David and/or Nancy: How does it feel to be asked about temple membership? What about the invitation made you respond positively? Negatively? What other approaches might elicit a positive response?
4. List 5 ways to initiate an invitation for temple membership. List some funny ways. What about indirect approaches? Does an indirect approach set up a hidden agenda? What seems most comfortable to you? most effective? What kinds of "arguments" might be successful?
5. Does the generation gap between the inviter and invitee in the scenario affect the role play? How would your approach change if you were inviting someone at a similar life stage?

Would your approach be different if you were inviting a young single person? a divorced man in his 40s? a person who has just retired and come to your community?
6. Who is on our "Membership Committees?" How can we engage a broad spectrum of total temple membership in this effort, rather than just the committee? What kind of training would be helpful?
7. Evaluate the workshop. What changes would you make? How can it be used in furthering the work of our Task Force?

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Role Play 2: "Executive Committee Meeting"

Goals: To consider the issues of synagogue identity that are challenged by reaching out;

To articulate the wide range of values and feelings within a synagogue concerning even relatively non-controversial changes;

To plan effective ways of initiating a new program.

Instructions to the Facilitator:

Provide a brief introduction that includes the following:

- * An organized effort to reach out to unaffiliated Jews often requires a sense of mission on the part of the congregation.
- * Effectively reaching out also means developing consensus for change in the membership profile of the congregation. The "other" will become "us."

Introduction to Role Play:

Divide participants into groups of six or seven. Choose one person to act as director. Distribute copies of the scenario with role descriptions to each participant. Each participant should choose his/her role according to the point of view that is most congenial. If there is hesitation, the director may assign roles. (If there are 7 participants, 1 person will be an observer.) Remind participants that there is no right or wrong way to develop the roles. Sometimes the greatest illumination comes from what seems to be the biggest blooper.

Play out the roles for about 10 minutes. Participants may embellish the roles within the context of the scenario. Ask participants to switch roles, each person taking the role that seems least congenial. How do the role plays differ?

Role Play 2: "Executive Committee Meeting"

Setting the Scene

The Membership VP has just returned from a UAHC workshop on Reaching the Unaffiliated eager to put into practice what he has learned. The plan is to begin a major effort to attract the significant number of unaffiliated Jews in the area to Temple Kiruv (membership 350). The focus would be on the large number of young single Jews and young married couples who have been attracted by the relatively inexpensive housing and the proximity to the city. The program would involve several approaches: free introductory basic Judaism classes and learners' services, special programming (starting a "thirtysomething" group), dues incentives and free High Holiday tickets for one year. Advertising for all these programs will be undertaken as well.

Membership VP

It is your task to introduce your idea to the Executive Committee of Temple Kiruv. You are very enthusiastic about this program to reach unaffiliated Jews and very much want it to succeed. Consider the strategies you might use to ensure its positive reception by the other members of the committee (the rabbi, president, treasurer, and secretary).

Rabbi

The following issues are relevant to the discussion for you:

- * you see kiruv (reaching out) as a primary mandate of your congregation and your rabbinate,
- * you are concerned about the extra demands of time and energy this effort would require,
- * you have some concerns about the fragmentation this project might create in the congregation.

President

The following issues are relevant to the discussion for you:

- * your tenure as president is coming to an end next year,
- * Temple Kiruv has an aging membership calling for altered program responses,
- * how will current members feel about others "getting something for nothing?"

Treasurer

The following issues are relevant to the discussion for you:

- * the initial outlays for the program seem high,
- * the reduced dues for this new group might create expectations of "free" services,
- * the budget is quite tight and Temple Kiruv needs a new roof.

Secretary

The following issues are relevant to the discussion for you:

- * your 28-year-old unmarried son has recently moved back to town,
- * you feel that Temple Kiruv blatantly ignores singles,

* if people are so concerned about intermarriage, why
doesn't the congregation offer more for singles?

Role Play 2: "Executive Committee Meeting"

Questions for Discussion:

1. Did the role-play feel realistic? Why or why not?
2. Was the strategy for introducing the idea successful? What other approaches might be taken?
3. In playing each of the roles, what was your first reaction to the proposal? Did your attitude change as you listened to others and thought about your own role in such a program?
4. Would your response be different if the demographics of the community were different? if the temple were a large, established urban congregation of 950 members? or an old congregation of 150 members? or a rapidly growing 5-year-old congregation?
5. How can the VP anticipate concerns? How might he overcome fears about "giving away the store?" What about staff concerns about overwork?
6. How does the tone of the message affect its reception? Think about the VP's enthusiasm, the possible hesitancy of the president, the possible stridency of the secretary.
7. How might the Membership VP build on positive feelings of mission, community need and temple need?
8. What can we learn from this scenario about initiating change in congregations?
9. Evaluate the scenario. How might it be used in helping congregations reach out to unaffiliated Jews?

Hayim Greenberg Anthology

Until recent times we were, fundamentally, not a minority. We were a minority statistically only, but not psychologically. A soloist in a large philharmonic orchestra is not a minority of one among scores of other musicians. The early Christians who were persecuted in pagan Rome were not a minority in the sense in which we should understand this term. The Quakers in England three hundred years ago were spiritually not a minority, though numerically they were insignificant. In the area of spiritual influences and cultural pressures we are justified in using the terms majority and minority only when we deal with two groups which are basically more akin than they are different; when the less numerous, statistical minority differs from its environment in matters which it does not regard as sanctities. Jews survived as a numerical and persecuted minority in an alien world not because they were a separate *tribe*, a distinct *people* (in the modern, nationalist sense) or a different *race*. Tribes, peoples, racial groups disappeared many times when they mingled with others more numerous and stronger than they. The world cemetery is filled with the graves of such dead entities. We were *also* a distinct people with specific characteristics of a people; perhaps we were also a separate racial group. But it is not these that give us vitality and continuity. While we were all these things, we were at the same time also something else: an exclusive group of believers, the Congregation of Israel. This is much more than a group sharing common memories (time and environment frequently eradicate group memories and eliminate them as influencing factors); it is more than blood kinship. In other words, we survived not simply because we were a people—how many peoples did not Jews see go under in the course of their long history, so that not a trace was left of them—but because we were a Chosen People with a special place in the history of the world, and a central position in the destiny of the cosmos as such.

What I wish to emphasize is that we are in grave danger of becoming merely an ethnic group in the conventional sense of the term—no more a Sacred Congregation, no more the Congregation of Israel, but only a group with a long and heroic history, with memories which, when cultivated, can arouse much justified pride (thus still not quite a mere banal minority) but without the consciousness of a specific spiritual drama and tension in its life. In the perspective of history this also means to be without a future.

This need not be interpreted to mean that extinction is around the corner. Such processes are slow and do not always follow a straight line. They are marked by zig-zags, by ups and downs. Even when tradition becomes mere inertia it remains a force capable of sustaining a social group for many years. But in the end the force of inertia must exhaust itself, and unless tradition acquires new vitality and style, it must in time become desiccated and lose its color. More power to everyone among us who does something positive to strengthen Jewish spiritual life, to restrain, or even simply to delay the process of disintegration. This is in itself a great good deed. But I cannot imagine the continued existence of a Jewish community in America in a *distant* future (and I must stress again that I am not limiting myself to the calendaric bounds set for my talk—the second half of the twentieth century) without a religious basis and without a stimulating religious content.

I do not now wish to step on anyone's corns. It is not desirable today to discuss the differences between Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Jews, and their respective merits or shortcomings. But there is one danger which they must all eschew: the danger of tedium. Tedium is, fundamentally, the greatest sin which can be committed in religious life. When Satan wishes to undermine religious life, he afflicts it—if he is successful—with a yawn, and then no efforts to exorcise the tedium with extra-religious means are of any avail. When congregations try to attract their audiences by means of dances, fine concerts or lectures on interesting secular themes, they do not thereby eliminate the boredom afflicting the specific religious life of the congregations if such boredom already exists. The attachment of the public to the congregation is then not for its own sake, but becomes technical, and so to say, topographic. I need hardly stress that I am not opposed to dances or concerts or lectures on general themes. I am convinced that they can also fulfill a specific religious function, as long as religion remains central and all projects glow with its light. But is religion central today? By its very nature religion cannot be a peripheral matter. Either it stands at the core of things, and all other cultural activities intentionally or unintentionally serve as its periphery—or it ceases to be religion. Either religion inspires the entire man, the totality of his being, or it ekes out a miserable existence on the sidelines, and then it knows that, in time, it will probably not be tolerated at all and will be driven out also from its corner.

It was taught, R. Ishmael b. Eleazar said: On account of two sins 'amme ha-arez⁴ die: because they call the holy ark a chest, and because they call a synagogue *beth-'am*.⁵

M. KAPLAN

JUDAISM AS A CIVILIZATION
pp. 426 & 427

When we survey the efforts that have been made during the last hundred years to infuse new life into the synagogue, we note that they have been directed mainly at modernizing or estheticizing the service. The chief interest is in introducing decorum, good music, sermons in the vernacular, and in modifying the type and language of prayers. All such efforts have been motivated by the fundamental error that the way to save the synagogue is to make public worship its primary purpose to a far greater degree than was ever contemplated in the past.

Reformism's conversion of the synagogue into a "temple" indicates that public worship which, until the emancipation, had been only one of the activities of the synagogue, was henceforth to be the chief, if not the only activity, of the synagogue. Strange to say, this attitude has been adopted by all the sections of Jewry, whether they agreed with or were opposed to the Reformist movement, and it is this attitude that has caused the progressive deterioration of the synagogue. Public worship should be one of the functions of the synagogue, but by no means the only one, nor even the principal one.

A number of causes at the present time make the desire for worship an insufficient motive for keeping the synagogue alive. In the first place, the economic difficulty involved in the observance of Sabbaths and festivals prevents a great many Jews from attending the services. Secondly, the obligation to take part in prayer, an act which was formerly considered indispensable to the salvation of the soul and to material well-being, has greatly weakened. Finally, there are the competing distractions. For many people, literature, music and the theater answer to the spiritual need which only public worship could once satisfy. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to include within the scope of the synagogue the cultivation of whatever

workaday interests Jews have in common, and whatever leisure interests may form the basis of friendship and cooperation. The synagogue should not be displaced by, but it should evolve into, the *bet am*, or Jewish neighborhood center. Each center should be placed under the joint auspices of the *kehillah*, and of the Jews of the neighborhood where it is located. The cost of building and

maintenance should be shared jointly by the *kehillah* and the beneficiaries.

The *bet am* should have all of the spiritual sanction that formerly rendered the synagogue dear to the heart of the Jew, and, in addition, should deliberately be developed to meet the broader humanist-cultural needs that are included in a modern civilization. By upholding the spiritual sanction of the *bet am*, and by having the responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of the *bet am* shared between the *kehillah* and the Jews of the neighborhood, it might be possible to break down the social barriers which prevent Jews of different economic status from sharing their spiritual interests.

Franz Rosenzweig

On Jewish Learning

"On the Opening of the
JUDISCHES LEHRHAUS"

pp. 98-99

A new "learning" is about to be born—
rather, it has been born.

It is a learning in reverse order. A learning that no longer starts from the Torah and leads into life, but the other way round: from life, from a world that knows nothing of the Law, or pretends to know nothing, back to the Torah. That is the sign of the time.

It is the sign of the time because it is the mark of the men of the time. There is no one today who is not alienated, or who does not contain within himself some small fraction of alienation. All of us to whom Judaism, to whom being a Jew, has again become the pivot of our lives—and I know that in saying this here I am not speaking for myself alone—we all know that in being Jews we must not give up anything, not renounce anything, but lead everything back to Judaism. From the periphery back to the center; from the outside, in.

This is a new sort of learning. A learning for which—in these days—he is the most apt who brings with him the maximum of what is alien. That is to say, *not* the man specializing in Jewish matters; or, if he happens to be such a specialist, he will succeed, not in the capacity of a specialist, but only as one who, too, is alienated, as one who is groping his way home.

It is not a matter of pointing out relations between what is Jewish and what is non-Jewish. There has been enough of that. It is not a matter of apologetics, but rather of finding the way back into the heart of our life. And of being confident that this heart is a Jewish heart. For we are Jews. _

No whit less important than reckoning with the perpetuation of Jewish life and culture is it to reckon with the well-being and growth of the individual child. The Jewish educative process must start with the actual experiences of the child as he lives them in the present, and lead him constantly so to reorganize and reinterpret his experiences that he comes to identify his own good with the good of society in general, and do so in a manner that will indicate growth in mind and character. To achieve this end the child must be given increasing control over his own experience so that he will himself be able to shape and direct it toward aims freely and intelligently chosen. Restated from the standpoint of the child, the following should be the objectives of Jewish education: *

a. *To give insight* into the meaning of spiritual values and their application to different types of experience, religious, moral, social and political; Jewish life as a developing civilization; the spiritual character of that civilization; the relationships of Jewish to other civilizations in the past; the course that Jewish life must henceforth

take in the different countries of the world, and especially in America.

b. *To foster an attitude* of respect toward human personality as such; tolerance toward other groups, races, faiths; intellectual honesty, open-mindedness and responsibility; social and international-mindedness; loyalty to and participation in Jewish life in this and other countries.

c. *To train appreciation* of individual and group creativity in the values of civilization; Jewish creativity in religion, ethics, language and literature, mores, laws and folkways, and the arts.

d. *To inculcate ideals* of justice and kindness in our social and economic relationships; peace and tolerance; a just, thriving, creative Jewish homeland in Palestine, a creative Jewish life in America.

e. *To condition habits* of reflective thinking; purposive experiencing; using leisure to develop personality; affiliation with the synagogue or *bet am*; celebrating Jewish Sabbaths, festivals, etc.; observing Jewish customs and ceremonies; reading Hebrew books and periodicals, Anglo-Jewish books, Anglo-Jewish press, Yiddish press, Bible, Talmud, etc.; contributing to the upbuilding of Palestine; helping to support social-service and educational institutions; attending Hebrew and Anglo-Jewish theaters, concerts, etc.; patronizing Jewish artistic endeavors; buying Jewish books, works of art, etc.

f. *To impart knowledge* of the Hebrew language; Jewish history; the outstanding selections from the Bible, the Talmud, and subsequent Jewish writings; history and meaning of Jewish customs and ceremonials, religious beliefs, ethical ideals; current Jewish problems, institutions, endeavors; Jewish arts and crafts, home-furnishing, cooking, etc.

BERACHOT 8a

etc.'. The Holy One, blessed be He, says: If a man occupies himself with the study of the Torah and with works of charity and prays with the congregation, I account it to him as if he had redeemed Me and My children from among the nations of the world.

SHABBAT 11A

Raba b. Mehasia also said in the name of R. Hania b. Goria in Rab's name: Every city whose roofs are higher than the synagogue will ultimately be destroyed, as it is said, *to exalt the house of our God, and to repair the ruins thereof*.⁵ Yet that refers only to houses; but as for towers and turrets, we have no objection. R. Ashi said: I achieved for the town of Mehasia⁶ that it was not destroyed.⁷ But it was destroyed!⁸—It was not destroyed as a result of that sin.

AVOT D'
RABBI NATAN
IIIa

AND RAISE MANY DISCIPLES.¹ For the School of Shammai says: One ought to teach only him who is talented² and meek and of distinguished ancestry and rich. But the School of Hillel says: One ought to teach every man, for there were many sinners in Israel who were drawn to the study of Torah, and from them descended righteous, pious, and worthy folk.³

YOMA
35b

Our Rabbis taught: The poor, the rich, the sensual¹ come before the [heavenly] court. They say to the poor: Why have you not occupied yourself with the Torah? If he says: I was poor and worried about my sustenance, they would say to him: Were you poorer than Hillel? It was reported about Hillel the Elder that every day he used to work and earn one *trupaik*,⁴ half of which he would give to the guard at the House of Learning, the other half being spent for his food and for that of his family. One day he found nothing to earn and the guard at the House of Learning would not permit him to enter. He climbed up and sat upon the window,⁵ to hear the words of the living God from the mouth of Shemayah and Abtalion. They say, that day was the eve of Sabbath in the winter solstice and snow fell down upon him from heaven. When the dawn rose,⁶ Shemayah said to Abtalion: Brother Abtalion, on every day this house is light and to-day it is dark, is it perhaps a cloudy day. They looked up and saw the figure of a man in the window. They went up and found him covered by three cubits of snow. They removed him, bathed and anointed him and placed him opposite the fire and they said: This man deserves that the Sabbath be profaned on his behalf.

Dr. Henry Slonimsky

Essays

p. 115

On Being a Religious Person

A SPOKEN MEDITATION

In every community there is someone sufficiently unselfish, sufficiently generous, to carry not merely his own burden but the burden of others as well. Without such communally minded persons, nothing would ever be done. That holds for Jews as well as non-Jews—it holds for religious undertakings as for all others. These are the leaven in the dough—the ferment in the mass—the conscience of the community.

And if you extend and expand the type, you get the definition of a religious man: one who is willing to bear the burdens—and on a higher and more difficult plane, the sorrows—and on the highest and most difficult and almost superhuman plane, the sins of the world.

A religious person is one who feels responsible for every one else.

VIKTOR FRANKL THE UNCONSCIOUS GOD, pp. 14-15

Nowhere, to my knowledge, is this brought home to us more strikingly than with the uniquely human phenomenon laughter: you cannot order anyone to laugh—if you want him to laugh, you must tell him a joke.

But isn't it, in a way, the same with religion? If you want people to have faith and belief in God, you cannot rely on preaching along the lines of a particular church but must, in the first place, portray your God believably—and you must act credibly yourself.

Certainly the trend is away from religion conceived in such a strictly denominational sense. Yet this is not to imply that, eventually, there will be a universal religion. On the contrary: if religion is to survive, it will have to be profoundly personalized.



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021 (212) 249-0100

4/13/90

MEMORANDUM

To: Mel Merians and Rabbi Steve Foster
From: Dru Greenwood
cc: Rabbi Alexander Schindler, Rabbi Daniel Syme
re: Privilege Card Update

I want to bring you up to date with the development of the UAHC Privilege Card for young adults (ages 22 - 30). As you know, the committee has been meeting monthly since the Biennial. The program we are developing will have a major impact in terms of reaching young unaffiliated Jews and encouraging congregations to expand their programming in this area. This program will dovetail nicely with the College Department's new Access Card and bridge the wide gap in synagogue participation between college and parenthood. (The committee's current working document is enclosed.)

We are proceeding on several levels:

- * Camera-ready ads, press releases, tips on gaining access to radio and TV will be provided to congregations. Ads will be seasonally oriented and correlated with national press releases;
- * A menu of ways to participate in the program (from free membership for 2 years to invitations to special programs) will be provided to congregations, allowing the broadest possible participation;
- * A self-mailer including the card and a business reply card will be distributed to college graduates and any other young adults whose names we receive. The UAHC logo will be featured on the cards and in all ads. Developing the mailing list is a challenge we are addressing.

At our meeting on April 11 Marty Hertz brought a client of his, James Moore, who is a professional in the areas of marketing and public relations. James is working with us pro bono to develop a card and campaign that will appeal to the young adults we want to reach. (We are developing leads for a pro bono copy writer and printer as well.) Members of the committee were very excited by his presentation. I will get you the specs as soon as I have them in hand.

We anticipate instituting the program beginning in the fall of 1990. It is a coordinated program that will take time to be fully implemented, but that can have a major impact in the long run in changing both the image and the reality of our temples.

National Coordinator of Programs
Dru Greenwood
Chairman
Melvin Merians
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven E. Foster

DRAFT 2/22/90

NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND INTEGRATION ASSESSMENT SCALE
Idea Supplement

As this scale has been used in various forums throughout the Reform Movement, a number of concrete suggestions have been made in response to some of the questions. The Retention Committee of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated has prepared this booklet to share those suggestions with you.

The value of using the Assessment Scale remains the opportunity to discuss the various perceptions of your current methods of membership recruitment, integration and retention. The suggestions listed here are no substitute for that process.

I. Attracting and Recruiting

Question 3.

- * offer free kindergarten classes open to the community
- * offer free Tot Shabbat open to the community
- * offer free Family High Holiday services open to the community
- * cull real estate lists for names of newcomers
- * use school registration lists or condo newsletters to generate prospects list
- * contact Federation contributors
- * place articles by rabbi in local secular press
- * participate in "Synagogue Fair" hosted by JCC or Federation
- * participate in community-based "Synagogue Awareness Month"
- * list events in calendars published by JCCs or Federation
- * Temple Emanu-El (Edison, NJ) offers a 6-session, free "Doing Jewish" workshop that is advertised to the community. Sessions include Welcome to Reform Judaism, Doing Chanukah: The December Dilemma, Doing Shabbat, Doing Life Cycle Events, Doing Passover, and Feeling at Home in the Synagogue.

Question 4.

- * create a small committee responsible for writing press releases, taking photos, and placing articles in the local press on a regular basis. Activities of community interest might include:
 - * elderly drop-in center
 - * feeding or housing the homeless
 - * covering local hospital on Christian holidays
- * use public access TV to broadcast services, sermons or special activities to the local community.

Question 6.

- * If your congregation is located on a street without much pedestrian traffic, consider placing your sign perpendicular to the road so drivers have more opportunity to read it.



Question 8.

- * give visitors to services a rose for their lapel for easy identification
- * invite visitors to stand and introduce themselves following Kiddush.
- * send potential members bulletin of activities for 6 months
- * give Board members large buttons to wear that read "Ask Me About Temple X"
- * invite visitors to a designated "Shabbat Shalom" table hosted by a temple member at the Oneg Shabbat

Question 9.

- * use a visitor's sign-in book
- * leave cards in the pews for visitors to fill in and drop off

Question 11.

- * ask ushers to offer latecomers a prayerbook open to the current page

II. Integration and Retention

Question 13.

- * require a new member class for parents of children entering Religious School
- * offer a 6-session class on Reform Judaism for new members
- * invite new members to attend a special series of seminars with the rabbi and other temple leaders to explore the meaning of covenant in terms of their new affiliation with a Reform synagogue.

Question 14.

- * Monmouth Reform Temple (Tinton Falls, NJ) has created a program called "Mitzvot of Membership," that addresses the spiritual commitments expected of members in the areas of study, worship and community. Members are encouraged to make a spiritual pledge during the High Holy Days.

Question 15.

- * include a small bottle of wine, Shabbat candles, a certificate redeemable for a mini-challah, and a "Do It Yourself Shabbat" brochure (available from UAHC Press) in a Welcome Basket prepared for all new members
- * give new members a copy of The Jewish Home by Rabbi Daniel Syme (UAHC Press) or "Jewish Prayers for the Home Table," available from the CCAR (including Welcoming the Sabbath, Grace after Meals and Havdalah at Sabbath's End)
- * include Chanukah blessings in Hebrew, transliteration and in English with directions for lighting the Chanukiah in temple bulletin to encourage all members to observe Chanukah.

Question 17.

- * appoint one person from the current "class" of new members to the Board of Trustees specifically to represent new members.

- * Jewish Community Center (White Plains, NY) has started a "New Members Network," composed of families and single people who join during a particular year. The goal is to provide a comfortable, easy way for those who want to get involved in temple life to meet other new members. A steering committee calls each new member to invite them to services and special Temple events.

Question 19.

- * It is important to follow through with information about the interest of new members whether the information is obtained on the application form or in person. By gathering the information we create the expectation that it will be used and that someone will contact the new member to invite participation in temple activities.

Question 21.

- * Wilshire Boulevard Temple (Los Angeles, CA) has an "Invite a Friend" membership campaign, including an "Invite a Friend" Shabbat, "a chance to 'invite' friends, family and neighbors to visit your Temple, to show it off, and to share with them the benefits--and challenges--of belonging."

REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Our Temple, established in 1950, is a Reform congregation located in a medium size bedroom community close to New York City. It has been saddled with a declining membership over a number of years. From a high water mark of 425 members, it had declined to about 275 members, after hovering in the area of 300-325 for a number of years.

In the late spring of 1989, a new membership committee was formed to try to mount an aggressive campaign to enroll new members. New members with young children were the main targets, as they were the type of members who would remain the longest, and upon whom we could build. At least two thirds of the current membership no longer had children of school age. The new committee's job was to analyze why we were losing members, why we were having difficulty in attracting new ones, and what course of action to take.

The problems were defined as follows:

1. An aging population in the area, with many moving to Florida.
2. Less Jewish families moving into the area.
3. The high cost of homes, among the highest in the nation.
4. Our Temple's moderately high dues.
5. A high percentage of unaffiliated Jews in the area.
6. Our Temple's location in a commercial strip.
7. Poor retention of uninvolved members.

The committee felt that it had to do something different that what was done in the past by other committees. The old approach of waiting for someone to join when they were ready was not working. Sedate ads in the papers had to be rethought. We decided upon a novel course of advertising weekly in 3 of our local area Pennysavers. A basic format of a box ringed with the Temple's many clubs, arms, schools, etc. and our name and phone number prominently shown, with a large space into which we put different catchy questions or mildly humorous tag lines. For instance, just a few...

Dear Mommy,

(in childish scrawl)

When I grow up will I be Jewish?

It's time you enrolled your child in our Hebrew school.

or

Want your children to meet other Jewish children?

Join and enroll them now in our Religious school.

or

It will soon be Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur !

Do you know where your Temple is?

We started our ads at the beginning of July and ran thru October. In addition we erected a large lawn sign which had our slogan "Where new members are always welcome". We also encouraged our members to become involved in the campaign, to try and invite unaffiliated neighbors, and put a "thermometer" campaign sign in our lobby to show our progress.

To answer the specific problems defined by the committee we did the following:

1. Aging population and Florida bound, not much we could do here, except to try to make the Temple so important in peoples lives, that maybe they would stay,

2. Less Jewish newcomers. We tried to identify and reach out to any Jewish families moving into our area by getting lists of home purchasers and sending a warm letter to all Jewish sounding names. We even offered the services of our Rabbi to affix a mezzuzah to their doorpost.

3. and 4. Our biggest problem. The high cost of buying a home in our area has made it very difficult for families, especially young ones, to join any Temple. Our solution, and probably the main reason for the success of our campaign, was to formulate a special dues arrangement for young families. It provided for substantial reduction in dues, as much as 46%. For that we asked them to make a commitment to join for 3-4 years. We offered an escalating scale of dues from pre-school thru grade 2. When their child reaches grade 3, they get up to the regular dues structure. This provided them with very low starting dues. For instance a couple with one child of kindergarten age who would have had to pay \$940 regular dues, could join for \$350. Naturally we explained that their commitment to join for longer than one year was only a moral one, but that the earlier they started the more they saved. It now becomes our job to keep them as members for as long as we can. If we only keep them thru grade 8, that 46% drops to just 15% saving over what they would have spent cumulatively.

5. Unaffiliated Jews. To try to attract them to our Temple, or for that matter to any Temple, we sent a letter to every Jewish sounding name in the phone books of membership communities. We advertised open house services in the local Pennysavers, and got some turnout.

6. Our location in a commercial area has always lost us prospective members to another Reform Temple in the area, which is beautifully situated. And yet our Temple is second to none in its beauty on the inside, so we try to get people in our doors. We have a pre-school program for the community which has led to several members. We recently started a nursery school which is doing very well and providing a pipeline to membership as the children get older.

7. A big sore spot has been the loss of members for what we perceive as "no reason". The committee spent considerable time on the issue of retention of the members we have, and made the following recommendations to the Temple.

- A. That the Temple form a "Retention and Integration" committee that would:
- B. Work towards getting all new members involved in the life of the Temple as soon as possible after joining.
- C. Get all older "uninvolved" members involved.
- D. Have greeters to meet new members at services and introduce them to board members present etc.
- E. Provide babysitters at least twice a month at services.
- F. Hold a new members dinner.
- G. Provide a course by the Rabbi on Reform Judaism.
- H. Let the congregation know that they are there for them as "ombudsmen".
- I. Formulate other ideas to retain and to integrate.

To summarize, we started with a goal of 40 new members. We were able to sign up 33 families, most with young children. We consider the campaign a success, considering that we usually only get 10-15, with losses exceeding gains. Of course it remains to be seen what impact we have made upon losses. We hope to be able to repeat our gains this year. Then we will start to have the size congregation that can turn its efforts to the job of Tikun Olam.

PAMELLA WINTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT

March has been proclaimed Synagogue Awareness Month. The purpose is to focus attention on the multitudes of unaffiliated Jews and try to interest them in synagogue membership. It is not that one can't be a good Jew without belonging to a Synagogue, but rather, as Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President of the UAHC has said, "synagogue affiliated Jews are Jewishly more involved. They visit Israel more often, devote more volunteer time to other Jewish organizations; they give more to Jewish causes, insist on a better Jewish education for their children; and, of course, they are more likely to participate in communal worship and home observances."

Why am I addressing this to you who are already obviously affiliated Jews? Because at this time when the future of Judaism seems so precarious with the rates of intermarriage and assimilation on the ascendancy, the numbers of unaffiliated are staggering and should be shared. Currently approximately 3 million Jews are unaffiliated in the U.S. and Canada and moreover only 35% of Jewish adults are affiliated at any one time.

On the other hand, according to recent studies, ~~now~~ 85% of all adult Jews are, or have been, affiliated with a Synagogue at some time in their adult lives. This number raises many questions and concerns. How many of our members will not retain their membership with our Temple through the years? What can we do to better involve and integrate members into Temple life? There is no question that has pre-occupied me more during my year and a half as president than this one. We have been exploring it at the Board level and will focus more attention on it in the future.

One of the more obvious solutions is that we must make Temple life a more integral part of each member's daily life. The Temple must be a place we come to not only for the High Holy Days, to observe a Yahrzeit, to celebrate a Bar Mitzvah or to drop off our children at Religious School. It must be a place where we come to learn, to socialize, to do mitzvot, to share; a place where we can turn to be comforted and to comfort others; a place we seek out to restore inner peace and perspective. The Temple has a responsibility to make

BETH ELOHIM, WELLESLEY, MA

these opportunities and experiences available but you have a responsibility to reach out and embrace them.

March is Synagogue Awareness Month and this month Temple Beth Elohim has a startling array of programs which invite your awareness. The weekend with Scholar-in-Residence, Composer Ben Steinberg will be unforgettable. The Saturday evening lecture and social hour featuring Sol Gittleman will be marvelously informative and entertaining. The Sisterhood and WEFTY Shabbat Services should be inspiring and delightful. Don't miss the hour of study with Dr. Eli Grad; he presents the Torah from a most stimulating perspective. The second Sisterhood mini-luncheon promises to be as pleasurable as the first one. The opportunity to cook and then serve food at the Shattuck Shelter is a mitzvah that is easy to do yet greatly appreciated. Or help cook and serve for the Senior Citizens Luncheon. Finally, in March we will celebrate Purim. Come to our unique Purim Service, and stay for lunch and the Purim Carnival. You and your children don't need to wait until next October 31 to get dressed up in costume!

Look through the Bulletin carefully for further information and a more complete listing of Temple activities. Mark your calendars now and declare March to be your month to become aware of Temple Beth Elohim. You, the Temple, and Judaism will benefit from your participation.

Ilene Stellar
(President)

THIRTYSOMETHING

Are you thirtysomething* or a member of a family in which there is at least one adult who is thirty-seven or younger? Would you be interested in meeting other Temple members who are thirtysomething [single or married, with or without children] and participating in activities. We would like to start such an organization here at the Temple.

1. Are you interested in participating in the following: [check as many as you like]

lectures _____ hiking _____ week-end trips _____ theater _____
holiday celebrations _____ discussion groups _____ dinner cruise _____
dances _____ cultural events _____ concerts _____ other _____

Co-ed sports: softball _____ basketball _____ tennis _____ bowling _____
volleyball _____

Spectator sports: football _____ basketball _____ hockey _____ baseball _____

2. Would you be interested in participating in activities with your children?
check one: sometimes _____ always _____ never _____

3. Would the availability of babysitting effect your participation in these activities?
Yes _____ No _____

4. Are you interested in helping to organize and/or run some events?
Yes _____ No _____

5. Do you know of other Temple members who might be interested in such a group?

Name _____ Phone # _____

Your name: _____

Address: _____

Your occupation: _____

Child's name: _____ Age: _____

Phone work #: male _____ female: _____

home #: _____

Please tear off and mail the questionnaire to:

Thirtysomething
Temple Beth Sholom
228 New Hempstead Road
New City, NY 10956

attn: Rabbi Straus

* The thirtysomething group is intended for families in which at least one of the adults is thirty-seven or younger.

A Woman's Voice/ Marlene Adler Marks

Power Elite



Some years ago I attended a speech by a well-known rabbi/philosopher on the subject of the Jew of the future. He was erudite and handsome and I listened in admiration until I noticed an irritating personal tic: the rabbi had a habit of punctuating his thoughts with a joke in English, but delivering the punch line in untranslated Hebrew, using quotations from an ancient sage, usually from the Talmud. I guess the jokes weren't too obscure because segments of the audience

did laugh on cue, but it was lost on me, the sober guest at a party where most everyone else was high.

Since then I've developed what you might call an excessive sensitivity to the "outsider" in our midst. I can't stand elitism, jargon and the abuse of personal knowledge or power to separate the in-crowd from the masses in our community. But it's become impossible to ignore: stretch-limo Judaism is rampant these days, ripe for offense wherever large organizations meet.

Stretch-limo Judaism is at work not only among the religious cognoscenti who drop Hebrew and Yiddishisms into every phrase, but among the communal workers, the writers and academics who form our intellectual and social service "in-crowds." And, of course, there are the financial elites as well; our charitable groups are segregated into categories of big, bigger and biggest givers. Donald Trump carried favor for his building projects in Los Angeles last month by visiting the big givers of at least one Jewish organization, but who was courting whom?

I've got examples galore, Judaism among the swells. Recently I was asked to take a seat on a national board of a Jewish denomination, only to be told that the seat had a price tag, and not a cheap one at that. And, again, another woman's organization routinely offers me the opportunity for an "intimate" dinner with its speaker if I'm willing to help underwrite its affair.

Elitism is such a turn-off. Where is the community in the Jewish community? How healthy is it that before we get seated at the dinner table we're asked who or what we know and how much we're willing to spend?

The Tikkun conference was held a month ago at UCLA, and it's taken me while to figure out what, exactly, happened. Just about every local newspaper that covered the story (including this one) got it wrong. The L.A. Times thought the Tikkun conference was about Jewish men and women admitting they dislike each other. A local Jewish newspaper thought it was about a leftist referendum on a Palestinian state. The L.A. Weekly thought it was about Jews shouldering responsibility for all that ails the modern world. At The Journal mistakenly thought it was about intellectuals talking to each other, boring everyone in earshot.

But upon reflection, the conference was not about any of these. Tikkun was about challenging the power elites and opening up the community-building process to a more democratic hearing. It was about the ways that unaffiliated Jews perceive that elite, and how much they want to be included, despite organizational roadblocks that keep them out. It was about Jewish men and women getting together for some serious fun. A lot more could have been done to further this process than the two-day meeting actually attempted, but that was its goal, and harnessing that resentment was the meeting's success.

In the weeks since the conference, I have heard Michael Lerner and his so-called Tikkun community criticized, especially by those who weren't there. Well, certainly, Lerner is a great self-promoter and, yes, he is a Johnny-come-lately to community concerns. Furthermore, Lerner is criticized, I think correctly, for sapping energy and support from longstanding and effective organizations, for a program of his own that to this point has no teeth. Still, there's no denying Lerner is onto something and organized community skepticism toward him may be a form of envy. We need new blood and he knows how to get it.

And how did he get it? He appealed to Jews who were hungry for community who wanted to talk about their own lives, and to give voice to their concerns about where their community is heading. The panels on family and abortion, prayer, arts, Hollywood and literature were really no different than panels run by a number of liberal and feminist groups over the last 10 years, but that they were happening all at once, alongside a political agenda dealing with the painful subject of Israel, (and against the backdrop of the changes in Eastern Europe) this is what made Tikkun a happening, and made many of those at the conference feel that they, along with Judaism, were being reformed. If nothing else, Lerner has a great sense of the moment.

However, I do think that in some ways even Michael Lerner has the Tikkun group wrong. My sense is that the 1,500 Jews at UCLA's Ackerman Hall had a desire to substitute Lerner's "liberal and progressive" elite for the reputed conservative one, which he says is misrepresenting the community today. (In fact, Jewish communal leaders apparently are quite liberal, on Israel and the Palestinian question, among other issues, according to a new study.) Two days of listening to professors and rabbis is no more interesting than two days with any typical well-intentioned fundraising *macharocracy*. Lerner's academics have a certain sex appeal, but only Betty Friedan brought the crowd to its feet, feeling she was one of them. Lerner made other mistakes as well: he indulged himself and his friends in long-winded speeches, and (even worse) held a closing-day party at Stanley Sheinbaum's house, limiting the guests to a small coterie of the speakers and conference presenters. "Liberal and progressive revolution — ha!"

In a panel on Jews and the future of L.A., members of the audience cut short speakers' presentations, wanting to speak for themselves. "We don't want to hear from you," said one woman. "We've been listening enough."

This is a message the Jewish community needs to take seriously. Of course we need leadership. And perhaps a fully democratic Jewish community is a contradiction in terms. But the outsiders are pressing their noses to the line and they want in. It's time to open the window. ■

Marlene Adler Marks is managing editor of *The Jewish Journal*.

TEMPLE EMANU-EL - BETH SHOLOM, WESTMOUNT, QUEBEC

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES SHABBAT DINNER

Friday, March 30, 1990

Another Shabbat Dinner for Single Parent Families will take place on Friday, March 30th, 1990, at 6:15 p.m. and is open to all Jewish Single Parents and their children. Cost is \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children under ten years of age. Reservations are necessary and payment to Temple must be made before March 27th. This is the second of three dinners planned for Winter/Spring 1990, made possible by a grant from the Synagogue-Federation Relations Committee of Allied Jewish Community Services. The first dinner, held in February, was very successful and the many Single Parent Families in the community who attended are looking forward to another meaningful Shabbat celebration. Please call Naomi Litvack at 937-3575 for more information or make your reservations.

SINGLES ONEG SHABBAT

Friday, March 30th, 1990 at 8:15 p.m.

Our monthly service for singles will join in our regular Shabbat evening worship at 8:15 p.m. on Friday, March 30th. After the service, there will be an Oneg Shabbat for those singles who would like an opportunity to get together in a social setting. All members of the Jewish Community who are Single are welcome to attend each of our special services.

KOL HAKAVOD TO SAM SEGAL, MARCH 23

When summer came to Montreal, Sam Segal came to Temple and conducted our laymen's services. When there was a death in a Temple family, Sam came to their aid, leading home services during Shiva. When we wanted to honour our war dead, Sam arranged a beautiful and significant service for Armistice Day. Active in Temple, Temple Brotherhood, and in many areas of Jewish community, Sam Segal deserves to be honoured. Now Sam and Melva are moving to Vancouver. We want to take this opportunity to wish them both well and to say THANK YOU to Sam for his many contributions to Temple. A special service has been arranged to do so at 8:15 p.m. on March 23rd, as well as an Oneg Shabbat where we may greet both Sam and Melva personally and wish them farewell. Plan now to attend Sabbath Services on March 23, as we join in honoring Sam Segal.

PASSOVER ACTION WORKSHOP, APRIL 1, 10:30 A.M.

Only 8, count them, 8 more days 'till Passover (on April 1). Why let panic overtake you? Learn the ins and outs of leading and preparing for a Seder at our Passover Action Workshop, on Sunday, April 1, at 10:30 a.m.

Led by Rabbi Leigh Lerner and members of our congregation, the Action Workshop is the perfect way to:

- find new ideas to enliven your seder
- learn new recipes to spice your Pesach table
- enrich your understanding of the Hagadah so that you can better lead a seder
- answer those mysterious questions of "Why is this night different?" in custom, feeling, and food
- bring a contemporary flavor to the ancient feast.

Passover Action Workshop is for everyone - first time seder-makers, veteran seder-givers, and seder-attenders who want to know more.

No charge for all this Action, but your RSVP is necessary. Please call 937-3575.

ADULT EDUCATION

Temple's Spring Intro To Judaism Begins February 27th
Would you like to learn to read Hebrew? Would you like an overview of Jewish thought, history, and celebrations? Then you'd like Rabbi Leigh Lerner's Introduction to Judaism, which begins Feb. 27, at 5:45 p.m., continues on March 20th, and runs a total of twelve weeks at the Temple. If you've missed the first class, you can still sign up.

The course provides an introduction to Jewish holidays, Shabbat, Hebrew, and contemporary issues, as well, with aspects of active learning incorporated, so that participants can practice and build their Jewish understanding at home.

Those planning an inter-faith marriage must take the course, which also has a "Times and Seasons" component which deals directly with issues facing those who live in such marriages. Those contemplating conversion to Judaism at the Temple are required to take the course and to meet with Rabbi Lerner in small group and individual learning situations.

The course is open to the entire community. It is free to new members of the congregations, while others pay only a charge for the books that are used.

Call Rabbi Lerner, 937-3575, for more information.

SATURDAY MORNING BIBLE/STUDY/BREAKFAST DISCUSSION SERIES

- March 3 - Rabbi Leigh Lerner - Poetry of Jewish Spain
- March 11 - Sunday Purim Breakfast - Note change of day
- March 17 - To Be Determined
- March 25 - Sunday - 2:00 p.m. - Planets, Potions and Parchments
- March 31 - Professor Klaus Herrmann

Saturday breakfast is served from 9-9:30 a.m. followed by the lecture and discussion. All welcome.

THE FUTURE OF CANADIAN JEWRY

A Public Forum

On Sunday, April 22nd at 10:00 a.m. at Temple

Professor Morton Weinfeld, associate professor and Chairman of Department of Sociology McGill University.

will speak on

SURVIVAL OR EXTINCTION: The Future of Canadian Jews

Coffee & Danish \$3.00

Please reserve 937-3575

Sponsor Entre-Nous
Group of Temple

FOOD BANK

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, our message is still the same, food, food and more food is still needed (non-perishable of course). The gratitude and joy of the recipients knows no bounds, if you could just see their faces... Please co-operate!



ANSHE EMETH MEMORIAL TEMPLE

Founded 1859

222 Livingston Avenue
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901
(201)545-6484

RABBI
Bennett F. Miller

ASSISTANT RABBI
Jack P. Paskoff

CANTOR
Loe Coopersmith

ADMINISTRATOR
Gail R. Kroop

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL DIRECTOR
Susan Kushner

PRESIDENT
Phyllis M. Zicky

I am delighted that you have joined Anshe Emeth. I hope that your first weeks with us have already been ones of welcome. If I can help you to feel more at home in our congregation I hope you will call upon me.

This year we have arranged a very special program for our new members. We want to share with you the Temple's history, what Reform Judaism is all about, and how the Temple can be a meaningful part of your family's life.

Beginning Sunday morning October 15th, we will meet in six sessions. The program will be from 11:00 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. each week. Attached is a description of each week's schedule. You can see that it is very exciting and I hope you will join with me, Rabbi Paskoff and Cantor Coopersmith, together with some of our Temple's officers. If for any reason you cannot attend all of the sessions you certainly are welcome to participate in some of them.

Please do make every effort to participate. If you have any questions you can certainly call me. I look forward to seeing you soon. Best wishes to you and your family for a healthy and Happy New Year.

Very sincerely,

Bennett F. Miller
Rabbi

jd
encl.

Celebrating 130 Years

PROGRAM FOR NEW MEMBERS OF ANSHE EMETH MEMORIAL TEMPLE

BEGINNING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1989

IN THE TEMPLE'S CONFERENCE ROOM

WEEK 1 - OCTOBER 15, 1989 - 11:00 A.M.

Why are you here? What are the expectation of new members of the synagogue? What do you hope to get out of being members of a reform congregation. What is the role of the synagogue and how can it fulfill the expectation of our new members?

WEEK 2 - OCTOBER 22, 1989

What is Reform Judaism? A discussion of the development of Reform Judaism, its past, its present, and directions for the future.

WEEK 3 - OCTOBER 29, 1989

What is our ritual? A discussion of Jewish liturgy including learning some of the songs of the sanctuary and melodies of Shabbat and holidays.

WEEK 4 - NOVEMBER 5, 1989

How do we celebrate? Looking at life cycle events and how they are celebrated at Anshe Emeth. This week will be a continuation of songs, melodies, and ritual as it is celebrated at Anshe Emeth.

WEEK 5 - NOVEMBER 19, 1989

What is Anshe Emeth? A session dealing with the history of the Temple, its place and role in the community, its vision for the future. A discussion will also take place on the program of Anshe Emeth regarding children and the development of that program in the Religious School and Youth Program.

WEEK 6 - DECEMBER 3, 1989

What is our challenge? This will be a discussion about participation at Anshe Emeth. How new members can get involved? A discussion will also take place about the role of the Jewish Federation, UAHC, ARZA and other Temple activities.

M'kor Shalom
Mt. Laurel, NJ

The History and Philosophy of
Reform Judaism: Where We've
Come From and Where We're Going

Rabbi Nina Mizrahi and
Rabbi Barnett Brickner

This course is designed to help us to understand what being a reform Jew means. The history of the Reform movement will be discussed with an emphasis on our philosophical basis. We will learn how the principles of equality, progressivism and rationality have molded not only the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, but also M'kor Shalom. In addition, we will explore the future of Reform Judaism.

The Adults Education Committee believes this course will be of particular interest to new members, for whom the fee is waived.

Thursdays, 7:30—9:00 p.m. 5 Sessions
November 16, 30
December 7, 14, 21

New Member Class
Development

In any case, here are a few thoughts. It seems to me that the goals of the program are to introduce new members to Reform Judaism generally and to Reform Judaism as practised at Temple Ner Tamid particularly. An additional goal is to begin integrating new members into the community/family of Temple Ner Tamid by providing them an informal chevrah of their own and by giving them some special time with the rabbi (and perhaps other leadership). A corelary goal might be to encourage participation in other aspects of temple life, such as other adult education opportunities.

Substantively, the program might include a piece on the evolution of Reform Judaism, including the challenge and responsibility of choice that results from the non-halachic emphasis on individual autonomy. One program (Bennett Miller's) focused on the meaning of "covenant" for class members personally as Reform Jews in relation to their new association/commitment to the temple. It's a thought, although it might be too onerous to use as a framework for the whole program. As we have found in Intro, as well as the other new member classes that have been held, we need to strike a balance between concrete, experiential aspects and cognitive aspects. I wonder if some text study could be included in each session (Parashat Hashavuah) along with some home ritual (affixing a mezzuzah, lighting Shabbat candles, learning a Shabbat song). It might be helpful to tour the sanctuary and talk about the ritual objects there, including taking out and looking at the Torah scroll.

Operationally, the program should probably be fairly short--5 or 6 sessions of 1-1/2 to 2 hours with refreshments. I would avoid a string of show and tell visitors in favor of building a relationship with the group.

PRIVILEGE CARD COMMITTEE
ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS PROPOSAL
INTRODUCTORY YEAR

OBJECTIVE

To announce the new Privilege Card Program to target audience of 23-30 year old men and women.

GOALS

- To make Privilege Card temple membership attractive to target audience;
- To develop "user friendly" advertising and public relations program for congregations to use at the local level;
- To develop national public relations campaign, announcing privileg card membership.

RESOURCES

The best resources available are the good will and cooperation of participating temples. Other resources included in developing this program are the UAHC graphic arts studio, Richard Cohen PR Agency, and members of this committee.

REACHING TARGET AUDIENCE

Our target audience of 23-30 years olds is, to advertisers, a highly desirable demographic group and therefore very expensive to reach. A national print campaign using small space ads in selected publications such as Time, Newsweek, Elle, and Esquire, would cost a minimum of \$150,000 for a 2-3 month campaign, and would be difficult to evaluate on a local level. This proposal will reach the target audience at both national and local levels, using a coordinated combination of press releases, radio announcements and local advertising. It is designed to cost little more than printing and postage.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations remains the most cost effective way to reach an audience. Our Public relations campaign will coordinate use of newspaper and radio on national and local levels. Congregations will also be given easy instructions on handling local television appearances.

Newspaper - National

An initial introductory press release, followed by subsequent theme releases focusing on different Jewish celebrations, will be sent from our PR agency to national and major newspapers in all markets.

Newspapers-Local

A series of press releases, coordinated with the national releases, will be developed for congregations to use on a local level. These releases will be written in such a way that congregations will basically fill in the blanks with pertinent information and send to their local newspaper. For example: "Today, Temple Shari Beth of Cedar Hills announced their participation in the National UAHC Privilege Card Program, allowing 23-30 year olds to join for one year (pick one: without a membership fee or at a reduced membership fee)".

Radio- National

Radio stations on both national and local levels offer free public service announcements to non-profit community organizations. We will send a series of 30 and 60 second announcements to national and major market stations reaching our target audience. These announcements will be coordinated with the newspaper releases.

Radio-Local

A series of 30 and 60 second announcements will be developed for congregations to submit to local radio stations. As with the newspaper releases, these will be easily individualized.

Television - Local

Congregations will be sent an instruction sheet on how to place temple spokespersons on local television and radio shows, including cable.

ADVERTISING

As previously stated, national advertising is costly and not as efficient as local advertising by congregations. To encourage congregations to advertise, we will send them a printed sheet of completed ads, with alternate copy and headlines, that can be easily and inexpensively individualized. The ads, in tone and graphic appearance, should be as upscale as possible.

Suggested ad headlines are:

New in Town? We'd Like to Meet You

Just Starting Out? Don't Passover this Invitation

It's Our Privilege to Serve You

Introducing a Card That Saves You Money

Here's a Card That Doesn't Cost You

Why Don't You Have a Privilege Card?

This Purim, Come Party With Us

Our Seder Won't be Complete Without You

We Offer You More Than a Place to Pray

Don't Wait till Parenthood to Join the Jewish Community

We're expecting more than Elijah at our Seder

Celebrate the New Year in your New Temple

Conclusion

Using the combination of mediums discussed, and being generous in materials and assistance supplied to congregations, will provide a good first year introductory program for the Privilege Card.

Prepared by Vicky Farhi

CONGREGATION SHIR TIKVAH
TROY, MI

DUES INFORMATION 1990-1991

Maintaining our congregation and the Jewish identity and presence in our area requires all members to contribute what they can. The majority of our expenses are paid from your dues with the remainder from fund-raising and contributions. Each year our Board reviews our budget and sets dues based on required income to pay our bills. We currently have three membership categories:

Our Couples membership dues are \$640 a year. This category applies when the home contains two or more adults between age 30 and 65.

Our Singles membership dues are \$400 a year and applies to singles between age 30 and 65.

Our third category, "Set-your-own-dues", is available to all those under 30 or over 65. This program recognizes that these groups usually have less disposable income or limited need for synagogue services. Because we are near capacity for the High Holidays, the minimum dues for this category is established at the same rate we charge non-members for High Holiday tickets, currently \$80 per person. As a member, your minimum dues are per adult not per person.

Under "Set-your-own-dues", you determine for yourself what you can afford and that becomes your dues. We do not require any applications or interviews. Since most of the income we need to pay expenses comes from dues, we do ask all members in this category to give what they can.

Since these three categories cannot anticipate all circumstances, our Executive Committee accepts confidential requests for dues reduction based on need. You can discuss a reduction in whatever manner you are most comfortable - in person, by letter to the Executive Committee or by talking with a member of the Executive Committee or a Co-Chair of the Membership Committee who will then speak for you at an Executive Committee meeting. We do not require any records to support such a request. Our policy is to never deny membership because of financial limitations.

We have no building fund. We do own land in Troy at the corner of Wattles and Northfield Parkway which is intended for eventual use as a Temple. We do not expect to begin this project until we are large enough so that the obligation is affordable to all.

Our dues year is from April 1 to March 31. Dues may be paid in 1, 2, or 4 installments. Bills are sent 1 month before the due date. Full dues regardless of category apply to members joining between April 1 and the High Holidays with a 50% reduction if joining between the Holidays and Dec. 31 and pro-rated thereafter.

Our Hebrew and Religious schools are staffed by the United Hebrew Schools. Information and tuition are available upon request.

To join, call either our Treasurer, Rich Spitzer (879-1142) or the Membership Committee (Irv Wengrow, 643-8733 or Marla Scafe, 375-0778.) Thank you for considering Shir Tikvah. We invite you to belong and share.

The most frequently-heard reasons heard about why not to join a Temple or Synagogue is the cost of membership and that there's nothing for me.

Certainly the cost of membership is a factor to all of us. Most of us strain to find room in our budget to maintain these essential Jewish institutions. We also know that many join only for their children's education. At Shir Tikvah, we've decided to tackle these issues head on by offering a unique opportunity to the groups most affected - the under-30 group made up usually of singles and couples either without children or whose children are not ready for religious school and all those over age 65.

Our message is that there is a place for you at Shir Tikvah. We are confident that once you have experienced the value of a small and caring liberal congregation in your lives, you will recognize that we go a long way past dues and school. We also know that to this group, Temple membership dues are usually an unaffordable luxury. To overcome both of these issues, we have established a unique new dues category for all those under 30 and over 65.

We call it "Set your own dues" because that is what it is. We tell you how much our standard dues are by category and then you tell us what you can afford. If you can pay full dues, we will gladly accept it. If it's a figure less than that, we accept that amount with no questions asked. In the spirit of our heritage, we require no forms, no tax returns, no interviews. We also offer installment plans to make it easier to budget your payments.

Before making a decision, we invite you to attend services and social/educational events listed in the newsletter for this is the only way you'll be able to meet our most important asset - our members and your new friends.

JOINING A TEMPLE CAN BE TOO EXPENSIVE
THEN AGAIN, IT COULD BE JUST WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD

At Congregation Shir Tikvah, we recognize that the cost of a Temple membership can be unaffordable especially if you're under 30 or over 65. So we've come up with a new opportunity for these groups:

SET YOUR OWN DUES.

You tell us how much you can afford and that's it -
no tax returns, no interviews, no hassles.

For information for yourself or a loved one
call Irv Wengrow at 643-8733

CONGREGATION SHIR TIKVAH
BIG BEAVER RD., WEST OF SOMERSET MALL

SAPERSTON & DAY, P.C.

DONALD S. DAY
FRANK T. GAGLIONE
FREDERICK A. WOLF
ROGER B. SIMON
GARY L. MUCCI
TRICIA T. SEMMELHACK
RICHARD J. DAY
LAWRENCE A. SCHULZ
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DANIEL M. DARRAGH
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CHARLES G. HUMPHREY
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LAWRENCE J. GALLICK
JOHN L. KIRSCHNER
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THOMAS F. SEGALLA
BENJAMIN J. ANDREWS
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TIMOTHY C. CASHMORE
EDWARD M. GRIFFITH, JR.
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BRUCE S. ZEPTEL
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CHERYL A. POSSENTI
DANIEL P. JOYCE

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MORTON MENDELSON

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

GOLDOME CENTER

ONE FOUNTAIN PLAZA

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August 27, 1990

NATHAN OSTROFF

JOHN W. STEINBACH

PAUL A. PETERS

MARY E. ROCHE

JO ANNE GOULD

ANTHONY J. PIAZZA

RONALD A. SIPOS

RAYMOND N. MCCABE

CHARLES P. CERCONO

JULIE P. APTER

MAUREEN R.L. MUSSENDEN

JUDITH TREGER SHELTON

JAMES H. COSGRIFF, III

KENNETH W. AFRICANO

ALBERT J. D'AQUINO

CATHERINE T. WETTLAUER

PATRICIA LEWANDOWSKI

STEPHEN L. BARUFFI

PAMELA S. DISILVESTRI

RICHARD T. SARAF

MELANIE COLLINS TISDALE

THOMAS F. KNAB

HARRY E. WERNER

LISA G. MASSARO

ARTHUR F. HOLZ*

VINCENT P. HAUBER

GARY J. O'DONNELL

LOUIS C. FESSARD

THOMAS B. CRONMILLER

THOMAS J. BARNES

THOMAS E. LIPTAK

ELLEN G. YOST

WILLIAM C. ALTREUTER

RICHARD A. GALBO

MARGARET LILLIS SNAJCZUK

MICHAEL H. ARNOLD

LINDA CALLAHAN LAING

KENNETH M. ALWEIS

HOLLY SALOP WALLACE

ROBERT L. GALBRAITH, JR.

ROY A. MURA

ROGER F. COMINSKY

CATHERINE HABERMEHL

WILLIAM F. CUMMINGS**

TERRANCE P. FLYNN

JAMES A. LOWERY, III

PAULA A. DAMI

PETER L. POWERS

Rabbi Renni S. Altman
Task Force on the Unaffiliated
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021-7064

Dear Renni:

Our Meeting of the Dues Policy Review Committee took place in Detroit yesterday and we spent a considerable period of time in reviewing your memorandum and the issue it raises with respect to the suggestion that the CAP requirement be eliminated with respect to Privilege Cardholders.

Although at first blush the question appears to be a simple one and entitled to endorsement, on closer analysis, the issues become much more murky. For example, during the course of our discussion, the following issues were raised:

1. Some Congregations currently extend membership privileges to young people in the affected age range at substantially reduced membership fees. How does that Congregation respond to the complaints of their young members if free memberships are extended to others under the TFU program?
2. Many Congregations are granting free memberships to Soviet immigrants in their communities. Why shouldn't the same rules apply to them?
3. Many Congregations extend membership privileges to the indigent elderly on a vastly reduced basis or for free. Should this situation be treated any differently?
4. What about those Congregations who are not at CAP but who expend or commit funds to make the TFU program a meaningful one by allocating part of their professional staff to TFU programming or engaging new staff for that purpose? To the extent that these funds are appropriately allocated or spent,

* ADMITTED TO PRACTICE IN CALIFORNIA ONLY
** ADMITTED TO PRACTICE IN PENNSYLVANIA ONLY

*Spoke to
RSD
via phone*

SAPERSTON & DAY, P. C.

Rabbi Renni S. Altman
August 27, 1990
Page 2


should there not be an exemption for those Congregations under the normal expenditure test?

While there was some sentiment to call for a vote of the Committee (which would have resulted in a rejection of your request), the Committee accepted my suggestion that I appoint a small sub-committee to meet with the TFU for the purpose of fully exploring the issues. The sub-committee is to report back with its recommendations to our Committee at its next meeting in January.

Renni, like everything else in the MUM program, any changes from the norm have a significant rippling effect and we are trying to be extremely sensitive (as you are) to the different needs of the different Congregational situations.

I expect to complete the appoint of a sub-committee within the next several days after which, I think that we ought to move to set up a meeting between our sub-committee and your people to explore the situation more fully and perhaps arrive at some sort of a consensus.

Cordially



Donald S. Day

DSD:csa

cc: Mr. Melvin Merians
Mr. Allan B. Goldman
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Mr. Arthur R. Grant
Mr. Marshall D. Krolick

Dues Review discussed
see letter to Renni
(8/27) with cc's to
ABG. MM etc



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

[Handwritten signature]

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
 SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA
 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

August 20, 1990
 29 Av 5750

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alan Goldman and Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

FROM: Mel Merians, Rabbi Steven E. Foster, Rabbi Renni S. Altman

CC: Howard Wilkoff, Donald Day, Joan Greenberg, Rabbi Daniel Syme, Rabbi Howard Jaffe, Lydia Kukoff

RE: MUM Dues and the UAHC Privilege Card

In response to Rabbi Schindler's call at the 1989 Biennial for congregations to reach out to young adult Jews in their communities who are unaffiliated, the Task Force on the Unaffiliated has chosen to issue the UAHC Privilege Card to all unaffiliated Jews, ages 22-30. Congregations participating in the Privilege Card Program will offer a variety of incentives to attract these young people to participate in synagogue life. Studies and anecdotal evidence have taught us that one of the major factors keeping these young people away from the synagogue is the cost of membership. Therefore, as part of our program, we are asking congregations to consider offering a one or two-year free membership to Privilege Cardholders or, at a minimum, a reduced membership fee.

While we are receiving encouraging responses from congregations around the country, we have a serious problem concerning those congregations who are "at cap" for MUM dues. A number of cap congregations are asking us whether they will be expected to pay the \$95 fee for Privilege Cardholders to whom they grant free memberships. If so, many will not be able to participate fully in this program, even though they see it as a worthy one.

At our recent Task Force Executive Committee meeting, we entered into a long discussion regarding this problem, with Joan Greenberg in attendance to advise us as to the rules of MUM. Rabbi Schindler was also in attendance at the time of this discussion.

Director of Programs
 Rabbi Renni S. Altman
 Chairman
 Melvin Merians
 Co-Chairman
 Rabbi Steven E. Foster

① Tell them
 ABG + I
 Assume that
 Donald Day
 will follow
 Matter up
 w/ Dues Policy
 Review
 Committee
 ② Write down
 way -
 Tell him
 ABG + I
 would like
 to follow
 this up
 with him
 Committee
 (he has copy)

He enthusiastically supported the decision of the majority of the Executive Committee to seek relief for cap congregations that offer Privilege Cardholders free memberships or discounted memberships of \$100 or below. Rabbi Schindler encouraged us to approach the Dues Policy Review Committee and the Committee on Maintenance of Union Membership to request an exemption from payment of MUM dues for Privilege Cardholders for such congregations.

In promoting this program among our congregations, we have asked them to make an investment in the future by offering these young people time-limited free memberships now. As with our effort to welcome the newly-arrived Soviet Jews, we believe this act is an important mitzvah -- one that will not only bring new energy into and help secure the future of the participating congregation, but one that will insure the future vitality of the Reform Movement as a whole. Thus, the Privilege Card Program should be seen as a joint venture of the UAHC and its member congregations, one in which both partners must make an investment today for the sake of the future.

We must again emphasize that the Privilege Card program only requires a time-limited offer of free or reduced membership and that we are only asking for relief for cap congregations that offer free memberships to Privilege Cardholders or discounted memberships of \$100 or below. It is our hope that after that offer expires, these young people will continue their membership at their fair share rate. At that time, MUM dues would also be paid in full for them.

As the statisticians and sociologists continue to project ever-increasing numbers of unaffiliated Jews, it becomes incumbent upon our Movement to act with vision and creativity in order to reach the unaffiliated and bring them into our congregations. The UAHC Privilege Card is a program of such vision. We turn to you for your support and encouragement for this new and exciting endeavor.



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

File
Edie

July 27, 1990
5 Av 5750

MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee: Joseph Bernstein, Martin Hertz, Rabbi Howard Jaffe, Rabbi Dennis Math, Myra Ostroff, Ruth Reidbord, Rabbi Sanford Seltzer, Dr. Richard Shugarman, Rabbi Daniel Syme, Orrin Tobbe, Audrey Wilson

FROM: Mel Merians, Chair
Rabbi Steven Foster, Co-Chair
Rabbi Renni Altman, Director of Programs

CC: Rabbi Alexander Schindler
Lydia Kukoff
Dru Greenwood

RE: August meeting

Enclosed you will find the agenda for our next meeting, August 13 from 9:00 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the UAHC office in New York. If you have not already responded regarding your attendance at the meeting, please call upon receipt of this memo.

Also enclosed please find a copy of the summary report from a study conducted by the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture on affiliation. It has some good ideas for outreach to the unaffiliated and confirms much of what the Task Force has discussed.

We look forward to seeing you on the 13th.

Encl. MFJC report
Agenda

Director of Programs
Rabbi Renni S. Altman
Chairman
Melvin Merians
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven E. Foster



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TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
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838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, AUGUST 13, 1990
9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Agenda

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Welcome | Mel Merians |
| 2. D'var Torah | Howard Jaffe |
| 3. Director's Report | Renni Altman |
| 4. Updates: | |
| A. Privilege Card Committee | Howard Jaffe |
| - MUM dues | |
| B. Retention Committee | Audrey Wilson |
| Idea Book | |
| - publication | |
| - contents/emphasis | |
| C. Brandeis Program | Dru Greenwood |
| 5. Upcoming workshops on Outreach to the Unaffiliated | Renni Altman |
| A. Small Congregations Conference - April 1991 | |
| B. Regional Biennials | |
| - role of Task Force Members | |

- Lunch -

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 6. | Whether the Task Force? | For discussion |
| | - Where are we going? | |
| | - Setting priorities | |
| | - Picking up on old ideas | |
| | e.g. New Member Classes | |
| | - Developing New Programs | |
| | e.g. helping congregations develop | |
| | good PR to attract new members | |
| | - Functioning of the Task Force | |
| 7. | Task Force Meeting Agenda | For discussion |
| 8. | Good and Welfare | |

Summary report from:

"A Tale of Two Cities A Report on the Committee on the Stabilization of the Jewish Family" published by the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture

MAKING CONNECTIONS AND CONTACT: TWO PROGRAMS FOR JEWISH AFFILIATION

Samuel C. Heilman

This is a tale of two cities at the best of times and the worst of times. The cities are St. Louis and the towns in Essex, Sussex, Warren, Morris, Somerset and Union counties that make up the MetroWest region of New Jersey. The time is a period when in some quarters of Jewish life involvement and affiliation is higher than ever before, while in other places people who were once part of the Jewish community have lost their connection to it. While some Jews are deeply engaged in Jewish life—from supporting Israel to working on behalf of Soviet Jewry, celebrating holidays and observing rituals, raising Jewish families, giving their children a Jewish education and re-educating themselves Jewishly—other Jews are feeling left out, distant, and closed off from that Jewish life. For these other Jews, the under- or unaffiliated, a combination of circumstances have converged to make them feel this way.

Sometimes they are unconnected from Jewish life because they are young or just beginning their own new family and for the first time having to make decisions about affiliation for themselves; as they confront this reality, they discover they really do not know when, how, or why to go about connecting. Sometimes they have left the region and Jewish community in which they grew up and finding themselves someplace else simply do not understand where to enter the community in their new home. Sometimes they have been turned off to Jewish involvement by bad experiences which run the gamut from a negative encounter with Jewish education or rejection and disregard on the part of organized Jewish life to being overwhelmed by the high financial and social demands that active Jewish life demands. Sometimes they feel marginal because they have intermarried with non-Jews or because they know little or nothing about the content of Jewish life and are therefore afraid of being dismissed as inconsequential and irrelevant if they reach out to the Jewish community. Whatever the reason, these people are Jews who linger along the edges or just beyond the boundaries of Jewish life. They are Jewish families whose Jewishness is frail.

In 1984, recognizing that part of its mandate to preserve Jewish life was to reach these people, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, commissioned a series of studies relating to "the cultural condition of the Jewish people". In one of those papers which called for an effort to get Jews like those just described affiliated again to Jewish life, this writer suggested:

There remain obstacles to such renewed connections; not only those who are marginally attached to traditions, community, ethnicity or religion but as well many of those who at least nominally are ready to become more fully committed to these simply have no idea what that sort of life requires or promotes; theirs is a commitment without content. Indeed, many of our children are coming from "culturally disadvantaged" homes. We often think of "disadvantaged" as meaning impoverished or handicapped in material or physical terms, but it can also refer to an ignorance of cultural resources, a blindness to the protective framework of the tradition. Some contemporary parents, wrapped up as they are with the short-term present, are unknowingly passing on to their children their own cultural ignorance and blindness to community ties and Jewish life—their commitment without content—to say nothing of their feelings of insecurity about and alienation from one another and that community and Jewish life.

To help remedy this situation, a variety of proposals that would provide more intensive Jewish family and community life for these marginally affiliated people were articulated. Among the suggestions were the creation of a Jewish Family Cooperative which would provide informal education and act like an extended family or community for the unaffiliated in a particular locale and a system that would bring together those who have found a model of Jewish family life that works with those who have not yet found it.

Pursuing and developing these ideas, the Foundation formed a committee whose task would be to evolve a specific program that would implement some of them. Chaired by Daniel Thursz and including a variety of professionals and experts in the field of community organization, Jewish education, outreach, and the sociology of American Jewry, the committee worked for the next year and a half, surveying the spectrum of family life education and Jewish communal support programs already in place in various communities. Looking specifically at what already seemed to work and trying to distill the successes and creatively combine them so that the "marginally affiliated" would be contacted and embraced by Jewish life, the Memorial Foundation committee concluded in 1986 that they would co-sponsor a program with eight goals. These were articulated as follows by Dr. Jerry Hochbaum, executive vice-president of the Foundation, in an article published in the *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*: To make the marginally affiliated [1] feel more positive about being Jewish and develop a stronger identification with the Jewish people, [2] have a better understanding of Jewish values and traditions and an appreciation of how these can help them lead a more meaningful life, [3] gain a conviction about the significance and relevance of Jewish practice and heritage, [4] incorporate Judaism and Jewish life as an active element in the socialization of their children, [5] become more involved in Jewish communal activities, [6] become more engaged by Jewish cultural activities, [7] become more concerned about social and political issues confronting Jewish life and influencing these developments, and finally [8] include and increase the number of Jewish individuals and families in their network of friendships and social activities.

The challenge now was to find communities where these programs could be tried and developed, a place where those along the edges or just beyond the boundaries of Jewish life could be reached. A decision was reached to try to work through already existing Jewish communal frameworks rather than to create altogether new and therefore competing institutions. After all, the idea was to bring the marginally affiliated into the circle of the Jewish community, not to construct some island outside of it. Moreover, if established Jewish institutions became involved, the project--if successful--would become a part of their general mission and the pilot project would more likely serve as a model for other communities. And yet, the particular program would have to offer something beyond what already existed; it would provide a new gateway into Jewish life and community.

By 1987, a two-year partnership was formed between the Foundation and the Jewish Federation of St. Louis. This relatively small community of slightly over 53,000 where nearly everyone would have some need to touch base with the community, which had a turnover rate of about 2500 Jews per year, seemed a good place to start. Here connections of those on the fringes could be enhanced more easily. With financial support and input from both the federation and the Foundation, a program to reach those who otherwise were often lost or overlooked by the Jewish community was begun. Subsequently, a similar partnership a year later was established with the MetroWest Federation. In St. Louis the program was called "Contact"; in the suburban counties of New Jersey it was called "Connections". At this writing the St. Louis Program has completed its two-year initial phase, while in MetroWest, the first year is drawing to a close. What has happened and what have we learned?

While this brief report cannot hope to review all the important details and lessons of the experience--for those who want the full story there are comprehensive summaries, surveys, and narrative accounts available--these few pages are meant to give a sense of what these two programs did and what they continue to do for and with the marginally affiliated.

Common Elements

To begin with there are certain common elements of both programs. Critical to both was the assignment of a special project coordinator whose primary responsibility was to locate the under- and unaffiliated Jews in the local community and help discover what types of Jewish activities these people would participate in and what their needs are. As Judy Beck, who served as the outreach worker in the MetroWest area put it, "After the needs of the individuals in the group have been determined, the project coordinator tries to bring to fruition their requests." Key to this effort was the worker's ability to locate a target population and then, having found people with whom to work, remaining sensitive and open to their requirements. To give too much to people who have remained distant from the organized Jewish community can be as detrimental to their continued involvement as to give too little. When people are anxious about membership or reactive to previous negative experiences with Jewish life, contact must be gradual, sometimes intermittent, and never overwhelming.

The point in both programs was not to impose Jewish life upon these Jews but rather to "meet people where they are". This oft-repeated phrase and the idea behind it were essential in both St. Louis and MetroWest. Only in this way could Jewish experience and values become attached to the lives of the people in question. This meant always being ready to shift focus and vary the intensity of Jewish involvement, sometimes waiting patiently for participants to express an interest in some Jewish activity (even when the worker knew that it was crucial) or throwing out suggestions rather than always pre-programming events or imposing ideas. Without this attitude and approach, there was the chance that people would be turned off rather than turned on to Jewish life.

The worker, while an important initiator, could not on her own become the entire organized Jewish community. Rather, she had to be a facilitator who would gradually but inexorably disengage herself while increasingly involving members in planning and promoting the events which evolved from their requests. And all the while the environment had to remain "non-threatening". The participants needed to be able to take part in Jewish life even if they knew little or next to nothing about Judaism. This was the delicate mission: to impress the marginally affiliated with how much there is to being Jewish without overpowering them with a sense that there was too much for them to know in order to fully be Jewish.

What both programs were responding to is the realization that in many respects, American Jewry has created, in the words of one of those working in the field, "a very un-knowledgeable Jewish population and one in which people are angry because they don't know". Programs like CONTACT and CONNECTIONS must at one and the same time provide the missing Jewish knowledge and deal with the anger. Sometimes the project coordinators found themselves heirs to all sorts of built-up frustrations and failures of Jewish life in America. Handling this required resourcefulness, talent, and a significant sense of humor.

Indeed, from all testimony it seems that the successful outreach worker must be someone who has an ability to deal with all sorts of people--from the most open and searching to the most biased and embittered. The worker must also remain flexible, non-judgmental, with an open mind, yet retaining a commitment to Judaism and a confidence in its capacity to offer something rewarding along with a willingness to enable people to broadly and creatively define the character of that Jewishness. In both St. Louis and MetroWest this even meant at times allowing the parameters of who is a Jew to be stretched to the limit including some unconverted spouses of Jews and non-Jewish friends to participate in Jewish events. The project coordinator must not be easily defeated and have the tranquil disposition necessary to deal with the tentativeness of many of the contacts and connections those who participate in the program are prepared to make, or risk losing reaching the unreached.

The Target Population

Discovering and locating the under- and unaffiliated is perhaps the first and most daunting challenge, and so it was in both St. Louis and MetroWest. To do this required a good deal more than simply developing a method of pinpointing a population; it also demanded an understanding that just as Jews who do participate in active Jewish life are not all the same, so too those unconnected from Jewish life are not all the same. Some, as already noted, are unconnected--never having had a tie with Jewish life or new to a community or neighborhood in which no one has found them or they have discovered no way to enter. Others, on the contrary, may have disconnected--rejecting Jewish life because of negative experiences in their Jewish past like a bad encounter with Jewish education, rejection by the organized Jewish community perhaps because of intermarriage, or a sense that Jewish values diverge from their own feelings of what is moral and correct. Still others are not yet connected, young people who are just in the process of transition, at a point in their life cycle where they are beginning to think about communal, ethnic or religious links, and are testing out a variety of tentative possibilities, only one of which is the Jewish one.

"It is a fallacy," one of the workers observed in describing those who are part of her program, "to think all are Jews with character disorders or that there is no commitment to Judaism or that there is a uniform lack of knowledge about 'Yiddishkeit' or their Jewish heritage just as it is a mistake to think that on the other hand everyone went to Hebrew school or had families that cared about Judaism or the continuity of the Jewish people."

With this understanding of the multiplex makeup of the target population, both programs confronted the specific problem of how to find the people it wished to service. Both CONTACT and CONNECTIONS used a number of publicity and marketing devices. Advertisements in newspapers, direct mail, announcements at a variety of Jewish community functions, and--what was probably the most successful--word of mouth. Those who initially participated and who found the programs attractive and engaging eventually spread the word to others whom they knew. And so it went, like a snowball gathering speed and size as it rolls along. It was surprising, Ron Meir who wrote the proposal for the MetroWest project noted, how easy it turned out to be to find the marginally or unaffiliated. Indeed, it almost seems that there is a counter-community of unconnected and marginally affiliated Jews that exists alongside of the organized and active Jewish community. And once we turn our undivided attention to it, we discover that it too has its own network along which a Jewish current could be run. All that is necessary is making the connection and increasing the energy gradually and carefully so as not to burn out the circuits or miss the contact points.

In St. Louis, the approach to contacting target families included a warmup letter, telephone call, and conversation often in the potential participant's home. A similar strategy was used in New Jersey. It was important to show these outsiders that the Jewish community was willing to come to them, to give them attention, and not simply to canvass them for money but rather to offer them a way of joining Jewish life and sharing in its goods and goodness.

Who Was Most Receptive to Contact?

Of all those contacted in both locations, the most receptive to the programs were those in the initial stages of establishing their families with young children. This is not surprising and confirms the research findings of a number of sociologists who find this stage in the life cycle the one in which attachments to the community are most likely to be formed. *It is the Jewish family--particularly the new and intact one--that is the most inviting gateway to Jewish life and community.* Indeed, as one of the people in New Jersey noted, many of the most successful CONNECTIONS programs have "to do with parenting in some ways. Even when we have a study group talking about the holidays, it's because parents wanted to know how to deal with the holidays at home for their children, wanted to learn more about it." Confronted for the first time with the reality of being a link in the chain of being and the

need to give their children some sense of rootedness or belonging, young Jewish parents will turn to Jewish life if it makes itself accessible to them--and that is what these two programs did.

Many of the participants themselves marked their involvement in the programs with concern about their young children. In New Jersey, the typical participant is a young woman--in her thirties, new to the community, with a young child or two, contacted by another woman (the outreach worker) and she in turn contacts other women and through this a network is built. The typical participant in St. Louis was not too different.

For some, this program is a step before joining the synagogue or some other Jewish organization. "Many of those who were part of CONTACT," project coordinator Nikki Goldstein explained, "were people who we introduced into the framework of the Jewish community at an earlier stage than they might have entered on their own, but starting the process early has all kinds of benefits for the Jewish community and for the individual families." Then there are others who used these programs because they were not satisfied with the status quo in the Jewish community. As one project coordinator puts it, "I don't think I'm doing anything so different from what a synagogue could or would do; I just think I'm doing it with people who for one reason or another have not been reached by the synagogue, at least not as quickly."

Why have these people not joined local synagogues? In one case, the synagogues are already so large and have so many joining that there is no additional effort to reach out further. The synagogue can simply not take care of those who have already come to it. Its resources are already stretched to the limit. In other cases, the synagogue is trying to do outreach, but it is unsuccessful. And in some cases, they are not ready to make the commitment to as large and demanding an institution as the synagogue. All of these possibilities are not limited to synagogues; the same could be said about Jewish Community Centers, Y.M./W.H.A.'s or other organized Jewish institutions. And sometimes--as William Kahn of the St. Louis Federation explained--"it's simply because some people are inept or unprepared and just don't know how to make their way into Jewish life."

A Profile of the Participants

Nearly all the participants in MetroWest and St. Louis are people with children, most of whom are between the ages of three and eight. As one observer of the program in New Jersey noted: "You get to the mothers because of the children, and you get to the fathers because of the mothers." It was a pathway that was confirmed by the St. Louis experience as well. Foremost among these participants' concerns is "education for their kids, as part of parenting, and knowing what to do with their kids on holidays".

And why do they care so much about education? Because these are people who in their own lives for the most part are highly educated, over 80% having a college degree or beyond, and nearly a third have advanced degrees. In St. Louis 95% are in white-collar middle management or professions, occupations that call for high levels of education. While about 70% of those in New Jersey and St. Louis received some sort of formal Jewish education, it was for the most part afternoon Hebrew or Sunday school and so the amount of time they spent on such education and what they absorbed from it is significantly less than what they assimilated from their secular education. This perhaps accounts for their frustration over finding themselves under-educated Jewishly.

The matter of Jewish education is a sensitive one. Perhaps owing to their own previous experiences, about as many claimed they would not give their own children Jewish education as said they would do so. In St. Louis the numbers were even lower, though they rose after participation in CONTACT. For many, then, the experience with the outreach program and its impact upon them and their children may tip the balance one way or another. The implication for the Jewish future is clearly quite significant.

A survey of these Jews helps define under-affiliation. Of those belonging to the major Jewish organizations, in New Jersey 9% were in B'nai B'rith, 10% on the National Council of Jewish Women, 12% were members of synagogues, 15% were members of O.R.T., 17% used Jewish Y's, 19% affiliated with the local federation and a third were members of Hadassah. In St. Louis women's organizations attracted more than other groups--but still only about a third were members. Ironically, these last organizations were singled out by several in interviews as those from which they felt most alienated. These figures of course also demonstrate that most of the participants in the CONNECTIONS program were not members of other Jewish organizations. The same can be said about the CONTACT people.

In their Jewish identification, while about a quarter identified themselves as Conservative Jews and a similar number called themselves Reform, the single largest group--about 40% in New Jersey and about 50% in St. Louis--called themselves "just Jewish". Most of them attend synagogues at some time and a majority claimed to contribute to some Jewish causes. Almost two-thirds had Sabbath candlesticks at home, three-quarters owned a Bible, participated in a Passover seder, and had a mezuzah on their doorpost, and almost all owned a Chanukah menorah. In brief, these are people who find themselves floating within the orbit of Jewish identity but lack some specific locus of identity. Indeed, a plurality claimed that they intended to affiliate with the Jewish community in the future. Half of the New Jersey participants polled claimed that they were carrying on more Jewish practices now than they had five years before, though most were still doing less than they had done in their childhood. This means that in many cases the outreach programs are trying to restore Jews to a level of involvement that once characterized his or her past.

An important feature of these programs--as already noted--is that they reinforce in many of the participants the sense that they are part of a caring community which is a Jewish one. This is a message--in the long run perhaps the most important one--that their children will ultimately also absorb. And it may help overcome the fact that nearly a fifth of their children--at least among the MetroWest participants--had no close friends who were Jewish.

For many of the participants, the high cost of involvement in organized Jewish life is daunting. 60% of the New Jersey people said this was what kept them from joining and almost the same number said so in St. Louis. Individuals interviewed explained that they were not ready or able to make the financial commitments that synagogue or Y membership demanded. In St. Louis this opinion did not change as a result of participation in CONTACT. Others said the cost of Jewish education discouraged them from even thinking about anything more than the most part-time involvement in it.

To be sure, many of these people--as already noted--are young, just starting in their earning career and often a bit overwhelmed by the expenses of raising a family and carrying on the American middle-class lifestyle. In the absence of strong commitments to Jewish life and lacking a sense that their family life and sense of community is dependent upon established ties to other Jews, their reluctance to even think about expending their financial resources on Jewish life is comprehensible. To create the conditions in which young Jews will be ready to make financial sacrifices and commitments to the Jewish community and the Jewish world one must first arouse Jewish consciousness and the sense that life without belonging is an impoverished life. This means that for the most part, demands made of those who come in from the farthest points on the periphery must for a time be minimal. Both CONTACT and CONNECTIONS have learned this lesson, and accordingly focus their attention on giving and engaging participants, asking for relatively little in the way of funds. This, of course, was part of the plan--and it seems to have worked well.

What Is Done?

Among many of the activities carried out, both programs found ways of stimulating or enhancing Jewish celebrations at home. This was key for it meant that these people could discover how

to bring Jewish life into the most intimate contact with their lives. It was not simply something done elsewhere and by somebody else, carried on in the context of some institution or as a service. Rather it became a part of the way people connected themselves to their children and to Jewish peoplehood inside their own homes. Shabbat dinners, season-to-season Jewish holiday workshops, family or havurah type groups, educational cooperatives or discussion and study groups brought Jewish life into participants' homes--often for the first time or for the first time after many years. "There is nothing as exciting as that first direct encounter with Judaism in the context of your own private life, when it becomes your own," as one participant put it.

What sorts of activities appealed to the unconnected? This was clearly a question which each of the pilot programs and others that would follow their model would have to address. At first glance the programs are not all that different from what synagogues, community centers or Jewish Y's might provide. That of course is not a defect in the design but rather one of its essentials since the idea behind both CONTACT and CONNECTIONS was not to create an alternative Jewish community model but rather to outline another path by which to enter into the mainstreams of Jewish life in America and share in all that the American Jewish community has to offer. Thus, for example, in St. Louis the decision was made to co-sponsor several of the educational programs with various community agencies. "In this way," the people in St. Louis explained, "CONTACT was not viewed as competition or duplication to ongoing programs, and gained the support of different segments of the community."

But there were small, yet significant, adjustments made. For example, rather than use traditional sites like the synagogue or Y, space was rented in an apartment complex in a suburb near the participants' homes. Another adjustment involved accommodating the entire family unit rather than just one or two members. Often people's homes were used for group meetings, discussions, and meals. Many telephone calls were made before and after programs for reactions and input. Attention was paid to feelings.

Among the activities were holiday preparations, including learning about the content and meaning of the holidays as well as workshops that were geared to teaching parents how to teach their children about upcoming holidays. Both CONTACT and CONNECTIONS transformed the calendar into something that resonated with Jewish meaning and involvement. For families whose references were more often than not non-Jewish, each month now became a pretext and context for exploring and expanding Jewish consciousness. The epitome in both programs was getting people to the point where they could also share in at the very least a weekly Jewish experience focused around Shabbat.

Yet as much as the content of these holy days was emphasized, so too was the sense that they were all frameworks for communal and family gathering. That is, participants found that by being Jewish or doing Jewishly oriented things, they were also discovering ways to be associated with other Jews and with their families. They were putting Jewish content and commitment together.

Other programs dealt with how to be a Jew living in a society that is predominantly non-Jewish. As under- or unaffiliated Jews many, if not most of these participants, are acutely aware of their status as members of a minority. For some this means a reluctance or even an inability to assert their Jewishness. "I don't like to close myself up in Jewish life," as one participant put it. "I don't want a situation where being Jewish is everything," said another. "I don't think Jewish problems with Christmas or things like that should be everybody else's problem," one woman suggested. "I don't think we need to be pushy Jews," added another. Fully 70% of the MetroWest participants polled claimed that they resented pressures by the Jewish community, while about 50% of the St. Louis ones did. Recognizing these sensibilities, CONNECTIONS and CONTACT were especially sensitive in reaching out to those on the Jewish periphery. They asked for little and offered only as much as people seemed willing and able to take.

Helping these people to become integrated into Jewish community life is one of the primary objectives of these programs. In St. Louis this was articulated in a series of specific goals: [1] to enhance communal activities, [2] to enhance synagogue participation, [3] to enhance personal and family observance, [4] to enhance Jewish social friendship networks, and [5] to enhance both formal and informal Jewish education. In New Jersey, the project coordinator stipulated a related list of goals: [1] increasing understanding of Judaism and what it means to be Jewish, [2] understanding of Jewish ritual along with an increased observance in the home of these rituals, [3] a closer connection to other Jewish families in the community, [4] a commitment to Jewish organizations and institutions, including synagogues, Zionist groups and federations, and [5] financial support of or membership in Jewish organizations.

Attaining these goals sometimes requires helping the unconnected to create their own tentative community which serves as a stepping-stone to their joining the larger Jewish community. In St. Louis, for example, this took the form of a program called "mornings for moms", a series of mother-toddler groups held in various locations which provided an informal way for women to meet other Jewish women and discuss diverse topics such as discipline, Jewish education, and parenting as well as family groups who interacted in a variety of Jewish contexts including a Jewish family retreat or weekend which was the culmination of the Jewish family life education projects. In MetroWest similar programs were started and these quickly developed into a havurah made up of young families who had been unknown to one another before being brought together for picnics, pool parties, Sukkah raisings, Chanukah parties, a Tu B'Shvat gathering, and a variety of Shabbat-focused activities. In the end, as one of the people in the MetroWest foundation explained, the people who have come in through these new programs will discover that what they will want will require working with others in the Jewish community. They will find that there is no fixed endpoint for their participation in Jewish life.

Results

How does one measure success? If one person becomes more involved or committed to Jewish life after such a program than before is that success? Is saving one Jewish soul really like saving the world? And does one only save a single soul if one person is turned around? What about the others whom that person in turn influences? Or children? The measures of success are difficult to calibrate. And yet there are good indications that even by the most coarse measures, CONTACT succeeded and CONNECTIONS is on the path to success.

Looking first at CONTACT, in an evaluation and survey carried out by Dr. Arlene Rubin Stiffman for the Jewish Federation of St. Louis, evidence is presented that after exposure to the programs and people involved, more families held more memberships in organizations, attended more community activities, and gave to charity. Almost half those polled felt that CONTACT enhanced their community participation and caused them to plan for more Jewish involvement. Following the program, more families held membership in synagogue congregations, more owned religious ceremonial objects, attended services and celebrations and observed Shabbat than before participation. Almost a quarter felt CONTACT improved their personal Jewish identity while almost half felt it improved their Jewish observance and would lead them to improve even more. While there was no change in the percentage of their Jewish friends--which was high to begin with as about 80% report that half or more of their friends were Jewish--families attended twice as many Jewish social events after their involvement in CONTACT than before it. Twenty-four times as many families participated in Jewish educational activities after exposure to CONTACT as beforehand and their sense of knowledge about the Jewish community increased.

As for MetroWest, while it is not possible to talk about goals having been attained before the program has completed its initial two-year term, there are encouraging signs. Working in a variety of often different and disparate counties of New Jersey, CONNECTIONS has succeeded in organizing local programs and active participants. Its "Lev Cham" group, for example, sponsors regular programs

which are always fully attended. The CONNECTIONS center and its worker are constantly in touch with participants in all the counties, developing new and ever more intensive activities--already two of the county groups are planning and carrying out Shabbat dinners. Several participants who were interviewed spoke of the steps they have taken to enhance the education of their children, including one woman who sent her child to an educational workshop at a day school. But perhaps one statement by a young mother who had become involved in Jewish life through CONNECTIONS expressed what the program's success has been most movingly and dramatically. Sitting around a table with three or four other participants, she volunteered: "Connections' is very well-named; it's made me feel in touch with the Jewish community, and that was so important. Before, I felt very unaffiliated with anything. I was really alone. I couldn't really find a way to connect. It wasn't just being religious; Jewishness isn't just religion; it's culture too, and I felt very isolated from it until 'Connections' came along. Right now connections is the best step I can take. It does not ask me to do more than I can. Neither too much time nor too much money. It's open to give people what they're looking for rather than to force them into too rigid a program. It's just perfect, just what I was looking for."

Conclusion

There will be those who will look at these two programs and think that these goals are noble and the successes inspiring but with so many needs confronting the Jewish community--the need to settle Soviet Jews, support Israel, grapple with the high costs and tremendous challenges of Jewish education, to name but three obvious needs--the matter of reaching out to the unconnected or under-affiliated must necessarily be put on a lower priority. Yet the Jewish community must be judged not only on how it serves those who are already part of it but also how it reaches those who stand on or beyond its fringes. If we do not find ways of bringing those on the periphery into the center, we risk losing a sense of what and where the center really is. To preserve the future and to remain true to a sacred and noble past, Jews will have to reach out to the farthest limits. What St. Louis and MetroWest have begun can be continued elsewhere. The costs are not grand; both William Kahn and Howard Charish, federation directors in each of these locales, estimate the costs somewhere around \$50,000 per year. That money is a small investment to make in the future.

Perhaps the framers of the report on CONTACT's accomplishments put the case for such programs best when they wrote that what they had done should be looked upon as "insurance that a family will put on its agenda issues concerning Jewish life, and insurance that the quality of that interaction with Jewish life can be enhanced if it starts on a positive note." A journey of a thousand miles, the time-honored saying goes, begins with a single step. In St. Louis and New Jersey, with the help of the federations there and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, that first step has been taken. Now others must follow.



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021 (212) 249-0100

June 8, 1989
5 Sivan 5749

MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee

From: Mel Merians, Rabbi Steve Foster, Dru Greenwood

cc: Rabbi Alexander Schindler, Rabbi Daniel Syme

The first meeting of the executive committee was very fruitful thanks to the input of all those who were able to attend. Minutes of the meeting are enclosed along with meeting materials for those who do not have them already.

Please take a few minutes to look over the Prospectus from Brandeis. Lydia, Sandy and Dru will be meeting with Gary Tobin for further discussion on June 20. Funding will be the main topic under consideration, but your comments and suggestions in other areas would be appreciated. Please communicate them to Dru.

Materials for the workshop on retention and recruitment being offered by the Department of Synagogue Management at the Biennial are also enclosed for your information.

***Important calendar information:

Executive committee meeting - Monday, August 7, 9:30 - 3 p.m.,
838 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Task Force meeting - Monday, November 6, 2:30 - 8 p.m.,
New Orleans.

Please let Dru know by July 12 if you can attend the August executive committee meeting. You will be sent an agenda in advance of the meeting.

Thank you for your quick turn-around of the Mission Statement. An edited version will be sent to the entire Task Force shortly. The Task Force title will call for further negotiation. So far "Task Force on Affiliation" is favored.

Chag sameach!



איחוד
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TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021 (212) 249-0100

Executive Committee Meeting
838 Fifth Avenue
Monday, May 22, 1989

Participants: Mel Merians, Chair; Rabbi Steven Foster, Co-chair; Martin Hertz, Rabbi Howard Jaffe, Rabbi Dennis Math, Myra Ostroff, Ruth Reidbord, Rabbi Sanford Seltzer, Audrey Wilson, Rabbi Daniel Syme, Lydia Kukoff, Rabbi Nina Mizrahi, Dru Greenwood.

Mel Merians called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m.

Rabbi Mizrahi gave a Devar Torah on the mitzvah to "Assemble the people--men, women and children, and the strangers in your cities--to hear, to learn to revere the Lord your God, to observe faithfully the words of this Torah."

UAHC-Brandeis Joint Proposal

Dru Greenwood presented the Prospectus, "A National Research, Planning and Evaluation Program to Increase Synagogue Affiliation," put together as a draft for our input by Dr. Gary Tobin and his associates at the Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. (A copy is enclosed for those of you who have not received a copy.)

Several suggestions were made:

Dru reported that Gary had a positive response to the proposal from the Korette Foundation for partial funding. It was suggested that Alan Iselin meet with Gary to find further funding and that Mel and/or Dru participate as observers.

Information gathering on UAHC congregations is already being done either regionally or through the MUM office. As reporting forms are developed, consultation with the Brandeis group would be advantageous so that duplication can be avoided and so that necessary information will be obtained. The computerized form from the New Jersey-West Hudson Valley office might be used as a model. MUM is scheduled to enter the central computer system in early fall. It was noted that care must be exercised to protect privacy of information in MUM files.

The scope of the proposed research and program implementation seemed to call for a longer time-frame than three years. Perhaps the proposal should be mapped out in terms of stages with projected time requirements and costs specified.

National Coordinator of Programs
Dru Greenwood

Chairman
Melvin Merians

Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven E. Foster

It would be helpful to utilize the research on an on-going basis. The assessment was made that it takes a minimum of three years to mutually develop a program (between the UAHC and temples) and to implement the program as an on-going system. Clearly some research, program development and implementation could be done simultaneously. Long-term tracking of those in the affiliation project would be desirable.

What budget support would be required from the UAHC? Lydia, Sandy and Dru should work together to add funds to the proposal for UAHC implementation expenses, eg. creation of materials, printing, free membership, meeting expenses.

Internal UAHC concerns include funding for pilot programs. If congregations are asked to fund these programs themselves, it will be negative PR for the UAHC. Further, the UAHC should avoid presenting the program as "let us know-it-alls help you who have failed abysmally with recruitment on your own."

Assuring funding is a priority. We do not want to be stymied with our program until some unknown future date. A meeting to define capital resources should be set as soon as possible at Brandeis, hopefully in June. Foundations should be explored, not exclusively UAHC resources.

Rabbi Foster and Myra Ostroff raised a question as to the necessity for the Brandeis study. We may know "enough" on our own to plan our programs. As the UAHC, we are not engaged in social science research. The consensus of the committee was that the joint project with Brandeis will lend our efforts authenticity and that the project must be tailored to meet our needs. Evaluation must go hand in hand with implementation. The implementation cannot wait for preliminary data to be collected and assessed.

** Please send Dru comments on the prospectus at your earliest convenience.

Religion in American Life (RIAL)

Mel Merians presented the RIAL media campaign entitled "Invite a Friend." RIAL is a non-denominational organization devoted to promoting religious activity in the United States through comprehensive media campaigns. The chair of the organization is Rabbi Joseph Glaser and its executive director is Dr. Nick Van Dyck. The coordinated campaign is expected to generate \$20,000,000 worth of advertising time and space.

Pro: Affirms our responsibility to participate in inter-faith activities on the American scene. National ads could be used to focus our efforts. "Invite a Friend" might be taken up by Sisterhoods with a natural tie-in to Pesach or a national Shabbat; it could provide quick penetration into temples. (Audrey Wilson noted that "Bring a Friend Shabbat" has been instituted in the Northeast Council.)

Con: Much concern was expressed that the images are generically Christian, that something inadvertently embarrassing to us might be included, that the idea is not where Jews are psychologically. The investment in time and energy may not be worthwhile. We need to make a strong statement on our own.

A variety of suggestions was made to adjust the imagery: impressionistic poster, picture of a synagogue as generic, both a synagogue and a church or multiple pictures on one poster. Our cooperation and separateness should be registered.

The group consensus was opposed to this project. "Bring a Friend Shabbat" with Sisterhood is an idea worth following up.

Committee Reports

Young Marrieds: Rabbi Howard Jaffe reported on the progress of the committee during its two meetings (minutes enclosed). A brief sample questionnaire will be used by committee members to make preliminary assessment of techniques and programs being used in congregations--our best resource. "Congregation within a congregation" idea (Cleveland) might be used either in a workshop or as program materials for Biennial. It was pointed out that different models are needed for different size congregations.

Singles: Ruth Reidbord reported that the second meeting of this committee would be held immediately following the executive committee meeting.

Retention: Audrey Wilson reported on the meeting held the previous day in Stamford, CT. (minutes enclosed). Since attitude rather than programming is seen as the main issue, the committee recommends creating a workshop for temple leadership that addresses basic questions: why are we here? what is the mission of this congregation? how do we define ourselves? why do I belong? Such a workshop could be presented at the Biennial with role playing or scenarios to point up difficult issues and how they might be addressed.

Committee on the Family

There has been a concern with duplication of effort between the Task Force and the Committee on the Family as well as other departments of the Union. Despite the overlap, the missions of each are distinct and will rely on cooperative efforts. Rabbi Seltzer was requested to allay the concerns of his committee.

"Credit Card" (or Privilege or Courtesy Card)

Mel Merians presented his idea of giving every Jewish young adult a card that entitles him/her to use UAHC temples' services, facilities and programs. The purpose of the card is to convey the idea that the UAHC values each young person and wishes each to feel a part of us. "We are your spiritual bank." Authentic Reform Jews.

The idea needs to be fleshed out, but several suggestions were made:
A mini-computer might be used to keep track of names and addresses and membership numbers. Mailings could be sent. The College Department already has a mailing list of 15,000 names.

It could be presented in a special ceremony at temples before children leave for college. "Don't leave home without us." Or it could be given at the end of college. Perhaps it could cover an 8-year period.

It should provide "free entrance."

It would not be restricted to children of the Reform movement.

An 800 phone number might be listed to call for information.

Funding might be accomplished through the Wexner Foundation (The Limited). Perhaps a discount coupon book could be attached.

Need commitment of rabbis and college committees. Personal call to invite college kids for Shabbat dinner. Must be advertised as "no strings attached."

Dru, Mel and Lydia should put a proposal together.

Biennial Planning

We have three workshops scheduled at the Biennial. (Workshop worksheet enclosed for those of you who were not at the meeting.) Since there is some overlap in content, particularly with one workshop being presented by Irving Wengrow under the auspices of Synagogue Management with a title almost identical to one of ours, it was felt that there would be a great deal of confusion on the part of Biennial participants. (Wengrow's program is enclosed.) We might include a list of pertinent workshops for outreach to the unaffiliated in the Convention packets with a brief explication of content.

We need to determine the focus of Tobin's presentation.

Audrey and Dru will work with the Committee on Retention to formulate the workshop on Creating a Welcoming Congregation, including attitude assessment and scenarios.

The model programs workshop should include "Wondering Jew" and "Young Congregant" programs as well as concrete materials for hand-outs. (Credit Card and PR interchange)

Workshops generally should involve participants and have a balanced presentation/discussion time.

Workshops can be adapted and used for regional biennials or for regional program days.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement was reworked and abbreviated. You have all received it for approval or further comment. It will be sent to the full Task Force shortly.

Odds and Ends

Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald's innovative program, "Turn Friday Night into Shabbos...", was presented briefly. It was suggested that Mel, Lydia and Dru meet with him to discuss possible areas of cooperation.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated will be held at 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, on Monday, August 7 from 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Please let Dru know if you will be able to attend.

The full Task Force will have its second meeting immediately following the Biennial. It will meet in New Orleans on Monday, November 7, 1989, from 2:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. The hotel will honor the Biennial rate for the extra night.

Prospectus

A National Research, Planning and Evaluation Program
to Increase Synagogue Affiliation

Gary A. Tobin, Ph.D., Director
Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
Brandeis University
Waltham, MA

May 1989

UAHC Prospectus Draft 5/16/89

Goals of Proposed Research Project

To provide research and evaluation for programs that will:

1. Increase synagogue affiliation;
2. Increase synagogue membership retention;
3. Broaden the segments of the Jewish population affiliating with synagogues;
4. Build programmatic models that can be utilized by synagogues throughout North America.

Introduction

Synagogues and Jewish Continuity

The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations propose to jointly undertake an in-depth research, planning, and evaluation program examining synagogue affiliation, membership retention, and disaffiliation among American Jews. By conducting focused research, building model programs, evaluating successes and failures, and creating a careful strategy for disseminating the findings, this program will assist in improving levels of current membership retention, and broadening the base of the membership to include "marginal" Jewish populations.

The need to increase affiliation is essential. Data from demographic studies around the United States indicate that approximately two-thirds of American Jews do not have a current affiliation. Dropout rates are very

high, and highest among Reform Jews. Only through a thorough understanding of the current scene, evaluation of existing programs, and market research and testing for new programs can affiliation rates be substantively increased over the next decade.

Affiliation with synagogues and temples is an issue of critical concern to Jewish communal leaders and planners. Synagogue membership is a key component of a vibrant Jewish community. The continuity of Jewish values has been nurtured in the synagogue and in Jewish homes. Non-affiliation threatens the fabric of Jewish life as American Jews become increasingly assimilated. In a very real sense, the continued vitality of the American Jewish community is strongly correlated with the health of our affiliational picture.

The research model we propose combines sophisticated methodological techniques in a real-world setting and is designed to facilitate positive change even as research proceeds. The most effective type of research involves the user in the research design. The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies will work closely with UAHC in every aspect of the research design. Both the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations are interested in a research project which has immediate applicability for Reform congregations throughout the United States and Canada. Indeed, because the research will be designed jointly by these two institutions, the resulting usefulness and breadth of the study will be greatly enhanced.

It should be pointed out that such research efforts are time-consuming. There will be no "quick fix" for the kinds of problems that the

American Jewish community faces in terms of affiliation. Accurate research requires time for extensive testing and evaluation. These are the elements that have been lacking in most research within the Jewish community for the past ten years. It is necessary to know what works and what does not and why. These kinds of answers do not come easily. Therefore, while the proposal offers a strategy to gain important knowledge for immediate use in the Jewish community, the nature of the problems and the need for accuracy are so great that careful deliberation is essential in conducting this research.

The research and planning effort is strengthened by the cooperative efforts of the Cohen Center and the UAHC. Combining academic and implementation entities provides the perfect blending needed to link research with action, so that the findings are incorporated into the real world, rather than one more study that sits on a shelf.

Current demographic studies show that synagogue members of all branches of Judaism are far more active in Jewish culture and tradition than non-synagogue members. Synagogue members visit Israel more, they volunteer more hours for Jewish organizations, give more to Jewish causes, they give their children more Jewish education, and they are more likely to participate in public prayer and private Jewish home rituals. While it is obvious that the Jewish consciousness which involves them in these activities also motivates them to affiliate with synagogues, there are strong indications that the influence works in the other direction as well: belonging to synagogues reinforces involvement with many areas of contemporary Jewish life.

Jewish Demography and Affiliation

In most American Jewish communities four out of five Jewish households affiliate with synagogues at some point. However, in many of those same communities current rates of affiliation are relatively low. This is because affiliation is strongly tied to a variety of life cycle factors. Very few American Jews affiliate with a synagogue until they are married, and the majority do not affiliate until they have children. A sizeable proportion do not affiliate until they are ready to enter their children in religious schools. In some communities empty-nesters retain their affiliation even after their children have completed their religious schooling and have left home; in others the empty-nest years represent a drop-off point in affiliation.

Some of the most salient factors in non-affiliation and/or lapsed affiliation include:

Delayed Marriage:

Contemporary Jewish demographic patterns have contributed tremendously to the growth of non-affiliated and disaffiliated households. For example, American Jews today often remain single until they are well into their 30s. Sometimes they postpone family formation even further. Divorced persons without children, another expanding group, often allow their Jewish institutional affiliations to lapse as well. Singles, divorced persons, and childless couples represent a vast pool of Jews who postpone affiliation with synagogues.

Mobility:

Current patterns of mobility among American Jews also have an negative impact on affiliation. When empty-nesters or retired persons leave the communities in which they raised their children, they often do not re-affiliate in the retirement communities to which they move. Mobility among younger Jews (singles and couples who have not had children) also tends to mitigate against synagogue affiliation. In all communities, mobility is antithetical to affiliation.

City and Regional Differences:

Jewish communities vary tremendously, according to region, size and local history, and other factors. A national study must be very sensitive to such local differences. Therefore, the proposal chooses to study a variety of cities, including San Francisco, St. Louis, and Boston, or key representative cities. Others will be chosen to represent cities of diverse sizes and location.

The proposal calls for careful distinction between various subgroups of Jews. Since the Jewish community is constituted by a vast array of social, economic, religious and regional groups, the research will carefully delineate between these differences in both the research design and execution. What is appropriate for one group may not be appropriate for another, and what works in one region may not work in another. The research

team and the UAHC are keenly aware of the differences that exist within the Jewish population, especially in terms of local differences between communities and demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, income and others.

Special attention must be paid to the non-traditional Jewish household. This is the household that does not include two parents and children belonging to those parents. Indeed, today the traditional Jewish household constitutes a distinct minority of Jewish families. Therefore so-called "marginal" Jewish populations have become much more prominent, and synagogues must recognize and meet the needs of changing Jewish households if affiliation rates are to increase.

Given the impact of the factors enumerated above, the Jewish community and the Reform movement have to consider whether they will resign themselves to operating synagogues which involve an increasing small proportion of American Jews or whether they will try to develop strategies to connect and involve the currently unaffiliated. Research, planning, and action can be productive mechanisms for increasing affiliation and involvement and therefore strengthen Reform congregations and Jewish life.

Research Activities

This proposal outlines a comprehensive three-year research and planning project. We begin by examining the types of information available from existing studies and by indicating where we need new mechanisms to provide additional information. The proposal then focuses on mechanisms for obtaining this new information, and the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs based on our findings.

The proposed project includes three basic kinds of research. The first type of research is background research. This research provides information about basic demographics, religious behaviors, friendship patterns, volunteer involvement, and other information that helps formulate strategies and tactics to increase affiliation. Some of this background research is available from data collected by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies. In addition, intake forms and other information gathering techniques will be instituted as part of the study process to provide a better understanding of factors which influence affiliation in Reform congregations.

The second type of research is evaluation research. This research examines existing programs or programs that will be instituted over the period of the study. Evaluation research is designed to improve the quality of social and educational activities and increase their effectiveness.

The third type of research is market research, including market testing. Model programs, techniques, and materials will be developed on a pilot basis and tested. Responses to certain public-relations materials or to certain price structures for programs will be tested using this type of research.

What Information Is Available--and What Is Needed?

Jewish population studies conducted by Jewish federations in communities of diverse size and geographical location across the United States provide a great deal of information on patterns of affiliation, which has only been partially analyzed to date. The UAHC-CMJS study of

affiliational patterns among Reform Jews would begin by mining this large body of data.

Many of the recent Jewish population studies ask respondents about their needs and desires for a plethora of activities which the Jewish community might sponsor. How great a communal mandate exists among the unaffiliated for Jewishly sponsored singles programs, professional networking, or all-day child care? Are there activities, programs, and services which synagogues might offer which would encourage singles, childless couples, and parents of pre-school children to join temples ten to fifteen years earlier in their young adult years? The answers to these questions are crucial to all those concerned with synagogue affiliation.

In addition to those who have not yet affiliated, households which have allowed their affiliation to lapse represent the second large group of currently unaffiliated. In order to understand why they are currently disaffiliated, we must begin by understanding why people join synagogues in the first place. Again, the Jewish population studies represent a rich, largely untapped body of data. Many of the recent population studies ask respondents detailed questions about their reasons for affiliating. Presumably, when synagogues do not meet these needs--or when these particular needs cease to exist--disaffiliation results. Assembling and analyzing the answers to the affiliation-disaffiliation patterns, as revealed in the city studies, is a crucial first step in devising methods to enhance satisfaction with affiliation and thus increase the longevity of the relationship.

There are many questions which the Jewish population studies will not answer. What successful programs are being conducted today? How could these programs be adapted and disseminated to differing communities? New pilot programs must be designed, tested, and evaluated. For these endeavors, systematic new qualitative and quantitative studies must be devised and implemented, as detailed in the following sections of this proposal.

However, a careful exploration of the large body of data in the Jewish population studies provides a sound basis for all more focused new research in this area. Data from seven diverse cities with large Reform populations will be especially useful: San Francisco, St. Louis, Dallas, Worcester, Hollywood/Ft. Lauderdale, Boston, and New Orleans. It is with this exploration that the UAHG-CMJS study will begin.

New Research

Information from Congregants

Institutions interested in understanding the causes for affiliation and the reasons for disaffiliation need to be able to obtain information from their constituents about why they affiliate or disaffiliate. This information can be gathered in a manner which serves both the interests of the institutions and the concerns of their congregants.

By conducting intake interviews--half-hour, personal interviews in which new members are asked a series of questions when they first decide to join--congregations can ascertain why members join and what particular needs they have, while obtaining important demographic information concerning the make-up of the household. All this can be done in a manner

which makes the new congregant feel important and creates a positive image for the congregation.

Since about one in three households which affiliate drop their membership at some point, synagogues also need to have mechanisms for interviewing those who do not renew their membership. These interviews should focus on the reasons for non-renewal as well as the reasons the persons originally joined. Were there unmet expectations? Were there particular reasons motivating them to join which are no longer operative? How do they feel about the congregation? Since families disaffiliate at different times in their lifecycles, it is important to obtain basic demographic information as well: has their youngest child just finished confirmation? Is the family about to move? Are these factors which have influenced their decision to disaffiliate?

Clearly, research focused upon how to increase retention is as critical as research that explores how to increase initial affiliation with the synagogue. Without developing programs for increased retention, much of the impact of membership efforts will be in vain.

Information from and about current members is also critical. What are the reasons people joined? Are they pleased with the congregation? By combining reasons for joining (e.g., providing a Jewish education for their children) with demographic information, congregations can make plans for their schools and other services knowing the profile of the congregation.

A core questionnaire which would obtain respondents' reasons for joining, congregants' needs and expectations, and a demographic profile of households would be created by UAHC and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish

Studies. By obtaining information about who joins and why, a membership profile of the congregation, and data concerning who is disaffiliating, congregations can better understand how they are perceived, what their congregants expect of them, and where they fail to meet those expectations. At the same time the demographic information can be used by congregations to meet the needs of specific sub-groups (i.e., singles, divorced, blended families, widowed) and to plan for growing or shrinking enrollments in religious schools and youth groups.

Interviews can be conducted either by professionals or trained volunteers, giving a positive role to those serving on synagogue membership committees. Personal interviews with new congregants can be done by a new member outreach committee. Those who have not renewed their membership can be called on the telephone and interviewed by a member of the membership retention committee. Current synagogue members can be asked to complete a one-page form. The entire process of obtaining such information can be a positive community building experience for the congregation.

At the same time, by utilizing a core questionnaire developed by the Union, congregations will be creating a base of information for the Reform movement. Since each congregation would be asking the core questions in an identical fashion, congregational data could be merged into a national data base. This data base would provide the Reform movement with critical information about who belongs and why. Information concerning the congregation, including number of members, annual budget, staff size, size of religious school, and geographic location of the congregation could be included in the data transmitted to the Union. Such information could be

used to ascertain trends among congregations based size or region, and perhaps point to potential linkages between congregations facing similar situations. Such cooperation may be particularly helpful when model programs are instituted in particular types of settings.

Evaluation Research--Successful Programs

In addition to the information being obtained about reasons for affiliation among members of congregations, evaluation research will be utilized to examine existing successful programs and to monitor model programs developed during the course of the study. This type of research helps to establish what makes programs successful, and what steps might be taken to make already successful programs even better.

Evaluation research focuses on three different issues regarding programs: program process, outcomes and efficiency. The evaluation of program process involves assessing the extent to which a program has been implemented as designed, and whether it is serving its target population. Questions asked in this type of research include: What type of work does the staff do? Is the program attracting a sufficient number of participants? Are participants involved in the types of activities offered by the program? This research helps to ascertain whether a good program design has been properly implemented and whether a successful program is really serving its target population. The information necessary for this type of process evaluation is often available from the organization--in this case synagogues or local Union offices. When this information is not readily available, a system of reporting can be designed to facilitate gathering and summarizing useful information.

A second focus of program evaluation is an assessment of the outcomes achieved. This research addresses whether the program has achieved the desired outcome among participants. For example, are participants in a synagogue singles program or families enrolling their children in synagogue-run child care more likely to join as a result? Are they increasing their attendance to religious services? Are they increasing the observance of religious practices at home? Have their attitudes towards the synagogue changed through their involvement in the program?

This form of evaluation demands the formulation of specific definitions of "program success." A simple examination of the state of program participants after the completion of the program can provide information about whether participants leave the program with acceptable levels of achievement. If there are objective program goals that are widely accepted as valid, simple evaluation designs can be quite useful. These methods may involve one or two (pre and post) sets of observations of the participants. While these evaluations often do not determine the direct cause for the change, they can be used to ascertain that changes have taken place, and will assist congregations in evaluating whether programs which attract participants also result in strengthening their Jewish involvement.

Finally, evaluation of efficiency reveals whether programs achieve their desired outcomes at reasonable cost. While a program may unquestionably help the participants, policy makers must decide whether the outcomes justify the cost (in terms of staff time and resources) and how it compares to other programs costing the same or less. In addition, creating new programs for outreach may result in taking staff time away from

programming for those currently affiliated. Cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses are the basic modes of evaluation of efficiency.

All three forms of program evaluation are essential to establishing an effective strategy for reaching the unaffiliated. It is possible, of course, to engage in process evaluation without moving onto evaluations of outcome and efficiency. This would limit the ability to assess whether the programs achieved their goals and at what cost. The Union and its constituent congregations should have this information available to insure that those who undertake "model" programs do so with a full knowledge of the nature of the expected outcomes and the attendant costs.

Market Research--What Is Needed?

Market testing will be an essential function of this research effort. As synagogues and temples, like other Jewish organizations and institutions, find the American Jew more and more of an institutional and organizational consumer, the need to use modern marketing techniques grows.

Therefore, testing and evaluation must be completed for a variety of membership programs, recruitment mechanisms, human services, and other activities in a number of test cities. For example, how would families respond to the possibility of a joint membership between a synagogue, a Jewish community center, and other Jewish organizations? What proportion of preschool care or nursery school care could be offered at competitive market rates with the private sector? What media would be most effective to promote synagogue programs to which particular groups of Jews, such as singles, recent in-movers from other communities, or very specific

occupational groups such as physicians? We know, for example, that most recent movers and most younger Jews do not receive Jewish newspapers. Therefore, alternative media must be sought. What would be the best vehicles to reach these constituencies and what kinds of messages should be utilized? These are the kinds of issues that can be addressed through market testing and evaluation.

Much of the research must examine in detail the existing lifestyles of American Jewry as they relate to potential synagogue affiliation. What kinds of services are they utilizing and where? How is recreational time spent? What are the leading competitors for the attention of Jewish individuals' time and contributions? In order to carefully assess what synagogues should be doing to increase affiliation, they must know in detail what and why is pulling Jews into other organizational and institutional spheres.

The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

The Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandies University is devoted to the study of contemporary American Jewish life. The Center has become a national resource, serving as a think-tank and providing policy-oriented research findings to Jewish communal institutions, the academic community, and Jewish communities in North America. The Cohen Center's research includes such diverse issues as Jewish family life, intermarriage, Jewish education and identity, Jewish demography, antisemitism in America, and social service needs in the Jewish community.

The faculty of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies have extensive experience in applied research. They have been active in more demographic research in the Jewish community than any other group of scholars in the United States. They have also served as advisers and consultants to a vast array of national and local Jewish organizations and institutions throughout the United States and Canada. They have the "hands on" experience necessary to engage in the type of research that is proposed in conjunction with the UAHC.

Time Frame

The research and planning efforts will span approximately three years. Efforts must be made to insure that enough time is allocated to each phase of the project.

Research and Planning Team

The research team will be comprised of Cohen Center faculty and staff, other Brandeis Jewish Studies faculty, UAHC staff, and the appropriate scholars and Jewish communal staff from around the United States.

Budget

A detailed budget will be developed as the research design becomes more specific.



איחוד
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TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021 (212) 249-0100

Committee on Retention
Stamford, Connecticut
May 21, 1989

Participants: Audrey Wilson, Chair; Dru Greenwood, Staff; Bernice Brussel, Shirlee Goldman-Herzog, Lois Gutman, Judith Hertz, Dr. Richard Plumb, Dr. Judith Sherman, Rabbi Jim Simon, Jack Stone, Pam Winter. **Guests:** Betty Golumb, Dan Golumb, Irving Berlansky.

Audrey Wilson called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. A point of clarification was asked for. Since the Task Force is on the "unaffiliated," why are we talking about "retention?" Shouldn't we be focusing on those empty-nesters, retirees, post bar/bat mitzvah parents who have left the temple or never joined? Information from the Task Force meeting was reiterated to the effect that the lifetime of synagogue membership is very short, that most adult Jews do belong at one time or another in their adult lives. The mandate of the Task Force to this committee is both retention and outreach. The committee decided to focus first on retention since it was felt that others might be attracted if members found it valuable to belong.

The importance of networking with other committees and commissions was also stressed.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

Joint UAHC-Brandeis Prospectus

Audrey presented highlights of the prospectus for research, program development and evaluation created by Dr. Gary Tobin of Brandeis, particularly those areas relevant to this committee. Rabbi Simon spoke about his recent experience with Dr. Tobin and the potential value of his research. We tend to feel uncomfortable when people leave the temple and therefore blame those who leave; it's really their fault. Further when we succeed or fail in our programs, we don't really know why.

Directions for Committee

It was suggested that the committee might collect data on particular programs that have worked in various UAHC synagogues in order to prepare a menu that other congregations might draw from. However, the question was raised: Is programming really the issue? Maybe it's a question of attitudes instead. Points raised included:

National Coordinator of Programs
Dru Greenwood
Chairman
Melvin Merians
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven E. Foster

For temple members, Jewish identity is tied to membership.

One temple has a waiting list. When referrals are made to other temples, they are resisted. People want "satisfaction" from membership. Exit interviews are not the right time to poll people. We need to ask members: "What is it that satisfies you so much that you're willing to make sacrifices of time and money to belong?"

There are different types of temple members: those for whom it is part of the family tradition and/or the religiously committed--they are there forever; those who are members for sociological reasons, who feel they would be ostracized if they were not members; "gas station" Jews who use the temple for particular services; professional Jews who like to be important and leave when they are no longer machers. We need to instill religious commitment.

We must look into ourselves. Why don't they want to be a part? It's meeting my needs. What about the needs of others? For example, many younger couples come with their children rather than getting babysitters. Can we accomodate this change?

Many affluent, well-educated middle-aged men seem to suffer from "shul-shock." There is a tension between what they were taught and what they saw at home. They may be comfortable with their level of home practice.

We need to find a way to help people make adult choices that may include ways of participating in temple life. It might be useful to identify what the temple could be, what it should be and what it is. The committee worked with these three categories and created these listings (Is represents perceptions of unaffiliated):

Could Be

support system
social network
extended family
house of prayer
social action

Should Be

support system for
elderly, young parents
house of prayer
lifetime Jewish
education
social network
extended family
outlet for ethical
longings
opportunity to do good
social action
center for life cycle

Is

money grubbers
expensive
40% uncaring
political system
house of prayer
center for life
cycle events
education center

It seems to be an accident that people become involved with temple rather than other Jewish organizations.

Leadership sets mission, sense of meaning. Younger people seem to come from a different milieu; they come with expectations of

what the temple will provide for them. The amount of caring will never be enough.

Is the style of prayer meeting the needs of different groups?

There seems to be a lack of sensitivity on the part of those making the rules. College expenses, \$ and a new time schedule are not addressed. "We can't sponsor college tuition." Sandwich generation may have financial problems as well.

We need to create a model where parents study too. If Judaism is only for kids, parents will drop out.

Several congregations represented seemed to have a yearly turnover of 10% of membership. Is this usual? Include on possible questionnaire.

"What do you do for adults 1 year after bar/bat mitzvah?"

In terms of the lists cited above, do we do any long-range planning? Who are we? Where are we? Where do we want to be 10 years from now? What's happening in or to our congregation?

The whole ideology of Reform Judaism is not communicated or appreciated. Pride in Reform a must.

When a new member joins, what happens to them? Create a needs assessment.

Board programming does not necessarily filter down to congregants. We need to talk to congregants. Follow up one year later with phone call or questionnaire asking what we can do for you.

Resuscitate Reform Is a Verb. It has excellent study/programming ideas.

Workshop: consciousness-raising; model how to talk about value of temple membership. Create worksheets indicating amount of dues and how the money is spent.

Use motivation that exists. When there is a strong commitment to the school, make demands on parents in that context beginning right away.

Gather information from small, medium, large size congregations at Biennial. Focus on post bar/bat mitzvah. Who's doing programming? Religious school? Is the temple a "family of families?" What opportunities exist for a role in the temple for parents separately from kids? What's there for them?

- a. Sisterhood? Brotherhood? Religious School committee?
- b. Adult education?
- c. Social action?

What about problems with cliques and perpetual leadership?
Perhaps we need a workshop for Board members only that focuses on building ownership; on how to talk to someone you never met before.

Audrey reiterated the question the group started with: why don't we do the programs we do have? Please think about the barriers that exist to carrying out programs and techniques that have been identified.

Audrey and Dru will work on developing a board workshop on attitudes that can be used at the Biennial and afterward.

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED
Committee on Young Married
Central Synagogue, May 8, 1989

Participants:

Rabbi Howard Jaffe, chair
Joseph Bernstein
Vicky Farhi
Barry Kugel
Rabbi Nina Mizrahi
Helene Spring
Roger Tilles
Rabbi Bernard Zlotowitz
Dru Greenwood, Staff

The meeting began informally with a number of program ideas being introduced:

- * National Jewish Outreach (Orthodox) has an 800 number people can call to find out about where to go for services and a Shabbat dinner (free). Joe noted that an 800 number is very expensive and needs to be manned around the clock to be effective.
- * A variety of programs for couples with very young children were described. Different models ("Torah for Tots", "Mini Tot Shabbat," or "Club Yeladim") bring young children and their parents into the temple for study, arts and crafts, food, stories, sometimes a very short service. Variants of these programs have been very well received in a number of temples.
- * Credit card (membership card) for young adults either post-college or post-high school that would be good for membership in a Reform temple. It could possibly be used to make reservations for High Holiday seats or a Seder. An 800 number might be available for information on temples nearby.

The first item of business was the creation of an attitude statement. The statement outline had two parts: questions a temple should ask in self-assessment and statements affirming temple identity. Programmatic and procedural ideas resulted.

- I. How do we get people to inquire or make contact with the temple?
 - video in local bank
 - flyers in store windows
 - local papers (perhaps Task Force can prepare articles)
 - Networking (one or two young couples who are temple members can bring in other such couples)
 - UAHC national advertising to encourage contact with temples
 - Jewish Welcome Wagon
 - Program such as Basic Judaism outside temple as first hook?
- II. How do we respond to the initial inquiry?
 - Train secretary or receptionist
 - Policy to invite inquirers to next Shabbat service

- Greeters (with buttons reading "Please ask me about Temple...")
- Invite for Shabbat meal (a la Lincoln Square)
- Guest register
- Follow through by putting on Bulletin mailing list or personal contact by rabbi or membership person
- III. How can we empower congregants to reach out to others?
 - Articulate value of own synagogue (chevrah, ruach)
 - Make personal calls, contacts
- IV. What kinds of programs will bring people to join temple?
 - Procedural programs such as lower dues, adjusted MUM?
 - Substantive programs

These first four questions lead to the following agenda:

- * Create substantive in-reach as well as outreach
- * Create strategies for inviting inquiries about the temple
- * Create policies that outline appropriate responses to inquiries
- * Create a welcoming atmosphere in the temple.

A correlary to this agenda would be a statement of affirmation including an assessment of the value of temple membership for temple members, a statement of pride in Reform Judaism, and a statement of why "we" need "them."

The Task Force might provide a menu of program responses from which individual temples could choose depending on their particular needs.

Such a menu might include:

- Baby naming free for non-members with a suggested donation
- Cradle roll for babies named at temple
- Invite community to special events to enhance experience with temple: Sukkot celebration, Purim Carnival
- Torah for Tots
- Parenting Center or parenting programs
- Even a funeral can be a point of entry
- Cooperate with other community organizations

The question of whether or not rabbis should officiate for non-members at life cycle ceremonies was raised. It was noted that different communities treat this question differently and that in large communities such as New York this factor cannot be controlled.

Fact finding and the formulation of a preliminary questionnaire that might be used for this purpose was next on the agenda. Several programs were mentioned:

- * Temple Israel in Minneapolis has a program called "Young Contemporaries" begun with a personal letter or phone call from the rabbi to young potential members. Ads in local papers are also used offering special Seders, education and a warm environment--"a place to feel welcome." 25 - 30 new members have resulted. More singles are involved at this point, but they do not want to be known as "singles." Child care is provided. 100 - 120 people come to Shabbat dinner and service.

- * Fairmont Temple in Cleveland has a "Young People's Congregation" that is served by its own rabbi, plans its own events and has its own board and committee structure. It is open to people up to age 36 for \$95 per year. 220 households are members. People 37-40 may hold dual membership in the YPC and temple. 95 households hold dual membership. Special programs include social action projects, late (9 p.m.) Friday evening services.
- * Other suggestions for programs outside the UAHC to investigate include: Rabbi Stephen Listfield in Englewood, NJ who has done programming for young people; Lincoln Square Synagogue, Anshe Chesed, Sutton Place, Young Israel.
- * Further information might be elicited at the Biennial during workshops or at an information table in the exhibit area.

The brief questionnaire was discussed and questions drafted. (See attached.) Rabbi Howard Jaffe and Dru Greenwood will work on the draft and assign each member one or two temples or outside organizations to contact. The questionnaire is designed to be brief rather than comprehensive and will be used as a test to see if the information we want is elicited.

The final part of the meeting was used to brainstorm additional programming ideas:

- * Use local radio stations for PR.
- * Create a packet for new mothers to take home with them from the hospital to let them know what programs (Reform Mohalim) are available and where local temples are.
- * Set up a community bulletin board with temple information in stores specializing in children's clothing and toys.
- * Offer early Shabbat dinner 5:30 - 6:30 for no charge with rabbi and traditional blessings.
- * Get temple pictures in the paper; rabbi should be friendly with editor of local paper.
- * Offer "Story Hour for Little People" with a Jewish author reading his/her work; or share reading cooperatively among parents.
- * Keep names of those named in temple and follow up a year later with birthday card or invitation to temple event.
- * Give year of free membership to children of temple members who are married.
- * Send Rosh Hashanah card to couples married by rabbi the previous year.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 with the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday evening, August 8 from 5:30 - 9 p.m. at Central Synagogue.



איחוד
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Commission on Synagogue Management

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS - CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021-7046 (212) 249-0100

MEMBERSHIP: RETENTION & RECRUITMENT

A PROGRAM FROM:

Troy Jewish Congregation
Troy, Michigan

For more information contact:
Dept. of Synagogue Management
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021
212-249-0100

MEMBERSHIP

I. GENERATING PROSPECTS

- A. ADVERTISING
- B. BROCHURES
- C. PUBLICITY
- D. WORD-OF-MOUTH
- E. DIRECT MAIL

II. RECRUITING

- A. INTRODUCTORY LETTER- IN DEPTH
- B. FOLLOW-UP, 2 WEEKS & PERIODIC

III. CLOSING

- A. PERSONAL, LOW KEY

IV. RETENTION THROUGH INVOLVEMENT

- A. SOCIAL ICE-BREAKER, MATCH UP TO COMMITTEES
- B. DIRECTED INVOLVEMENT IN TEMPLE ACTIVITIES

These notes were compiled by a member with an advertising and marketing background. Several (much larger) Temples are nearby, although many of the comments apply to all Temples in all locations.

MEMBERSHIP

I. GENERATE PROSPECTS

A. Advertising - When

Most people start looking to join a Temple when they a) want to attend HH services, b) have kids for religious school, or c) just moved to area. The first 2 are geared to the August-Sept. period; the last, year-round. Advertising is most effective when the audience is naturally receptive or can be stimulated to being receptive. While most general media placements should be for the Aug-Sept period, other placements can be worthwhile since it's not what people expect to see and there's no other competition at that time. This may also be the opportunity to stimulate them by something unusual; e.g., reduced price, invitation to an event.

Where

Seasonal placements work best in general and specific media that have a Jewish audience. Your publicity committee should have a list of newspapers where they send information. This is not the place to cut back on spending- most advertising pays for itself with new memberships. Spend the extra money for a larger ad and/or more placements. Always track your ads by asking prospects where they saw information on Temple. Use this to concentrate placements in subsequent years.

Also very valuable throughout the year are free neighborhood "throw-a-ways", also new resident pamphlets published by Cities, and the Yellow Pages.

What

Besides being informative, ad should grab attention- headlines, white space, artwork. Try to differentiate from other Temples, why join us? Put yourself in position of reader. Remember in general media to use artwork like the Star of David. Pictures draw attention especially if you instantly identify it as something Jewish; ads with only words are frequently overlooked.

B. Other

Besides media advertising, a good use of money is for brochures placed with realtors and in public areas seen by new residents. Again, use artwork on cover to identify it instantly.

Non-commercial material is frequently the best because it's not seen as "advertising". This includes publicity releases, feature articles on the Temple, Rabbi, or members for some unusual event or activity. Anything that gives positive visibility is worthy of a press release. Make sure the release contains all pertinent facts- what, where, when, and contact phone for more information. Committees should be periodically reminded to submit material for press releases well ahead of event.

Always important is word-of-mouth since it involves an endorsement by someone whose opinion is respected and/or has experience in the Temple. This one-on-one approach always has the highest "closing" rate. Stimulate membership to "sell" the Temple whenever possible. Don't lose site of past prospects even if they showed no interest. It may be that they weren't ready when they first contacted you. Consider a periodic mailer to them with highlights of past and future events- shows you still have interest in them.

II. FOLLOW- UP

It is essential that once someone has expressed interest, follow up occurs very soon. The form of the follow up should utilize both written and verbal. A phone call from membership is the best start since it enables one-on-one personal discussions. The essence of this call should be informative, not "selling". It's even a good idea to tell prospects to come to a service or function before joining. If the prospect has a particular interest- mixed, school, B'nai Mitzvah, tell them that they'll be contacted by someone who can discuss this- the more people talking to prospects, the better. You may also involve the Rabbi here, asking him to call the prospect to discuss the Temple and any questions he might answer. They will be impressed that the Rabbi took a personal interest.

For many, the school is the key- invite them to attend with their child, meet the teachers, and sit-in. Contact the person in charge of the school to arrange. Have them call prospect.

We've also noticed that many people feel their situation is unique; e.g., mixed with the non-Jewish spouse calling, never belonged anyplace but now that child is 10, etc. These people need to be reassured that this is not unusual. Find some commonality between their circumstances (city of residence, mixed-marriage, etc.) and our membership- "we have several members just like you", or "we have several members that live in ---"

The next step is to send them an information package (letter from Pres., dues, and school info if appropriate). Filling out a prospect form and sending to Communications will trigger 3 months of complimentary newsletters.

About 2 weeks after sending package, give them a call to see if they received the info and see if there's any question you can answer. Invite them to attend services and a social function as our guest.

III. CLOSE

The hardest and most sensitive part is to get them to join- don't be pushy, it will turn them away. What you can do are the subtle things- a personal invitation to an event or service, picking them up, a meal. Some people just aren't ready to join anyplace, all you can do is leave a positive impression by thanking them for their interest and extending an open invitation to come to services.

These people should be re-contacted every 6 months or so via a special mailing (see above). Also after the Holidays, get a list of those who bought tickets and contact them indicating that their ticket cost will be applied to dues if they join within 30 days after Holidays.

IV. RETENTION

The greatest mistake a Temple can make is to stop "recruiting" once someone has joined. Every Temple should have a distinct group whose only purpose is to involve members, especially new ones, in Temple activities. This group could be separate or a sub-committee of Membership.

Frequently, new members are reluctant to embarrass themselves by asking questions or volunteering. This can be overcome in several ways. One is a structured introduction to the Congregation beginning with an information packet containing a personal greeting from the President and Rabbi, a Temple Directory, Membership card (from UAHC), and home Kiddush and Candle Lighting prayers (from NFTS). This should be followed by phone calls from the Rabbi and President, then a call or visit by the Membership Involvement group with a Shabbat gift bag (challah, wine, candles). This is a good way for someone familiar with the Temple to get to know the new member for 2 reasons- linking their interests and capabilities to the Temple to see where they might help, and also to match them with Temple members by affinity- interests, children's ages, location of residence. This is used to have these people call new members and hopefully begin friendships. It's also a good way for one of them to act as a sponsor- bringing the new member to services and functions.

Since most people join before the Holidays, a good way to introduce them to Temple leadership is a casual party in November with the Rabbi and Trustees.

The next step to begin involvement for those with leadership potential is attendance at a by-invitation, mid-winter self-evaluation and goal-setting workshop where new members and other Temple leaders spend a day to analyze, critique, and plan for the future. Besides being a desirable process, the new member feels that their opinions count in Temple matters and it breaks down the barriers to getting them involved in Temple leadership. The UAHC Leadership Development Seminar is another way to involve current and potential leaders.

Getting members involved and keeping them involved is the best insurance policy available and the natural culmination to membership efforts.

ATTACH. To SECTION II - Follow-Up -

LETTER To PROSPECTS - 4 PAGES

Thank you for your interest in our Congregation. Since you may not know too much about us, I'll use this letter to introduce ourselves to you.

Our Beginning

TJC was formed in 1982 by a small group who saw a need to provide a Jewish identity in our area. As such, our members come from diverse backgrounds which has evolved as one of our greatest assets. As we have grown, our membership area has expanded beyond Troy and Rochester to Southfield, Oak Park, West Bloomfield, Birmingham, Royal Oak, Sterling Heights, Auburn Hills, Huntington Woods, and many other suburbs. Our current membership is approx. 115 families and singles.

Religious Orientation

In 1984 we affiliated with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform) which has proven to be an invaluable resource to us. For 3 years, we participated in the Union's Student Rabbi program and had a student with us for the Holidays and throughout the school year. We now are very proud to have our own Rabbi, Arnie Sleutelberg, a 1988 graduate of Hebrew Union College. Arnie brings much experience to us from several student pulpits as well as a warm and genuine personality that we all appreciate and respect. He has been very well received by the Congregation because of his ability to relate to old and young, married and single, Jew and Gentile. Since we share him with another Temple, some of our Shabbat services are led by members. With their diverse backgrounds, the services reflect differing points of view which has enriched and enlightened all of us.

The mixture of Hebrew and English varies although the English content is always sufficient to make the service understandable and meaningful to all. We use the Reform prayer book Gates of Prayer for our Shabbat services. This book contains several versions that vary from traditional to modern. Normally we alternate services between Friday evening and Saturday morning so that all can attend. Men and women participate equally in all Temple activities including

services. Tallit and kipahs are available and their use is optional.

Life-Cycle Observances

Recognizing that participation in life-cycle events is an important part of Jewish family life, we have available within TJC or through referrals all the resources for life-cycle observances including bris, baby-naming, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, marriage, death, burial, and shiva.

High Holidays

Our High Holiday services have been very-well received. The sanctuary provides a comfortable and intimate setting to enjoy these services led by our Rabbi and Cantor. For these services we use The New Mahzor which is available in the sanctuary. We observe the first day of Rosh Hashonah at the Temple and the second day at a local park for a traditional "Tashlich" service. Children's services are conducted on the afternoons of both the first day of Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur.

What We Offer

Besides our religious services, we offer a full range of programs and services for adults and children including traditional and modern observances of Holidays, picnic services, a professionally-taught Religious school, adult educational and social programs, several youth activities, a Sisterhood, a library, swim parties, a toddler group, a mixed-marriage group, a teen group and several others. We also sponsor a spring picnic, a Purim festival, Shabbat dinners, a Congregational Seder, a Sukkah decorating party, several Chanukah festivities and much more.

Facilities

Currently most of our services and functions are held in the Northminster Presbyterian church on Big Beaver (16 Mile Rd) between Adams and Coolidge. The building is excellent for our needs since it presents a neutral appearance and the Congregation is very comfortable there. The sanctuary has 200 permanent seats with a capacity of 280. There is also a lounge, nursery, library, and kitchen available to us.

Our religious school meets at the Hamilton elementary school in Troy on Wednesday afternoon and Sunday morning. The Congregation owns property in Troy and our long-range plan is to build but only when we are large enough so the cost structure is affordable to all.

I think you'll find for all this that our dues structure as noted on the attached is very reasonable. Also as our guest, we'll send you our next 3 newsletters. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of the services and events noted in the newsletter for this is the only way you'll get to know us.

Perhaps the greatest benefit we have is that at our size we are large enough to satisfy the needs of our members yet small enough to provide a relaxed and informal setting with the genuine warmth and friendliness from our extended family. We are very proud of TJC and hope you can visit us at an upcoming service or function to experience the importance and comraderie of having a Jewish identity in our area as well as the enthusiasm and uniqueness of our small and caring Congregation.

If you have any questions, please give me a call (643-8733)

Sincerely yours,
TROY JEWISH CONGREGATION

Irv Wengrow,
President

DUES INFORMATION

Troy Jewish Congregation offers two membership categories.

Our Family membership dues are \$360 a year. This category applies when the household contains two or more adults over age 25. This category applies regardless of the religious affiliation or level of synagogue participation of the spouse since our By-laws provide both adults the full rights and privileges of membership.

Our Special membership dues are \$225 a year. These memberships are available to Singles, Seniors age 62 and over, and Young Marrieds (under 25).

In April, 1988, we approved a temporary annual assessment of \$100 (Family), and \$60 (Special) to cover the incremental cost of a part-time Rabbi. These amounts will be added to your dues statements for the tenure of this assessment.

The Executive Committee will also consider applications for dues reduction and exceptions based on circumstances. These will be handled confidentially and on a case-by-case basis. Our policy is to never deny membership because of financial limitations.

Our dues year is from April 1 to March 31. Dues may be paid in 1, 2, or 4 installments. Bills are sent 1 month before the due date.

Full dues (either Family, Special or reduced) apply to members joining between April 1 and the end of the High Holidays. Dues are reduced 50% if joining after the Holidays and before December 31. Members joining between January 1 and March 31 will be handled on a pro-rated basis.

Our Hebrew and Religious schools are staffed by the United Hebrew Schools. Information and tuition are available upon request.

If you wish to join us, please call our Treasurer, Rich Spitzer (879-1142 evenings). He will give you additional details and determine your initial payment.

Thank you for considering the Troy Jewish Congregation. We invite you to belong and share.

ATTACH TO SECTION II FOLLOW-UP

Form for Prospect Info

TO: MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION

Date:

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING NAME(S) TO YOUR LISTS FOR FOLLOW-UP
AND 3 ISSUES OF THE NEWSLETTER.

CATEGORY 1 - THE PROSPECT INQUIRED ABOUT US DIRECTLY

CATEGORY 2 - THE NAME WAS GIVEN TO US AS A PROSPECT

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>OTHER INFO</u>
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I HAVE SENT THEM _____ NOTHING YET; _____ AN INTRODUCTORY LETTER; _____ A BROCHURE

IRV

ATTACHMENT TO SECTION III - CLOSE

LETTERS TO PAST PROSPECTS - 3 SAMPLES

Dear Friends of TJC,

Since you had expressed interest in our Temple, I thought you would appreciate knowing about a significant step we have taken. Beginning this August we will have with us our own year-round Rabbi. He is Arnie Sleutelberg, a 1988 graduate of Hebrew Union College. Arnie is a dynamic young man who brings with him excellent credentials and a warm and genuine personality. We are very pleased with him and would like to share him with you. He will be with us at our August membership picnic to which you'll be invited and he'll be leading services beginning in September.

The Congregation is absorbing most of this expense so the impact on dues is low, thereby keeping our dues structure very modest. I have listed below for your information our upcoming services. We hope to see you soon.

With regards,

Irv Wengrow
President

SERVICE SCHEDULE

Friday, May 6, 7:45 pm	Saturday, May 14, 10:00 am
Friday, May 20, 7:45 pm*	Friday, May 27, 7:45pm
Friday, June 3, 7:45pm	Saturday, June 11, 10:00 am
Saturday, June 25, 10:00am	

* This is a special service with a guest speaker, Rabbi David Hachen. His topic is "Jews in Anguish" which reflects upon his recent trip to Israel.

Dear Friends of TJC,

Since you expressed interest in TJC, I thought you would appreciate knowing about our upcoming events and a special membership offer.

Our services will be held on Dec. 4, 11, 19, 26, Jan 8, 16, 23 and 29. Friday services begin at 7:45 and Saturday at 10:00. The December 19th service will also include our family Chanukah service with traditional foods served afterward. The Dec 26th service will be at a member's home and the Jan. 16 service will be conducted by one of our Sunday School classes and will include a presentation on Camp Tamerack.

Further down the road is a end-of-January weekend at Wheels Inn in Chatham, a family Purim celebration at the Rochester Community house on Mar 6, and our Congregational Seder in April.

I also want you to be aware of a new policy we adopted to let you become familiar with us on a no-risk basis. We are now offering complimentary 6-month memberships that run from December 1 to June 30 that will enable you to attend all our functions as a member and not just a visitor.

We're doing this because we feel that once you become familiar with all that we offer including an excellent religious school, a toddlers program, an inter-faith marriage support and social group, a Caring Community support group, extensive adult and youth programs, our very active Sisterhood and teen groups, and of course our weekly Shabbat services, that you'll choose to stay as have 98% of those that have joined us and are still living in the Detroit area.

Please call me for further information on our Congregation and to accept our offer.

Sincerely,

Irv Wengrow
643-8733

Dear Friends of TJC

We enjoyed having you with us for the Holidays. Since many of those who bought tickets have inquired about membership, we are sending the enclosed information to you. We hope that your experience with us was enjoyable and that you will want to consider membership as a way of being with us year-round to partake in all that we offer. As you will note on the dues letter, you are entitled to a 50% reduction if joining between now and the end of the year.

Even if you do not join, our Shabbat services are, of course, open to all and you are encouraged to attend whenever you wish. Please call Irv Wengrow, 643-8733 or JoAnne Levy, 689-4003 for the schedule.

ATTACHMENTS TO SECTION IV - RESENTION

5 PAGES - WELCOME LETTER, PARTY, WORKSHOP

On behalf of the Officers, Trustees, and members of the Troy Jewish Congregation, I want to welcome you to our family.

As you become involved in the Congregation, you'll understand why I call ourselves a family since in many respects our Congregation and the members serve as a second family. At our size we are small enough to provide the closeness of family and large enough to offer many important services including weekly Shabbat services, observances of all Holidays, a full social and educational calendar for adults and children, a library, a Sisterhood, an inter-faith marriage support group and a pre-teen group.

As a small Congregation, many of our members are active in one or more of our committees. This participation does involve some time but also provides much self-satisfaction. We also ask our members, if they can, to take a turn in helping to conduct services. And we also ask all members to help with our Oneg Shabbats. I urge you to become as involved as your schedule permits for this is the only way we can offer much-needed services and activities to our membership and community.

On the enclosed page, I have listed each of our committees and groups, their function, and chairperson. Please call these people directly if you have any interest or need, or call me (643-8733) if you have any questions or concerns. Also by copy of this letter, I am notifying several committees of your membership and they will be contacting you for supplemental information.

Again, I want to thank you for joining the TJC family and look forward to seeing you at our services and functions for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Irv Wengrow
President

cc: Rabbi Sleutelberg, Historian, Communications, Directory, Caring Community, Membership.

WELCOME TO TJC PARTY

AS A NEW MEMBER, YOU'RE INVITED TO MEET YOUR
OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES AT A CASUAL RECEPTION WITH
HORS D'OEUVRES AND DESSERTS ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14
STARTING AT 7:30 PM AT THE HOME OF IRV AND MARSHA
WENGROW, 3787 BOULDER, TROY.

PLEASE RESPOND TO MARSHA BY NOVEMBER 4 (643-8733).

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE.

W A T T L E S

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B I G B E A V E R

Because of your involvement and concern for our Congregation, you are invited to participate in our next TJC Goal-Setting workshop to be conducted on Saturday, March 19 from 9:00 to 3:00 at Northminster.

The purpose of the workshop is to critique what we've done recently (good & bad), re-examine our direction, and establish goals including priorities, timetable, and responsibilities. This year we will have with us Arnie Sleutelberg, a fifth-year rabbinic student. Arnie brings much experience from other small Temples as well as a rabbinic perspective.

We have found in the past that these informal sessions, away from the day-to-day business of the Congregation, are very productive in that they provide a very focused evaluation and game-plan with much enthusiasm and creativity.

To save time a little homework is necessary. To prepare for the goal-setting phase, jot down where you feel we've made mistakes and evaluate how we have responded to them. Similarly, list what you feel are TJC's greatest successes- including why they were successful. Next on a separate sheet, list all worthwhile goals as you see them including additions, deletions, or changes to all of our activities - religious services, programs and activities, rabbinical needs, the building issues, our name, etc.

Please RSVP (yes or no) to me by March 6 so that we can make arrangements. Lunch is included in the registration fee (\$0). Since the agenda is full and we have to be out the door by 3, we'll start at 9 sharp.

Please try to attend if at all possible.

Irv

Dear Workshop Participant,

Thank you for joining us today to help plan the future of our Congregation. In the past, this type of setting has been very productive, enabling us to exchange ideas, thoughts, and opinions in an open and informal forum. Each of us is here to contribute and listen. Enjoy.

AGENDA

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND PURPOSE 9:15- 9:30
2. PREVIOUS WORKSHOP PLANS AND RESULTS 9:30- 9:45
3. STAGE-SETTER - TOBIN ARTICLE 9:45- 10:15
4. GOAL-SETTING PHASE
 - A. Problem Identification- mistakes we've made, shortcomings in our offerings. 10:15- 10:45
 - B. Our successes- what are they and why.
 - C. Breakout groups- Brainstorm Goals- areas needing improvement, incl directions we should pursue, programming additions (or deletions), any changes to our activities- religious services, social, educational, or other programs and activities. 10:45- 11:30
 - Lunch 11:30- 12:15
 - D. Group presentations 12:15- 1:00
 - E. Consolidation of ideas and prioritization 1:00- 1:45
 - F. Action Plan- Goal/Responsibility/Timetable 1:45- 2:15
5. OPEN DISCUSSION 2:15- 2:45

PREVIOUS WORKSHOPS

SUBJECT	STATUS
<u>ATTENDANCE</u>	
"Bring- along" program	started, stopped , being re-activated
New membership drive	continuing
New member package	implemented
New member involvement	being re-activated
Choir	being activated
Guest speakers	continuing
Transliterations	implemented
<u>OTHER</u>	
Pre-teen group	implemented
Formal mixed marriage group	implemented
Burnout resolution	partially implemented- co-chairs, successors
Community Involvement (social action, charity work, volunteer work)	partially implemented
B'nai Mitzvah tutor list	implemented
more frequent student rabbi	continuing
improve singing/music	being activated
Confirmation program	still being pursued
MSTY Chapter	" " "
More adult ed	" " "
Involving Non-Jewish spouses	continuing
Burnout problems	partially implemented through suggested use of ad-hoc committees for major one-time or annual events (Seder, Purim)

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED

Minutes for Brainstorming Session
January 10, 1989

Participants: Mel Merians, Chair; Rabbi Steve Foster, Co-Chair; Dru Greenwood, Lydia Kukoff, Rabbi Nina Mizrahi, Rabbi Alex Schindler, Rabbi Dan Syme.

The chairman began the meeting by asking each participant to "define the problem" of the unaffiliated as he/she saw it.

Steve: Whether people are actually "unaffiliated" or within our communities, there are many who have never been tapped. We are not serving their needs or giving them inspiration. Religion is tangential to their lives. We are not connecting with their goals and expectations for life. We need to offer them something and tap their personal resources. (Financial resources will follow later.) Many use Chabad tapes--we need to look into that. Basically, many are affiliated, but not attached. We need to offer spiritual nourishment.

Dru: We need to find a way in to the "unaffiliated" population by defining who we mean and prioritizing. The vast majority of Jews are connected in some way, so may not be as hard to find as originally thought. Demographically, certain populations, particularly single parents, are less likely to be affiliated. Different sub-groups will call for different programming. Perhaps a "shot-gun" approach would work best for starters.

Nina: We need to follow up with people we are bringing in through Outreach, particularly Introduction to Judaism and Times and Seasons graduates. For this effort, as well as across the board, we need to develop people resources and work jointly with other departments on this effort.

Danny: Many groups in the Jewish community are doing Outreach to the unaffiliated. They are focused on raising money. Our special mandate is the making of Jews. We should focus in four areas: establishing a lifelong program model, building on childhood memories; educating for spiritual development; re-educating Jews ethnically; creating programs that respond to the rhythms of people's lives (eg. with the demographic increase in working women, we need to sponsor daycare, latchkey programs, etc.).

Lydia: We need to go back to basics and develop materials for this purpose, eg. put Intro on tape. But we are deluding ourselves if we think only in terms of developing programs and staff. The hard part will be helping congregations cope with change. They have an image problem that is reflected onto the unaffiliated. What is really involved is educating Temple Boards to work on the image of ourselves and the image "out there." Further, we must have experts on PR to help us get the message out.

Alex: We need to categorize the unaffiliated and then program for each category. Add to the list of possible target groups, children of current temple members who have not joined in their own right even into their 30's.

The "ethnic" dimension is a problem because people have forgotten their East European roots. What needs to be reinforced is a sense of the peoplehood of Israel. Judaism is not just ideological; it is a way of life.

Gary Tobin of Brandeis is anxious to work with the UAHC. He needs access to a population for research and is willing and able to do the fundraising work. A good focus for this partnership might be unaffiliated Jews. We could set up different models in communities where foundations, etc. are likely to fund the effort and do comparative research. Tobin has found the reason for non-affiliation given by many respondents to be "I haven't been asked," or "I didn't know you were interested or cared."

Resource people to contact: Joe Rosenblum (St. Louis), who has a staff person to reach out to unmarried young professionals who have not joined a temple; Daniel Thursz (St. Louis), of the Memorial Foundation that sponsors CONTACT.

Mel: (There seems to be greater agreement on problem definition than anticipated.) We must change attitudes within our temples to make them welcoming places. We don't fill needs. The first problem is that temple members are angry at those who do not join. It is felt that they should belong; on the other hand, we won't let them in. Rabbi is in coalition with the leadership and often focuses on each Jew's "responsibility to the Jewish community." We hate most those who "drop off" their kids for bar/bat mitzvah and then "drop out." We can't change every program, but we must make Temples and Boards realize that the problem is a result of temple failure. There are not alot of unaffiliated (in the sense of totally unconnected) Jews. They need to feel important and needed. Federations and Israel have succeeded here. Defense agencies and AIPAC are growing tremendously and attract large numbers of non-synagogue-affiliated Jews. Right now the temple is seen as "the place not to be." We need to reverse this perception and make it "the place to be." Temple must have a psychological change. The primary needs of members are not religious or spiritual, but concrete: daycare, education, psychological counseling, so this is where we should begin.

General Discussion: We might look to the Christian fundamentalist churches to see how they succeed: "They accept me for who I am." (Steve)

The psychology has to be changed, but we also have to give the tools for change. We may not need a new instrumentality; "new members committees" may suffice. We need regional programs, either under the auspices of Outreach or independent, to establish new congregations. We also must be concerned with the "cost image" of our congregations. Young marrieds are being driven away by this; it is demeaning to ask for dues relief. (Alex)

Tobin can give us a list of Jews in any given area by using an index of 5 or 6 factors.

The temple should be a center that includes anything Jewish, eg. Stephen Wise.

This program might be instituted through regional Outreach Coordinators.

Constituting the Committee: The committee will meet 3 or 4 times each year, will have sub-committees to work on various areas, and an executive committee. It should include relevant Union staff, one or two regional directors, and lay leaders including experts on PR.

Particular names raised: all those present at this meeting;

Joe Bernstein and a lay leader from Synagogue Management;

Art Grant or Sandy Seltzer (the latter appropriate because of connection with Tobin and position on Committee on the Changing Family);

two lay people from Committee on the Changing Family;

NATA representative, perhaps Barry Kugel from Central;

Fred Schwartz or Donny Rossoff (Chicago);

Roy Walter (Houston);

Shai Zeldin (Stephen Wise), ask to present program to the committee;

perhaps ask Steve Leder (Wilshire);

Gary Glickstein (Florida);

Note: in the case of large congregations, consult with senior rabbi and invite junior rabbi or the person who is really doing the program;

rabbinic representatives from mid-size congregations;

Norman Kahan and lay people from small congregations (Danny will check if this is appropriate);

Rabbi Dennis Math (Village Temple);

Helaine Spring;

unaffiliated people: Vicky Farhi (pre-affiliated and good PR distribution), Michael Cohn (post-affiliated);

UAHC Board: Larry Simon, Roger Tillis, Dolores Wilkenfeld.

Note: Draft a letter to the Board to elicit interest;

Joe Glazer and Sam Karff, ex-officio;

Helene Ferris (~~Central~~); (Stephen Wise)

HUC-JIR: Gary Zolla (recruitment) and Alvin Reines (Cincinnati);

Note: Dru ask Edie to draft a letter from Alex to Gottschalk telling about new committee, that we would like to invite the above and does he have any objections? (Reines might be invited to address the group.)

Lay leaders: Norton Stern (Detroit, Corps of Service to the Jewish People) and Dick Plum (President, Houston);

Note: 25 lay leaders should be invited; Danny and Lydia send invitations.

Invitations out no later than February 7.

First committee meeting to be held either Sunday, March 12 or 19.

Further Tobin discussion: Sandy is contact with Tobin. Alex would like the unaffiliated to be the focus of the project with Tobin. We need to set up a brainstorming session with Tobin and two of his people with Danny, Lydia and Dru to further investigate possibilities. Perhaps immediately after the Cabinet meeting on February 7. Mel should pass Tobin tape to Dru, then to Alex.

How to Proceed: Should we begin re-education at the Biennial? Or should we kick off at the May Board meeting? There is not yet a theme for the Board meeting. If the Task Force meets in early March, that does not allow enough time afterwards for programming the Board meeting. We ought not to decide on substance and then convene the Task Force to simply ratify our decision. Perhaps we can establish the structure and use the Task Force for substance.

We should not begin negatively by trying to convince congregations of their failure; rather, we should give them some positive ideas and tools with which to proceed. A balance such as that used at the beginning of Outreach would be appropriate.

Task Force: Create outline for discussion including an overall view of the problem and an overall approach; debate the approach; adopt an approach and set priorities.

Board Meeting: Components might include a statistical presentation, a panel of unaffiliated Jews, getting in touch with attitudes toward temple (what proud about) and toward unaffiliated (possible prejudicial feelings). Possible keynote: "The State of Unaffiliatedness in the Jewish Community: The Challenge." This should include the human dimension, the isolation of those who are apart from us and our responsibility to meet their needs through community building. Saturday morning perhaps statistical breakdown and panel with question and answer period. Perhaps lunch could be used to report on the early work the Task Force has brought to bear. Saturday afternoon could be used for response. "Sometimes more is less:" we should not overprogram.

Naming: Task Force on the Unaffiliated.

Odds and Ends: Create an annotated bibliography for the Task Force.

Including the CCAR will call for additional budget. What will the cost to the Conference be? Check with Joe Glazer.

Information gathering: "Wondering Jew" program held last October in Denver attracted a large percentage of unaffiliated. Dru should go to follow-up meeting and meet with Sandra Heller on January 31. Ask regional directors for names of congregations doing innovative programming in this area. Write an announcement seeking information for the CCAR Newsletter and send it to Elliot Stevens. Choose 8-15 congregations and interview by phone. Read temple bulletins. Look at what is being done in other movements and Federations.

Create a document for the March meeting and send to Mel, Steve and Danny for review. The document should include:

- Information gathering

- Demographic data from academics

- Recommendations

- Sub-committees on various target populations

- Psychological component identifying the problem in terms of temple complicity

- Objectives: three workshops and a major address by Alex at the Biennial in New Orleans.

GUEST EDITORIAL

The search for the 'unaffiliated' Jew

By Gary A. Tobin

Captain Kirk and the crew went searching for Mr. Spock in a recent Star Trek episode. Porgy went searching for less. Sidney Greenstreet and a slippery Peter Lorre went on one more rumbled expedition to find the Maltese Falcon. Meanwhile, Jewish organizations and institutions continue to seek the ever elusive "unaffiliated Jew."

The search for the unaffiliated Jew is a misguided effort. The biggest problem we face is not in rates of affiliation, either with synagogues or temples or other Jewish organizations. It is the levels of involvement that should concern us most.

Study after study in the 1980s, whether in St. Louis, San Francisco, Baltimore, New Orleans, or other cities, show that most Jews are affiliated. Some may belong to a

synagogue or temple. Others belong to one Jewish organization or another. Most Jews make some nominal gift to some Jewish philanthropy. Most Jewish children receive some Jewish education. The majority attend High Holiday services, even if they do not belong to a synagogue or temple.

When all of these are added together, the total encompasses the great majority of Jews. Those who do none of these things are likely to be over the age of 65 and used to belong to some organization or institution, or under the age of 30 and plan to join in the future. Proportionately, few Jews are totally disconnected, totally unaffiliated. Rates of true nonaffiliation are found to be highest among intermarried Jews.

The real problem can be found in the level of commitment, involvement and activity for connected Jews who are inactive within the organizational and institutional

structure. The reason Jewish organizations search so hard for unaffiliated Jews is because most unaffiliated Jews are invisible within the Jewish communal structure. They are members, but in name only.

While Jews give something to Jewish causes, the vast majority give only a few dollars. Most Jews who belong to Jewish organizations volunteer no time to them. Jews go to a synagogue or temple, but only once or twice a year, or to drop off their children at Hebrew school.

The search for the unaffiliated is a cop-out. It allows Jewish organizations to focus outward instead of looking critically inward. Jews are already connected in some way, or will be, or used to be. Certainly we should make every attempt to reach out to those who are totally outside the organizational and institutional structure. But that search should not serve as a smoke screen to the obvious problems of involving those

who will be marginally drawn to Jewish communal life at some point. Marriages, birth of children, children becoming school age, illness and death are all life cycle events that bring Jews into contact with Jewish organizations and institutions. What do we do to expand that contact?

The most pressing and vital challenge we have is increasing levels of involvement and participation. That requires creating new volunteer jobs, undertaking new and broader agendas in our institutions and organizations, opening up leadership circles, providing different and more human services. It means more creative religious services and educational programs. It means social events that are vibrant and exciting. It means diversity in what we do and the ways we do it.

Jewish organizations and agencies must be willing to change and experiment. Jews' lack of involve-

ment is partly due to the competition of a secular society and the weakening bonds of religious Judaism. But the problem also rests partly with Jewish organizations and institutions themselves. How creative, energetic and open have they been to new ideas, new programs and new faces? Federations, temples, synagogues and all other organizations must stop asking "how do we bring more people within our walls?" and seriously consider "how can we expand our walls to the places where people live and think and believe?" Hundreds of thousands of Jews with nameless faces are walking through our institutional and organizational doors. It is our communal task to ensure that they do not walk right back out again.

Mr. Tobin is associated with the Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University.



free

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

NATIONAL OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS
Rabbi Gary P. Zola, Dean

3101 CLIFTON AVENUE • CINCINNATI, OHIO 45220-2488
(513) 221-1875

February 13, 1989

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

It will be my privilege to contribute to the new Task Force on Programs for the Unaffiliated.

I am deeply honored by the confidence this invitation evidences, and I look forward to participating.

With warmest personal regards, I am . . .

As always,

Rabbi Gary P. Zola

blf

cc: Dr. Alfred Gottschalk
Dr. Eugene Mihaly
Ms. Dru Greenwood

February 1, 1989
26 Shevat 5749

Rabbi Gary Zola
HUC-JIR
3101 Clifton Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45220-2488

Dear Gary:

By now you may have heard that in response to the need to reach out to non-synagogue Jews, our Outreach Commission has determined to form a sub-committee on Programs for the Unaffiliated. This group is, after all, the fastest growing segment of the American Jewish community and we must do our utmost to bring these Jews, many of them young people, into our family of Reform Judaism.

An initial "brainstorming" session has been held and among matters discussed was personnel for the group. Thus, this letter to invite you to participate in the work of our new Task Force on the Unaffiliated. Fred Gottschalk agrees that you will have much of value to contribute to the work of this group as it develops. I hope you will agree to serve and to work with us in this very critical area of concern to our entire movement.

The first meeting of the full Task Force has been set for March 12-13, 1989 and once we have your acceptance fuller details as well as minutes of the initial brainstorming session will be shared with you. Ms. Dru Greenwood has been named the National coordinator of programs for the unaffiliated, and she is working out of 838 Fifth Avenue. She will be the contact person once we have that I trust will be your affirmative response.

With warm regards and every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc Dru



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

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THE PRESIDENT

3101 CLIFTON AVENUE • CINCINNATI, OHIO 45220-2408
(513) 221-1875

January 25, 1989

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Alex:

Thank you for your letter of January 17, 1989 regarding unaffiliated Jews in our American Jewish communities.

I will be happy for you to invite both Alvin Reines and Gary Zola to join the subcommittee on Programs for the Unaffiliated of the Outreach Commission. I wish this new venture every success.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Alfred Gottschalk

AG/ns

January 17, 1989
11 Shevat 5749

Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk
President, HUC-JIR
3101 Clifton Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45220-2488

Dear Fred:

You are undoubtedly aware of the fact that unaffiliated Jews comprise the fastest growing segment of the American Jewish community. In response to a need to reach out to non-synagogue Jews, our Outreach Commission has determined to form a sub-committee on Programs for the Unaffiliated. We have named a national coordinator for the program, Dru Greenwood, formerly Outreach coordinator in our Northeast Council and, more recently, the New Jersey West Fudson Valley Council.

A small group met recently to discuss the path to take in seeking to bring into the Reform fold these unaffiliated Jews, many of them young people. We also discussed personnel for the committee and thus this letter to you. We are eager to have Alvin Reines and Gary Zola join in this critical aspect of our program. I trust you will have no problem with this request. After all, a growing Reform movement helps to secure the material as well as the spiritual future of the College-Institute no less than of the Union.

As soon as I have heard from you, an invitation will go forth to Gary and Alvin. They will undoubtedly have much of value to contribute to the work of this group.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

MEMORANDUM

From Dru Greenwood Date 1/27/89
To Mel Merians, Steve Foster, Lydia Kukoff, Nina Mizrahi, Alexander
Copies Schindler, Dan Syme
Subject Unaffiliated Brainstorming Minutes and Task Force Date

Attached are minutes from our first brainstorming session for the Unaffiliated project.

The first meeting of the Task Force has been expanded from only Sunday, March 12. We are planning to meet Monday, March 13 through lunch as well.

Calls I have been making to invite participation on the Task Force have been met with overwhelming enthusiasm. It is clear to me, however, that we will have to set dates for future meetings well in advance to accomodate busy schedules.

Dru

TASK FORCE ON THE UNAFFILIATED

Minutes for Brainstorming Session
January 10, 1989

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two lay people from Committee on the Changing Family;

NATA representative, perhaps Barry Kugel from Central;

Fred Schwartz or Donny Rossoff (Chicago);

Roy Walter (Houston);

Shai Zeldin (Stephen Wise), ask to present program to the committee;

perhaps ask Steve Leder (Wilshire);

Gary Glickstein (Florida);

Note: in the case of large congregations, consult with senior rabbi and invite junior rabbi or the person who is really doing the program;

rabbinic representatives from mid-size congregations;

Norman Kahan and lay people from small congregations (Danny will check if this is appropriate);

Rabbi Dennis Math (Village Temple);

Helaine Spring;

unaffiliated people: Vicky Farhi (pre-affiliated and good PR distribution), Michael Cohn (post-affiliated);

UAHC Board: Larry Simon, Roger Tillis, Dolores Wilkenfeld.

Note: Draft a letter to the Board to elicit interest;

Joe Glazer and Sam Karff, ex-officio;

Helene Ferris (Central);

HUC-JIR: Gary Zolla (recruitment) and Alvin Reines (Cincinnati);

Note: Dru ask Edie to draft a letter from Alex to Gottschalk telling about new committee, that we would like to invite the above and does he have any objections? (Reines might be invited to address the group.)

Lay leaders: Norton Stern (Detroit, Corps of Service to the Jewish People) and Dick Plum (President, Houston);

Note: 25 lay leaders should be invited; Danny and Lydia send invitations.

Invitations out no later than February 7.

First committee meeting to be held either Sunday, March 12 or 19.

Further Tobin discussion: Sandy is contact with Tobin. Alex would like the unaffiliated to be the focus of the project with Tobin. We need to set up a brainstorming session with Tobin and two of his people with Danny, Lydia and Dru to further investigate possibilities. Perhaps immediately after the Cabinet meeting on February 7. Mel should pass Tobin tape to Dru, then to Alex.

How to Proceed: Should we begin re-education at the Biennial? Or should we kick off at the May Board meeting? There is not yet a theme for the Board meeting. If the Task Force meets in early March, that does not allow enough time afterwards for programming the Board meeting. We ought not to decide on substance and then convene the Task Force to simply ratify our decision. Perhaps we can establish the structure and use the Task Force for substance.

We should not begin negatively by trying to convince congregations of their failure; rather, we should give them some positive ideas and tools with which to proceed. A balance such as that used at the beginning of Outreach would be appropriate.

Task Force: Create outline for discussion including an overall view of the problem and an overall approach; debate the approach; adopt an approach and set priorities.

Board Meeting: Components might include a statistical presentation, a panel of unaffiliated Jews, getting in touch with attitudes toward temple (what proud about) and toward unaffiliated (possible prejudicial feelings). Possible keynote: "The State of Unaffiliatedness in the Jewish Community: The Challenge." This should include the human dimension, the isolation of those who are apart from us and our responsibility to meet their needs through community building. Saturday morning perhaps statistical breakdown and panel with question and answer period. Perhaps lunch could be used to report on the early work the Task Force has brought to bear. Saturday afternoon could be used for response. "Sometimes more is less:" we should not overprogram.

Naming: Task Force on the Unaffiliated.

Odds and Ends: Create an annotated bibliography for the Task Force.

Including the CCAR will call for additional budget. What will the cost to the Conference be? Check with Joe Glazer.

Information gathering: "Wondering Jew" program held last October in Denver attracted a large percentage of unaffiliated. Dru should go to follow-up meeting and meet with Sandra Heller on January 31. Ask regional directors for names of congregations doing innovative programming in this area. Write an announcement seeking information for the CCAR Newsletter and send it to Elliot Stevens. Choose 8-15 congregations and interview by phone. Read temple bulletins. Look at what is being done in other movements and Federations.

Create a document for the March meeting and send to Mel, Steve and Danny for review. The document should include:

- Information gathering

- Demographic data from academics

- Recommendations

- Sub-committees on various target populations

- Psychological component identifying the problem in terms of temple complicity

- Objectives: three workshops and a major address by Alex at the Biennial in New Orleans.