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The new Temple policy, focus upon religious and cultural activity,
not recreation, amusement, 1929.

THE NEW TEMPLE POLICY

had been
The new policy for Temple activities which our Congregation adopted last May has evoked a truly remarkable response throughout the country. Press and pulpit have been discussing it at great length and in most appreciative terms. It has been hailed as an epoch-making event in the development of American Jewish congregations. It seems as if the entire organized religious life of our country, both Jewish and non-Jewish, ~~was~~ waiting for some representative congregation to take the initiative and courageously lead the way.

We have elsewhere stated the reasons which induced our Congregation to abandon its community center activities and to concentrate upon those *values* ~~needs~~ for which a Synagogue exists, worship, religious education and ethical guidance. The Temple is convinced that Judaism is potent enough to make its appeal to the minds and hearts of men both young and old, directly and forcibly and that it does not require the bait of amusement ~~and entertainment~~ to lure men to it and to hold their interest and loyalty.

We wish our people to think of the Synagogue reverentially, as a place of spiritual up-lift, as a fountain-head of inspiration for magnificent living, as a center of light and learning and not as a place of ~~amusement~~ *entertainment* and recreation.

We ~~shall~~ *must* gauge our ~~success~~ *influence* not by the noise and bustle ~~and~~ *of* multifarious activities which ~~may~~ *may* be carried on within the Temple precincts, but by the readiness of men and women to turn to the Temple for the things of the spirit and by their eagerness to share in the larger life of Jewish responsibilities and human idealism. *and largely unfruitful*

It is not contemplated to curtail any activities of the Temple which are directly in line with its essential purposes. Rather it is hoped that such activities will be increased and intensified. Only activities of a purely secular and recreational nature which are aimed ~~to~~ *to* entertain people and which contribute little or nothing to their spiritual life will be discontinued.

We shall devote ourselves even more painstakingly than heretofore to the enrichment of our worship and to the development of a full program of religious education for young and old. All of our organizations will carry on as heretofore but with a determination to bring their programs into *more* vital relation ~~with~~ *with* the ideals for which a Temple ought to stand.

The Temple hopes to serve its members not less, but more in those reaches of human life where a religious institution can best serve in fulfillment of its historic function and essential genius.

Sp It remains now for us to carry this new Temple policy into effect.

We call upon the men and women of our Congregation to participate more actively than ever before in the religious and cultural life of our Congregation, ~~to~~ bring to the Synagogue an increased measure of their devotion, faithfulness and piety, and to avail themselves of those opportunities for knowledge and inspiration which the Synagogue ~~can afford them~~ *offers*.

The quality of our work during the coming years will alone vindicate the position which we have ~~now~~ *now* taken.

The New Temple Policy

The new policy (which the Senate ^{adopted} ~~sanctioned~~ last May) has evoked a remarkable response throughout the country. Both press and pulpit have been discussing it at great length and ^{in the most} ~~in the most~~ ^{enthusiastic} ~~enthusiastic~~ ^{appreciative} ~~appreciative~~ terms. It has been hailed as epoch-making in the devel. of Am. Jew. ^{emancipation} ~~emancipation~~. It seems as if the entire ^{Jew. rel. life} ~~Jew. rel. life~~ ^{in our country} ~~in our country~~ had been waiting for some ^{signal} ~~signal~~ ^{to pull the isochronous} ~~to pull the isochronous~~ ^{in the matter and} ~~in the matter and~~ ^{we have} ~~we have~~ ^{adopted the new policy} ~~adopted the new policy~~ ^{bec. we} ~~bec. we~~ ^{are} ~~are ^{convinced} ~~convinced~~ that Jew. ^{policy} ~~policy~~ is potent enough to make it ^{attract} ~~attract~~ ^{the} ~~the ^{public} ~~public~~ ^{to the} ~~to the ^{mind} ~~mind~~ ^{that} ~~that~~ ^{it does not require} ~~it does not require~~ ^{any} ~~any~~ ^{effort} ~~effort ^{to} ~~to ^{attract} ~~attract~~ ^{the} ~~the ^{attention} ~~attention~~ ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{all} ~~all ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the ^{people} ~~people~~ ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the ^{country} ~~country~~ ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{that} ~~that~~ ^{it does not require} ~~it does not require~~ ^{any} ~~any~~ ^{effort} ~~effort ^{to} ~~to~~ ^{attract} ~~attract~~ ^{the} ~~the 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We call upon the men & women of our
Temple to participate ⁱⁿ activities ^{than ever before}
^{and culture.} ~~along the coming year~~ ^{the Congressmen,} to
enrich the Synag. by their devotion and
faithfulness and piety, and ^{teachings} ~~bequests~~ ^{their} by the
~~inspiration~~ ^{inspiration} and ~~gen~~ knowledge which the Synag.
can give them.

we wish no people to think, the Jews.
reverently, as a place of sp. uplift, ~~and~~
as a fountain head ^{for us, living} of light and learning - not as a place
of amusement and recreation.

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Spirit for worship and ~~in~~ study
and by their eagerness to share in
the larger life of ~~the~~ responsibility
and human idealism.

MRS. ABBA HIELEL SILVER
10311 LAKE SHORE BLVD.
CLEVELAND, OHIO



A Happy New Year.

The Rabbi and officers, the Temple extend to the members, the congregation and their families. Their sincere wishes for a happy and prosperous new year.

~~May the blessing, all good things, as the coming year, with its many blessings, be yours. We hope our efforts, in the past year, have been of some assistance. We trust the future year, your struggles and hardships, and crown our days with love and happiness.~~

As we move onward through the years, each to his appointed destiny, may we find the right path in which the heart may most profoundly long for peace and beauty, truth and goodness.

Our 80th Birthday

This year will mark the 80th anniversary of our Temple congregation. This historic event will be appropriately celebrated by us. For ~~over~~ ^{40 years} eight decades our song has ~~been~~ ^{stood} in the forefront of progressive Am. Judaism. ~~and~~ ^{for many years it has been a pioneer and pathfinder.} It occupies to-day a position of leadership and influence not only in our community but ~~at the~~ ^{throughout the} land. We arrive at ~~the~~ ^{the} milestone, the largest Jewish cong. in ~~the~~ ^{the} outside of N.Y. - ~~let us~~ ^{let us} enter this jubilee year with enthusiasm and freshness of spirit, resolved to make it outstanding in the annals of our cong.

May He prosper ^{love with men upon} all our the toil ^{our hands}
and ~~many~~ hearts and prosper ^{our ways} ~~us~~ when we
seek Him in righteousness.

May the whisper of all good bless us and our
dear ones ^{during the coming year} with peace and well-being.

May He crown our days with love and ^{happiness} ~~in~~.



MRS. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
10311 LAKE SHORE BLVD.
CLEVELAND, OHIO

1929

The New Temple Policy



The Temple

EAST 105TH STREET AT ANSEL ROAD

Dear Friends:—

A chorus of praise from all parts of the country greeted the announcement of the new policy for Temple activities which was adopted unanimously at the Annual meeting of our Congregation held on May 26th. Editorial writers, ministers, both Jewish and non-Jewish, college presidents and professors have joined in acclaiming the action of the Temple as one of the most forward-looking steps in the organized religious life of America. Many important congregations and churches are preparing to follow the Temple's lead. We plan to publish in the near future a booklet containing the country's reactions to our decision.

The Temple wishes to emphasize one fact in connection with the newly adopted policy. **It is not contemplated to curtail any activities of the Temple which are directly in line with its purposes.** Rather it is hoped that such activities will be increased and intensified. Only activities of a purely secular and recreational nature which are aimed at entertaining people or at attracting them to the Temple with the bait of amusement and which contribute little or nothing to their spiritual life will be discontinued.

The Temple will concentrate on religious worship, religious education and on such activities which will tend to enrich the lives of our members in Jewish cultural content.

We shall devote ourselves even more painstakingly than heretofore to our Religious School,

our High School, our College Department and we shall endeavor to develop a full program of educational opportunities for our adult men and women. We shall of course, continue our splendid Monday evening series of lectures, which have been hailed with such enthusiasm throughout the community.

The Temple Women's Association will carry on as heretofore its manifold activities which are directly related to a religious institution such as ours. So will the Temple Men's Club and the Alumni Association. But their programs will be more vitally related to the ideals for which a Temple ought to stand. The Alumni Association has already re-organized itself so as to be in a position more effectively to serve as the youth movement in our Congregational life.

We hope to serve our people not less, but more in those reaches of human life where a religious institution can best serve in fulfillment of its historic function and essential genius.

The Temple can not be all things to all men but it can be and should be a place of inspiring worship, of religious education, of ethical guidance and of Jewish sanctities for all men.

Sincerely yours,

Abba Hillel Silver, Rabbi

Leon I. Feuer,

Minister of Religious Education

Eugene E. Wolf, President

MEMORANDUM ON TEMPLE ACTIVITIES

The whole subject of Temple activities should be studied in the light of the function of a Synagogue in the life of a Jewish community.

The traditional point of view has been that the Synagogue is essentially a place of worship, religious inspiration and religious education. Only occasionally was the Synagogue used for public gatherings, of unusual ^{moment} community meetings. This ^{point of view} ~~attitude~~ still prevails throughout Europe and in most of the Synagogues of the United States.

Recently there has developed in the United States ^{the} ~~an~~ idea of the Temple Center. The philosophy back of the Center is this; ~~the~~ the whole of Jewish life ought to be integrated around the Synagogue. The social life of the Jew ought not to be separate^d from his religious life. Under the auspices of the ~~Temple or~~ Synagogue the individual ought to find full opportunities for his cultural, social, recreational and religious needs. It was also thought that by attracting ~~especially~~ the young people to the Synagogue precincts through social and recreational activities, that they would then be won over to the specific religious program of the Synagogue.

Thus many of the larger Temples of this country equipped themselves with recreation halls, gymnasiums, dining halls, ball rooms, ~~restaurants~~ and theatrical apparatus. In fact the social club was combined with the Synagogue, and the varied activities of the social club ~~xxx~~ such as dancing classes, card parties, musical comedies and many other purely secular social activities were introduced.

The Temple Center has now been in existence long enough to ^{enable us} take stock of its contribution to the life of the Synagogue. In fact such surveys have been made. The findings have not at all justified the early enthusiastic claims which were made for the Temple Center.

1. In the larger congregations the Center does not seem to attract the members of the Temple families. It appeals largely to the unaffiliated Jews of the community - principally those within the immediate vicinity of the Temple. While this in itself is not undesirable, ~~yet~~ the fact remains that the Temple Center is not ~~longer~~ a Temple Center but a neighborhood settlement. ^{It} ~~and~~ does not serve the families which are affiliated with the Temple and who should be the primary ~~first~~ concern of any Temple.

2. Many of the members of Liberal congregations belong to social clubs of their own and the Temple can not compete with these clubs in the realm of entertainment and recreation. At best it can urge upon them additional social activities for which they have no need.

3. The crowding of many secular activities into the life of a congregation frequently causes men to lose sight of the real purposes of a religious institution. The voice of the Synagogue is drowned out in the midst of the tumult and noise of many activities which can be carried on as well, if not better, elsewhere.

4. The hope that young people would be attracted to worship and religious study through the magnetism of dances, plays, athletics and parties has not been realized. Young people are in the habit of selecting the things for which they care most. If they are interested in entertainments, they will come to them and if they are interested in the service, the sermon or the study group, they will attend them. The appeal of the Synagogue is not heightened through the bait of amusements.

5. It has not been found possible successfully to ^{transform} ~~extend~~ the large congregation into a congregational club house wherein all ages and groups ~~will~~ ^{may} meet for their social intercourse. Our large metropolitan Temples no longer represent homogeneous social groups. Rather they reflect all the social strata in a community. While these elements will meet in religious service, in the religious school and in other educational activities, it has been found extremely difficult to have them meet in purely social ~~activities~~ ^{Gatherings}. As a result most of ~~such~~ ^{these} social ~~activities~~ ^{Gatherings} in the larger Temples are attended by representatives of only one or two groups ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ the congregation and not at all ~~of~~ the entire congregational family. This has a tendency to emphasize distinctions and separateness within a congregation rather than the hoped-for fellowship.

6. The time, money and energy expended in carrying on an extensive Center program are inordinately great and are a heavy tax upon the Rabbis of a congregation. Many Temples have sought to solve the ⁱⁿ problem by engaging the services of a director of Temple activities. Such an office however, does not absolve the Rabbis of all responsibility for the activities which go on in the congregation and he is constrained to devote much time and thought to them - thought and time which should be devoted to his specific religious functions and to his studies. In many congregations the Rabbi has been forced to become a practical manager instead of a religious guide and teacher.

These considerations and others lead us to the conclusion that the Temple should in the future devote itself exclusively to the role which it alone can perform in a community, namely ^{as} ~~a~~ House of Prayer and a House of Religious Study.

Jewish community life has reached a point where it needs to be departmentalized. Not every worthy Jewish activity needs to be carried

on under the roof of the Synagogue. There is room in a well organized Jewish community for Community Centers, Young Men's Hebrew Associations, Young Women's Hebrew Associations, Jewish Art Leagues, Jewish Theatre Guilds, Jewish Social Clubs, etc. etc. The Synagogue ought to concentrate upon those basic community needs which ~~XXXX~~ have from ~~the~~ ^{its} ~~beginning of its history~~ ^{inception} been its particular province,—religious inspiration and religious education. Whatever energies the Synagogue can command ought to be applied to the development of its educational system, to the improvement of its educational curriculum, to the elevation of the standard of its religious instructors, to the extension of its scope, so as to include not alone the religious education of children and youths but also ^{of adults.} ~~to adult education.~~ The congregation should likewise apply itself to the ennoblement of its religious services and to the task of applying collectively and individually the prophetic message of the Synagogue to the life of the community as a whole and the individual members thereof.

Whatever extra-pulpit lectures are held in the Temple ^{building} should have a direct bearing upon these fundamental purposes of the Synagogue. There already exist in every large community sufficient agencies,—forums, ^{evening courses at colleges} noonday meetings, ~~of clubs~~, etc. for the discussion of secular subjects. The religious institution dissipates its energies ~~by~~ ^{when it} duplicating the work of these agencies.

Specifically applied to the needs of our own Temple this declaration of principles would mean as follows:

1. Our religious services and our educational system must continue to hold their place of primacy in the life of our Congregation. Our success or failure must be gauged by our success or failure in these spheres. Were we to do nothing else and do these two tasks well, our purposes would be fully vindicated.

2. A fuller program for adult religious education should be developed. We should organize more study groups for the discussion of religious problems, ethics, Jewish history and literature, and contemporaneous Jewish life. The type of large group meetings represented ~~in~~ ^{by} our Monday evening lectures should be encouraged.

3. In a large congregation such as ours it is well nigh impossible to create a close fellowship between all the members. ^{at achieving this through} Efforts ~~at~~ Congregational dances, receptions, etc. have proved and must prove unsuccessful. The Congregation ought to plan to celebrate every Jewish holiday appropriately. i. e. the Seder, the Chanukah celebration, the Purim celebration, etc. This will rally our people 'round a significant Jewish idea and will afford opportunities for our people to meet outside of the opportunities which are offered to them ~~at~~ ^{at} the services, lectures, study groups and the annual meeting. The fathers-sons, mothers-daughters gathering is in keeping with the Jewish ideal of intensifying family loyalty and should become an annual institution in our Congregation.

4. The Temple Women's Association performs a distinctive service in the life of a congregation. Through its various committees it visits the sick, welcomes the stranger, works for the poor, provides scholarships to the Hebrew Union College, supports many other Jewish institutions, cooperates with the religious school, looks after the out-of-town Jewish student and in many ways serves as an effective arm for carrying out Temple purposes. Its literary programs should be planned, as many of them have in the past, with an eye to the specific Jewish religious mission of the congregation. There ~~should be~~ ^{can} no hard and fast rule to determine what kind of a program falls within this definition but an intelligent committee may well be trusted to give effect to the spirit of this understanding.

5. The Alumni Association as it is at present constituted should be completely reorganized. Boys and girls after their confirmation at the Temple should be invited into the Temple High School which shall offer these young people the type of supplementary activities which ^{any} ~~in~~ well-organized high school ~~does~~ offer. Upon graduation from the High School these young people ^{should} ~~may~~ then become members of the Temple Alumni Association. This association composed of young people from nineteen years and over shall work out a definite program of Jewish educational activities. Such a ~~successful~~ program alone warrants the continuation of an Alumni Association ^{within the} ~~in the life of~~ a congregation. Failing in this the Alumni Association should be abandoned and in its place the young people should be asked to become junior members in our Congregation.

6. The Temple Men's Club like all other Temple brotherhoods has not yet discovered ^{its} ~~raison d'etre~~. It ^{is still} ~~has been~~ groping for a definite program. Unless the brotherhoods of Temples discover such a program it is very likely that in the course of a few years they will disintegrate. We suggest that the Temple Men's Club, if it feels capable, should take charge of the Monday evening lectures at the Temple, as well as of the ^{activity} ~~organization~~ of adult educational groups. This is a difficult task. The Men's Club attempted such activities in the past but ^{with} ~~were~~ only moderately ~~successful~~. Its literary programs likewise should tie up with the main purposes of the Synagogue ^{above} ~~above~~ indicated ~~above~~.

All in all, the Temple ^{should} ~~ought to~~ aim to express its essential genius and not to cater to the ^{varied and} ~~conflicting~~ tastes of its ^{membership} ~~constituency~~. It should devote itself to quality rather than to quantity. It means nothing to Judaism or to the life of a Jewish community if the precincts of a Temple are ^w ~~crowded~~ with people coming for entertainments which can be supplied to them as well, if not better, in theatres, moving picture places, dance halls, social clubs, etc. A few souls inspired in the Temple to seek the higher

things of life, a few Jews taught loyalty to the sacred ideals of Israel, a few men sent out into the community as representatives of the best in Jewish life, are by far a greater triumph for the Synagogue than multitudes who ^{may} have been ^{received} ~~offered~~ entertainment and ~~recreation~~ *amusement within its* ~~which they can receive elsewhere~~ *halls.*



SYNAGOGUE VERSUS SYNAGOGUE CENTER

By ABBA HILLEL SILVER
In "The American Hebrew"

29-11

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Recently there has developed in the United States the idea of the Temple Center. The philosophy back of the Center is this: the whole of Jewish life ought to be integrated around the Synagogue. The social life of the Jew ought not to be separated from his religious life. Under the auspices of the Synagogue the individual ought to find full opportunities for his cultural, social, recreational and religious needs. It was also thought that by attracting the young people to the Synagogue precincts through social and recreational activities, they would then be won over to the specific religious program of the Synagogue.

Thus many of the larger Temples of this country equipped themselves with recreation halls, gymnasiums, dining halls, ball rooms and theatrical apparatus. In fact, the social club was combined with the Synagogue; and the varied activities of the social club such as dancing classes, card parties, musical comedies and many other purely secular social activities, were introduced.

The Temple Center has now been in existence long enough to enable us to take stock of its contribution to the life of the Synagogue. In fact, such surveys have been made. The findings have not at all justified the early enthusiastic claims which were made for the Temple Center.

1. In the larger congregations the Center does not seem to attract the members of the Temple families. It appeals largely to the unaffiliated Jews of the community—principally those within the immediate vicinity of the Temple. While this in itself is not undesirable, the fact remains that the Temple Center is not a Temple Center but a neighborhood settlement. It does not serve the families which are affiliated with the Temple and who should be the primary concern of any Temple.

2. Many of the members of Liberal congregations belong to social clubs of their own and the Temple can not compete with these clubs in the realm of entertainment and recreation. At best it can urge upon them additional social activities for which they have no need.

3. The crowding of many secular activities into the life of a congregation frequently causes men to lose sight of the real purposes of a religious institution. The voice of the Synagogue is drowned out in the midst of the tumult and noise of many activities which can be carried on as well, if not better, elsewhere.

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6. The time, money and energy expended in carrying on an extensive Center program are inordinately great and are a heavy tax upon the Rabbis of a congregation. Many Temples have sought to solve their problem by engaging the services of a director of Temple activities. Such an office however, does not absolve the Rabbis of all responsibility for the activities which go on in the congregation and he is constrained to devote much time and thought to them—thought and time which should be devoted to his specific religious functions and to his studies. In many congregations the Rabbi has been forced to become a practical manager instead of a religious guide and teacher.

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(Continued on Page 18)

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Jewish community life has reached a point where it should be departmentalized. Not every worthy Jewish activity needs to be carried on under the roof of the Synagogue. There is room in a well organized Jewish community for Community Centers, Young Men's Hebrew Associations, Young Women's Hebrew Associations, Jewish Art Leagues, Jewish Theatre, Guilds, Jewish Social Clubs, etc., etc. The Synagogue ought to concentrate upon those basic community needs which have from its inception been its particular province—religious inspiration and religious education. Whatever energies the Synagogue can command ought to be applied to the development of its educational system, to the improvement of its educational curriculum, to the elevation of the standard of its religious instructors, to the extension of its educational field, so as to include not alone the religious education of children and youths but also of adults. The congregation should likewise apply itself to the ennoblement of its religious services and to the task of applying collectively and individually the prophetic message of the Synagogue to the life of the community as a whole and the individual members thereof.

Whatever extra-pulpit lectures are held in the Temple building should have a direct bearing upon these fundamental purposes of the Synagogue. There already exist in every large community sufficient agencies—forums, noonday meetings, evening courses at colleges, etc., for the discussion of secular subjects. The religious institution dissipates its energies when it duplicates the work of these agencies.

All in all, the Temple should aim to express its essential genius and not to cater to the varied and conflicting tastes of its membership. It should devote itself to quality rather than to quantity. It means nothing to Judaism or to the life of a Jewish community if the precincts of a Temple are crowded with people coming for entertainments which can be supplied to them as well, if not better, in theatres, moving picture places, dance halls, social clubs, etc. A few souls inspired in the Temple to seek the higher things of life, a few Jews taught loyalty to the sacred ideals of Israel, a few men sent out into the community as representatives of the best in Jewish life, are a greater triumph by far for the Synagogue than multitudes who may have been receiving entertainment and amusement within its halls.

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SYNAGOGUE CENTERS NEEDED?

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