



USCJ Commission on Community and Covenant in the Twenty-First Century

**Report to the Board of
Directors
The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism**

December 4, 2016

Preface

The genius of traditional Judaism is its refusal to be reduced to a single value, an isolated principle, or a flattened vision. Depth and texture come from integrating multiple perspectives into a three-dimensional composite that is greater than any individual component. And so it is with our tradition.

Conservative/Masorti Judaism, like all traditional Judaism before it, understands that Torah thrives best when it integrates fidelity into our understanding of God's will with contemporary expressions of the best of human thriving. Rather than reducing life to either/or, we stand with the prophets of Israel and the rabbinic sages of every age insisting that God speaks not only through our sacred texts but also through the living community. Both of these are the voice of the living God. Doing the hard work of keeping the two in conversation is where Torah most thrives and where Judaism lives.

In our time, the great challenge and opportunity is the growing welcome of Jews and Judaism as valued members of the human family. As our exclusion has shrunk, we find ourselves sharing work, neighborhoods, values and interests with the broader community. How we navigate a robust Judaism in the mode of freedom is a new challenge for us as a people and for our tradition. One of its primary manifestations is that a significant number of Jews and non-Jews now fall in love, marry, and seek to create families together. Many of those families will turn to Judaism for wisdom to live fuller lives. And we must be there to share the light of Torah, love of God, and the practice of *mitzvot* with them. We must welcome them and draw them close.

In opening ourselves to these questing people, we manifest the traditional values of loving our neighbors, of being a light to the nations, and of walking humbly with our God. In opening the doors of our kehillot, and in letting families in all their diversity know that they are welcome through our words and deeds, we benefit not only these seeking families but also ourselves. They too manifest the divine image in unique and precious ways that will make our communities and our spiritual life richer and better. They will add to Torah in ways that will make it even greater.

This Report is not the end of the process, nor should it be viewed in isolation. In every age, great Jewish sages risked welcoming expanding circles of people, making Judaism stronger, more supple, and more vital. In our age, we are called to do the same. May the One who gave our ancestors the courage to embrace the mixed multitudes (for their good and for our own) inspire us to show the Torah's face of welcome, inclusion, and wisdom.

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USCJ Commission on Community and Covenant in the Twenty-First Century

The USCJ Commission on Community and Covenant met between June and November 2016 to consider issues related to Standard V of USCJ's Standards for Congregational Practice. These issues center on the definition of membership in a *kehilla* but spiral out to include issues of welcoming, inclusion, and engagement of twenty-first century families.

The final report of our work begins with an introduction to the Commission. It then presents our recommendations, including proposed new language for Standard V (Membership), recommendations concerning organizational policies and cultural practices, and recommended action items. The report is organized into eight sections and also includes an appendix with background information from research and practice.

Outline of Report

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1. COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Commission intentionally included a cross-section of Conservative Judaism, including lay leaders, rabbis, researchers, and institutional leaders, while also representing a diversity of age, gender, background and geography.

Ned Gladstein (Chair): International Vice-President - The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) and Congregation Agudath Israel, Caldwell, New Jersey

Rabbi Stewart Vogel (Vice-Chair): Rabbinical Assembly (RA) Representative and Senior Rabbi, Temple Aliyah, Woodland Hills, California

Lloyd Fishman: President, The Orangetown Jewish Center, Orangetown, New York

Rabbi Felipe Goodman: RA Representative and Rabbi, Temple Beth Sholom, Las Vegas, Nevada

Rabbi Adam Greenwald: Director - Miller Introduction to Judaism Program, American Jewish University, Los Angeles, California

Rabbi David Hoffman: Vice-Chancellor and Chief Advancement Officer - The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, New York

Norman Kahn: Chair - USCJ Kehilla Strengthening and Transformation Committee and Congregation Beth Tzedec, Toronto, Canada

Stephen Lachter: Senior Trainer - Keruv Initiative of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs and Adas Israel Congregation, Washington D.C.

Danielle Leopold: United Synagogue Youth Alumna (USY)

Rabbi Annie Lewis: Former Assistant Rabbi - Germantown Jewish Centre, Germantown, Pennsylvania

Naomi Schaefer Riley: Journalist and Temple Israel Center, White Plains, New York

Ed Rudofsky: General Counsel - USCJ, New York, New York

Dr. Amy Sales: Associate Director - Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts

Rabbi Michael Siegel: Senior Rabbi - Anshe Emet Synagogue, Chicago, Illinois

Rabbi Susan Tandler: Bnai Zion Congregation, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Dana Sharon Winer: Past-President - Congregation Agudas Achim, Austin, Texas

Margo Gold (Ex-Officio): USCJ International President

Rabbi Steven Wernick (Ex-Officio): USCJ Chief Executive Officer

Leslie Lichter (Ex-Officio): USCJ Chief Innovation and Implementation Officer

Rabbi Joshua Rabin (Staff Member): USCJ Director of Innovation

2. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

In March 2016, the Board of Directors of The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) authorized the creation of the USCJ Commission on Community and Covenant in the Twenty-First Century (the "Commission") consisting of USCJ stakeholders and thought leaders from centers of energy identified with Conservative Judaism. USCJ chose to embark upon this work because of the changing makeup of our affiliated *kehillot* and the increased need for USCJ to act as a trusted partner in relationship with them.

The Commission was asked to present policy recommendations to the USCJ Board of Directors relating to Standard V (Membership) of the USCJ Standards of Congregational Practice. The Commission was also asked to recommend programs for use by USCJ affiliated *kehillot* wishing to make changes to their bylaws and other policies relating to access to and membership in the Jewish community in light of the Commission's policy recommendations.

The Commission engaged in this work with humility and with respect for the diversity of experiences and emotions in our communities. Research indicates that USCJ *kehillot* need more resources from their umbrella organization to help them work with twenty-first century families. Research also indicates that successful change in a *kehilla* must include partnership between clergy and other leaders.

The Commission presented its Interim Report to the USCJ Board of Directors on September 11, 2016. This Final Report presents the Commission's policy recommendation for language for Standard V of USCJ's Congregational Standards, while also mapping a pathway for how better to serve *kehillot* in working with interfaith families. The report provides the USCJ Board of Directors and the General Assembly of Kehillot information about the policy changes proposed by the Commission and next steps for engaging this work in *kehillot*.

3. RECOMMENDATION FOR STANDARD V

The main charge of the commission was to focus on Standard V of [USCJ's Standards for Congregational Practice](#),* which deals with membership in our *kehillot*. It was the immediate consensus of the Commission that the language of Standard V should change. The Commission members pointed out that the new standard language should signal how *kehillot* can place less emphasis on “membership” as an operating concept and place greater emphasis on engagement and participation. In particular, it was pointed out that Standard V is the only congregational standard that defines *who* is part of a community, as opposed to *what* the congregational community does.

The proposed new language reflects a vision of a fully engaged *kehillah*, while also acknowledging and supporting the independence of *kehillot* to define membership.

CURRENT LANGUAGE

Standard V – Membership

Standard: Only persons of the Jewish faith, as determined by the rabbi, may be admitted to membership in the congregation.

[Congregations are encouraged to welcome the participation by non-Jewish spouses and children of a Jewish member of the congregation in rites, ceremonies and functions in accordance with Standard IV; however, this is not intended and should not be construed as permitting non-Jews to become members of congregations. Recognition of patrilineal descent as a definition of Jewish status is prohibited by the Standards of Rabbinic Practice of the Rabbinical Assembly. Accordingly, patrilineal descent is not to be recognized by the congregation as a basis for membership, nor may the congregation engage clergy who recognize patrilineal descent.]

PROPOSED NEW LANGUAGE

Standard V – Membership

Standard: USCJ supports every affiliated *kehillah* in developing its own criteria for membership.

[USCJ, as a valued and trusted partner, is committed to assisting vibrant and caring Jewish communities in fully engaging the spiritual gifts of all community members. We celebrate the diversity among and within our kehillot and encourage the engagement of all those who seek a spiritual and communal home in an authentic and dynamic Jewish setting. We call on all of our kehillot to open their doors wide to all who want to enter. Let us strive to make the words of Isaiah a reality in our time: “My House will be called a house of prayer for all people” (Isaiah 56:7).]

* USCJ's Standards for Congregational Practice can be found by visiting <http://uscj.org/LeadingKehilla/Leadership/StandardsforCongregationalPractice.aspx>.

This policy recommendation was approved by the Commission, vetted with key stakeholders including the Rabbinical Assembly, and presented to and approved by the Kehilla Strengthening and Transformation (KST) Committee and the USCJ Executive Committee, for the USCJ Board of Directors' consideration. Additionally, the language also aligns with USCJ's Strategic Plan and its Communications, Marketing and Branding initiative.

The Commission recognizes the potential impact of this change in Standard V. The current Standard draws a clear line between those eligible for membership and those who are not. It is important to note that the proposed change in the USCJ Standards of Congregational Practice does *not* require any *kehillah* to make any changes in its current policies concerning eligibility for membership. The goal of the proposed standard is to empower *kehillot* to determine their unique membership needs. The Commission recognizes that there will be implications for both the rabbi and lay leadership in *kehillot* that choose to extend membership to individuals beyond their current definitions, and that even within a given community some may call for change while others may wish to maintain the status quo.

Because the proposed Standard V does not draw clear lines, it will be up to the leadership of each community to assess its needs and to develop new procedures for making decisions and for bearing the responsibility of those decisions, perhaps even on a case by case basis. The relationship between the rabbi and lay leadership will be critical in developing these new procedures.

4. COMMUNITY AND COVENANT IN OUR KEHILLOT

“In the beginning... the earth was unformed and void...and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day and the darkness God called Night” (Genesis 1:1-3).

Some form of the word “to separate” appears five times in the first chapter of the Torah. The foundational act of Creation is one of dividing. Separating literally redeems humanity from undifferentiated chaos. As God separates the waters below from the land, the Earth and the Sea are born. It is by means of the act of separation through which discrete entities

– *with their own unique identities* – emerge. In order for something to exist, it must have boundaries that distinguish it from other things. Boundaries, for the Torah, are a source of blessing (See Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 1-20).

For the Jewish People to exist as a discrete entity, there must be boundaries that allow “this” group to be distinguishable from other groups. Michael Rosenak writes that “peoplehood” remains an essential paradigm for Jewish life because it has the “power to blur the great differences among Jews and still somehow hold them together, despite the variety of ways in which Jews discern themselves as Jews; despite the different degrees and kinds of their commitment; and despite the varied ways Jews see “the other,” both Jew and Gentile” (*Covenant and Community*, p.181).

All of this is background for the Commission’s affirmation of the importance of boundaries for the continued vitality of the Jewish people. Moreover, regarding the question of “Who is a Jew?” and, as to the process of how a person enters into the Covenant of the Jewish people, this Commission acknowledges that these questions are addressed by the Rabbinical Assembly’s Standards of Rabbinic Practice and the *teshuvot* approved by the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards.

Indeed, this Commission began with the challenge presented by a person who is part of a synagogue community and does not self-identify as a member of the Covenant – that is to say, as a Jew. This person might not be interested in conversion or this person might still be on his or her journey to becoming Jewish, or this person might simply never have thought about the possibility of entering into the Jewish Covenant.

While such an individual has not made a commitment to membership within the Jewish people, this person is an important part of a synagogue community. He or she may have children being educated in the synagogue school; she or he may have a Jewish partner who is part of this community; or he or she may be spiritually searching and attending services or synagogue events.

The question before this Committee and all of our *kehillot* is: How might we create a more meaningful space for individuals in our communities who are not Jewish and honor their contributions to our communities? A person who is not a member of the Covenant and yet is a part of our community is more than a participant or onlooker. He or she is invested in some way in the well-being of the synagogue community and shares a commitment to “this” particular community with the Jewish members of the synagogue.

Membership, as it is being considered, for such a non-Jewish person would be a welcoming gesture communicating that, in fact, they were seen and their involvement was appreciated and valued. Synagogue membership – understood in these terms – would acknowledge their *de facto* involvement and investment in the communal life of the synagogue community *even as non-Jews*.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

From the opening retreat, the Commission felt that *kehillot* have great room for improvement in how they engage interfaith families, yet the Commission also did not want to minimize the well-founded communal and halakhic concerns that many community members have about too much change. Many of the obstacles to better engagement of interfaith families emerge because of deep anxieties Jews have about the Jewish past and future. Moreover, the Commission has been sensitive to the relationship between clergy, professional and lay leadership in our *kehillot*, both in terms of the makeup of the Commission itself, and in terms of our recommendations on the essential conditions of creating a healthy congregational process.

These concerns led the Commission to place an emphasis on “community,” participation in Jewish life, and “covenant,” acceptance of the rights and responsibilities of God’s pact with the Jewish people. Conservative Judaism maintains the position that we should value and honor those people who are a part of the Covenant, but that does not mean we should not also affirm the ways in which supportive non-Jewish partners and non-Jews can and should be a part of a twenty-first century spiritual vision. Below are the key findings of the Commission concerning organizational policies and cultural practices.

Organizational Policies

The Commission developed an interview protocol and spoke with representatives of Conservative and Reform *kehillot* of various sizes and locations that had gone through a process of changing their policies and elevating their culture. These interviews yielded two key findings:

- Congregations that are successful in this work follow a process that is *indigenous* to the community culture. Some congregations felt that they needed grassroots support from community members before making any changes, whereas others felt that the majority of the change management work came through the leadership. Failure to create a process that reflects the community’s culture only leads to resistance.
- All of the *kehillot* emphasized the importance of rabbinic and lay partnership in making successful change. No policy change can be imposed by the staff or by the board. Rather, it emerges from aligned rabbinic, professional and lay support.

Based on the above findings, the Commission emphasizes that congregations must address issues of both policy and culture, yet order these in a way that suits the community. For example, one *kehillah* felt that its members would agree to change the bylaws only if they saw evidence of culture change, and its task force spent several years doing house meetings and listening campaigns before changing the policy. In another *kehillah*, the rabbi and board knew that if they began their process with a policy change, it would send a strong signal to the membership that deeper changes were on the way. In both cases, congregational change was successful, but the leadership went about it in two very different ways. As a result, USCJ’s work with *kehillot* requires that the process be flexible enough to reflect the community’s culture.

Cultural Practices

Culture is the most difficult thing for any community to change. But it may also be the most important. All congregations send implicit messages—through language, rituals and education—about what the community values. Congregations that want to be more welcoming to interfaith families (regardless of whether they change membership policies) might consider doing an inventory of communal life. What would a person experience when walking into this community for the first time? What would that person experience by filling out a membership application? From the way a person is greeted on Shabbat to the way questions about High Holiday seating are answered by a receptionist in the office, *kehillot* may be welcoming people in or unwittingly turning them away. The language used in written and spoken messages by clergy, lay leaders, and other representatives of the synagogue have the potential to do great help and great harm.

Communities concerned with welcoming those of other faiths, of no faith, and those who are moving toward conversion could consider a variety of options. As a first step, the Commission focused on the importance of creating spaces where interfaith families can discuss their religious journeys and the experience they had within our communities. Once we better understand these experiences, *kehillot* should consider creating specific opportunities around lifecycle events that would do more to welcome these families as well as offer them greater opportunity to participate in community life. Our educational offerings for adults and children could also be enhanced to reflect the diverse backgrounds and goals of the people we serve, to be proactive in explaining the meaning behind our religious observances and ritual practices, and to explain the halakhic reasons for boundaries around participation in these observances and practices.

6. IMPLEMENTATION: OUR THEORY OF CONGREGATIONAL CHANGE

USCJ understands the traditional designation of *Kehilla Kedosha*, a sacred community, as the foundation of its mission and vision. The power, importance and holy nature of the congregation centers on the strength of the Jewish community it houses. Much depends on the relationship between the lay leadership and the rabbi. We strongly recommend that our congregations adopt a covenantal model that underscores the sacred nature of the synagogue's work and the distinctive nature of the roles that different leaders play. While the congregation's culture and its strategic and spiritual approaches are responsibilities fully shared by the full leadership, there are areas that are separate and apart. It is vital that all parties respect the boundaries of their duties. In particular, the rabbi is the *Mara D'atra* and serves as the final authority on any matter of *halakha* and status informed by the decisions of the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards. While there will always be overlap between rabbinic, professional and lay leaders, there must be mutual respect of roles and boundaries to create communities worthy of being called a *Kehilla Kedosha*.

The information gleaned from congregational interviews and the congregational survey conducted in May 2016 led the Commission to develop a theory of congregational change that forms the basis of how USCJ should design a capacity building process for working with member *kehillot*. Most importantly, the research revealed that if USCJ wants to be a trusted partner in strengthening and transforming *kehillot*, the work with *kehillot* must focus on grassroots training and organizing, as opposed to centralized directives.

The capacity building process the Commission envisions is based on four actions in a virtuous cycle of engagement aimed at creating new pathways and entry-points to elevate the level of intentionality in a *kehilla* to engage twenty-first century families:

- **Welcoming:** The first step in transformative change involves putting the *kehilla's* communications materials and outreach strategies under the microscope and examining the language used to describe the community and the methods employed to create low-barrier entry-points for families who otherwise would not feel welcomed.
- **Honoring:** If a *kehilla* wants to better engage families where one partner is not Jewish, then the congregation needs to affirm how every member of the community defines his or her relationship to the Jewish covenant. More specifically, the *kehilla* needs to help non-Jewish partners feel that they can make a contribution to the community's mission and vision, while also ensuring that those partners who wish to explore conversion can do so in a supportive process.
- **Deepening:** A successful process must value the hearing of individual and family stories to develop a better understanding of how people come to and enter Jewish community. In particular, community organizing techniques such as one-on-one meetings and house meetings will play a critical role in helping the community develop a shared language.
- **Transforming:** The previous steps set the stage for the congregation to make structural changes, to heighten people's sensitivities to the needs of the community, and to prepare the way for culture change. As with any virtuous cycle, if a *kehilla* transforms its culture, it becomes easier to welcome, honor and deepen relationships in the future.

The above process will form the basis for the action program outlined below. Each action word (welcoming, honoring, deepening, transforming) aligns with a specific task force that USCJ will help the community organize, and with specific assessments and resources. The program will conclude with the *kehilla* writing "Community Commitments," which will frame in positive terms its vision for working with twenty-first century families in their community.

7. ACTION ITEMS: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The Commission recommends that resources provided by USCJ to member *kehillot* cover structural and organizational changes that can be taught through training as well as culture changes that must be cultivated over time. Furthermore, the Commission recommends that USCJ provide resources that reflect differences among *kehillot* in terms of their level of readiness to engage in transformative work.

The Commission recommends that three kinds of resources be developed through the KST Department, each reflecting a different way for USCJ to create touch points with *kehillot*.

- **New Capacity Building Program:** The majority of the time following the conclusion of the Commission's work should be spent on developing and testing the new capacity building program for *kehillot* through the KST Department. Similar to other programs offered under the banner of Sulam Leadership, this program should allow cohorts of *kehillot* to work with USCJ staff on a 6-12 month process to think deeply about how they serve interfaith families. The capacity building program should utilize some of the key practices taught in Sulam for Strategic Planners, with a special focus on working with interfaith families. Practices include visioning exercises, congregational assessments, text study, and case studies of thriving congregations. The process should end with the leadership team creating "Community Commitments" for the *kehilla* to frame how twenty-first century families are part of a twenty-first century synagogue.
- **Single Training Module for Kehilla Relationship Managers (KRM):** Not every *kehilla* is ready to participate in an intensive capacity building program, and thus a single module needs to be created that a KRM can facilitate with *kehilla* leadership in 45-60 minutes. The opening material of the above mentioned capacity building program should be designed in such a way that KRMs can do this module as a single training opportunity. The module should combine survey data, text study, and community conversation. This approach is similar to the way USCJ currently utilizes the curriculum for Sulam for Current Leaders (SCL), wherein any KRM can teach a *kehilla* several of the units from the curriculum, and *kehillot* can choose to participate in a longer and more intensive process when they are ready.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Throughout the Commission's work, the consensus was that USCJ should not re-create resources developed by other organizations working in this area but rather should seek complementary strategic partnerships. While the bulk of the forthcoming work will involve creating the leadership development program mentioned above, potential strategic partnerships should be explored with organizations such as the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs Keruv Initiative, the Miller Introduction to Judaism program at the American Jewish University, Big Tent Judaism, the Shalom Hartman Institute, and others. These partnerships are intended to augment, rather than replace, the core work that will be created by the staff at USCJ.

8. Next Steps

The Commission recognizes that changing Standard V may result in new issues relating to *kehilla* leadership, stewardship and governance that could have impact beyond USCJ itself. These questions are outside the scope of the Commission's work, yet they should be examined by USCJ in the coming months in partnership with other stakeholders and organizations identified with Conservative Judaism.

The next step for USCJ is to engage and inform member *kehillot* about the Commission's process and report and to solicit further feedback. This step includes an introduction to the work of the Commission at the December meeting of the General Assembly of USCJ Kehillot, informational sessions for *kehilla* leadership, and a vote on the recommended policy changes in March 2017.

The action items will be developed in 2017, and will play a key role in the initiatives launched and highlighted at the USCJ Convention in Atlanta, Georgia in December 2017. Due to the Commission's work, the seeds have been planted for transformative work in member *kehillot* in the near future.

Appendix How We Were Informed

The work of the Commission was informed by original research (a survey of USCJ *kehillot*) and prior experience (Federation of Jewish Men's Club's Keruv Initiative).

Survey of USCJ Kehillot on Interfaith Families

Following the Commission's formation, USCJ conducted a survey on the role of interfaith families in member *kehillot*. Just over half of *kehillot* responded to the survey. Here are a few key findings:

- 76% of the responding *kehillot* allow for an interfaith family to have a household membership, which means that their membership policies significantly diverge from the current membership policy of USCJ.
- 67% of respondents said their *kehilla* permits a child with a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother who has not converted to enroll in the congregation's preschool.
- 75% of respondents said that their *kehilla* permits children with a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother who has not converted to enroll in the congregational school prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Note that the new Standard V language was developed, in part, to align the central organization's policies with the policies that grew organically in its constituent *kehillot*.

The survey also showed that only a minority of *kehillot* are making specific efforts to engage interfaith families.

- 19% of responding *kehillot* have a special section of their website describing how they make efforts to include interfaith families; 81% do not.
- 28% offer programming related to issues facing interfaith families (e.g., the "December Dilemma").
- While a number of outstanding organizations currently provide resources to synagogues for working with interfaith families, 25% of responding *kehillot* have participated in the Keruv Initiative of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs. In addition, 17% have participated in initiatives of Big Tent Judaism (formerly the Jewish Outreach Institute), 8% in initiatives of InterfaithFamily.com, 21% in initiatives of their local federation, and 8% in USCJ's Family Engagement Cohort.

As a result, while certain policies and practices of member *kehillot* are changing to reflect the makeup of the Jewish community, a significant gap exists in terms of maximizing the full engagement possibilities of interfaith families in our *kehillot*.

Lessons from the Keruv Initiative of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs

Within Conservative Judaism, the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs (FJMC) has been the organizational leader in the area of outreach to interfaith couples for over a decade through their Keruv Initiative. Many lessons can be learned from their work.

Working with rabbis, through rabbinic think tanks, and officers and congregants, through Keruv Consultant Trainings, the FJMC successfully encouraged individual kehillot to adopt programs to engage interfaith couples, thus creating a foundation for new Jewish families. The FJMC also published a number of books, pamphlets and materials to be used in dealing with membership, marketing and communications, and staff training. The Keruv Initiative also stressed the importance of welcoming the "supportive non-Jewish partner/ spouse" as part of the formula for supporting engaged Jewish families.

The most important lesson taken from the FJMC's work is that rabbinic engagement and partnership with lay leadership are each essential to successful culture change in kehillot. Rabbinic engagement requires buy-in by lay leadership and support from the officers, board of directors, and executive committee. A team approach--with one or two consultants, lay leadership and staff, under the direction of the rabbi as *mara d'atra*--can change the culture of our kehillot and truly make them welcoming, engaging communities.

The FJMC has been a leader in the area of interfaith engagement for over a decade, yet there is much more that can be done. USCJ is well positioned, with resources and experience, to build upon work already done and expand the breadth and depth of engagement activities.