



**The Jewish Center  
Long Range Strategic Plan  
Committee Report**

August 2008

# The Jewish Center

## Long Range Strategic Plan

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## **I. Background**

The Jewish Center has enjoyed a proud and distinguished sixty-year history. With more than 700 member families, it is one of the fifty largest Conservative synagogues in the United States and the fourth largest in our United Synagogue Mid-Atlantic region. We have established a strong Jewish community in Princeton and offer a wide diversity of programs serving congregants at every stage of life. Yet like many synagogues, The Jewish Center now must address demographic and generational changes that compel re-examination of the core functions of a contemporary synagogue.

The Jewish Center has not adopted a formal and comprehensive strategic plan for many years. President Michael Feldstein and Past President Linda Grenis recognized the need for a clearer direction for The Jewish Center based upon a thorough assessment of congregational needs. The objectives for the process were identified as follows:

- Determine congregational priorities for resource investment
- Develop consensus among lay leadership and professional staff about key goals for synagogue
- Assess the staffing to determine whether it is structured properly to achieve organizational goals
- Ensure that new initiatives (capital campaigns, creation of new staff positions, introduction of new programs) are consistent with the real needs of the congregation
- Develop core values and mission of The Jewish Center
- Ensure that a planning process is implemented with long-term involvement from the professional staff, lay leadership, and the larger congregation.

It is the hope of our committee that this plan will be a living document that will help drive new initiatives over the next five years. We recognize that our staff and lay leaders are currently fully engaged in meeting the needs of the congregation. However, the new directions and programs

described herein are critical in ensuring continued success for The Jewish Center in facing existing challenges and the changes expected over the next five years.

The committee members were:

Marc Citron/Richard Fishbane (Co-Chairs), Rabbi Adam Feldman, Michael Feldstein (President), Gil Gordon (Vice President-Administration), Linda Grenis (Past President), Bernard Abramson (Co-Chair, Religious Affairs), Judy Leopold, Judy Levine (Co-Chair-Arts and Cultural), Linda Schwimmer (Recording Secretary), Josh Zinder (Co-Chair, House)

## **II. Methodology**

**Spring 2007-** Executive Committee discussions about the need for a formal strategic planning process followed by off-site retreats conducted for the Executive Committee and professional staff to initiate discussions about shared values and goals for The Jewish Center.

**Summer 2007-** Long Range Planning Chairs were appointed and a committee was formed. Meetings began in July, 2007.

**Fall 2007-** A web survey was fielded in September, 2007 to assess congregational priorities for resource development and possible mission statements for The Jewish Center. 157 congregants representing all Jewish Center demographic segments responded and the survey results were used as a foundation for plan development.

**Winter 2008-**The committee reached consensus on a mission statement, core values and the key seven priority goals listed as follows;

- **Ensure that our nursery and religious schools offer outstanding educational programs**
- **Develop and strengthen Jewish identity and involvement for pre-teens and teens**
- **Provide opportunities for lifelong learning**
- **Encourage membership and participation of young families**
- **Increase programming to meet the needs of and engage the baby-boom generation (ages 50-65) and seniors (over age 65)**
- **Serve the larger Jewish and secular community with projects that reflect our heritage of Tikkun Olam**
- **Encourage more members to experience Shabbat and holidays at home and at The Jewish Center**

Sub-committees were formed to develop more specific programs and action steps for each of the seven priority goals. Presentations were made to the Board and Executive Committee to update them on progress.

**Spring 2008**-Subcommittee reports on each of the seven goals were submitted to the committee for review. The committee recognized some facilities improvement needs and agreed to recommend a more formal evaluation of the possible need for facilities expansion and improvement. These findings were then presented to the Executive Committee. Additionally, work was completed on plan drafting and presentation.

**Summer 2008** – Review and tying together all sub-committee reports to define and coordinate recommendations. Revamping of a Lifelong Learning committee to investigate best options to achieve our goals in that area.

### III. Demographics and Research Findings

The Long Range Plan is based on demographic and opinion information gathered from our survey of The Jewish Center’s membership and from member data. These are described in this section.

It should be noted we have been unable to identify any source of detailed demographic information about the Jewish population of Princeton and surrounding areas. There is some limited data at the state level but not at the county level or below.

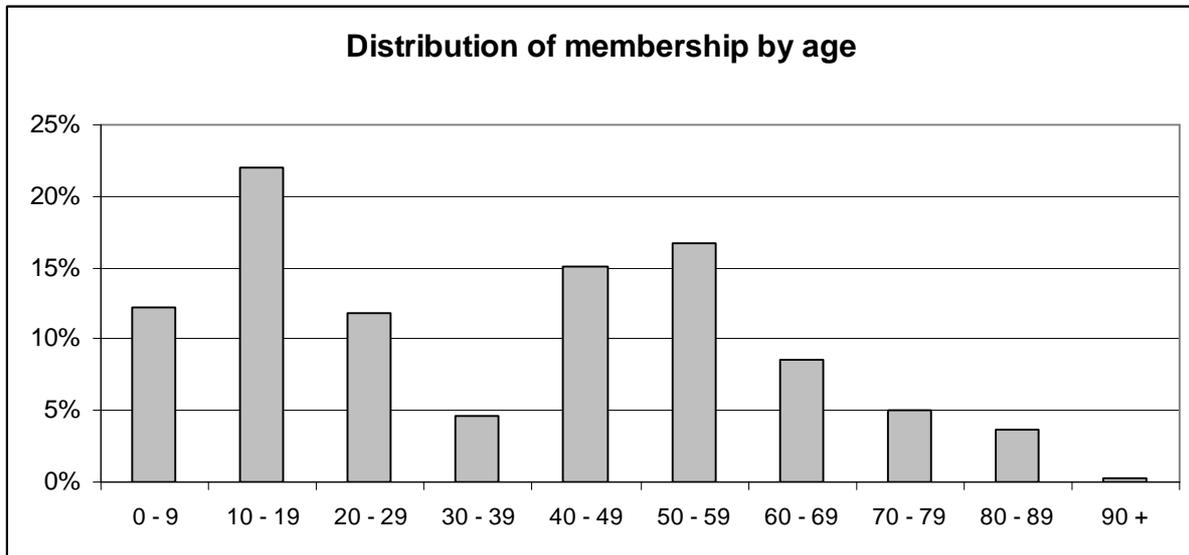
#### 3.1 Membership of The Jewish Center

The total TJC membership is approximately 2,260 in approximately 720 households.

Analysis of TJC’s member data shows the following age distribution by gender:

Age	Male	Female	Total	%
0 - 4	39	37	76	4%
5 - 9	94	91	185	9%
10 - 14	130	114	244	11%
15 - 19	124	100	224	11%
20 - 24	91	85	176	8%
25 - 29	40	36	76	4%
30 - 34	11	16	27	1%
35 - 39	36	35	71	3%
40 - 44	55	78	133	6%
45 - 49	91	98	189	9%
50 - 54	98	103	201	9%
55 - 59	70	86	156	7%
60 - 64	59	57	116	5%
65 - 69	32	33	65	3%
70 - 74	29	21	50	2%
75 - 79	21	36	57	3%
80 - 84	29	22	51	2%
85 - 89	15	12	27	1%
90 - 94	4	3	7	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>1063</b>	<b>2131</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table is derived from the dates of birth given by members. Approximately 95% of members supplied dates and hence the distribution of the whole membership by age can be assumed to follow the same pattern. The distribution may be viewed as a histogram:



As one would expect our membership is strongly oriented towards children up to college age and their parents. We see a drop in membership after college age and at the age when one can presume children have left home. The low representation of thirty-year olds is considered typical for most American synagogues.

### 3.2 The Long Range Planning Survey

The Long Range Planning committee issued a survey to all members to determine the issues that members feel are most important for the community and the priorities for action. Over 160 survey responses were returned although not every respondent completed every question. While responses were received from a broad cross-section of the TJC community, congregants who are more deeply involved at The Jewish Center were predictably over-represented (this is the pattern in all congregational research)..

The survey is attached as an appendix.

#### Profile of Survey Respondents

We asked several initial questions to obtain a profile of the respondents. Here are the results:

**1. How long you have been a member?**

3 years or less	17	11%
4-15 years	66	42%
16-25 years	34	22%
More than 25 years	<u>40</u>	<u>26%</u>
	157	100%

**2. Please tell us a little about your children...**

Have children at home---of age to be in TJC nursery school or religious school	62	38%
Have children at home---too old to be in religious school	23	14%
Children grown and living on their own	70	43%
Do not have children	<u>8</u>	<u>5%</u>
	163	100%

**3. What is your involvement with The Jewish Center?**

I am currently involved---either on Board of Directors or on committees or as an active TJC volunteer	70	45%
I have been involved in the past on the Board or committees or as an active volunteer but not currently	47	30%
I am not currently and have not previously served on the Board or committees or as an active volunteer	<u>40</u>	<u>26%</u>
	157	100%

**3a. In the last twelve months, please indicate whether you participated in..**

Adult education class	70	50%
Social/cultural event (e.g. Cantor's concert or evening of Sephardic music)	95	68%
Purim Carnival	48	35%
Friday night Shabbat service	106	76%
Wednesday or Sunday morning minyan	53	38%

**4. How often do you attend services?**

Primarily high holidays, and Shabbat services only for special occasions	38	24%
Shabbat services or midweek minyanim 1-8 times per year	30	19%
Shabbat services or midweek minyanim more than 8 times a year	<u>88</u>	<u>56%</u>
	156	100%

It can be seen that respondents typically:

- have been members for some years
- have children
- are or have been active in TJC governance or volunteering
- participate in TJC educational, cultural, or religious activities.

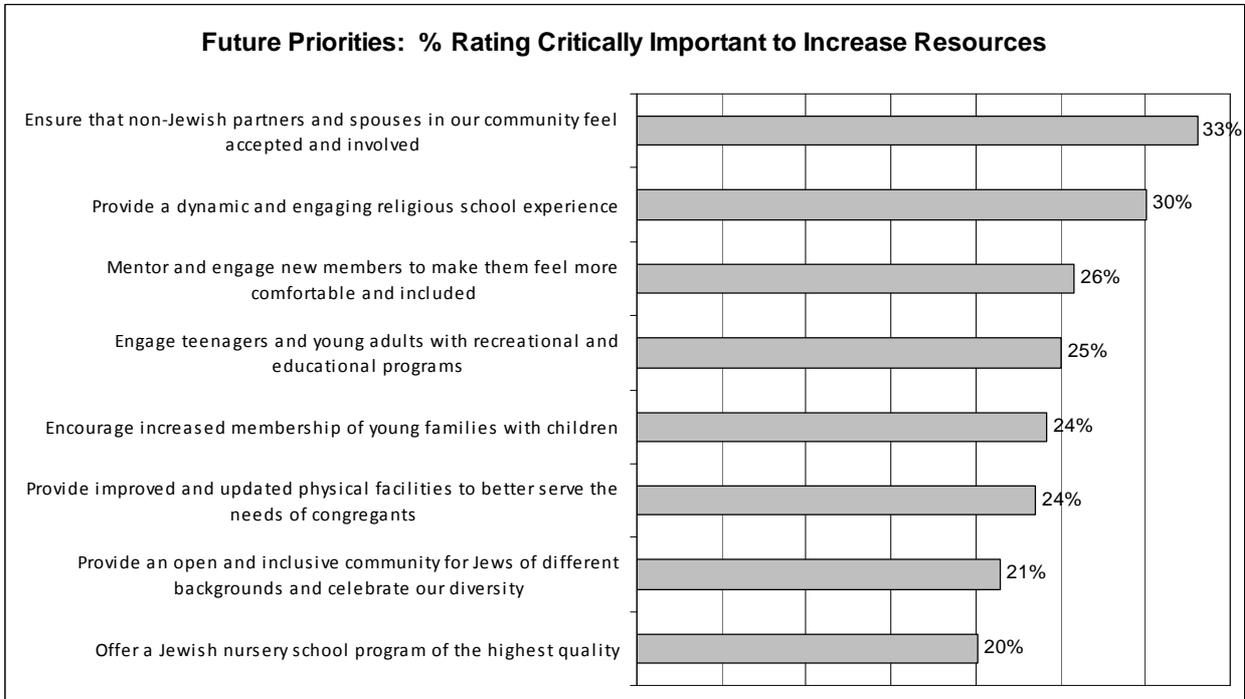
### Priorities

The survey asked members to evaluate statements which best reflected their view of the priorities that TJC should adopt for investing its resources (staffing and funding).

Statements were each scored on an 8 point scale from most to least desirable. The table below lists the statements that received the highest number of ‘most desirable / critically important to invest more resources’ scores, with cross-tabulation by member profile:

	All	Currently Active		Children in School?		Service Attendance	
		Active	Not Active	Yes	Older or none	>8 per year	<8 per year
Ensure that non-Jewish partners and spouses in our community feel accepted and involved	33%	26%	39%	31%	35%	28%	40%
Provide a dynamic and engaging religious school experience	30%	29%	31%	41%	23%	32%	27%
Mentor and engage new members to make them feel more comfortable and included	26%	27%	25%	31%	24%	26%	25%
Engage teenagers and young adults with recreational and educational programs	25%	26%	24%	31%	22%	30%	19%
Encourage increased membership of young families with children	24%	31%	18%	19%	26%	28%	20%
Provide improved and updated physical facilities to better serve the needs of congregants	24%	31%	17%	26%	22%	30%	15%
Provide an open and inclusive community for Jews of different backgrounds and celebrate our diversity	21%	17%	25%	26%	20%	15%	30%
Offer a Jewish nursery school program of the highest quality	20%	26%	16%	21%	19%	24%	15%

For clarity these can be shown in histogram form:



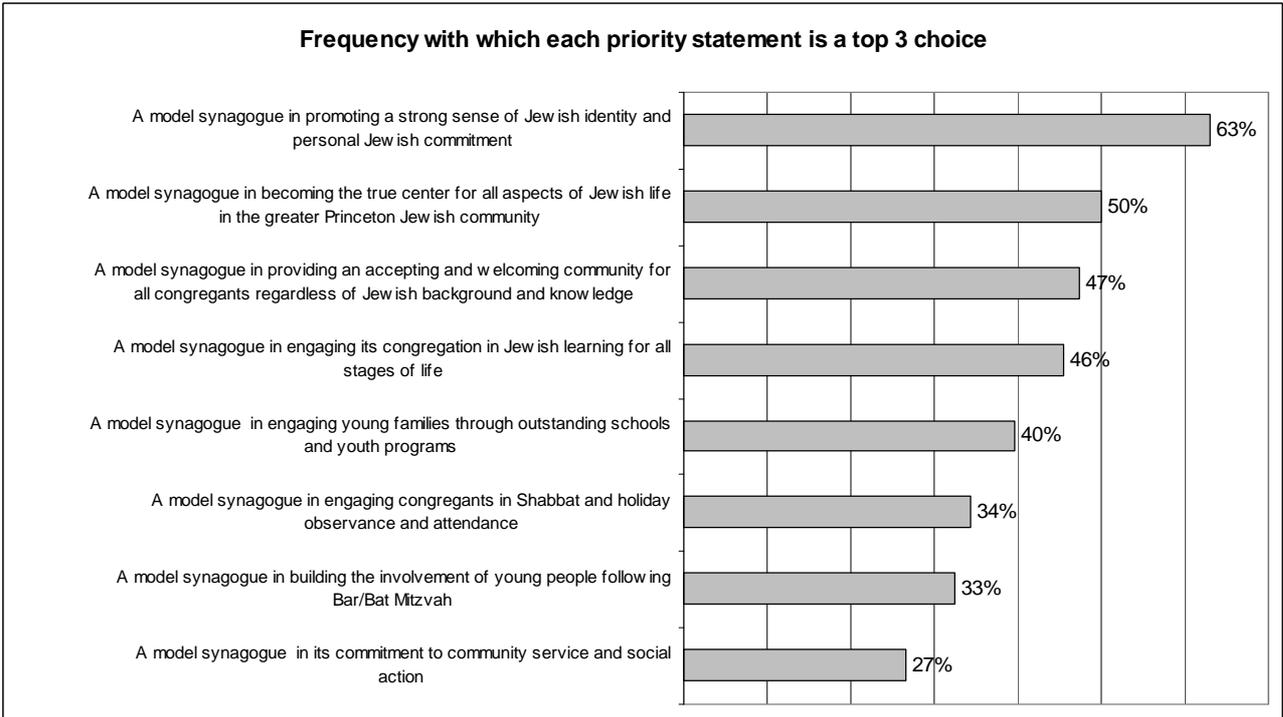
## Vision

The survey then asked respondents to rank a series of statements reflecting their personal hope for what TJC should become: a vision for the future.

The table below lists the numbers of respondents who selected each statement as one of their top three choices. Cross-tabulation by member profile is given also:

The Jewish Center should become:		Currently Active		Children in School?		Service Attendance	
		Active	Not Active	Yes	Older or none	>8 per year	<8 per year
Base	154	70	84	61	98	88	66
A model synagogue in promoting a strong sense of Jewish identity and personal Jewish commitment	97 63%	46 66%	51 61%	37 61%	63 64%	58 66%	39 59%
A model synagogue in becoming the true center for all aspects of Jewish life in the greater Princeton Jewish community	77 50%	34 49%	43 51%	31 51%	49 50%	44 50%	33 50%
A model synagogue in providing an accepting and welcoming community for all congregants regardless of Jewish background and knowledge	73 47%	25 36%	48 57%	25 41%	50 51%	34 39%	39 59%
A model synagogue in engaging its congregation in Jewish learning for all stages of life	70 46%	38 54%	32 38%	24 39%	48 49%	42 48%	28 42%
A model synagogue in engaging young families through outstanding schools and youth programs	61 40%	31 44%	30 36%	29 48%	34 35%	35 40%	26 39%
A model synagogue in engaging congregants in Shabbat and holiday observance and attendance	53 34%	25 36%	28 33%	20 33%	34 35%	39 44%	14 21%
A model synagogue in building the involvement of young people following Bar/Bat Mitzvah	50 33%	19 27%	31 37%	16 26%	36 37%	33 38%	17 26%
A model synagogue in its commitment to community service and social action	41 27%	12 17%	29 35%	10 16%	31 32%	24 27%	17 26%

These are listed by popularity and can be viewed as a histogram:



All statements received some support and the data does not exclude any from further consideration.

#### **IV. Mission Statement**

*The Jewish Center's mission is to promote Jewish commitment and continuity through outstanding religious, educational, and community-building resources and programs.*

## V. Core Values

- *We are committed to building a vibrant Jewish community in the Princeton area.*
- *We are committed to providing a welcoming and accepting community for all regardless of Jewish background*
- *We are committed to encouraging active participation from all members of our congregation*
- *We are committed to helping new congregants and visitors feel welcome in The Jewish Center community*
- *We are committed to strengthen the connection of teenagers and young adults to Jewish values*
- *We are committed to build a community of learners comprised of congregants at all stages of life*
- *We are committed to support the state of Israel in word and deed.*
- *We are committed to serving the larger Jewish and secular community with projects that reflect our heritage of Tikkun Olam.*
- *We are committed to joyous and inspiring Shabbat and holiday observance*

## **VI. Goals/Action Plans**

In order to further illustrate the vision of this long-range plan, and support its implementation, the Long Range Planning Committee has developed what has become known as our “Pod Reports.” These are included in Appendices A.1 through A.7. Each such report was generated by the thoughtful consideration of teams including member(s) of the Long Range Planning committee and members of our professional staff and Board of Directors with experience and involvement in related areas. It should be noted that these plans are illustrative and preliminary, and the action plans contained in each plan are not in any order of priority. They are concepts that need to be further vetted by the appropriate lay leaders, staff, and congregation to confirm their utility in serving our core values, and the feasibility of their implementation based on funding, staffing, timing, and other factors. These concepts are intended to supplement and guide TJC’s activities, not to replace existing activities.

A philosophical background to the Pod Reports is that The Jewish Center can feel justifiably proud of its record of service to congregants and the high quality programs offered in many different areas. Nonetheless, The Jewish Center faces many of the challenges experienced by congregations everywhere. We struggle with engaging our young people, changing demographics, broadening participation, and creating a cohesive community. There is a need to re-evaluate the synagogue paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and develop some innovative models for various aspects of the contemporary synagogue. We must be bold in challenging some of our long-held assumptions and ensuring an even brighter future for The Jewish Center.

## VII. Underlying Themes

Through the work done by our priority goal subcommittees, we recognize that several themes transcend specific functional areas and affect all of our plans for the future:

1. Lifelong learning is a central goal that defines much of what we do at The Jewish Center. There is a need for more integration of educational programs currently undertaken in Nursery School, Summer Camp, Religious School, Family Education, Adult Education, Religious Affairs, 55 Plus, Jewish Center Women, Keruv, Youth etc. We need to look at a new structure possibly one supervised by a Director of Lifelong Learning (new position).
2. The Jewish Center must do a better job in engaging congregants who were primarily involved only through their children in the schools and congregants who no longer have school-age children living at home. There is a real need to offer opportunities for our large congregation to break into smaller micro-congregations through a resurrection of our once-active havurot program. We need to do a better job in mentoring new congregants and engaging congregants who are not currently active and involved.
3. Some of the programs recommended here require modest-to-significant resource investment. Given the current financial challenges we face, it is difficult to even consider new and additional expense areas. While fundraising efforts have improved markedly over the last few years, our revenue base may still be inadequate to address even some of the highest priority needs for the future. We need to be sure that we have explored every possibility for revenue expansion and reallocation of budget priorities as we address future needs.
4. In many areas, there is a need to improve and integrate The Jewish Center's marketing and public relations efforts. It is essential that we expand the public profile of The Jewish Center and build community-wide awareness of our special programs and initiatives. Both internally and externally, we need to improve our marketing and communication of events, resources and successful programming.

5. In many areas, we are limited by a physical facility that cannot adequately meet the needs of our diverse and active congregation. The school building must be updated and improved or replaced in order for us to address the current needs of our nursery and religious schools. We lack space for alternative Shabbat minyanim, family education programs, high holiday programs, community events, committee meetings, youth events, Judaica shop, and parent classes during school hours. The Jewish Center must address the important strategic need for facility improvement/expansion (see below).

The limitations of our existing facility and the opportunities to significantly enhance the potential for success of our core values by implementing facility improvement/expansion were demonstrated in all of the Pod Reports. For this reason, a dedicated evaluation of such limitations and opportunities is recommended.

Given the expressed needs for expanded and improved physical facilities at The Jewish Center, described above and detailed in Appendices A.1 through A.7, there is a need for a task force to develop a more detailed plan and assess the feasibility of a capital campaign. The committee will have to do a detailed assessment of the programmatic function of a new facility and the required space allocation for these purposes. It will need to do preliminary work on building design and estimated budget. The fundraising capability of the congregation has to be evaluated. Based on all this, the task force will need to come back to the President and Board of Directors with a recommendation on next steps.

The specific facility needs identified in the Long Range Planning process primarily include better educational facilities. Such facilities will enhance our Nursery and Religious Schools as well as adult education programs and meeting spaces for committees and other groups. This that will enable us to maintain a level of excellence for our schools, continue to attract potential young families that want to be a part of our schools and, and re-engage all other groups and individuals in our synagogue community. In addition, expanded facilities will enable many more of the goals expressed in this report to be achieved.

# APPENDICIES

## **A. Pod Reports**

### **A.1 Baby Boomers/Seniors**

#### **Goal**

Serve and engage the “Baby Boomer” and Senior members of The Jewish Center

#### **Overview**

Members currently over 65 and Baby Boomers (defined as people born from 1946 to the early 1960s) are not only a vital constituency to serve and support, but they can also offer abundant talent and energy to the congregation. This “age wave” will profoundly affect every aspect of TJC. Over 650 individual members of TJC were born between the years 1946 through 1964, i.e., Baby Boomers. This is over 30% of the membership. Further, over 320 members (i.e., more than 15% of membership) were born before 1946 and can be described as Seniors.

In a tradition that focuses on continuity (*l'dor va-dor* - from generation to generation), having Baby Boomers and Seniors actively participating alongside younger members can enhance our congregation's vitality. The success of TJC cannot be based solely upon the number of new, young members participating in our congregation. We must embrace a vision of the synagogue as a truly multigenerational community - a "community for all ages." Young, old and in-between will benefit from interdependence, reciprocity, inclusion, and connectedness

#### **Action Plans**

##### 1. Accessibility for All Congregants at Services

- Assure that all of our facilities are physically accessible, including the bimah
- Provide amplification for those with hearing loss
- Make available large-type siddurim and humashim.
- Transportation for those members who do not drive so that they can get to services and programs, including car pools and/or taxi service.
- Assure that Senior participants who attend services and/or programs are greeted and assisted in getting seated when needed and made to feel welcome.

**Responsibility:** Director of Operations, VP Administration/House Committee

**Budget:** \$30,000-\$50,000

**Timing:** 1 – 2 years

2. Avodah: Spiritual and Religious Engagement

- Create a bridge between Baby Boomers and Seniors who enjoy late Shabbat services and families who want early services by holding an early "family" service, followed by a later service, with dinner for all in between.
- Tap older members as mentors for Bar/Bat Mitzvah students.
- Involve Baby Boomers and Seniors in Havdalah at homes of other members.

**Responsibility:** Clergy, Ritual Director, VP Religious Affairs

**Budget:** Minimal

**Timing:** Immediate

3. Gemilut Hasadim: Caring Connection

In moments of need and crisis, responsive congregants and clergy are invaluable. Baby Boomers and Seniors may not reach out for help, but will appreciate any effort the congregation makes toward them. Because TJC is an important gateway to community organizations and social services, we should explore ways of making sure that Baby Boomers and Seniors are aware of the resources offered by Jewish Family and Children's Services.

- Develop a pre and post retirement planning seminars for individuals over 55.
- Develop a singles group for individuals over 50, focused on issue-oriented programs and social activities.

**Responsibility:** Co-chair Social Concerns Committee and Endowment Committee

**Budget:** Minimal

**Timing:** Immediate

#### 4. Providing Opportunities to Contribute Talents and Find Meaning

Baby Boomers and Seniors are a reservoir of skills and wisdom that TJC can tap both in service to the group and on its behalf. Many, if not most of the Baby Boomers are and intend to remain active. Retirement should be viewed as a time to become more involved in TJC, rather than as a time to refrain from work. TJC should encourage and assist them in reframing retirement as a time of increased service, participation, and growth.

Utilize Baby Boomers and Seniors as mentors with new members.

**Responsibility:** Director of Operations, Clergy, Co-chair Social Concerns Committee

**Budget:** Minimal

**Timing:** Initiate Immediately

#### 5. Additional Considerations

In addition to the work of our new committee, we suggest that TJC consider assigning a specific staff member to work with the Baby Boomers as well as possibly engaging a director of older adult services, whose role would be to assess needs and coordinate programs and services for Baby Boomers and Seniors in the congregation.

- Make synagogue affiliation affordable. Structure synagogue dues with a "lifetime membership" so that Baby Boomers and Seniors are exempt from paying dues after a certain number of years of membership. Promote endowments and bequests as ways for older congregants to form a permanent bond with TJC.
- Offer a "cab card." Create an endowment to fund taxi transportation to synagogue events. Arrange with a local taxi company to bill the congregation for these rides. (See [www.ti-stl.org](http://www.ti-stl.org), Temple Israel of St. Louis.)

**Responsibility:** VP Finance

**Budget:** \$500 annually for the Cab Card

**Timing:** To be determined

## A.2 Social Concerns/Tikkun Olam

### Goal

Serve the larger Jewish and secular community with projects that reflect our heritage of Tikkun Olam

### Overview

Congregants connect to TJC in many ways. Tikkun Olam, a core value of Judaism where we serve as God's partner in repairing our world, is a natural portal of entry to TJC. Acts of Tikkun Olam allow everyone--young, old, single, married- to participate in making our world a better place. With this connection emanating from TJC we can build community within our synagogue and make a positive difference in our larger communities.

### Action Plans

#### *Build community and volunteerism at TJC through Tikkun Olam projects*

1. Form a Social Concerns (working, rather than advisory) committee. In addition to chairs, there should be program/event chairs with sub-committees to optimize both the organization and follow through of projects.

**Responsibility:** Social Concerns and Israel Affairs Committees, with help from President, Board, Clergy. In order to provide continuity, establish a part-time staff position to oversee Social Concerns—offering direction, support, and leadership for volunteers.

**Budget:** \$5,000 - \$10,000 annually for 4 hours per week.

**Timing:** November 2008

2. Form affinity groups around topics (e.g. environment/green issues, homelessness, etc.) In addition, form a group for congregants who wish to pursue policy and legislative solutions to social inequities, thereby creating non-political systemic change (*K'hilot K'doshot: Holy Congregations, Just Communities; Jewish Fund for Justice, September*

2007, page 3). Use Jewish Funds for Justice and/or other similar organizations as a resource for initiating Congregation Based Community Organizing.

**Responsibility:** Social Concerns Committee, Jewish Center Women, Men's Club

**Budget:** none until projects identified

**Timing:** December 2008

3. Organize trip(s) around issues of Tikkun Olam, for example, Day of Advocacy in Trenton or Washington DC, parent/child trip to Biloxi. First step is to do some "market research" to determine which niche(s) of TJC to target.

**Responsibility:** Social Concerns and Israel Affairs Committees

**Budget:** depends on trip. Biloxi could be about \$1,000pp for 5 days/4 nights

**Timing:** spring break 2009?

4. Organize at least one new social action project each year (balancing small, large, local, non-local, Jewish, non-Jewish, short term, long term needs) over the course of a 5 year plan. Begin by listing current standing projects (Yom Kippur food drive, Blood Drive, etc.) and then decide which new project(s) to initiate. Select a Social Concerns theme for the year (or longer), e.g. "green" issues. Organize a Friday night Social Concerns Shabbat with a speaker focused on this issue.

**Responsibility:** Social Concerns and Israel Affairs Committees, Jewish Center Women, Men's Club

**Budget:** none in the deciding phase. \$\$ depends on project.

**Timing:** decide first project by January 2009

### *Improve Communications*

- 5a. Use TJC website more effectively.

- Post a full year’s calendar on TJC website so everyone (committees and congregants) can be aware of programs. Post events, programs and activities as they are scheduled.
  - Use website to connect membership with issues of social concern and organizations with whom we can connect either individually or as a congregation.
- 5b. Build bridges of collaboration between the staff, clergy, board and TJC committees (pertaining to social concerns issues) to ensure all work together toward a common goal. Partner with TJC individuals already involved in community activities and encourage these individuals to be liaisons to TJC.
- 5c. Use the bulletin more effectively. Offer information and education to TJC membership by providing an article in the monthly bulletin. Each month focus on one issue of social concern with action steps for individuals to carry out from home. These suggestions could be both small and grand in scope.
- 5d. Assist in being a clearing house to connect mitzvah projects with people in need.
- 5e. Consider marketing our Tikkun Olam projects (web site, bulletin, Packet, Topics, etc.) both within and outside the TJC community.

**Responsibility:**        **Social Concerns Committee, Men’s Club, with other TJC Committees, Bikkur Holim, Director of Operations and webmaster**

**Budget:**                **None**

**Timing:**                **ongoing**

## A.3 Shabbat and Festivals

### Goal

Encourage more members to experience Shabbat and holidays at home and at The Jewish Center

### Overview

Religious affairs at The Jewish Center are active and healthy. Each Shabbat we conduct several services and offer a range of programs. High Holidays are as well attended as they have ever been. Our main goals are to maintain the level of energy, to involve more members, and to increase the level of religious observance in the home. Our main constraint is space.

The plans below are divided into those which A. need levels of effort or funding (or both) which significantly exceed our current capacity and, B. those which can be regarded as continuations of or additions to existing activity. Only the former need be considered for inclusion in the Long Range Plan, however, both sets are presented here for a full picture.

#### A. Action Plans dependent on added capacity and funding

##### 1. Holiday guides

Send guides (via email and brochure, thin booklets, or another style) prior to each holiday on ways to celebrate the holiday. Simple guides that explain what the holidays are (like the excerpts from Telushkin's Jewish Literacy) and how to celebrate them. For instance, how do you celebrate Purim (costumes, hamantashen, come to the megillah reading, the carnival, etc.). Mention things one can do at home as well as TJC. Guides can be available via our web site also.

We all take for granted that we know how to have a sukkah, a Tu B'Shevat Seder, etc.; but the majority of our congregation don't know how to do these things for themselves and their children.

We could extend the distribution to include unaffiliated Jews in the community.

**Responsibility:     Ritual Director, Clergy, and Religious Affairs to prepare content  
                                  Operations Director to arrange production and distribution.**

**Budget:** < \$5,000  
**Timing:** Board year 2008-09  
**Level of effort:** Similar to the effort involved in writing and producing the TJC Mourners' Guide.

2. Alternative Shabbat service

Offer an alternative service once a month (in addition to the Library Minyan) which could include prayers currently omitted from the main Shabbat service due to time pressures. The sermon could be a discussion on the parsha to avoid adding to the clergy's preparation. Either Rabbi would lead the service.

**Responsibility:** Ritual Director, Clergy, and Religious Affairs  
**Budget:** Low  
**Timing:** Board year 2008-09  
**Level of effort:** Needs elaboration and careful planning.

3. Luncheon every Shabbat

Provide a congregational Shabbat lunch every Shabbat. Currently we have approximately 30 congregational Shabbat lunches between b'nai mitzvah and special events. We should also consider providing lunch on holidays such as Sukkot, Pesach and Shavuot. Offer opportunity for sponsors for these luncheons.

We could combine this with a post-lunch educational session or a session with the Cantor to review new and changed tunes.

**Responsibility:** Ritual Director, Director of Operations  
**Budget:** Lunch for 100 people for 20 Shabbatot per year at ~\$1,000 per luncheon  
**Timing:** Board year 2008-09, contingent on funding.  
**Level of effort:** Relatively straightforward.

4. Shabbat Mincha, Ma'ariv, and Havdalah

Introduce Shabbat Mincha, Ma'ariv, and Havdalah service. Include other attractions, e.g., meal and a movie at TJC, or Israeli dancing. Begin by targeting specific groups within the synagogue for the programs such as School Families, Baby Boomers, JCW, Men's Club, etc. Consider other people in the community who could conduct programs that would attract others.

**Responsibility:** Ritual Director, Clergy, Religious Affairs

**Budget:** Funds to cater for 30-50 people each Shabbat and for film rental.

**Timing:** Board year 2008-09

**Level of effort:** Will require considerable planning and organization.

5. Havdalah across Princeton

We encourage families to make havdalah at home on one Shabbat evening having sent every family a havdalah kit. All families would then come to TJC for a communal event. We would build up to the event during the preceding week.

**Responsibility:** Religious Affairs

**Budget:** ~\$8,000 – could be funded, external to TJC budget, by one or more donors

**Timing:** Board year 2009-10

**Level of effort:** As an annual event would involve less effort than, for example, Purim but still requires real planning and organization.

6. Havurot

Create multiple havurot groups, possibly forming each around a particular theme, to meet for Kiddush, dinner etc. on Friday evenings, or other times that the families agree to. There could be discussions on self-selected themes or those suggested by clergy. These groups would meet in people's homes or other locations away from TJC. For some groups, the goal would be educational, for others social or cultural goals.

**Responsibility:** Religious Affairs, Membership, JCW, Men's Club, Clergy

**Budget:** Self-funding

**Timing:** Board year 2008-09

**Level of effort:** The first few will need considerable effort from Clergy and organizers. Thereafter, new groups could learn from existing groups.

7. The all-day Shabbat

Introduce a monthly Shabbaton designed to attract congregants to remain after Shabbat lunch or come in for Mincha. Involve guest and congregational speakers. Begin by aiming individual Shabbaton at specific audience, e.g., families with high school children, silver circle, etc. although the events will be open to all. The day would include programs after lunch such as study groups (Rabbi Silverman's group and other groups), Mincha, Seudat Shlisheet, Ma'ariv and Havdalah. We have to think about either children's programs or childcare during this time.

**Responsibility:** Ritual Director, Clergy, Religious Affairs

**Budget:** \$5,000

**Timing:** Board year 2009-10

**Level of effort:** Will require considerable planning and organization.

**B. Action Plans which continue or build on existing activities**

1. Congregational lulavim and etrogim

For Sukkot purchase 10 sets of lulavim, etrogim, etc. for use in the sanctuary services. After the services give these to any family requesting a set so that more people can have them at home. Also encourage families who are interested in purchasing a sukkah to do so and help them with creating Sukkot programming.

**Responsibility:** Ritual Director, Religious Affairs, and Clergy

**Budget:** \$400 - \$600 annually – could be funded, external to TJC budget, by one or more donors

**Timing:** Whenever we are ready.

**Level of effort:** Low

2. Downloadable festival and Shabbat tunes

Cantor Simon will record the main tunes used during the major festivals, e.g., kaddushah, Pesach tunes. We will make these available on our web site so that congregants may learn the tunes in advance. We can also introduce new tunes familiar prayers, piutim, etc. this way. These can supplement existing recordings of Birkhat HaMazon (full traditional), Havdalah (traditional and Debbie Freidman version), and how to make Shabbat which can also be uploaded.

**Responsibility:** Cantor Simon, Webmaster, Religious Affairs

**Budget:** Low

**Timing:** Whenever we are ready.

**Level of effort:** Cantor Simon has recorded a large library covering weekday and Shabbat services. These can readily be loaded as recordings on our website. Additional recordings are relatively easy to add.

3. Seder guests

Pesach belongs at home and people should be encouraged to attend a home seder. To encourage more people to attend a Pesach seder at home we will introduce a matching service. Those who wish to attend a seder will be matched with hosts who have indicated their willingness to include one or more guests in their family seder. Havurot (see 1) could have their own seder. We should consider making shul premises available for seders without turning the event into a congregational seder.

**Responsibility:** Religious Affairs, Membership. Will need an organizer.

**Budget:** Low

**Timing:** Board year 2009-10

**Level of effort:** Low once we have a volunteer organizer.

4. Videos of ritual

Make video recordings of standard bimah activities used in the Shabbat ritual (e.g., ark openings, gabbai tasks, aliyot, hagbah and g'lilah) and post these on the web-site. This will allow those who are unfamiliar with the service (e.g., b'nai mitzvah guests) to feel more comfortable about their part.

**Responsibility:** Ritual Director, Religious Affairs, Clergy

**Budget:** Low provided we have access to a digital video recorder

**Timing:** Whenever we are ready.

**Level of effort:** Requires an experienced videographer so that we have professional quality

## **A.4 Religious and Nursery Schools**

### **Goal**

Ensure that our nursery and religious schools offer outstanding educational programs

### **Overview**

Virtually everyone agrees that quality Jewish education is the cornerstone in our efforts to ensure Jewish continuity. It is not surprising that our long-range planning congregational survey had respondents ranking our religious and nursery schools among their top eight priorities (out of twenty-seven) for resource investment. The Jewish Center has enjoyed the benefit of outstanding schools for many years. Many congregants choose our congregation because of our excellent educational offerings for their children.

The nursery school and religious school face some new challenges in the years to come. Demographic changes in our community have produced declining enrollments in both the nursery school and religious school. An aging and inadequate school building provides both educational and marketing challenges for the schools. The nursery school operates in an increasingly competitive enrollment environment as fewer families with preschool children move to Princeton.

We are committed as a congregation to place high quality education for children among our most critical priorities. We must take some actions over the next few years to ensure ongoing improvement in our already excellent schools and to ensure that young families will continue to choose The Jewish Center for its outstanding educational programs.

### **Action Plans**

1. Market the nursery school as the premier Jewish nursery school in the greater Princeton area
  - Expanded emphasis on Hebrew/ritual/holidays education
  - Marketing and PR efforts will clearly communicate the Jewish nursery school positioning with a consistent tag line and message with a liaison person from Membership helping to coordinate our media communication.
  - Focus marketing efforts on prospective member families with young children.

**Responsibility:** Director of Nursery Program / School/Membership Chairs

**Budget:** May require some minor expansion of marketing budget

**Timing:** New materials ready by Nov 2008 for prospective 2009 enrollees

2. Develop a more formal and comprehensive written curriculum for the religious school

- Teachers will be trained in the new curricular requirements prior to the beginning of the '09/'10 school year.
- Develop new initiatives for a Hebrew language and values education programs

**Responsibility:** Principal of Religious School/Education VP

**Budget:** None

**Timing:** New curriculum ready by July 2009 for 2009/2010 school year

3. Develop separate parent education for religious school parents

- Parents to receive supplementary education (e.g. Midweek Bible Ba' Boker) to engage them in the educational process and enhance their own Judaic knowledge
- Parent education will cover a variety of subject areas and will be taught by our faculty and professional staff

**Responsibility:** Principal of Religious School / Clergy / Adult Education Chairs / School Chairs

**Budget:** Will require additional compensation for staff teachers

**Timing:** Implemented during 2008/2009 school year with classes/curriculum determined by October, 2008

4. Expand enrollment in the religious school three-day program

- Increased internal marketing of the three day program to parents of children in early religious school grades
- Written materials that clearly delineate the advantages of the extra day of instruction

**Responsibility:** Rabbi Feldman/School Chairs/Principal of Religious School

**Budget:** Will require minor expense for written materials

**Timing:** Developed by December 2008 for use in encouraging three-day choice in 2009

5. Increase enrollment at every level of Tichon program

- Strong internal marketing of Tichon benefits and the Siyyum Tichon program to both parents and students. This should include calls from the clergy to encourage participation and dissuade dropping out. Must be done on a consistent basis.
- Special emphasis on retention from eighth to ninth grade where the most significant drop-off in enrollment occurs

**Responsibility:** Rabbi Feldman/School Chairs/Principal of Religious School

**Budget:** Will require minor expense for written materials

**Timing:** Developed by December 2008 for use in encouraging three-day choice in 2009

6. Improve school physical facilities

- Immediate need for upgrades to bathrooms/flooring/materials storage areas
- A negative perception about our physical facility is having an impact on nursery school enrollment
- Improvement timing will need to be balanced against the potential for an all-new school building (see #7)

**Responsibility:** Director of Nursery Program/Principal of Religious School/Director of Operations/House Chairs/School Chairs

**Budget:** Significant-to be developed

**Timing:** Urgently needed but depends on budget and the development of a larger facilities plan

7. Ensure that the religious and nursery schools will not have to share classroom space

- Major priority that will engender both educational and marketing benefits
- Cannot be accomplished within current facility requirements and dependent on possible larger facility plans

**Responsibility:** **President and Executive Committee**

**Budget:** **Significant**

**Timing:** **Long Term (3-5 years)**

8. Increase the number of religious school teachers who achieve formal certification

- Educate current faculty of the benefits of certification (possibly through CAJE)
- Combine certification emphasis with other staff development priorities

**Responsibility:** **Principal of Religious School**

**Budget:** **May require small financial incentive for completing certification**

**Timing:** **Immediate**

9. Increase staffing in schools to address current needs

- Administrative assistant or college intern in nursery school to support Director of Nursery Program in administrative tasks
- Religious school specialists (very part-time) in Hebrew/Curriculum/Family Education appointed to assist Principal of Religious School in new initiatives

**Responsibility:** **Director of Nursery Program/Principal of Religious School/VP Education**

**Budget:** **New position in nursery school and supplementary raises in religious school (to be determined)**

**Timing:** **September, 2009**

## **A.5 Youth Programs**

### **Goal**

Develop and strengthen Jewish identity and involvement for pre-teens and teens.

### **Overview**

The Jewish Center has always made youth a priority. However, as times have changed, and the interests and sophistication of today's youth evolved, so must our programming at TJC. At its core, youth programming should educate, keep youth linked to their synagogue and most importantly help them form a positive Jewish association. The more positive the association is for children and teenagers within their community, (especially their immediate congregational community) the more likely they are to become active, committed and connected Jewish adults.

As a synagogue and as community leaders, we are committed to Jewish continuity. With that in mind, The Jewish Center Youth Programming has always aimed to engage the youth (3<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) through informal, fun, and innovative programming. TJC has aimed to provide a venue for Jewish youth to interact through social, recreational, educational, social action, worship, and through formal and informal Jewish education.

Instead of youth programs being merely additional extracurricular activities, a "youth culture" needs to be developed. The youth need to see themselves as valued members of the community and must understand their responsibility to participate and give. In order for our youth to feel a sense of belonging and commitment to the larger community we must create an environment where they are valued. (Some suggestions to help create a youth culture at TJC might include adding the USY President on our stationery letterhead, installing the USY Board when we install all other Board Members. Invite USY Board members to Board meetings especially those with a youth agenda, and offering High Holiday honors to youth) it is important that our youth see themselves as a part of the bigger community.

In trying to create more than a youth program, but a youth culture, we must remember we are competing against a myriad of opportunities available to our youth: clubs, sports, music lessons, dance classes, camps, the internet and more. Many young adolescents have deferred their involvement in these important secular activities during the period of time that they spent

preparing for their B'nai Mitzvah. With this event behind them, however, there is a tendency by these youth to feel that they have fulfilled their "Jewish involvement quotient" for the year and are now free to go play. It is this age group that we are at particular risk of losing.

### **Action Plans**

1. We need to create space that is a user-friendly place for young people. The youth need a space that they can socialize in, feel responsible for, make decisions about, and feel comfortable in.

**Responsibility:** President/Executive Committee

**Budget:** Tied to New Facility Plan

**Timing:** TBD

2. We need more family-focused programming. There is great benefit in involving parents and siblings in some youth programs. Parents will gain a greater appreciation of the importance of our Kadima and USY programs and younger siblings will be motivated by their experiences.

**Responsibility:** President/Executive Committee, JCW, Men's Club

**Budget:** Tied to New Facility Plan

**Timing:** TBD

3. Reach out to those congregational youth who never attend youth events to find out why they do not come out for youth programs. Take appropriate corrective action and seek to involve these youth by drawing on their particular interests, skills or talents. Reach to youth not in Religious School

**Responsibility:** Youth/Family Director/Youth Chairs

**Budget:** None

**Timing:** Now

4. Build more consistent communication with parents about our youth programs. Notify parents about upcoming events, and opportunities.

**Responsibility: Youth/Family Director/Youth Chairs**

**Budget: None**

**Timing: Fall 2008**

- 5a. Strengthen the Youth and Family Committee. Expand the breadth of the committee
- 5b. Work closely with the staff, board, and youth committee to establish a youth agenda, youth programming, and the full integration of youth in the synagogue community.
- 5c. Maintain a youth section of web site and involve our USYers in designing that section of our web site.
- 5d. Promote and integrate youth programming in the Religious School setting. In order to be successful in reaching out to our young adolescents, we must create a partnership between formal learning, informal education, and the home thus, between the religious school, other youth activities and family life.

**Responsibility: Youth/Family Director/Youth Chairs**

**Budget: None**

**Timing: Fall 2008**

## **A.6 Lifelong Learning**

### **Goal**

Create a community of intergenerational learners who develop a personal love for Jewish learning, who see the beauty of our traditional Jewish texts and develop the skills to incorporate Jewish rituals/traditions in the personal life. The engaged student of Jewish learning sees this as an ongoing, life-long process.

### **Overview**

The Jewish Center's Life Long Learning Initiative is committed to building and sustaining a community of learners, inviting and challenging everyone to experience Judaism on a whole new educational level. The overall objective of Life Long Learning is to provide programs and resources to members of our congregation which will be both stimulating and educationally rewarding. We encourage participation in programs not only in our synagogue building, but also Jewish rituals at home and events throughout our community. An emphasis is placed on integrating the love of learning and ritual observance into the home environment. Our faculty, clergy, and guest speakers are dedicated to developing and strengthening our relationship to the Jewish people and to our synagogue.

We encourage everyone in our TJC community to immerse themselves in Jewish education as a lifelong journey. All levels of learning are offered: anyone from beginner to advanced is welcome in each course of study. Diversity of belief, religious background and practice among students and families is cherished and welcomed. We provide learning opportunities for all age groups, offering both age-specific experiences and intergenerational encounters. Whether taking a traditional class, attending a lecture or engaging the world through field trips and travel, our fellow lifelong learners can enhance their journeys by engaging in the sacred act of study, deepening their understanding of both religious and cultural aspects of Judaism, growing in and connecting to our tradition along the way. We not only strive to help people connect with the educational opportunities at The Jewish Center but also to the myriad of other Jewish educational options in our greater community.

Rabbi Alvin Fine wrote a profound poem entitled "Life is a Journey" in which he includes the

phrase “life is a sacred pilgrimage.” At The Jewish Center we want people to enhance their life’s journey by engaging in the sacred act of learning so that we can all be both student and teacher. We may not know our ultimate destination but we will make the best of our journey if we take the time for ourselves to study and grow and learn and connect to our tradition along the way. We look forward to learning together.

### **Staffing Recommendation**

We have concluded that our current professional staff is at capacity along with our volunteer pool and we do not have the resources available to accomplish the goals of the initiative. Synagogues similar to ours typically require eight full-time professionals to accomplish all that needs to be done. We recommend that the congregation hire a Director of Life Long Learning, or comparable title, to oversee all educational programs at The Jewish Center. The Director would manage the development and implementation of the Life Long Learning Initiative outlined below, including the integration and coordination of new elements with existing programs. We anticipate that this project will take three to five years.

The Director of Life Long Learning would report to the Rabbis and VP of Education with responsibilities that include:

- Overseeing the current educational programs of our religious and nursery schools
- Developing and implementing the initiative
- Integrating all elements of the program
- Coordinating the work of the clergy, educational professionals and volunteers
- Maintaining and increasing the level of professionalism of our educational programs
- Supervising publicity and administration of all of these programs
- Being accountable for the finances of the Life Long Learning Initiative
- Keeping us apprised of the current trends and concepts in Jewish education.

This person should have a graduate degree in Jewish education as well as practical experience as a synagogue educator in a top school. Salary must be competitive for the field.

## **Action Plans**

### 1. Work with our current educational institutions to foster more coordinated programs and themes

There are so many good things happening in all of our educational programs now and we would like to see them work more closely together. It is an ongoing challenge to oversee the educational work of the Religious School, Nursery School, Adult Ed, JCW, etc. By doing so we will be able to maximize our resources and produce a more cohesive educational program.

**Responsibility:** Rabbi Feldman and LLL Director, Arts & Cultural Committee

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** Ongoing

### 2. Facilitate Learning on our Website

We want to encourage people to see the Jewish Center website as an educational tool and we want to utilize this tool with state of the art techniques for audio and video including:

- Educational Material/Lesson Plans for each class - posted by the teacher
- Online Classes
- Create a Blog on a theme such as the Parasha of the week or prayer
- Create Discussion material for the Shabbat and Holiday Table
- Teach Home Rituals such as Kiddush, Birkat HaMotzi and Birkat HaMazon
- Teach synagogue Rituals such as Torah Honors, Torah/Haftarah Reading, Ark Opening, etc.

**Responsibility:** Rabbi Feldman, Cantor Simon and Webmaster

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** Spring 2009

3. Life Long Learning Brochure (One Major brochure or many smaller brochures)

We want to create glossy brochures that can be used for publicity both within the congregation and in the outside world. The brochures could be for the following programs:

- Shabbat Morning - Sanctuary, Jr. Cong, Mini Minyan, Tot Shabbat, Vav, Zayin, Family Service
- Holiday Programs – High Holidays, Sukkot, Tu B’shvat, Pesach,
- Nursery and Religious Schools
- Adult Education

**Responsibility:** Martha Friedman and Judy Levine

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** Sept 2008

4. List Serv for Different Groups in TJC

Create E-mail address for each group and list serve for who want information about these programs. This would include the major committees such as, Adult Education, Social Concerns, Arts and Cultural, Israel Affairs, JCW, Religious School, Nursery School, Religious Affairs, Men’s Club.

**Responsibility:** Director of Operations and Rabbi Feldman

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** Fall 2009

5. Havurot

Our Congregation has a history of organizing Havurot so that people feel a close social connection to a small number of people within the larger congregation. We think these groups need some guidance and attention and we also recommend creating new havurot that could be good educational settings for other programs. The work that is needed would include:

- Contact all current Havurot and offer assistance
- Create new Havurot based on what people are looking for
- Remain a support to these groups and help them connect to each other when needed

**Responsibility:** Rabbi Tucker, JCW, Men’s Club

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** Ongoing

6. Eleventh and Twelfth Grade Program – Rabbi Feldman, Rabbi Tucker and LLL Director

We have a wonderful Tichon program that ends in tenth grade and we do not provide a program for our older teens with the exception of USY. Some teens will be attracted to USY but others will benefit from the structure of Tichon. Eleventh and Twelfth grades are years that we need to be in the lives of these teens as they prepare for college and beyond. There are scheduling challenges to these years and we need the parents to see this as a priority. Making 11th and 12th grade part of Tichon could help. We would need to create a graduation ceremony for these students and choose the right class to begin our efforts.

**Responsibility:** Rabbi Feldman, Rabbi Tucker, Director of Youth and Family Services

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** September, 2009

7. Connecting to Outside Educational Facilities

We want to make a stronger connection to the other educational resources in our community including other synagogues and Jewish institutions as well as national organizations. So many of these organizations try to contact us and we do not have the main contact person for them. We also would benefit from a closer connection to secular and other religious institutions in our community including the University and the churches in Princeton.

**Responsibility:** Director of Operations and LLL Director

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:**           **Fall 2008**

8. Summer Experiences

Our young people participate in so many great summer programs and with some effort we could track the young people and the programs so that we would be able to encourage more students to participate. As students and families make their decisions for these camps and programs, we would like to encourage more families to participate in the programs of the Conservative Movement. Camp Ramah, USY Israel Pilgrimage, USY on Wheels all offer great options for our young people and each of these programs fit with the educational goals of our schools.

**Responsibility:**   **Rabbi Tucker, Director of Youth and Family Services, Nancy Lewis and Helaine Isaacs**

**Budget:**           **TBD**

**Timing:**           **Summer 2009**

9. Senior Connection

In the greater Princeton area, there are many Senior residence facilities inhabited by a large number of Jews including both members of our congregation and people who are not affiliated with a synagogue. We would like to see a connection made to these facilities where members of our clergy and professional staff visit in order to bring educational programs and holiday rituals to the residence. We also suggest that efforts are made to encourage residents of these facilities to visit us for Shabbat, Holidays or other special programs. We could also strengthen these connections online, on the phone or through other technology.

**Responsibility:**   **Clergy, Ritual Director and Bikkur Holim Chair**

**Budget:**           **TBD**

**Timing:**

10. School Programs Open to the Community

We do so many wonderful things in our schools and we would like to see more people participate in these programs both from within the congregation as well as the greater

community. We need to identify these programs in advance and make sure that the proper people in congregation and community know about them.

**Responsibility:** Director of LLL, Principal of Religious School, Director of Nursery Program

**Budget:** TBD

**Timing:** Ongoing

## **A.7 Young Families**

### **Goal**

Encourage membership and participation of young families

### **Action Plans**

1. Survey the existing nursery school families who are not members. Devise a short, simple survey to find out what would motivate them to join.

**Responsibility:** **Membership Committee; School Committee; Director of Nursery Program; and Director of Operations**

**Budget:** **under \$500**

**Timing:** **By Summer 2008**

2. Develop ways to increase the spiritual connection between the school building and the synagogue building. Currently, the two buildings are physically and spiritually disconnected, which makes it easy for nursery families to never enter the synagogue building and view it as not a part of their lives. We want to develop programs and events for the nursery parents that occur in the synagogue building. This will increase their comfort level and interest in the synagogue and membership.

**Responsibility:** **Director of Nursery Program, Principal of Religious School, Rabbi Feldman, Rabbi Tucker, Cantor Simon, Director of Youth and Family Services, and Director of Operations**

**Budget:** **to be determined based on programming, maybe no extra cost**

**Timing:** **ongoing throughout school year, but to be developed before Fall 2008**

3. Make personal appeals to unaffiliated families with phone calls, conversations at the schmooze time and at other nursery events to directly encourage the nursery families to join.

**Responsibility:** **Membership Committee, with assistance of Director of Nursery Program and School Committee, clergy, JCW, Israel Affairs, Men's Club**

**Budget:** Less than \$500 and probably none

**Timing:** ongoing

4. Reach out to un-affiliated Jewish households and inter-faith families to encourage them to attend Jewish Center events. Increase public notice and promotion of events in local media outlets to create a “buzz” about all of the interesting, fun events that are happening at The Jewish Center that are open to the public. The press releases and other public relations should occur both before and after the event. Coordination between the Nursery and Religious Schools and the Director of Operations is essential to promote the events most appealing to potential members.

**Responsibility:** Director of Youth and Family Services, Principal of Religious School, Director of Nursery Program, and (JCW, Israel Affairs, Men’s Club) Committee Chairs for various events to publicize – coordinating via Director of Operations.

**Budget:** Cost is staff time (to be determined)

**Timing:** Ongoing (start with Yom Ha’Atzmaut Spring 2008 – If possible)

5. Work with the Executive Committee and Finance Vice-President to develop revised membership fees to reduce the initial costs, especially for young families with or without children, to entice them to join.

**Responsibility:** Executive Committee, Finance Committee

**Budget:**

**Timing:** to implement by Fall 2008

6. Start a Havura Program for new members and existing members who are interested. A Havura Program will give people a strong connection to The Jewish Center which will carry them through the years and make them want to maintain their membership.

**Responsibility:** Membership, Arts & Cultural, JCW, Men’s Club committees and/or start a new committee

**Budget:** Need to gather further information, depends on scope.

**Timing: Fall/Winter 2008 then ongoing**

7. Place more of an emphasis on Friday Night programs for young families and less religious families who want to celebrate and join the fun of Shabbat, but are unable to be in shul on Saturday mornings. Some families prefer not to be separated for individual children's morning services. Hold more Shabbat Alive and other music focused services on Friday Nights to appeal to the kid in all of us. Create additional Friday night programs that will attract this important audience.

**Responsibility: Rabbi Feldman, Rabbi Tucker, Cantor Simon, Ritual Director, Director of Youth and Family Services, Religious Affairs and Israel Affairs Committees**

**Budget:**

**Timing: Fall 2008**

8. Form a buddy system with current members who are good at reaching out to new members (or those who aren't involved) and making them feel welcome. Pair people who have something in common. Have set requirements for the out-reach buddy to agree to take on one full year. This will help transition all new members (or those who aren't involved) into the Jewish Center and create a positive first year (or new) experience for them.

**Responsibility: Membership Committee, Welcoming Committee, Volunteer Corp, with help from JCW and Men's Club**

**Budget:**

**Timing: Fall/Winter 2008 and then ongoing**

## B. Survey Form

### The Jewish Center Strategic Planning Survey

September 2007

*We are beginning a process to define our vision, mission, and guiding principles as we develop a strategic plan for The Jewish Center. This plan will be guided by input from the congregation about our priorities for the next five years. This planning process will help structure our thinking about programming priorities and resource investment for The Jewish Center.*

*First we want to know a little about you and your family...remember the survey is completely confidential*

1. First, please tell us how long you have been a member of The Jewish Center community...

- |                       |                 |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | 3 years or less | <input type="radio"/> | 16-25 years        |
| <input type="radio"/> | 4-15 years      | <input type="radio"/> | More than 25 years |

2. Please tell us a little about your children...

- |                          |                                                                            |                          |                                        |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Have children at home---all too young to be in religious or nursery school | <input type="checkbox"/> | Children grown and living on their own |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Have children at home---at least one in nursery or religious school        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do not have children                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Have children at home---too old to be in                                   |                          |                                        |

religious  
school

**3. As you think about your involvement at The Jewish Center, please select the statement that best describes your involvement...**

- I am currently involved--- either on Board of Directors or on committees
- I am not currently and have not previously served on the Board or committees
- I have been involved in the past on the Board or committees but not currently

**4. How often do you attend services?**

- Primarily high holidays and Shabbat services only for special occasions
- Shabbat services more than eight times a year
- Shabbat services at least eight times per year

**5. What follows is a list of many kinds of priority areas for synagogues. To a greater or lesser extent, The Jewish Center is currently involved in all of these areas. Thinking specifically about The Jewish Center, we need for you to think about whether we should be investing more or less resources (staffing and funding) in addressing these possible priorities as we think about the future. Please look at the list and assess whether we need to invest more in the specific possible priority area, whether we have about the right current focus currently in the specific possible priority area, or whether we should reduce or eliminate our focus in a specific area.**

7- <i>Critical to do more here</i>	6- <i>Very important to do more here</i>	5- <i>Somewhat important to do more here</i>	4- <i>Currently able to do the right amount here</i>	3- <i>May be slightly reduce what we do here</i>	2- <i>Should substantially reduce what we do here</i>	1- <i>Should not offer any TJC focus on this area</i>
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**adult education offering**

**Offer a broader range of Jewish cultural (arts/music etc.) experiences**



**Provide an open and inclusive community for Jews of different backgrounds and celebrate our diversity**



**Provide programs for Jewish singles**



**Engage the congregation in a commitment to lifelong learning and Jewish journeys**



**Become the leading source for the purchase of Jewish art and ritual objects in the Princeton area**



**Provide a broader range of Shabbat experiences to encourage more members to spend Shabbat in Shul**



**Encourage Kashrut observance in congregant homes**



**Offer more weekday services to address needs of those in mourning period**



**Build a greater knowledge of the Hebrew language among congregants**



programs

**6. Let's look at statements that could describe The Jewish Center in 2012. Please rate them from 1 (Most desirable future positioning for TJC) to 8 (Least desirable future positioning for TJC)**

A model synagogue in building the involvement of teenagers and young adults

A model synagogue in engaging congregants in Shabbat and holiday observance and attendance

A model synagogue in engaging young families through outstanding schools and youth programs

A model synagogue in engaging its congregation in Jewish learning for all stages of life

A model synagogue in its commitment to community service and social action

A model synagogue in promoting a strong sense of Jewish identity and personal Jewish commitment

A model synagogue in becoming the true center for all aspects of Jewish life in the greater Princeton Jewish community

A model synagogue in providing an accepting and welcoming community for all congregants regardless of Jewish background and knowledge

**7. As you think about your own experience of The Jewish Center, please tell us what you think we should be most focused on as we plan our priorities for the next five years...**

***Thanks for helping us with your input and views---all responses will be treated confidentially---please hit submit to transmit your responses***