

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

SINAI TEMPLE, 2003

Preface

What you have before you is the best efforts of the Long Range Planning Committee to respond to the data accumulated in the “Jewish Population Survey: Champaign-Urbana, Illinois 2003 by Stanley Wasserman and Jane Templin. The entire report and the implementation of its various suggestions is being considered item by item by the Sinai Temple Board during the years ahead. Input by community members is encouraged during this process of taking a committee report and modifying, adapting, and implementing some or all of its recommendations.

Underlying and substantiating the need for such a report are concerns arising not only from the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Population Survey, but those which occur as well from studying recent national Jewish surveys--The National Jewish Population Survey 2000-2001 of the United Jewish Communities, entitled “Strength, Challenge and Diversity in the American Jewish Population, and the “American Jewish Identity Survey 2001,” by Egon Mayer, Barry Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, of the Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, reissued in 2003 by The Center for Cultural Judaism. All three surveys point to the aging of the Jewish Population, its diminishment because of lack of sufficient replacement births, the increase in interest among the population for both spiritual and cultural Jewish stimulation, enrichment and learning, and the importance of considering the increasingly broad range of constituent elements within the population of Jewish households regarding religious background, age, gender, Jewish education and interest, when dealing with such important elements of Jewish life as worship, fellowship, education, caring, connection to Israel, and fundraising..

My hope is that this Report will be the basis of a thorough revitalization of Jewish life in Champaign-Urbana at Sinai Temple and in the community as a whole.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Norman Mark Klein

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LONG RANGE PLAN

“Planning can transform the possible into the probable” (anon.)

We are pleased to provide the Board of Trustees with what we believe to be the first comprehensive long range plan for Sinai Temple.

In the ongoing press of Temple stewardship, decisions are often made without necessarily being a part of a vision for the future. Long range planning, however, a widely used tool in business, government, and not-for-profit organizations, can provide coherent frameworks for decision-makers. This report tries to map out that future. It is not a quick fix for current difficulties but rather an outline of ideas put forward by the committee after much analysis of the data collected and after much internal deliberation. One major underlying theme of the report is the need and the desire for congregants to strengthen their attachments and commitments to Sinai Temple. The more congregants feel bonded to Sinai Temple, the more likely they are to share the resources that fuel the life of the temple: spirit, time, and money.

Since last fall this committee has worked diligently to collect information from the membership and others in the Jewish community. Both quantitative and qualitative information was obtained through focus groups, Temple open forums, interviews, a survey questionnaire, and in more informal face-to-face sessions or written communications. The committee, whose membership represents diverse sectors of the congregation, reviewed and analyzed the information looking for both immediate needs and suggestions for ongoing improvement of the Temple. It feels that in

formulating its recommendations it has interpreted the will of the congregation. It is worth stressing that the membership of the committee did not include officers or professional staff members, precisely so that its recommendations would come “from below,” as it were, so as not to justify or suggest reflexively the existing policies and procedures, and would thus ultimately be of greater value to Sinai’s officers, board, and professional staff. While the report contains many specifics, it is designed to be a guide rather than a prescription. Plans like this one have to be flexible and are adjusted when necessary. A plan will be utilized if concrete positive results can be attributed to it.

This report is divided into 6 sections:

- * Introduction
- * Executive Summary of the major recommendations
- * Detailed recommendations in specific areas
- * Time-line indicating how recommendations can be phased in over the next seven years
- * How To Start: First steps— a single page outlining a few measures which can be taken immediately.

From Sinai’s mission statement as well as from the Temple’s current committee structure, we have identified six specific areas, or “Pillars,” of congregational life, that deserve attention: Worship, Fellowship, Education, Caring, Physical Plant, and Finances. We used this “Pillars” framework as we gathered and analyzed data. While the raw data is not included in the actual report, all of it (except for what is confidential) is available to board members who wish to review it. We created subcommittees to draft specific recommendations for the various pillars, which were then reviewed and approved by the Committee as a whole. A seventh pillar focuses on the

structure of Sinai Temple as a whole, as well as on the implementation of the report itself. (Differences in format of the various recommendations reflect the work of different subcommittees.) From those detailed recommendations, the Committee created a suggested timeline, an Executive Summary of its most salient suggestions, as well as an even shorter list of steps which could be taken immediately to spark the plan into action, under the title “How to Start: First Steps.”

Long range planning works best with existing organizations. Past activities can be reviewed and plans made for the future. Strengths and areas of improvement can be identified. Opportunities for growth can become apparent. The committee believes that its recommendations are rooted in the past successes of Sinai Temple and in information gathered from the members of the congregation and others. It suggests that the plan be reviewed (and probably adjusted) each year by the Board and appropriate committees since conditions and needs do change. It is more important that each year the plan’s past results and future events should be shared with the congregation.

Long-range plans are valuable when results can be tied to plan recommendations. If this document is not an integral part of ongoing planning at Sinai Temple, then what has been accomplished since September 2002 was just an exercise for the committee members and a major letdown for the congregation, which had a substantial voice in formulating the plan and has a significant interest in seeing it carried through.

Serving on this committee has taken a lot of time and energy, but we have enjoyed working together and learning more about the rich diversity of all aspects of Temple life and the wealth of opinions shared by its members.

Robert Manaster and Michael Shapiro, co-chairs
Lianne Anderson
Chris Hall
Len Heumann
Kari Imlay
Judy Kaplan
Charles Kozoll
David and Janice Saks
Rae and Ray Spooner
Stan Wasserman
Barry Weiner

Executive Summary

Worship

- *Implement ideas from S2K and other sources for enlivening services.
- *Explore idea of cantor, bring cantors for Glaser concerts and other occasions.
- *Eventually expand concept of Oneg hosting to include all worship services, e.g. traditional, youth, torah study.
- *Establish cadre of usher and greeters.
- *Create support committee to assist Rabbi in logistical matters pertaining to services.
- *Explore the possibility of dual affiliation with UAHC and Conservative movement.

Fellowship

- *Appoint social task force to facilitate and coordinate more events and programs and identify members who can implement them, e.g. film series, cultural series, shabbaton, new members program, JCC-type events.
- *Develop new chaverot and encourage chaverot to sponsor events and programs.

Education

- *Revitalize adult education—Sundays-at-Sinai, weekday short courses, Steinberg scholar-in-residence, Shavuot academy, etc.
- *Enlarge role of parents in religious school by forming PTA, encouraging co-op style teaching in early grades, for one-shot or short courses during university vacations.
- *Engage students more deeply in Shabbat worship and in post-confirmation programs.
- *Appoint committee to plan and implement community-wide Jewish holiday programs.

Caring

- *In partnership with CUJF and other local Jewish organizations,
 - 1) Convene a task force of members from the helping professions in order to assess human services needs for the Jewish community then to develop as well as implement a coherent plan addressing and communicating those needs.
 - 2) Develop an organized system to communicate and facilitate linkage to volunteer opportunities and to promote social awareness of the broader C-U community

Physical plant

- *Establish task force to coordination of various committees involved with physical plant.
- *Consider a professional administrator, board members, or super volunteer who could also coordinate in caring and financial areas. Among the building related tasks of this person would be the daily oversight of janitorial services including set-ups and tear downs for special events, the oversight of contractors doing building maintenance and repairs, coordinating all use of rooms— “rents” and responsibilities.
- *Establish committee for future changes in physical plant—quiet space, land acquisition, renovation of sanctuary— replace pews and carpeting, redesign bima and choir area.

Finance

- *Establish special society of members paying significantly more than annual dues.
- *Investigate progressive fair share dues structure.
- *Plan endowment campaign.
- *Appoint chair to oversee fundraising events.
- *Restructure finance committee and redefine its responsibilities.

General structure and implementation

- *Appoint an oversight committee to insure that the recommendations in the Long Range Planning Report are considered by the board in a timely fashion and acted upon when appropriate, informing the congregation annually of the plan's progress.
- *Create group(s) to study Sinai administrative structures, e.g. board and officers; relations with larger Jewish community.

Worship Pillar

I. Introduction

Sinai Temple next year will celebrate its 100th birthday. For most of that time, it has affiliated with the Reform Movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations. As the Reform Movement has changed, so has Sinai. Instead of the Union Prayerbook, we now use Gates of Prayer and may begin using a still newer UAHC commissioned prayerbook when it is published. Like most Reform congregations in North America, Sinai's services now include more ritual and greater use of Hebrew, as well as melodies created in recent decades. Some congregants who grew up with the classic reform mode of liturgy have not fully embraced these changes, while other congregants, who grew up with more traditional Jewish practice, have welcomed them. Moreover, as the only congregation in Champaign-Urbana, at least for the last half-century, Sinai has many members who if given a choice would probably join a Conservative or Reconstructionist Congregation. Indeed, some families who now belong to Sinai were once part of the local conservative synagogue. With the exception of Hillel, which largely serves students and a small number of Orthodox families, Sinai is now, as we often say, "the only show in town." As such, it has strived in various ways to develop a pluralistic approach to worship.

In various ways, all of our recent rabbis have supported this pluralistic approach to worship, which seems to be quite unique within the UAHC.

II. Summary of Action Items

1. Diversity of Services

A hallmark of Sinai Temple is the variety of services offered, within the framework of a reform congregation. The temple and its congregants should be commended for not only tolerating, but really supporting, the following:

- **The Friday night reform service.** This is the main service in the Reform Movement, and has traditionally started at 8 PM. Early in his tenure, Rabbi Neuman encouraged pluralistic thinking about liturgy by developing a system of rotation, whereby each month there would be a classic reform service, an informal camp style service, a more contemporary reform service, and a service geared toward families, especially those with younger children. This rotational system was well publicized in the bulletin so that members knew which service was planned for which Shabbat and it had the additional effects of acquainting members with liturgical styles new to them and of fostering greater openness and respect for that which was unfamiliar but unquestionably authentically Jewish. Changes in this service have emerged from S2K deliberations, but decisions in this area are the province of the rabbi. A major

issue has been the music and choir, which will be discussed under the music heading.

- **The Traditional Minyan.** In the late 1970s, a group of congregants, with the support of Rabbi Neuman and the Board, began to hold High Holiday Services in the Kindergarten and Pre-kindergarten room at the end of the school wing, the only available space of any size. It was agreed that there would not be an evening service on Rosh Hashanah so that all members would be encouraged to attend the main service held in the sanctuary on that occasion. Shortly thereafter, the same group took responsibility for organizing and leading Shabbat morning services once a month, a practice which continues to this day and often extends to two services a month. This egalitarian minyan remains vibrant, well-liked and growing, although the average age of the participants is also growing and the small children who once were much in evidence have grown up. Younger families are not joining this minyan in significant numbers, so that its overall demography reflects the general trend within the temple.
- **Torah Study Service.** This past year, Rabbi Klein fostered the development of a Torah Study Minyan, which has been meeting on those Shabbat mornings when there is neither a traditional nor a liberal minyan. These Services are largely sung, are mostly in Hebrew, include a short discussion of a section of the week's Torah portion, and generally last about one hour. This new service, with Torah reading and discussion, but no formal sermon, has great potential for growth into a more substantial service.
- **Liberal minyan.** In the late 1980s, with the encouragement of Rabbi Bloom, a Liberal Minyan was formed and held services once a month. The group took as its name M'vakshei Derekh, or Seekers of the Way, to underscore its commitment to experimenting with liturgy and its willingness to examine many issues and attitudes surrounding prayer. Of late, the impulse which led to the group's creation seems to be flagging. It attracts fewer and fewer attendees and is experiencing a severe shortage of leaders. It seems to have served its purpose as a Jewish Journey Group and will likely disband at some point in the near future.
- **Junior congregation:** This service for youth is in its 2nd year, and is filling a need for families of school aged children. Attendance should be encouraged as a continuation from Toddler Shabbat.
- **Toddler Shabbat:** Rabbi Klein has been leading a short Toddler Shabbat service one Friday evening each month, a practice started by Rabbi Bloom. This service is quite popular and should be continued for families with very young children.

- **Class services.** Reform Friday evening service, starting at 6 PM with dinner following.

We recommend the following regarding the various services:

Continue to have a *consistent start time* to services to encourage the habit of coming.

More publicity for the Torah Study service, with write ups in the bulletin explaining it. This service has the potential to grow into a major Saturday morning reform service. This might also alleviate the problem of Bar/Bat Mitzvah families feeling that their day is truly *their* day, and not part of the regular congregational service – mainly because there is no regular Saturday congregational service.

The Traditional Minyan should be prominently mentioned in introductory literature for potential new temple members. Many newcomers to the community do not realize that there is a more traditional option available at Sinai.

The Erev Rosh Hashana service should be stressed as the one service during the year for people to join as an entire community, regardless of which Shabbat service a person usually attends. Members of the Traditional Minyan, who have been coming to this service less frequently in recent years, often because of the late ending in view of the fact that the Traditional service starts early at 9 AM the following morning, may be more comfortable with an earlier start time.

Occasional interactive discussions instead of a sermon on Friday night, similar to those in the Torah Study Service.

A change in the music format at the Friday night service. This will be addressed under the Music heading.

Let the Liberal Minyan disband when its residual members feel the time comes.

In keeping with the diversity of the congregation and to help legitimize the growing Traditional Minyan, consider changing Sinai's affiliation with U.A.H.C. to a split affiliation with U.A.H.C. and United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the conservative movement.

2. Music

At one time, Sinai relied on a choir composed of members to provide music for the Friday evening service. About the time we moved into the new building, that is about 30-35 years ago, Sinai decided to hire a professional choir and choir director/organist. Music for the Friday night service is a hotly contested topic within the congregation.

The issue of music received the largest number of responses in the open-ended question part of the recent survey. 136 responses were received, of which 41 liked the music as is and 95 disliked it. Music was also the topic receiving the most attention at the open forum and focus group, much of it of a critical nature. Obviously, changes need to be made.

Choir: There was much opposition to a hired choir singing set pieces in multi-part harmony. Many felt that choir members should be Jewish. Many want to be able to sing along as a congregation. Several like Debbie Friedman music, but many don't, or at least don't like entire services of her music, feeling that that provides monotony. A congregational group called the Shabbat Singers has been formed to sing in unison at services. Use of an organ seems to be outmoded on a national basis, with piano, guitar, or other instruments becoming more popular. This year, for budgetary reasons, there were many services with only a soloist, who stood below the choir area near the piano.

Cantor: The committee recommends working toward hiring a reform cantor as a very long-range plan. Such a cantor would enlarge the scope of Jewish music, provide Bar and Bat Mitzvah training, be an additional clergy person in the community for life cycle events, and lead a lay choir, among other duties. However, the cost would have a major impact on the budget.

We recommend the following:

- *Rotation of services:* We recommend that there be a rotation of styles of music in Friday night services, with the style of service listed in the Temple bulletin. The rotation should preferably be on a fixed schedule, as in the past under Rabbi Neuman. We hope that congregants would come to all, just with the knowledge of what style the service would be, but if they really wish to avoid a certain style, they could be selective rather than complaining. A choir or soloist could be used selectively as part of the rotation.
- The soloist should be on the bima, rather than off in the choir area.
- *Educating the congregation as to the role of a modern reform cantor.* We suggest bringing in a reform cantor for a combined scholar in residence/Glaser concert weekend to begin such instruction.
- Continue support for a *group of congregants acting as a choir*, with unison singing. Perhaps they could be on the bima to help start the service with a niggun, before going to their seats.

3. Ancillary Matters

- Create an area in the children's section of the library to which a parent could take a young child during services.

- Place a loudspeaker in the lobby and the library, so that a parent who must leave services with a child, or anyone else who cannot be in the sanctuary, can still hear the service.
- Redesign the printed Order of Service with a more modern, more easily readable type font.
- Create a brochure, to be handed out at High Holiday services, with extras on the bookcase, with details about the various services, Jewish Journey Groups, clubs (book club, investment club, any others), Adult Ed courses, family ed courses, committees that want members, etc. Include description of activity, dates, contact person and phone number. Update each year. The information in the brochure should also be available on the web site.
- **Oneg/Kiddush** after services. We recommend that:

The Oneg committee continue to try to procure assistance in the kitchen.

It be stressed to all temple members that one of the duties of membership is to serve at an Oneg. However, we recommend that the *concept of "Oneg" be expanded* to include the oneg after any service, not just the Friday evening one. Thus, members can choose to serve at the service where they are most comfortable attending, be it Friday night, Traditional Minyan, Torah Study service, junior congregation, Toddler Shabbat, etc. The issue of coordination will have to be addressed under organizations, but should not be a deterrent. This would be consistent with Sinai's policy of supporting diversity.

The reception after Rosh Hashanah services should be continued, with an invitation to the Traditional Minyan to attend if time permits.

Understanding that the Traditional Minyan ends the Ne'ilah service much later than the Reform on Yom Kippur, discontinue the notion of having an all-Temple break fast. Call it a Break Fast for the Reform service. The Traditional Minyan will provide their own food on their own schedule.

- **Usher committee.** We recommend that the usher committee be reformulated with younger members, to form an usher/greeter committee and that some thought be given to lightening the heavy load borne for years by Art Robinson.

4. Architectural concerns. The following issues must be considered when the time comes.

- Pews - are wearing out. Suggestions are for upholstered chairs which lock together, but can be configured into a variety of seating arrangements. Racks can be fitted to the backs to hold copies of books not in use at the moment.
- Bima - concerns about accessibility have led some to suggest the bima should be taken down to ground level. We suggest that this would ruin sight lines for many members of the congregation, especially as they age. We recommend removing the organ and choir area, thus yielding space for an access ramp at the side.
- The Davis Chapel could be used for accessibility, better lighting, more intimate gatherings, and smaller services during the summer.

Fellowship Pillar

I. Introduction

Sinai temple has always prided itself on its being a warm community, welcoming to newcomers and able to foster relationships among its members that range from cordiality to deep friendship.

About 15 or so years ago, Sinai created its Chaverot program, largely in response to a need expressed at a general meeting for forms of fellowship on a smaller scale. With advice from Mimi Dinitz, on the staff of the regional UAHC, Sinai initially created some 6-8 Chaverot, most of which are still alive and well, and added a couple of more in subsequent years.

Up to the last 8 years or so, much of Sinai's organized social activity was provided by the Sisterhood as well as by the Temple's own social committee. Many will recall progressive dinners in members' homes, the Great Chefs of Champaign dinner at the temple, plays performed by the Sinai Players on the makeshift stage in the pods, and a host of other pleasurable events. Whether or not these programs made any money was beside the point, for they were not conceived of as fundraisers but rather as spirit-raisers, that is, as programs primarily for fun and fellowship.

In recent years, and under the influence of S2K, efforts have been made to supply designated greeters to welcome worshippers to services.

The data collected by the LRPC indicate that a surprising number of Sinai members consider fellowship to be very important and regard it as a key factor in many aspects of synagogue life, such as the recruitment of volunteers, who are vital to the success of many programs and activities. Responses by both members and nonmembers to the survey suggest that Sinai needs to reinforce its sense of itself as a warm and welcoming place. After reflecting upon data gathered earlier this, the LRPC makes the following recommendations for enhancing bonds of fellowship among its members.

II. Summary of Action Items

1. Social Events:

We need more social events to connect members to each other. These social events should be geared for our members. The events themselves can directly or indirectly have a Jewish focus. In that vein, the LRPC recommends the following:

- **Creation of a Social Task Group. The leader of this group is to be appointed by the President and Board.**
 - The tasks of this group would be to create opportunities for congregational members to gather and connect, thus strengthening members' ties to each other and to the temple. This task force would work with the evolving social forces within our temple. The important point here is that this Social Task Group should serve as a coordinating body (i.e., get other individual groups and individuals to do things) so that it does not have to take upon itself the job of organizing each and every social event. This group should adhere to the following guiding principles:
 - Strongly encourage inclusiveness: Identify and reach out to individuals or unformed groups. Be inclusive for all members that may have been excluded (i.e., singles, non-traditional households, non-Jewish spouses, elders, etc)
 - Encourage partnerships: Encourage partnerships of all the various groups, thus improving the Sinai Temple community as a whole.
 - **Social events for Sinai Temple's Centennial Anniversary.**

For the first year of the long-range plan, we recommend several, major centennial celebration social events. Each of these social events should be Temple-wide, as inclusive as possible, and *not* involve fundraising. These social events are meant to be in addition to other kinds of events planned for Temple's centennial anniversary.

- **Encourage Journey Groups.**
Journey groups are groups of people (mostly self-made groups) who interact and relate to each other for a purpose. (I.e., torah study group, women's investment club, the bar/bat mitzvah families, Chaverot—see below). These Journey Groups can be ongoing or short-term.
- **Help stimulate or implement (and continue) events with direct Jewish focus.**
Present activities: Purim Ball, Passover Seder, etc. We recommend developing 1 or 2 major ongoing events within the next five years. One highly recommended possibility is to create a Shabbaton retreat/sleepover within the Champaign-Urbana community, building on the Jewish value of Shabbat and rest amidst our temple members' busy lives throughout the week. We recommend making this event very affordable by holding it in Champaign-Urbana (i.e., right at home).
- **Help stimulate or implement (and continue) events with indirect Jewish focus.**
Suggestions: Jewish Film Series, Plays, readings (i.e., more cultural). We highly recommend the film series and developing a cultural program/series that occurs each year or every other year (with a changing focus) or periodically.
- **Encourage each chaverah to organize at least one social event or do one project each year for the entire congregation,**
as one Chaverah did this year, organizing the Purim Ball. Chaverot could even organize the events suggested here.
- **Promote and publicize Federation efforts involving singles Group.**
- **JCC model**
We recommend **exploring the possibility of supporting secular activities** (like excursions to museums or to athletic events in Chicago) in the hopes of reaching more people. Since this community does not have a JCC, we found that there may be an untapped need here. We recommend 1 or 2 secular trips or outings out-of-town (e.g. to Chicago or Springfield) in year 4 or 5. We also recommend a sports outing and a sports team by year 3, 4 or 5, which is to say that Sinai Temple organize team to compete in local leagues, such as softball, or hold its own mini-tournaments in tennis, golf, or 2-3 person basketball teams. Such events might appeal to some adult members, but should also be designed to include our youth and the youth group, who mentioned it in their own survey.

2. Chaverot

Because this social unit is very important and has been so successful, we need to be more active in stimulating the formation of new Chaverot. We recommend to the Chaverot committee that when appropriate we **grow new Chaverot from a small nucleus of families or members** rather than wait for the accumulation of enough people to form it. In other words, we should encourage interested members to form their own groups, as well as having Chaverot chair/committee recommend members. We need to foster Chaverot as much as possible and could have as many as possible.

3. Inclusiveness & partnerships

In order to make Sinai Temple the kind of Jewish community that Sinai Temple has envisioned, we need to act upon our vision and be "warmer," more open, and less cold and "cliquish." Besides the other recommendations in this pillar, we recommend the following:

- **Forming intergenerational partnerships.** For instance, have elder speakers in our congregation speak and interact with in religious schools more. The Educator and the religious school would be responsible for overseeing this aspect.
- **Religious school-New member-Mentor household Partnership:**

As the welcoming of strangers to one's door is a very Jewish value, we recommend that new member baskets be the responsibility of the Religious school and/or the Mentors (see below) so that new members (who usually have children attending religious school) would feel even more welcomed. We especially recommend that the religious school become involved with welcoming new members of the congregation. Perhaps, students in religious school can be involved in a presentation during new members Shabbat.

- **At services: The Rabbi and/or the president can make subtle announcements emphasizing friendliness.** They can be explicit about reminding congregants to remember to greet visitors or congregants they do not know at the oneg after services. Perhaps we could form a "Social Ushers" group of designated greeters who might wear labels identifying them as such in order to make it socially acceptable and easier for visitors or new congregants to approach them and be approached by them.
- **New member mentors:**
We highly recommend developing a Mentoring Program, which would help initiate new members into the culture of Sinai Temple. Mentors could help new congregants to understand Sinai's expectations of its members as well as guide them toward the activities and resources of the temple they might find rewarding and congenial. We recommend full implementation of a mentor program by year 4, with years 1-3 for planning and piloting.

Education Pillar

I. General Introduction

Sinai Temple members regard education as an integral part of being Jewish. To that end, there has always been strong support for the Religious School. About 8 years ago, Sinai hired a full-time professional Temple Educator to administer the Sunday School and Hebrew School. Before that time for over 10 years, part-time, school principals ran the Religious School.

About 8 years ago, Sinai also formed a partnership with CUJF to help support the full-time Temple Educator position. Sinai would admit children of non-members to the Religious School, although at a higher rate. About 5 years ago Sinai built the new school wing in order to support the growing Religious School (then on double sessions for Sundays) and to accommodate other temple functions.

While the Religious School is focused on our youth, Sinai is committed to Adult Jewish Education. In the past, there have been Sundays at Sinai Series, Scholar-in-Residence programs, occasional speakers on various topics, Torah study groups, and most recently Sunday Adult Education forums to discuss Reform Judaism's Responsa on various contemporary issues.

The data collected by the LRPC indicate a major aging trend. Simply put, our congregation is on average getting older. There are fewer students in religious school, and there are more adult-family situations without any children at all or with grown children living away from home. This trend suggests that while the Religious School's needs should be taken seriously, there is a growing need for more adult education in this congregation. Responses by both members and nonmembers to the survey suggest that Sinai is expected to address both of these educational needs to reinforce its sense of education as vital to being a Jew. After reflecting upon data gathered, LRPC make the following recommendations for enhancing education at Sinai Temple.

II. Summary of Action Items

A. Religious School Education

Sinai Temple is committed to having some form of a Temple Educator position to run its Religious School. The LRPC will make recommendations based upon four scenarios: 1) Full-time professional Temple Educator, 2) one full-time Cantor/Educator or two positions (Educator and Cantor), 3) one full-time Administrator/Educator or two positions (Educator and Administrator), or 4) part-time Temple Educator. At this point, there is no way to determine which of these options will best fit into our future plans. While the LRPC is recommending a movement toward scenarios 2) or 3), we feel any of these prospects would be viable alternatives.

LRPC will make only a very few curriculum recommendations--those general trends that were specifically mentioned in feedback received throughout this LRP process. Based on responses from the congregation, the LRPC highly recommends that the Religious School adhere to the following principles when operating:

- A main goal is to become a **community of learners** for life.
- **Serious education.** Be rigorous and focused in age-appropriate manner, perhaps assigning more individual work and family lessons to be done at home.
- **Social interactions** during Religious School are important and should be encouraged, but they should not interfere with the educational mission.
- **High expectations** of students and teachers and of leaders and parents. Parents (and others) need to be kept informed of these expectations.
- In general, students who have gone through education at Sinai temple will excel in the following areas :

- a. **Jewish Actions:** They will have been taught traditional Jewish values through an emphasis on righteousness (*tzedakah*), commandments (*mitzvot*), and goodwill (*gemilut hasidim*) to one another and to society at large.
- b. **Jewish knowledge:** They will have acquired some basic knowledge of Jewish heritage (Hebrew, Torah, prayer, other Jewish texts, Jewish history, Jewish modes of inquiry, etc.) and (one hopes) a desire to continue learning about it.

1. Curriculum Recommendations

- **Choose a ready-to-use Curricula:** We recommend that Sinai Temple evaluate UAHC's ready-to-use curricula or other ready-to-use curricula, choose one, and adapt it to our school. By having a set curriculum, we will be able to follow the principles above more readily, and any instructor, regular or substitute, could be given a lesson plan to help them teach effectively..
- **Sunday School Sequence:** In general, the overriding, educational sequence in Sunday School should be based on developing an **awareness of Jewish identity and Judaism, this process moving from the individual to the community to the world.** We recommend the following benchmarks in place for Sunday School:
 - Primary Level (Hand-in-Hand through 3rd): Students spend time with their families exploring Jewish identity. Who is a Jew? What do Jewish people do?
 - Middle Level (4th - 7th, which is the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year): Students investigate Jewish history, heritage, and ethics. Where do we come from and where are we going?.
 - Upper Level (8th – 12th): Students apply what they have learned by being active members of the Jewish community. How does one behave as a Jew in our community/in our world? We recommend for pre-confirmation (8th – 9th) the following: Electives and short courses, congregant-student partnerships or torah study group/social action committee members in partnerships, etc (as discussed in section on partnerships below). After confirmation (10th), we recommend the following: independent study, seminars, torah study, small-group study or work projects.
- **Hebrew School Sequence:** Hebrew school begins in the 4th year (and 3rd for some students). We recommend the following benchmarks in place for Hebrew school:
 - Primary Level (Hand-in-Hand through 3rd): Before they enter Hebrew school, we recommend that students learn the Hebrew Aleph Bet, learn prayers associated with Shabbat, learn some Hebrew vocabulary used in holiday celebration, songs, and learn some conversational vocabulary.
 - Middle Level (4th - 7th, which is the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year): Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year, students should know the prayers in the Shabbat service as well as several for holiday celebrations and know their significance. Students will have learned Hebrew grammar and have a reasonable vocabulary. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah year is spent studying trope, their Torah and Haftarah portions, how to lead a Shabbat service, and customs and ritual observances.
 - Upper Level (8th – 12th): Post Bar/Bat Mitzvah students would continue to learn conversational Hebrew, perhaps applying this knowledge in trips to Israel. They could also begin Torah study in Hebrew taught by a qualified teacher.
- **Assessment.** We recommend at least two age-appropriate tests a year (one each semester) and relevant assignments to be done at home. At each grade level, students should be given the opportunity to assess their progress. This age-

appropriate self-assessment should be shared with families. The Temple Educator would evaluate classes and teaching.

2. Recognition Programs

- **Establish a "Shabbat is Rewarding" program:** Reinforce prayer-learning by rewarding those who attend any of the Shabbat services—Junior congregation, Friday Night Services, or Saturday morning Shabbat services. For example, the coordinator of this program can establish a threshold and keep track of student attendance. If students attend a certain number of times, they will be rewarded as a group (pizza party, Krannert tickets, skating rink passes, movie passes, tickets to sporting events, etc.).
- **A "mini-confirmation" event for transition from Primary to Middle Years (from 3rd to 4th grade):** We recommend a "mini-confirmation" event to be instituted. This event will celebrate the students' transition from Primary to Middle level. We recommend that students be strongly encouraged to demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of what they have learned so far.
- **A "post-confirmation" program for students after Confirmation (grade 10th) who "graduate" from the post-Confirmation Years (grade 12th):** We recommend developing this program to give students a chance to express their Jewish knowledge in a deeply felt way. Perhaps, it will culminate in an evening where students give presentations of their on-going projects, whether self-study or mitzvah projects. The students will then be recognized for their deep commitments to Judaism.

3. Role of Parents

The role of parents and families in our education programs is emphasized in the following recommendations and allows for some different approaches and possibilities for our school. With parents learning and co-operatively teaching some difficulties are solved, such as hiring and discipline, and some benefits are realized such as family education and attention to study. Having parents and congregants involved on a regular basis allows for planning field trips and greater community involvement. With these benefits in mind (as well as input we've received from the LRP process) we recommend the following:

- **Sunday School Co-op for primary level (hand-in-hand – 3rd):** We already have one example of this kind of model for Hand-in-Hand. We highly recommend expanding this concept. At the beginning of each year, the Temple Educator would work with each class to develop an acceptable and appropriate co-op model. Parents could contribute in various ways, but their participation would lend the school more stability and authority. Best of all, the parents would become involved in their child's (or children's) education. While this may seem to be a large time commitment, by the time parents have finished hand-in-hand, they will have established the habit of being involved in their child's (or children's) Jewish education.
- **Sunday School for kids and parents for part of middle level (4th – 6th):** We envision the good habits of Sunday school attendance and learning developed in the co-op to continue through the middle years. We recommend that parents and their children attend class together as co-learners, with a hired teacher or parent volunteer to lead the class. Adults can continue to set the tone for attentive learning and respectful behavior. As an alternative, we recommend that parents attend their own adult education at the same time their children are in school.

4. *Kesher* (Connection) and Partnerships

- **Religious School Outreach:** The LRPC recommends developing and maintaining appropriate partnerships between the religious school and other Jewish organizations in our community. We recommend the Sinai Temple PTA (see recommendation under point 6) form a subcommittee to serve as a liaison. This committee would have three tasks: 1) To partner with CUJF (For example, on Holocaust education). 2) To partner with Hillel. (As many of our teachers are college students hired through Hillel, we should seek ways to work with Hillel to start a Jewish teaching internship program.) 3) To partner with other appropriate Jewish organizations.
- **Student – Hillel Program:** We recommend having a program with Hillel for our older students (11th – 12th) so they can have more of a sense of Jewish life in college. We recommend having the students attend at least one special Hillel Shabbat in a year. (Facilitated by Religious School Outreach Committee)
- **Student – Elder Program:** We recommend age-appropriate talks/discussions at least twice a year. (Facilitated by Chai). Another possibility is an adopt-a-Bubbee/Zaide program.
- **Brother/Sister School Partnership:** We recommend that the religious school form a partnership with another school in order to expand the students' knowledge of the world. One such program is the **Yad-V-Yad** Program, which establishes connection with a Jewish community in the former Soviet Union: (Facilitated by PTA in conjunction with the Temple Educator and Rabbi). Another possibility is to establish **Pen-Pals** program (like www.epals.com) with a congregation in U.S. or even Israel.
- **Shuk-type weekends (on Shavuot or on Tu-B'shvat):** Possibly in conjunction with the Jewish Holiday Committee (discussed below), we highly recommend a weekend where parents and other congregants teach topics or activities based on their own interests.
- **Student – Congregant Partnerships** (especially for 8th & 9th): We highly recommend tapping the resources of individual congregants and certain groups within the congregation to teach short courses or electives for 8th and 9th grade and to mentor the 11/12 grade students. The religious school needs to publicize the importance of this aspect. The Educator would seek to develop these partnerships with the help of the Rabbi or knowledgeable congregants. We also recommend encouraging adult congregants to be mentors for the post-confirmation students who are participating in a "Post-confirmation" program (see "Recognition" programs above).

5. Role of the Youth Group

We made some recommendations in the Fellowship Pillar. In general, the LRPC sees the youth group in terms of social and mitzvah activities, which reflects their own preferences as indicated in the recent youth group survey. The LRPC recommends that the board consider relieving the Temple Educator of youth group oversight and transferring this area of responsibility to other individual(s).

6. Structure of Religious School

- **Establish Sinai Temple PTA:** We recommend this group have the following responsibilities: 1) Support communications among parents, teachers, and Temple Educator; 2) Support the classroom. For example, the PTA would coordinate tasks involving the room parents; 3) Coordinate Religious School outreach (as stated

above in "*Kesher*" section); 4) Do fundraising for educational programs as needed (Sinai Cafe is an example of a successful ongoing fundraiser). The Religious Education Committee should choose a chair for this organization.

- **Adapt School Calendar, as needed.** As adult/parent involvement increases, we recommend the religious education committee consider the number of sessions and length of the school day. If parents are more involved, especially in teaching, we will be less constrained by the university's calendar so we can balance the calendar more and create some summer and intersession activities. If parents are more involved, more discussion and activities can happen at home, thus reducing the need for a long day.
- **Evaluate Educator Position in year 3:** The role of the Temple Educator may change in the long-term, depending upon how many students are enrolled in religious school. Significantly, the largest three classes in religious school will be out of religious school in three years. The number of students in our school will be below 150 in the next 5 years, barring any surges in the preK population. We currently have about 162 students in the school, which includes the last biggest class (grade 7) of the last ten years. If the decline continues, Sinai might be able to return to a part-time Educator, although it might be difficult to find a qualified person to take the job on that basis. A declining school population provide the opportunity to expand the Educator's functions, or perhaps to combine the Educator position with another, and thereby creating such dual positions as Educator/Administrator or Educator/Cantor. The Administrator/Cantor benefits the whole congregation while having a professional educator part time may be enough of what we will need for the school. Given the demographic changes in progress, we recommend reviewing the Educator position in 3 years.
- **Prepare congregation for possible dual position of Educator/Administrator or Educator/Cantor.** During these five years, we recommend looking into how a cantor or administrator would fit into our congregation's professional staff (see discussion above).
- **Jewish Holiday Committee:** The LRPC acknowledges that the observance and celebration of Jewish Holidays involves the whole Jewish community. Therefore, planning holiday celebrations should involve and represent our entire community. This task should not fall solely upon the Temple Educator or the Religious Education Committee. We strongly recommend forming a Jewish Holiday Committee comprised of members representing our whole Jewish community (Religious school, youth group, CUJF, Hillel as well as youth, adults, elders, etc.)
- **Role of the Religious Education Committee:** 1) Set school policy, 2) Determine PTA leadership, 3) Maintain religious school web site, 4) Oversee religious school budget, and 5) evaluate and make suggestions for updates to curriculum. The committee is not expected to supervise the Educator or micromanage the Religious School.
- **Evaluation of Temple Educator:** The LRPC recommends that the board develop an evaluation process of the Temple Educator so that input from all constituencies can be considered.
- **Role of the Rabbi:** Continue to increase interaction with both Religious and Hebrew school, and to encourage family involvement.

- **Training:** We recommend that some thought be given as to how we might more effectively train the teachers in our Religious School. We need to create a consistent and effective structure for training non-professional parent-teachers (and student-teachers) to make them comfortable and successful when they enter the classroom. Such ideas may include mentoring, "walk-in" curricula, training "school" (in conjunction with Hillel), etc.

B. Library

1. **Need a library assistant/trainee** for Henrietta.
2. Reestablish "**Adopt-a-book**" program.
3. Continue **Hebrew book orders** to bring in free books to library.
4. **Create Showcase/Display of library selections** to highlight what we have and what is new. We could perhaps get volunteers from Chavurot, the book clubs, or Youth Group.
5. **Easier access:** Perhaps keep open on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

C. Adult Education

While Sinai Temple has historically advocated and sponsored adult education, the focus in the past few years has been the family unit, with the emphasis on children. While this focus is certainly important and should continue, the LRPC sees that the focus needs to be broadened to include all adult members in the community. We therefore make the following recommendations:

1. Partnerships

- **Sinai – Jewish Culture & Society and CUJF:** We recommend coordinating with the Jewish Culture & Society program and CUJF in order to invite UIUC faculty member and visiting lecturers to speak at the Temple
- **Encourage Journey Groups and self-study.**
- **Encourage more "Haverah-sponsored" educational events.**

2. Programs

- **Triennial Culture Series & Shabbaton:** See Fellowship pillar
- **Sundays at Sinai.** Perhaps include this aspect in Culture Series.
- **Torah Study:** We recommend continuing our current Torah study groups and looking into a youth torah study group.
- **Music Study with Cantor/Music Director,** including reviving the Glaser Concerts, using funds from appropriate endowments. We recommend continuing and possibly expanding training and programs involving the Shabbat singers
- **Steinberg Scholar in Residence.** Perhaps include this aspect in the Culture Series, Shabbaton (see Fellowship pillar), and Shuk celebrations (see above under Role of Parent / *Kesher*). Again, endowment funds for adult education can be used for such activities.

3. Structure

- **Role of the Adult Education Committee:** This committee needs to be revitalized with clear instructions and expectations, including concrete to-do lists. We have the following three recommendations for such a committee:
 - a. Help coordinate— not necessarily plan!— all the Adult-Education events listed above (and other Jewish programs as they see fit).
 - b. Look to congregants to get feedback and program ideas, and perhaps even conduct periodic surveys.
 - c. Consider childcare or any other special needs (like rides for elderly) when coordinating events.

Long-Range Planning Committee 2002-2003
Caring Pillar
Survey Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

It is written:

“You shall walk after the Lord your G-d’ (Deut. 13:5) But how can a person walk after G-d who is ‘a devouring fire’ (Deut. 4:24)? It means, walk after the divine attributes: namely, clothe the naked, visit the sick, comfort the mourner, bury the dead. (Sot.14a)”

This pillar seeks to address such “acts of loving kindness” or *gemilut hasidim* as they are extended to both those within and those outside of our community.

Sinai has from time to time formed caring committees that sought to minister to various needs within its own community, but these have been relatively inactive of late. Sinai also reaches out to help throughout the greater community through its social action committee, as well as through its commitment to collecting food at High Holiday time for the Prairie Food Bank, its raising money for scholarships in the name of Martin Luther King, and its very successful Mitzvah Day, to cite a few examples.

- Summary of findings: The survey revealed an aging population not being replaced proportionately by younger membership. This finding parallels national demographic trends and will affect not only the types of future services required but their provision and funding as well. Major expressed needs include many targeting the elderly or their caregivers. Examples include the need for homemaker services, adult day care and respite. Other special groups expressing unmet needs were our immigrant population, singles and young families. While a number of temple and federation committees exist to address these, communication between the organizations is not always clear. Respondents expressed uncertainty as to where to turn for referral. Likewise, many expressed a desire to volunteer but did not know what opportunities are available. The present system is piecemeal and fragmented. It does not adequately meet current and emerging community needs.

Defining problem: No organized system of communication or funding exists for the identification of human service needs, referral to resources or volunteer linkage.

Plan

The following recommendations are made in order to address identified priorities:

- Internal focus:

Convene an ad hoc committee of social workers, psychologists, gerontologists, nurses and other volunteers from the community engaged in the helping professions to:

a.) perform a community human services needs assessment

The group would look at what we already do and what we need. Their work would take into account demographic features and expressed needs identified by this survey. Additionally, members would apply their professional observations and expertise to complete the assessment. (Ex: the survey indicated a need for more services targeting our aging population.)

b.) develop a plan for a coherent, effective system to address community needs

The committee would take into account the need to synergize inter-agency efforts, existing human service funds and human resources. A realistic plan would also factor in projected trends in volunteer recruitment, revenue and donor base and other variables necessary for its successful implementation. (Ex: streamlining of CUJF and temple services could be developed in a fashion that also best utilizes dedicated endowments. Innovative avenues of funding such as grants for faith-based initiatives could be explored. Cooperative partnerships with existing social service agencies might be investigated. Sliding-scale and fee-for-service funding might also be considered. Communication technologies including the website need to be integrated into the plan. A handbook of available community services and contacts is strongly urged.)

c.) present a report to the temple board with findings, suggested plan and means of implementation

The report would include a projected timeline for implementation as well as realistic cost estimates for each major component. It is hoped that committee members would serve as the foundation for the new system and its implementation. Implementation might need to occur in prioritized phases as funding and personnel dictate.

The suggested timeframe would have the committee assembled and ready to begin its initial work within six months after the LRPC report is submitted to the Board of Trustees. It is hoped that it would bring its findings to the board within the following six months. It

is suggested that the implementation process begin immediately following board input and approval. The ideal time frame would be 12 to 18 months from the first group meeting to the start of the plan's implementation. Annual review is recommended to be sure services are adjusted to meet our evolving needs.

- External focus:

Develop an organized system to facilitate linkage to volunteer opportunities and promote social awareness of the broader community.

a.) The scope of this system would encompass the creation of culture designed to foster *gemilut hasidim* as an accustomed part of the lives of all our members. It would encourage the development of significant, ongoing relationships between our members and those in need in the greater community. Nevertheless, volunteering should not become a compulsory part of synagogue life but rather, a part of a culture in which it is routine. It might be advisable, however, to include such activities as a permanent part of the religious school curriculum. These would be coordinated with the educator. Other functions would include linkage to as well as identification and communication with human needs opportunities. Volunteer recruitment and orientation would also be included. Relationships with ecumenical groups and participation in related activities would also be fostered. While the diversity of our congregation would prohibit the promotion of specific political points of view, the promotion of social awareness through the coordination of journey groups, speaker's forums and the like might also be appropriately included here.

b.) Coordination might be achieved through an administrative position dedicated to this purpose or as a function of a more formal professional role. A committee could also serve this purpose and might include representation from the board, religious school, youth group, other temple committees and other local Jewish agencies. It is recommended that this be an inter-organizational committee.

c.) Communication would be a critical component of this position. It is recommended that an annual listing of volunteer opportunities and scheduled events be made available to all members. Such a reference could include brief descriptions of activities, contact names and other relevant information. Updated information could be posted in the bulletin and on the website. Reminders and announcements could be made through flyers and email.

The suggested timeframe would have a coordinating chair or position in place within three months after the LRPC report is presented to the Board of Trustees. A committee could then be formed and begin meeting on a regular basis. Within six months, it is hoped that a basic calendar and listing of opportunities would be made available to the membership. A more detailed reference would be expected by the end of the first year, to be updated at least annually after that.

- Appendix:

Identified and expressed needs:

Seniors:

Transportation to services, events, medical transport
Support groups
Family respite
Errands, shopping, repairs, cooking and household help
Adult day care
Calling service
Bus trips and social events
Early services and more daytime programs
Social worker or gerontologist
Health care needs, including information on long-term care insurance, referrals to MDs, group exercise and fitness, community nurse
Long-term care (in-home) and extended care (nursing home, etc)
Outreach to non-member elderly
Buddy system
Financial planning
Dating

Young Families:

Baby sitting during services
Changing tables in all restrooms

Youth:

Projects to involve youth in social services
Intergenerational projects
Youth social worker
Volunteer and leadership development for youth

New members:

Inform and connect to volunteer projects, social services

Singles:

Support, dating and social services

Immigrants:

Language classes

Ways to involve in activities and community

Jobs

Administrative:

Lack of communication between agencies, poor chain of command, and duplication of effort

JCC

Need direction and coordination from the top

More interfaith outreach

Safety net funds

May need more chronic needs met by formal service agencies: need better linkage, referral, and relationships

Part-time volunteer coordinator, maybe CUJF-temple could share funding. Maybe board position

Listing of services and contacts in Jewish community (update on website)

Transportation (Red Cross training, van rental, volunteer coordination)

Coordinated crisis and emergency support services (mental health, transportation, child and household care)

Increase awareness of volunteer opportunities via e-mail, website, calendar

Provide a forum to increase social awareness, including journey groups and outside speakers

Current resources (committees and funds): (not exhaustive)

Sinai

Social Action: food drive, interfaith and High Holiday babysitting, Catholic Worker's House, Council of Congregations (medical transport), MLK Scholarship, Thanksgiving baskets, Meals on Wheels, Center for Women in Transition, Mitzvah Day

Mitzvah Committees: Cancer Support (inactive), Condolence, Family Crisis, New baby, Transportation (inactive)

Cemetery: Purchase plots, support at funeral home, etc

Membership: welcome new members

Alpiner Flower fund: bima flowers then go to an ill person or family in need

Shapiro fund and Sisterhood: camp scholarships

Naomi Siegel Social Action Fund: Mitzvah Day and other SAC projects

CUJF

CHAI: (joint committee with temple. Federation provides 95% of funding, temple provides space and miscellaneous) programs and visiting services for seniors

Human Services: social services on as needed basis, referrals to providers, camp scholarships

Chevra Kadisha: burial needs and preparation, including occasional funding for needy families

VIMS: Senior social group

New American Committee

Goldberg/Gordon/Yairi Fund for seniors

Libby and Harry Miller Fund

Hillel:

Visits to seniors in conjunction with CUJF

Misc social service activities by students

B'nai B'rith:

Serves holiday meals at local hospitals

Physical Plant Pillar

From the *Jewish Population Survey* completed as part of this long range planning project, it would appear that the Jewish community as a whole is smaller and it is aging. There are fewer children and young adults and a growing middle-aged and senior population. The Jewish population in 2003 also appears to be staying in the community longer and senior members of families are relocating to this community to be with their children. While the Jewish population might be a bit smaller, it seems to be more involved in Jewish life both spiritually and socially. There is a sense that as the community shrinks the remaining population rallies more around its Jewishness—lower absolute number of children in religious school but a higher percentage of the available Jewish children in religious school and learning Hebrew; more parents wanting Jewish summer camp options and other Jewish experiences for their children; more Jewish adult education interest and attendance; and more adult ties to ritual and Hebrew learning. This combination of aging, contraction and intensification has major implications for changes in the physical plant and where the plant needs to grow in the future.

The recommendations that follow are divided into two broad sections; first, how we administer and maintain the current physical plant: and second, the adequacy of the plant and long range growth projects.

A. Administration and Maintenance of the Current Physical Plant

We have very recently increased by half again the total physical plant of Sinai Temple. Administering, monitoring, maintaining, and furnishing the larger and more complex spaces and structure have caught the Temple's antiquated volunteer committee structure by surprise.

The recent hiring of a janitorial service that can draw upon a team to help with set-up and tear-down and clean-up of spaces has been a major improvement. However, not all of the building's needs can be met by making janitorial service a line item in the yearly budget. There needs to be a maintenance and repairs budget of at least \$5,000 per year to meet the current on-going repair needs, and this figure will have to be re-evaluated and perhaps increased periodically with the aging of the plant and the inflation of the dollar. The Temple Building Fund is meant only to handle long range capital emergencies, up-grades and repairs, and should not be used to meet on-going yearly maintenance and repairs.

The committee structure overseeing the physical plant needs to be overhauled. There are too many committees that claim control over some part of the physical plant and there is no hierarchy of control in priority planning or maintenance and improvement planning—preventing coordination or even cooperation between the committees. The

authority of the various committees is not well defined, creating overlaps and gaps in the oversight of the building, its contents and the grounds. In sum, planning and maintenance is disjointed, incremental and serial, and volunteers are frustrated by the lack of comprehensive planning and maintenance

The physical plant committees include:

- *The Building Committee.* In charge of monitoring and maintaining the physical plant, which includes hiring and overseeing the janitorial services, monitoring wear and tear on the building, making all minor repairs and refurbishing, and taking bids and hiring contractors to complete emergency repairs, replacement of aging parts, and upgrades and additions to the physical plant. However, because of a lack of coordination and inertia in other committees the Building Committee also oversees snow removal, lawn mowing, tree trimming, upkeep of driveways, walkways, parking lots (lights, and signage) and all utility easement cases that arise. Other committees feel they can plan changes and set change priorities to that portion of the building they use and turn these into orders given to the Building Committee.
- *The Grounds Committee.* This committee is in charge of upkeep and care of all the garden plots. However, there is or has been a separate Neuman-Lewis garden committee.
- *The Interior Committee.* The actual status of this committee appears to be currently under debate. Based on feedback from the focus groups used in this planning process, some members believe this is a permanent committee in charge of all interior furnishing. Others believe this committee is only temporary, and that it came into being following the recent addition, with its primary function to oversee the building of the Chapel ark and the renovation of the main sanctuary ark. It shares a number of members with the Arts and Acquisitions Committee and the relationship between of these two committees is unclear.
- *The Arts and Acquisitions Committee.* In charge of maintaining all existing Judaic artifacts and purchasing new Judaic artifacts for the Temple, this committee might also be involved in the purchase of new interior furnishings and with other purchases, but its range of responsibilities is not clear.
- *7 Committees claiming sovereignty over a portion of the physical plant:* Kitchen Committee, Gift Shop Committee, Library Committee, Education Committee, Office Committee, Youth Lounge Committee and Security Committee. These committees each make separate plans for up-keep and repairs, order additional furnishings both free-standing and attached to the building, and set their own priorities that are only infrequently coordinated

with any of the other committees mentioned above. They make sovereign decisions and issue job orders given to the one of the above committees or done on their own.

To manage the physical plant we need an office administrator who can coordinate the day-to-day management of the plant, ranging from overseeing set-ups and special clean-ups by the janitorial staff to overseeing volunteers and contracted firms working on the site.

To coordinate the committees and oversee the paid Administrator we need a member of the Board of Trustees to be in charge of Building and Grounds oversight. That person should design the plan for a new committee structure and clarify the charges of this and other relevant committees.

The membership needs to be educating as to how to use and respect the larger, more complex physical plant. Unfortunately, misuse and abuse of the building have been on the rise. This area is beyond the scope of any single committee and might be another role for an Administrator. Religious school teachers and students, youth groups and others using the class rooms must know what can and cannot be mounted on different parts of the rooms and halls. Children have to respect the bathrooms, families need to assume responsibility for their guests at special events; the kitchen equipment, serving pieces, food supplies, etc, must all be respected and instructions for clean up and use obeyed.

B. Long Range Growth Projects

The following items begin with very short range growth projects, some of which are underway, and then list others which will not be very costly but which will require planning. The list then extends into the future to address the physical plant implications of changing needs and new activities and functions of the Jewish population as expressed in the focus groups, congregational meetings and recent survey results. These longer range items clearly require more extensive planning and fund raising.

1. The Youth Lounge Furnishing and Redecoration

The new youth lounge is not well used and with its current furnishings is not very useful. A new design has been created, funding forthcoming and as this pillar is being written bids for the work are being requested.

2. Quiet Space/Retreat

There have been requests coming primarily from the focus groups that the Temple have one space that could hold one to five or six people that is a permanent quiet space, or retreat. It has also been suggested that we study the use of semi-privacy areas as well. As there are actually multiple uses suggested for this space that need to be studied, use priorities will affect both the location and furnishing of the

space. There are also other spaces that already serve some of this function on a temporary basis that need to be studied so they might better perform this function. A quiet space for an individual or family could be used for grieving and private consultation. While the sanctuary and chapel can and do serve some of this function, they are not always available or appropriate. A quiet space can also serve as a quick retreat from services to gather emotions, calm a child, or nurse a baby, etc. There are actually a number of reasons for also having semi-private quiet spaces near the sanctuary, and the Levin lounge, Cohn garden and Neuman-Lewis garden have served as such semi-private retreats during services of various kinds or when people seek the Temple for solace. Part of this project would include looking at the design of these spaces as well—for example, the speaker system from the sanctuary might be extended to the Levin lounge and Cohn garden so that those using these spaces during services can continue to hear the service.

3. **The Sanctuary**

There is a great deal of analysis through S2K of our changing spiritual needs and the importance of the physical plant in providing the right mood, barrier free design, comfortable seating and lines of sight, flexible and adequate lighting and sound systems, etc. As the pillar is being written, new ark doors have been installed in the main sanctuary.

Now that we have installed new ark doors, there is talk about redesigning the entire main sanctuary so that:

- The old and worn pews would be replaced or refurbished. This includes looking into individual chairs vs. pews and a central aisle vs. the current set-up.
- The lighting in the main sanctuary would be improved and made more flexible for varieties of services like the chapel.
- The bima itself would be redesigned so that services could be held with leaders and congregation all on one level for regular and smaller services, but with leaders elevated for larger and special services.
- An elevated bima, if retained, would be handicapped accessible.
- The choir area would be eliminated and some thought given to the issue of keeping the organ vs. the piano, an issue linked to the space needs of the redesigned and more accessible bema.
- The present carpeting would be replaced.

4. **Outdoor Recreation**

There needs to be adequate classroom space for a summer camp that involves

study, arts and crafts, meals, and the like.

There needs to be a better organized outdoor recreation and activity space. We anticipate a toddler-play area just north of the Cohn garden but south of the ring road.

The area north of the ring road and at the east end of the lot would be for large motor activities for older children, like a small basketball half court just off the east end of the ring road, and an all-purpose or combination softball, soccer, play field, that could still be used for overflow parking on high holidays.

5. Land Expansion

Sinai Temple is close to being land-locked. The one remaining outlet is the house and two lots to our west—the original farmstead for the area. It has a large and nicely treed lot that would allow privacy from neighbors and flexible uses if we intend eventually to do all things listed below in this section at some time in the future.

Therefore, we should be prepared to purchase this land whenever it becomes available. It could immediately serve as a retreat location for youth meetings, family weekend study groups, even as a “parsonage” or other living accommodation. By adding onto the house and providing more parking, we could turn it into a permanent planned retreat area and even accommodate additional parking for a Jewish Community Center, mentioned below. If we can get it re-zoned, we can easily build a larger building off the east end of the site right next to our ring road without offending the view or sensibilities of the residential housing bordering the property to the west and north.

6. Jewish Community Center

When the current plans for the addition were made, there was a sketch-plan made to accommodate a community center building where the storage shed is currently located. This center could be connected to the main building by an enclosed bridge that would be a continuation of the main hallway and would come to the office and extend north through what is now the board meeting room, with a portion of that room becoming extended office space. The elevated bridge would allow the continued use of the ring road that services the entire site.

A Jewish community center connected to the Temple will raise some complex membership issues which cannot be resolved here. A Jewish Community Center building would probably be a two-story building with offices, meeting rooms, smaller game rooms, a weight-room, an all purpose gym, and perhaps even a pool and locker rooms. It should be flexible enough to serve toddlers, youth, adults and seniors. The Center might have another “main” entry and some parking behind the Temple, but this would have a major impact on the view from the Davis Chapel and space for outdoor recreation if this were on the east side. Such a center could be built on the west side with the purchase of the neighboring lots

mentioned above.

7. **Federation or other Jewish Offices**

There is concern about the ability of the landlocked Hillel building to continue to grow on its present site. Even with an expansion of the building on that site, the Federation offices might have to move, in which case the Temple would be one option. Perhaps future employees of the Jewish community, such as a community nurse, care manager, or social worker, might have offices at the Temple made out of an existing classroom or as part of the new JCC space mentioned above. Any extended Jewish services housed at the Temple would also have long range implications for staff and building administration.

8. **Jewish Senior Day Care or Assisted Living**

This is a growing market in Champaign-Urbana and some Jewish investors have explored the prospect in the past. It is a real possibility as we continue to age as a community in the future. The issue is, so long as such a facility is nearby, does it need to be a part of Sinai Temple's limited space and grounds? This problem would need to be analyzed and discussed.

9. **Jewish Child Day Care and Day School**

Given the current statistics on children and the trend from 1993 to 2000, we don't need a child day care service. There have been thoughts that such a service need not be exclusively for Jews and that Southwest Champaign has a growing young family population. It is further argued that such a program could be a money maker as well as serving the Jewish community. However, day care programs and especially schools are major investments that make tremendous demands on other services and functions. Other religious facilities have also found that they don't always make much if any profit. Toddler day care is the most likely prospect and perhaps could be located in existing classrooms, especially if the toddler playground mentioned above for summer camp and religious school use was already available.

10. **Cemetery**

The current set of plots will cover the current planning horizon. This issue needs to be revisited in future long range plans.

FINANCE PILLAR

Over its long history, Sinai Temple has always been financially stable. Thanks are chiefly due to the able stewardship of its officers and boards, and to the generosity of its members. We have an excellent physical plant, which as of this spring is completely paid for, and a building fund which seems to fluctuate between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and which is used for major capital repairs and emergencies. We have a total endowment of over \$379,000 (\$229,000 owned by Sinai itself and \$150,000 owned by CUJEF in funds obligated to support various activities at Sinai). Both types of funds are currently managed by Strategic Capital and overseen by CUJEF. Members regularly contribute to these funds, and some members make general donations or voluntarily increase their temple support (formerly called “dues”). The Religious School is partially supported by tuition, by allocations from Sinai’s general revenues, and by assistance from CUJEF, which for the past decade or so has underwritten the position of Temple Educator with an annual allocation of about \$23,000. Sinai also holds a number of fundraising projects each year to augment its income from the sources mentioned above. However, some disturbing trends have emerged:

1. Budgets have risen steeply in recent years. For 2003-04 the budget will run about \$455,000. In particular, the overall costs of salaries are increasing at much faster rates than income from temple support and will limit our ability to service the community unless the problem is addressed, either by raising income or lowering costs, or both. Our overall salaries (including Office Staff and Religious School salaries, offset by tuition) currently equal 85% of annual income, the upper limit recommended in UAHC finance seminars.
2. Because we not paid full UAHC dues, we are in the process of renegotiating our annual financial obligations to that body. It is impossible to predict the results of these negotiations. In the past, such negotiations provided temporary relief for a year or so but eventually required Sinai to pay the full UAHC assessment in order to remain in good standing. There are serious consequences for falling out of good standing: we will lose the services of UAHC in recruiting new staff and may well appear less attractive to potential recruits; our children may not be able to register for UAHC camps until children from members congregations are served, with the result that they might not be able to attend at all; our members and professionals will not be eligible to attend UAHC regional and national meetings.
3. In our view, the Finance Committee has not been as effective as it might be in conveying a medium to long view of Sinai’s financial situation to the board and the membership.

We therefore make the following recommendations in the areas of temple support (or dues), endowments, and organization and structure:

Temple Support. The current age-based structure of temple support was established about a decade ago, replacing a fair-share system based on a flat percentage of income that had been in existence for many years. At the time, the board felt that an age-based system would eliminate apparent inequities presumably caused by the underreporting of income, by ambiguities as to what actually counted as income, or by simple reluctance to pay a fair share. Under both systems, adjustments based on need were available for members who requested them, a percentage that remains at about 26% of the membership. (A UAHC publication on temple finances suggests that temple support systems are dysfunctional when more than 20% of the membership requests dues adjustments.). It is inescapable that over the next five years the leadership of the Temple must figure out achievable ways to increase income from temple support or make almost impossible choices with regard to lowering costs. Because our standard dues are actually fairly high already, the challenge, in our view, is to reach members who are capable of giving more, and to give them reasons for doing so.

1. We recommend the creation of a specially designated group of members who will agree to provide temple support in significant excess of their annual assessments. Some congregations which have had great success with this plan and have created incentives for joining such a group, such as providing occasional functions expressly for them. (One congregation, some years ago, formed a Chai society for members giving \$1800 or more in temple support, a figure which might seem low by current standards.)
2. We recommend that the Finance Committee give its most serious attention to a fair-share dues schedule in order to determine whether a progressive (rather than a flat) fair-share scheme, with percentage of gross income starting at, say 1% or 1.5% and rising with income would provide revenues exceeding today's income from temple support. The committee would have to do some serious number-crunching to make this determination and would be charged with developing the plan and if passed by the board with implementing the changeover.

Endowments. Because of our large fixed commitments, our borrowing against the endowment funds to pay off the bridge loan (now fully repaid) on the expansion of the building, and a low rate of return in recent years on our endowment funds, Sinai has greatly reduced the amount of money available for music and other programming. One hopes the economy will recover to the extent that the endowments are producing enough revenue to fund these programs at previous levels. But even if such an optimistic scenario comes to be, we must begin to raise long-term endowments not only to support special programs but also to help underwrite our normal operating expenses and address the problems of an aging facility. We need such endowments not only because of our contractual obligations, but also because of the aging of our community. According to the surveys of 1993 and 2003, the percentage of our temple community that is now over

fifty years of age has grown from just under 30% to just over 40%. That number does not bode well for tremendous growth in revenue from dues in the future but might lead to the creation of endowment funds were we able to persuade members to plan appropriately.

We recommend a broad and intensive campaign among Sinai's members to encourage them to leave a percentage of their assets to the temple (say, 5%) in order to insure the Jewish future of Champaign-Urbana. Such a campaign, tied to Sinai's 110th anniversary, must be well-organized and well-designed, and will require active participation by former and current Temple leaders. For members who wish to change their wills or add codicils stipulating such bequests, attorneys who are members of Sinai should be urged to offer their services without charge, as in-kind donations to the Temple.

Organization and Structure.

1. We recommend that the by-laws be amended to empower the President to appoint a chair for the Finance Committee other than the Vice-President, Treasurer, or assistant Treasurer, all of whom should serve on the committee, along with other members known for sagacity in financial matters and familiar with Sinai's programs and operations.
2. We recommend that the Finance Committee meet regularly to discharge the following responsibilities:
 - A. insure that Sinai's financial statements be simplified so that everyone can understand our status and lead candid discussions of that status at annual meetings so that congregants can come together in facing future financial issues;
 - B. oversee adjustments of temple support based on need for all new members and regularly review previous adjustments for current members in the light of changing circumstances;
 - C. review contracts of temple employees and report the financial implications of those contracts to the board before approval.
3. We recommend billing the membership for dues in June for the beginning of the fiscal year in July, thus helping our cash flow in the summer.
4. We recommend that a fundraising chair be charged with coordinating all of Sinai's fundraising projects and that the board seriously consider the recommendations of a report made about a decade ago by Richard Newman and Seymour Sudman that Sinai schedule fewer fundraising events and try to raise more funds per event.

5. We recommend that Sinai seek dual affiliation with the national organizations of both the Reform and Conservative movements, with the understanding that it pay half of the normal assessment to each one. Dual affiliation would not only reflect Sinai's diverse membership, its primary justification (as noted in the Worship Pillar), but would also lower total costs of national affiliation, as the assessments of the Conservative movement are significantly lower. Dual affiliation would also provided increased access to services and potential staff.

The 7th Pillar: General Structure & Implementation

I. Introduction

The long range plan will make considerable demands on the leadership of Sinai. Perhaps such demands can be eased by modifications in the governance structures currently in place. In addition to such introspective focus, the officers and board should strive to maintain good relations with other organizations within the Jewish community, especially inasmuch as many aspects of the plan call for cooperation and coordination with those bodies. To ease the burden on the officers of the board of the implementation of the plan, a special oversight committee should be created with the broad authority to see that the board considers specific recommendations in a timely fashion.

II. Summary of Action Items

4. Structure of Sinai Temple:

- **Create an ad-hoc committee to look into the board and committee structures.** Since our temple's inception, we have not changed the size and composition of our board. We recommend this committee look into the board structure, committee structure, and possibly other bylaws, in order to determine if Sinai Temple's governing bodies might function more effectively.
- **Communication with the greater Jewish Community.** We recommend that Sinai Temple maintain open, friendly, and candid communications with other organizations within the greater Jewish community, ideally on a regular basis. Partnerships, more coordination, and better scheduling can only benefit the entire Jewish community.

5. Implementation of the Long Range Plan

In order to implement a Long-Range Plan, the LPRC recommends the following:

- **Board president to appoint board members to all the pillar committees, as needed,** especially fellowship and adult education. We recommend that only one board member be *appointed* per committee. We feel these appointments would help keep a consistent connection of the board with the pillars of our temple life, establishing a foundation for carrying out the recommendations of the LPRC and other ideas and events generated from the LPRC recommendations.
- **Creation of a Long Range Planning Implementation Committee.** The LPRC *strongly* recommends the creation of this Long Range Planning Implementation Committee. This committee should consist of a term-limited mixture of board member(s) and non-board member(s). It might well be chaired by one of the past presidents (or one of the past board members), perhaps by the most recent among them. If possible, the rest of the committee should be comprised of the following representation: At least one more past president (or past board member), at least one present board member, at least one at-large member, and at least one representative of the Long Range Planning Committee. While individuals may come and go for various reasons, the representation on this committee should remain stable. The committee would be a standing, ongoing committee. It should have the following responsibilities:
 - Insure that the recommendations in the long range report are considered by the board in a timely fashion and acted upon when appropriate.
 - Oversee the long-range plans from an administrative and not a planning standpoint.
 - Inform the board of progress of long-range plans.
 - Gather feedback on matters relevant to long range planning.
 - When absolutely necessary, propose amendments to the Board on LRPC recommendations.

- Inform the congregation, especially by means of a yearly follow-up report (see below).
 - Choose the people who will be implementing the long-range plans. This task is especially important since practically all of the long-range plans rely on volunteers. It is crucial that people be matched with their interests and skills and not be overworked or overused. Personal contact between members of this committee and volunteer leaders will be invaluable.
- **Dissemination of Long-Range Plan.**
The LRPC recommends that the LRP “kickoff” be held on the High Holy Days in 2003. We trust that the president will discuss the plan when addressing the congregation during the High Holiday services. We also recommend putting our full plan on the web site and mailing an executive summary to the membership.
- **Follow-up.**
 - Each year a **report should be presented to the congregation about the progress of the previous year’s phase of the long-range plan.** Such a report could be given at the annual temple meeting and/or printed as part of the temple’s annual report. Each year, at the time of the High Holy Days, **the next year’s programs and events relating to the long-range plan could be announced.**
 - The Long-Range Plan should be a **seven-year plan.** This "Shabbat-year" cycle allows for renewal that's patterned on the biblically based renewal. The LRPC recommends having an LRPC develop long-range plans every seven years, incorporating techniques and structures used in this effort.

How to Start: First Steps

The Long Range Planning Committee strongly urges the president and the board to take a few bold but simple steps which will demonstrate that the long range plan is concrete and viable, and which will prepare the groundwork for the implementation of other recommendations.

Here are 5 important and relatively easy measures that will lead the way to further implementation of the long range plan:

1. To disseminate the recommendations of the committee to the congregation, we urge that the executive summary be sent out to all congregants and that the president include a statement about the committee's report when addressing the congregation during the High Holidays.
2. Appoint an implementation committee to insure that the recommendations in the long range report are considered by the board in a timely fashion and acted upon when appropriate. The chair of this committee should report to the board each month and to the congregation annually. The committee could be chaired by the past president and should include a term-limited, representative mixture of board member(s), past president(s), member(s) from the Long Range Planning Committee, and member(s) of the congregation.
3. Consider restructuring the finance committee and redefine its responsibilities as detailed in the body of the report.
4. Establish a PTA for the Sinai Religious School to provide support for the Temple Educator.
5. Make plans for at least one non-fundraising fellowship or social event to be held this fall (film showing, a centennial celebratory event) as a way of identifying a group of members who will form a task force for generating ideas for and coordinating other social events.

Here are 4 more ideas, most of which do not require board action and can be put into play by administrative action:

1. Appoint a cohort of greeters and ushers to welcome attendees at services and during onegs and kiddushes that follow.
2. Take proactive steps to form 2-3 new chaverot.
3. Collect and disseminate via the temple's website and in other appropriate ways information about social services in the Jewish community, both services available to members and those provided by members for the larger community.
4. Arrange a miniseries of talks for Sundays at Sinai this year.