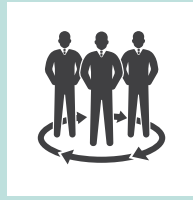


# WHY ARE WE PROPOSING A NEW MEMBERSHIP MODEL?

The decision to explore a new model was based on the understanding that the world around us is changing. As we look at the landscape of the Jewish community along with the local area, we recognize the need to be responsive to the evolving trends and best practices.



**Synagogue affiliation is down** across the country. Jews, particularly those of younger generations increasingly identify as “Jews of no religion” and have decreasing desires to affiliate<sup>1</sup>. This trend requires a new, more creative, flexible approach to engaging people in Jewish experiences.



**Jews are more diverse** in their identities and how they experience Jewish life. With multiple important aspects of their identity and competing priorities, the desire for greater flexibility on what it means to be a member has increased.



**The proliferation of online content and changing demographics in our immediate neighborhood** are redefining why, how, and where people join synagogues. Proximity to your home is often the number one reason to join a synagogue. It is incumbent on us to think more expansively about our geographic reach and inclusivity in order to encourage new membership as well as retain current members who may no longer be geographically close.

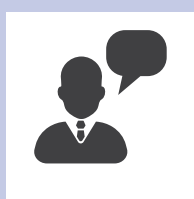


**Best practices in synagogue life are more inclusive** and are moving away from our current dues structure towards more choice-based models. Our current dues structure has many categories based on assumptions about people’s age and family structure. According to industry research, synagogues who shift to a more choice based model see a 1.8% annual increase in membership revenue and a 3.6% annual increase in membership units<sup>2</sup>. Higher levels and depth of engagement are also reported. Several synagogues across the country and in Massachusetts, including two in our local area, have successfully transitioned to models such as this.

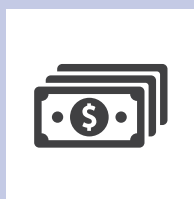
<sup>1</sup> To learn more about the changing landscape of the American Jewish Community, we invite you to check out the 2020 Pew Study. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/>

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about other synagogues who have changed their membership models, click the link for the leading study in this field. <https://www.ujafedny.org/api/v2/assets/788990/>

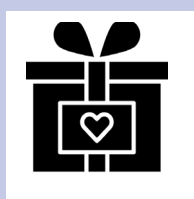
**Before delving into any potential changes in a membership model, we assessed TBA’s current situation through a congregational survey, evaluation of our financial position, assessment of philanthropic giving, and strength of our leadership.**



Over 50% of member families participated in the congregational survey in the fall of 2022 and reported **high satisfaction, commitment, and engagement with TBA**. Approximately 93% of people who completed that survey felt that TBA’s vision and values resonated with them and were being fulfilled. The data from this survey will help us create more meaningful and valuable experiences and connections. If you would like to see more of this data, please contact Becky Oliver, Executive Director.



We are in a **strong financial position** with effective management and a robust balance sheet that includes investments of over \$4 million. In the fall of 2022, we received over \$200,000 in the Employee Retention Credit from the federal government, effectively a COVID related tax refund. This money has been saved for future use should it be needed. More information about our financial position and budget for fiscal year 2023-24 will be shared ahead of the annual meeting.



We have a **growing culture of philanthropy** of giving meaningful gifts from the heart. Over 50% of our congregation has given a donation above and beyond their dues in the past 12 months. Our Annual Sustaining Campaign has grown from \$40,000 ten years ago to over \$200,000 and close to 100 participants.



Our lay leadership, staff, and clergy have a **shared vision and collaborative approach**. We have a mutual commitment to member engagement including a shift in board responsibilities to include ongoing member outreach, allocation of staff and clergy time across positions, and a financial commitment to engagement efforts.

**The task force went through an in-depth process of learning about the trends and best practices in the Jewish community and assessing TBA’s position. In collaboration with the board, this led them to the decision to propose a new model.**