INTRODUCTION

Managing the Sacred: A Guide for Synagogue Board Members is a project of the Ida and Howard Wilkoff Department of Synagogue Management of the Union for Reform Judaism (the “Union”). The Department of Synagogue Management provides assistance to Union member congregations in all areas of synagogue management and administration. The department and the Joint Commission on Synagogue Management, in cooperation with the National Association of Temple Administrators, develop materials for and provide consultations to congregations throughout North America. The department strives to help congregations build, develop, and maintain well-run, spiritually fulfilling congregations, in which the sacred informs the practical and the practical creates the sacred.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Shalom:

Mazal tow on your election to your synagogue’s Board of Trustees. As you assume a leadership role in your congregation, I wish you well. I hope your service as a board member will be a very meaningful experience, one that helps you grow as a leader and as a Jew.

You now have a marvelous opportunity to help develop the programmatic and spiritual direction of your synagogue by striving to secure lifelong learning opportunities through the study of Torah and the texts of our faith. You can also seek to create ways and means by which your congregation can adopt the great principles and ideals of our people in order to become a congregation of vision, one that truly represents a center of religious living and religious action.

In addition to being an honor, the responsibility you accepted when you agreed to become a trustee of your congregation represents a critical and sacred trust. You will be called upon to deal with financial and business aspects of the congregation. You will also be a partner in working toward the creation of a secure financial and spiritual future for your temple for generations yet to come. As a leader of the synagogue, you can set an example for fellow congregants by your participation in educational and cultural programs as well as Shabbat and holiday worship services.

You are joining a vast cadre of dedicated men and women, your counterparts in Reform congregations across North America, who give of their time and talents to strengthen and enhance their home congregations. In turn, all of you have a share in insuring a viable and strong future for the Reform Movement. As the individual links in our family of congregations are strengthened, so the national institutions of Reform Judaism are enriched and enhanced as we gain new programmatic ideas and insights as well as a pool of devoted and experienced future lay leaders for the Union and other institutions of Reform Judaism.

May you gain intellectual and spiritual growth as you embark on this sacred journey of service to our people and our faith. Shalom and all good wishes.

Sincerely,

Eric H. Yoffie
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Welcome to a unique board! As a trustee of a Reform synagogue, you are participating in an ancient tradition of dedication and service that dates back thousands of years.

Synagogues, initially founded to house prayer meetings, date back to the Babylonian Exile. There, during the beginning of the Diaspora, the guidance and teachings of the prophets helped to form the basis of congregational life. Eventually the synagogue became the exclusive location for worship and a communal center for assembly and study.

As a Reform synagogue leader, you are part of a continually evolving movement that began early in the nineteenth century in Germany during the Age of Jewish Emancipation and took root and flourished in the United States. Reform Judaism recognizes that our sacred heritage has evolved over the centuries and that in order for Judaism to survive, it must continue to evolve while also fulfilling its mission to be a center for worship, communal life, education, social action, and social service.

As a trustee, you are expected to enable your congregation to fulfill its mission by assuming the following responsibilities:

- Accepting fiduciary duties.
- Being a leader and role model.
- Listening to the members of the synagogue.
- Transforming the needs of the congregation into realistic goals.
- Initiating programs.
- Planning effectively for the future.
- Establishing a sound organizational structure.
- Fostering solid management practices.

This guide outlines your unique role and responsibilities as a trustee of a Reform synagogue, defines and sets priorities for board functions, and describes the resources that are available to your congregation through the Union for Reform Judaism (the “Union”). We hope that it will be a useful reference tool during your tenure as a board member of your synagogue.
FROM MEMBER TO BOARD MEMBER

A LEADER MAY NOT BE APPOINTED WITHOUT CONSULTING THE COMMUNITY.
TALMUD, B’RACHOT 55A

You have been asked to become a leader of your congregation and to serve on your board because you have displayed a commitment to your synagogue. Frequently this commitment is manifested by:

- A prior record of committee service.
- An interest and participation in congregational activities, including education, worship, social, and cultural programs.
- Attendance at religious services.
- Demonstrated leadership in synagogue auxiliaries.
- A dedication to Jewish knowledge and service to the Jewish community.
- Achievements in the community at large.
- Good judgment, skills, and experience in business, professional, or communal life.
- Specific talents and abilities that may benefit the congregation.
- A commitment to attend meetings, serve on committees, and be a constructive member of the group process, including a willingness and ability to accept board responsibilities.
- An ability to see beyond one's own "constituency” and work broadly for the benefit of the entire congregation.
- Financial support of the congregation in accordance with one's means.
- An understanding of the goals and mission of the congregation.

Now that you are a member of the board, it is important for you to do everything possible to maximize board effectiveness. Defining purposes and developing policies and goals are tasks shared by the board in partnership with the Executive Committee and others, including any clergy and administrative staff members. An effective board makes policies that govern the daily life of the congregation, sets long-term planning goals, and develops good plans of implementation to support those goals.

You will be the most effective and make the maximum contribution if you do your homework and “learn the ropes.” Your congregation may have a board orientation program that will help you prepare for your new position. Some synagogue boards appoint a committee for board development to insure that board members are getting the training they need to fulfill their role.

It is appropriate and beneficial for you as a trustee to take the initiative and become active in planning for your own educational and informational needs. The following seven ways will help you prepare yourself to become an effective board member:

1. Read the constitution and bylaws of the congregation, which should describe the structure of the board, the functions of its standing committees, and how the congregation operates.
2. Become acquainted with all aspects of synagogue programming, including Shabbat worship and festival observances, Women of Reform Judaism and Brotherhood programs, the religious school, preschool and adult education, and youth activities.
3. Become familiar with the synagogue’s financial reports and operating statements, its administrative structure, and the physical premises.
4. Develop an understanding of the division of responsibilities among the board, the rabbi and, where applicable, the professional staff, including the cantor, administrator, educator, and others.
5. Obtain the board calendar and the schedule of meetings.
6. Learn what is expected of you as an individual trustee with regard to establishing the congregation’s vision, mission, and goals, as well as the day-to-day aspects of meetings.
7. Educate yourself regarding Reform ideology, history, and the structure of the movement.

Membership on the board is a privilege as well as an obligation. It is your opportunity to make a viable contribution to the future of our Jewish heritage and traditions. As you prepare to join the board, you will want to understand what the president, the rabbi, and the rest of the board expects of you. Consider the following list of board member responsibilities:

**Attendance** Members are expected to attend
- Regularly scheduled board meetings.
- Orientations, training sessions, and retreats.
- The installation of synagogue officers.
- The congregation’s annual meeting.
- Congregational services and activities.

**Board Involvement** Each member should
- Be prepared to discuss agenda items.
- Participate thoughtfully in discussions at board meetings.
- Support the final decisions of the board.
- Help raise funds for the synagogue.
- Serve as a representative of the whole congregation.
- Possess a thorough knowledge of synagogue goals and objectives, bylaws, operating procedures, and financial affairs.

**Committee Involvement** Each member will
- Participate actively and take a leadership role in one or more of the synagogue’s committees or auxiliaries.
- Prepare to act as a liaison for this committee or auxiliary to the board, a role that includes providing written and/or oral reports when required.
Involvement in Synagogue Life  As a role model, each member will
• Attend religious services on a regular basis.
• Support and attend congregation-sponsored educational, fund-raising, and social
  programs.
• Provide financial support to the synagogue in accordance with his or her own means.
• Remain current regarding payment of all dues, fees, and financial obligations.
• Actively welcome new members into all aspects of congregational life.

Community Involvement  Each member will
• Encourage others to join the congregation.
• Be active in the larger Jewish community.
• Financially support Jewish causes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHECKLIST OF USEFUL INFORMATION FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constitution and bylaws</td>
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<td>Synagogue programming information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial reports/Operating statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative structure</td>
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<td>Tour of/Familiarity with physical plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Division of responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board calendar/Meeting schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of board responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission statement</td>
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<td>Information about Reform Judaism</td>
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DEFINING AND SETTING PRIORITIES FOR BOARD FUNCTIONS

The general functions of the board are to

- Define the mission of the synagogue, approve policy for fulfilling that mission, and take action to achieve it.
- Find and install congregational leaders, define their roles, motivate and support them, and evaluate their performance.
- Evaluate the board’s own performance.

In order to execute these functions, the board will need to do the following:

Policy Determination (through service on the board and its committees)

- Define the “vision” and purpose of the congregation.
- Set goals and policies that will achieve the synagogue’s mission, take action to achieve those goals, and gauge the progress toward them.
- Consider, debate, and decide issues.
- Confirm, modify, or reject Executive Committee or standing committee proposals.

Resource Development

- Increase membership.
- Identify candidates for new leadership positions.
- Collaborate with the clergy and staff in planning significant programming.
- Raise funds.

Personnel Management

- Hire or designate the function of hiring professional, maintenance, and clerical staff. (Rabbis, cantors, educators, and administrative staff are usually hired by a Search Committee, whose decisions are ultimately subject to board approval.)
- Designate a committee to set compensation for the staff.
- Set and review mutual goals with the clergy and other senior staff.

Service As a Jewish Leadership Model

- Engage in Jewish study.
- Attend services.
- Participate in congregational programs.
- Integrate the congregation into the wider Jewish community at the local, national, and international levels.
- Develop a policy for providing meaningful religious education for children and adults.
- Observe, listen to, and be attentive to the needs of the members of the congregation.
Fiscal Management

- Review the operating and financial reports and activities of the congregation.
- Understand the budget plan and monitor its implementation.
- Supervise and control congregational funds, records, and property.
- Insure the financial stability of the congregation.
- Oversee both short-term fund-raising and long-term development programs to meet programmatic and capital needs.

Your board’s priorities and therefore your meeting times should be balanced among the five areas referred to above. You might consider apportioning these areas (the two pie charts below provide a useful visual) according to the importance that each area should have for your board and how you perceive the functions are actually being practiced. This is a useful way to reset priorities for your board’s functions and time allocations.

Most of the work of the congregation is done through its committees, which in turn recommend policies and programs to the board. It is expected that in addition to serving on the board itself, you will chair or serve as a liaison to one or more committees. At the back of this guide is a list of committees frequently found in congregations and a brief explanation of the typical responsibilities of each committee. Committees may be logically grouped or combined in order to keep their number manageable. This list is only a sample. Each congregation has its own list, which will change from time to time as the needs and priorities of the congregation shift. In order to control the number of committees, ad hoc committees, temporary committees, or task forces may prove useful.

![Pie Chart](chart.png)

**PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT**

Complete the pie chart on the left, marking each segment with the amount of time you estimate that your board spends on that area. Ideally, your meetings should be divided more or less equally among the five areas (as the pie chart on the right indicates). Consider ways that you as a board member can reset your board's priorities.
WHY IS THIS BOARD DIFFERENT?

[WHEN] TWO SIT TOGETHER AND EXCHANGE WORDS OF TORAH, THEN THE DIVINE PRESENCE DWELLS WITH THEM.

*Pirkei Avot 3:2*

It is important to try to create the feeling of holy space in your deliberations as you approach the sacred task of managing your congregation. It is not appropriate to separate or compartmentalize your work as a synagogue leader from the purpose of the institution you serve. As a board member, you should try to develop yourself “Jewishly,” both as an individual who is deeply committed to your faith and as a leader who is sensitive to the concerns of the congregation’s members. As a board member, ask yourself whether there is a core of Jewish values and observances to which you can commit yourself and to which you can then invite the commitment of the congregation.

At the outset, board members should treat one another with respect and compassion and with the knowledge that your decisions involve building and perpetuating the Jewish future. One of the missions of a board member is to accept the awesome responsibility and incredible opportunity you have been given to be God’s partner in tikkun olam, the repair of the world. Every action you take is potentially critical: You are either helping to repair the world or you are not. Thus you have the ability to shape lives, change lives, be a force for good, and apply our most cherished Jewish values to synagogue work.

The work of the board is to become a community, learning and living Torah and serving as a model for the congregation. The most successful synagogues

- Have a clear vision of the kind of welcoming, spiritually fulfilling community they want to be.
- Understand that the business of synagogue trustees is to manage the sacred.
- Know that their mission is to create Jews and sustain Judaism.
- Build the kind of environment in which God’s Presence is palpable, individuals can grow Jewishly, and k’dushah, holiness, is the guiding principle.
- Understand their role in the Reform Movement and participate at the local, regional, and international levels.

Compared to other institutions in Jewish life, the synagogue has a special opportunity to pursue ethical behavior through the decisions it makes, the policies it fosters, and the activities in which it engages. Every aspect of your role as a synagogue leader has an ethical dimension—from how you make policy decisions to how you speak to others, from how you conduct business with your vendors to how you treat your employees. Consider the importance of modeling Jewish ethical behavior in the following areas:

- **Interpersonal relationships** should be inclusive. Board members should encourage intergenerational harmony among and attention to all people, with special sensitivity to those who might feel stigmatized.
- **Communication** should reflect an awareness of the biblical dictum that life and death are in the power of the tongue. Gossip should be avoided. Ethical communication requires honesty, openness, and, at times, strict confidentiality.
• Moral criteria should be considered in all matters, ranging from the way contract negotiations are conducted to the way you select your leaders, including whom you choose to honor.
• Financial ethics should be central to all the congregation’s economic and financial transactions.
• Social responsibility should be expressed in the way the synagogue deals with ethical dilemmas and how it responds to the wider world.

As a board member, you are looked upon as a role model by your congregation. Consequently your presence at or absence from Shabbat and festival worship services and temple educational opportunities will be noted. The unique function of the synagogue is to be a worshiping community that every week engages congregants of all ages in Torah study and prayer. To create such a community requires an organized approach on the part of the Board of Trustees.

### Checklist for Jewishly Enriching Congregational Board/Committee Meetings
Consider which of these concepts you can utilize in your congregation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What makes this board different?</th>
<th>Do now</th>
<th>Could do</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make a place for God at your board/committee meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin and end the meeting with prayer and/or song</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use silent prayer at a tense time or before an important decision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incorporate Jewish study into the body of the meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Place a Jewish ritual object in the middle of the table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Include the Hebrew date and Jewish quotes on your agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read and discuss a book from the Union Literacy Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask participants to share personally meaningful texts</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask participants to share their personal Jewish journeys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin or end a meeting in the sanctuary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weave temple history/Jewish stories into your deliberations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consciously relate decisions to Jewish texts and values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insure that meetings and decisions are consistent with your mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model and encourage respectful interactions and deliberations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acknowledge life-cycle events with appropriate prayers</td>
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CREATING A MODEL OF LEADERSHIP

As a synagogue board member, it is appropriate for you to educate yourself about Judaism and leadership and to also provide such opportunities for the members of your congregation.

Educating yourself Jewishly can simply mean taking advantage of the myriad opportunities that are available to you. Studying our heritage, our history, and our traditions; learning about the Reform Movement and its place in the world today; taking advantage of Jewish cultural opportunities, such as plays, movies, books, and music; enrolling in courses and attending lectures; understanding what is happening in Israel and the meaning of those events for every Jew; and seeing the world through Jewish eyes.

Some specific ways in which educating yourself Jewishly can enhance your role as a board member and your relationship with the congregation include:

- Attending Torah study sessions, learning how to lead a d’var Torah, encouraging others to do so, and starting each board and committee meeting with Torah study. The Union’s Ten Minutes of Torah (www.urj.org/Torah/ten) is a searchable online source of board and committee study material.
- Committing yourself to acknowledging members’ life-cycle events by bringing meals to a new mother and the proud grandparents; presenting bar/bat mitzvah gifts from the bimah; visiting sick or homebound members; and attending shivah minyanim.
- Becoming comfortable with Hebrew so that you can learn to chant Torah and be a lay leader of minyanim and other services.
- Connecting with Israel and organizing a trip by your temple or another local Jewish organization.
- Attending Union regional and international biennial meetings, reading Union publications, and visiting the Union Web site at www.urj.org.

It is also important for you to educate yourself about leadership and to work with your board to encourage others to become involved in synagogue life by developing a good system of training leaders within your congregation and also taking advantage of outside opportunities.

At the outset, you can foster leadership by treating your fellow members with respect and promoting free thinking. You will create a more dynamic congregation by encouraging thinking “out of the box,” keeping an open mind, welcoming new ideas and ways of doing things, encouraging creativity and openness to change, and making it possible for board and committee members to be risk takers when sharing their ideas.

Board orientations and leadership training programs are often utilized to educate new and potential board members. You may also consider consulting the following other resources for yourself and your congregation:
• Your Auxiliaries: Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) and North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods present opportunities for newer members to get involved and learn about the congregation while serving worthwhile and community-building functions. The auxiliaries offer unique and valuable leadership training on the local, regional, and international levels.

• Your Committees: Membership in and rising through the ranks of any congregational committee offer participants practical hands-on opportunities to learn about how to plan, follow through, and get things done within your congregation.

• Your Union: The Union offers leadership training at its regional and biennial meetings and will even conduct leadership training seminars at your congregation.

As a board member, you may be called upon to chair a committee, which in itself is excellent leadership training. A challenging aspect of chairing a committee is leading a productive meeting. If you succeed, you will be rewarded with loyal and productive committee members, the successful achievement of your goals, and the respect of your congregation. Consider the following ten “commandments” for leading a productive synagogue meeting:

1. **Be prepared** Schedule your meetings for the entire year, prepare an accurate agenda for each meeting beginning with Torah study, have all written material copied accurately, and make sure all presenters understand what is expected of them.
2. **Create an appropriate environment** Reserve a quiet room and provide refreshments.
3. **Start on time** Even if just a few people are present at the outset of the meeting, committee members will quickly appreciate the respectful aura you create.
4. **Follow your agenda** It is the road map that will keep you on track and enable you to avoid inappropriate digressions.
5. **Treat everyone with respect** Allow all members similar opportunities to speak, and consider all opinions thoughtfully.
6. **Clarify goals and expectations** Participants will be more productive if they know what is expected of them.
7. **Record and review minutes** Appoint one person to record minutes, or rotate this function; request transcribed minutes one week before the next meeting for distribution in advance, along with the agenda for that meeting.
8. **Develop a follow-up plan** Assign tasks to others at the meeting or soon thereafter, and keep a running list of what you need to do.
9. **End at a reasonable time** Designate the length of time for each item on your agenda, and appoint a member to be the timekeeper.
10. **Conduct your business in accordance with Jewish values and ethics**.

Although decision making by committee is not the most efficient process, it allows for an exchange of ideas and opportunities for socialization and involves many congregants in the process of governance. Empowering committees to make recommendations to the board fosters Jewish values by establishing an atmosphere of inclusivity.
As a trustee, it is your fiduciary responsibility to pay careful attention to fiscal management, which consists of developing and monitoring annual budgets as well as short- and long-term financial planning. Because you will be held to a high standard of accountability, you will need to become familiar with the financial reports and operating statements of your synagogue.

Your congregation may have at least three different classes of funds: Operating, capital, and endowment. There should be a separate budget for each class.

Operations are funded substantially by the collection of membership dues and are supplemented by a multitude of fund-raising events, such as dinners, bazaars, auctions, concerts, and speakers, and sometimes by interest from endowment funds.

Capital funds, used for renovating present facilities or constructing new facilities, are generally segregated from all other synagogue funds and are often generated by special fund-raising campaigns and/or assessments of the members.

The assets from endowment funds provide assurance for the congregation’s future by preserving, enhancing, and perpetuating the synagogue. Unrestricted contributions are collected, and only the interest is expended.

Every year you will be asked to approve the operating budget, which is a compilation of budget proposals by the congregation’s various operating committees. The budget is a description in financial terms of the programs of the synagogue. It is a tool that enables the administration and the leadership to plan, supervise, and control the operations of the synagogue. It is a projection of the funds that will be available to the congregation for its anticipated expenses and expenditures during a specified period of time.

Three sources of income fund a synagogue: congregational support, special/specific gifts, and planned giving. Congregational support is received on an annual basis and is calculated in a variety of ways. Special gifts are one-time donations and encompass small and large contributions from fund-raising events such as dinners and bazaars, bar/bat mitzvah celebrations and yahrzeit donations, and capital campaign contributions. Planned giving includes bequests and life-income options such as pooled income funds, charitable remainder trusts, and charitable gift annuities.

**MONEY MATTERS**

**DEVELOPING FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

> IM EIN KEMACH, EIN TORAH V’NEED EIN TORAH
Where there is no bread, there is no Torah.

PIRKEI AVOT 2:17
Synagogues are continually looking for more and better ways to develop alternate revenue streams. Grants that enhance programming are available from a myriad of sources. Renting your facility for congregants’ simchas and for local use by the community is another possibility. Establishing funds restricted for a designated time and purpose in which the income and principle are expended may be used to fulfill specific needs.

To approve budgets that reflect the congregational mission, to effect an equitable dues structure, and to supplement dues income through short- as well as long-term financial planning are just a few of the basic considerations that must be addressed by board members in order to meet their fiduciary responsibilities.

For more detailed information on money matters, see the Union publications Give As God Has Blessed You: Rethinking Financial Commitment in Your Congregation; Doing What Is Just and Right: Endowments, Investments and Synagogue Funds; Money Matters: Compassionate Guidelines for Talking Dues and Food for the Spirit: Synagogue Budgets, all available at www.urj.org/synmgmt/publications.

CONGREGATIONAL FINANCE AS A SACRED TRUST

Issues to Consider

What is your temple’s budget process?

Does your budget reflect your temple’s priorities: the goals, vision, and mission of the congregation?

Does your budget process begin by a consideration of who you are, what you want to achieve, and what it will cost to create that vision?

Do you view your budget as a tool to help the congregation achieve that vision?

Do you consider the “big picture,” understanding that sometimes you need to spend money to make money?

Do you communicate frequently and appropriately (not only in times of crisis) with the congregation about the synagogue’s financial situation?

Do you consider raising dues slightly every year, instead of a large increase every few years?

Do you consider spending less time focusing on the percentage of the congregation who are not meeting dues commitments and more time focusing on those who have the ability to exceed minimum commitments?
THINK SMALL
AN APPROACH FOR SMALL CONGREGATIONS

Recognizing that more than half of the congregations that constitute the Union for Reform Judaism have fewer than 250 membership units, the Ida and Howard Wilkoff Department of Synagogue Management provides a variety of services tailored to small congregations. These include programmatic materials, consulting services, e-mail discussion groups, and the Small Congregations Resource Fund (a program that provides grants for participation in Union-sponsored events and loans for a variety of temple needs). In addition, the department’s publications address the specific needs of small congregations.

Being a board member of a small congregation is a unique experience. In larger congregations, members frequently come up “through the ranks,” sometimes spending a dozen years on committees and auxiliaries before being elevated to a board position. In a small congregation, just showing interest and giving some of your time can land you a position on the board in a handful of years. In addition, small congregation board members are frequently asked to assume a host of responsibilities, ranging from maintaining the building to being the cantorial soloist. Be aware of and differentiate between the governance (vision setting and policy making) and the management (day-to-day operations) aspects of your role.

So how do you prepare yourself to be on the board of a small congregation? First and foremost, remember that you are on the board of a unique institution. Every interaction and every decision you make should be considered through Jewish eyes. Even though you have a fiduciary responsibility to the synagogue, your primary responsibility is to deal with every situation by using the vision and values of the three pillars upon which Judaism stands—Torah, study, and acts of loving-kindness. Understand that even though you may be called upon to buy coffee cups, your primary role is to set a Jewish example and fix policy that is consistent with Jewish values. So, for example, consider advocating the use of fair-trade coffee and recycled paper goods, or better yet, purchase inexpensive coffee cups and set up a rotation system whereby volunteers will wash them after the Oneg Shabbat.

Focus on learning about the culture of your congregation and the board. This is especially important if you have only been a member of your congregation for a few years. Remember that you are always representing the synagogue, and be discreet and thoughtful when speaking about your fellow congregants. It is not uncommon in small congregations for staff members to also be congregants and for congregants to volunteer to fill roles that might be paid positions in larger congregations. Be sure that your role vis-à-vis the staff members is defined. If there are clergy and staff in your congregation, learn to whom the various staff members report. Always keep in mind that although your tasks as a lay leader are different from those of a staff member, you are all on the same team, working toward the same goal.
THE UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM
A KEY RESOURCE

As a board member of a Reform congregation affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, you will find it beneficial to learn how to tap into the Union’s extensive resources.

What is the Union for Reform Judaism?
The Union was founded in Cincinnati in 1873 by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise “to encourage and aid the organization and development of Jewish congregations; to promote Jewish education and enrich and intensify Jewish life; to maintain Hebrew Union College [and] to foster other activities for the perpetuation and advancement of Judaism.” The Union, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC–JIR), and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) are the “three major pillars” that support the organized structure of American Reform Judaism.

What is the mission of the Union?
The mission of the Union is to provide vision, leadership, and programmatic support to Reform Jewish congregations and to perpetuate and advance Reform Judaism. To fulfill its mission, the Union has four major goals:

1. To promote the enrichment and growth of Judaism through Reform Jewish congregations.
2. To foster the vibrancy of Reform Judaism through Torah (lifelong Jewish education), avodah (worship of God through prayer and observance), and g'milut chasadim (the pursuit of justice, peace, and deeds of loving-kindness).
3. To support Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, enabling it to train rabbis, cantors, educators, and other professionals and scholars who are essential to the spiritual and educational life of our religious community.
4. To be supportive of the State of Israel and the Jewish people and foster the development of Liberal Judaism worldwide under the auspices of the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

How is the Union supported?
The major financial support of the Union (approximately 85%) and HUC–JIR (approximately 50%) is derived from dues paid by member congregations to the Union through the Proportional Dues Program. The Union’s Maintenance of Union Membership (MUM) Committee supervises congregational compliance with an established dues formula that was developed by a committee of Union lay leaders.
How are the resources offered by the Union for Reform Judaism conveyed to your congregation?

To bring the programs and services of the Union closer to each of its member congregations, the Union maintains regional offices, each of which is responsible for serving the congregations within its geographical boundaries. Your regional office is a direct link to programming and management guidance, including personal consultations with professional Union staff members, and to a wealth of printed and audiovisual materials. Lists and descriptions of the program areas in which your synagogue can obtain assistance, as well as a map and a directory of the regional offices, appear at the back of this guide.

The Union Web site at www.urj.org contains hundreds of “pages” of information that can be very helpful to you. A majority of the printed materials of the Union is available on the Web. For example, you can access the following information on the Web site:

- Most of the publications of the Department of Synagogue Management, including this publication; Inside Leadership, a monthly briefing written especially for board members of Union congregations; and Communicate!, the online resource bank of more than 2,300 congregational programs and ideas, all at www.urj.org/synmgmt.
- Directories of the Union, HUC-JIR, and CCAR staffs and faculty, the CCAR membership list, and a listing of Union member congregations.
- Continuously updated materials on study retreats, educational offerings, and adult literacy, including Ten Minutes of Torah, which can be used to create board direct Torah, at www.urj.org/educate.
- Links to the Web sites of 88% of Union member congregations.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM REGIONAL OFFICE INFORMATION</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Name of Region</td>
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<td>Address</td>
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<td>E-mail address</td>
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<td>Regional president</td>
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<td>Regional director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant/Associate director</td>
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<td>Other regional staff</td>
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</table>


A Suggested List of Committees

Since ancient times, Jews have gathered in the synagogue to pray, study, and assemble. The following suggested list of committees is grouped according to those functions. Feel free to choose what is appropriate for your congregation, and for more detailed information, see For the Sake of Heaven: Committees in Congregational Life at www.urj.org/synmgmt/publications.

**House of Prayer Beit Tefillah**

**Music and Choir** Works with the clergy to oversee the musical content of the synagogue programs

**Ushers/Greeters** Coordinates with the Worship/Ritual and Membership Committees to train and schedule greeters

**Worship/Ritual** Works with the clergy to support the congregational worship experience

**House of Study Beit Midrash**

**Adult Education** Develops and administers the adult education programs

**Archives** Organizes and catalogs the documents and memorabilia of the congregation

**Library** Works with the temple librarian, if there is one, to maintain, staff, and make purchases for the synagogue library; publicizes its holdings

**Lifelong Jewish Learning** Coordinates all Jewish education, including early childhood, religious school, youth, family education, and adult learning

**Outreach** Welcomes non-Jewish partners of members and interfaith households; plans programs to educate and support outreach issues for interfaith couples, Jewish-by-choice and their families, and parents of children who have intermarried

**Parenting/Preschool** Recommends and/or sets the policy and reviews the activities of the nursery school and preschool programs

**Religious School** Recommends and/or sets the policy and reviews the activities of the schools of the congregation and oversees their operations

**Youth** Acts as the liaison between the synagogue youth programs and the Board of Trustees and oversees the youth programs
**House of Assembly Beit K’neset**

- **Budget**: Projects the temple’s annual income and expenses and makes periodic reports about synagogue income and expenditures to the board for approval.
- **Buildings and Grounds/House**: Supervises the buildings, grounds, equipment maintenance and updates, as well as the use of the synagogue's facilities.
- **Bylaws**: Reviews and recommends amendments and changes to the bylaws, as needed.
- **Cemetery**: Oversees the administration of the cemetery.
- **Development/ Endowment**: Coordinates the various funds of the synagogue and administers and enlists the support of the congregation for planned giving efforts.
- **Dues Adjustment and Review**: Reviews the individual dues adjustments and assessments and makes recommendations; may not be a formal standing committee; the administrator and one or two officers may meet as required.
- **Finance**: Reviews the financial needs of the congregation, recommends investments, and presents the fiscal reports to the board and the congregation.
- **Fine Arts**: Coordinates the performing arts programs and the acquisition and display of art objects for the synagogue.
- **Fund-Raising**: Oversees short-term fund-raising projects.
- **Investment**: Oversees the investments of the congregation.
- **Judaica Shop**: Oversees the administration, staffing, purchasing, and bookkeeping of the shop.

**House of the People Beit Am**

- **Board Programming**: Determines the appropriate areas for board focus and direction; plans meeting topics, retreats, and new member orientations.
- **Bulletin**: Oversees the editing and publication of the temple bulletin.
- **Executive**: Recommends policy and acts as an agent for the board, if so authorized, in time of emergency or between the board’s regularly scheduled meetings.
- **Hospitality**: Provides the refreshments at synagogue events.
Interfaith Relations

Schedules programming and dialogue with non-Jewish groups in the community.

Jewish Family Concerns/Caring Community

Provides mutual help and support networks to congregants facing illness and crises and furthers the models for full inclusion of all Jews—regardless of their sexual orientation, their age, or any disability—in the community.

Leadership Development

Plans ways to identify, train, and motivate new leadership.

Membership/Welcoming

Recruits, integrates, and retains members; works with other committees to make connections between members and create opportunities for involvement.

Nominating

Recommends individuals to serve as officers and trustees, subject to congregational and board approval.

Personnel

Writes and supervises the synagogue’s personnel practices code and recommends salaries and benefits for the staff.

Program/Calendar

Oversees and coordinates the programs for the congregation.

Public Relations

Publicizes synagogue events within and outside the congregation; may also create marketing materials and special campaigns for member recruitment.

Search

Usually created on an ad hoc basis as determined by need; oversees the search for key salaried clergy and staff, conducts interviews, and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Social Action

Analyzes the public affairs issues relating to Judaism that face the community; educates, sensitizes, and recommends positions to the congregation; operates synagogue social action programs and educates the members about social issues.

Young Adults 20s/30s

Provides opportunities for young adults (22–35) to connect to a synagogue community and to a clergy, a process that will eventually lead to membership.
MANAGING
Sacred
www.urj.org/directory
Social
www.urj.org/social
Outreach
www.urj.org/outreach
Communications
www.urj.org/communications
Marketing
www.urj.org/marketing
List
www.urj.org/list
Timetables
www.urj.org/timetables
Development
www.urj.org/development
Biennial
212.650.4270
biennial@urj.org
Development
212.650.4140
development@urj.org
Jewish Family Concerns
212.650.4294
jfc@urj.org
Lifelong Jewish Learning
212.650.4110
www.urj.org/educate
educate@urj.org
List Maintenance
212.650.4173
listmaint@urj.org
Maintenance of
Union Membership
212.650.4170
www.urj.org/mum
mum@urj.org
Marketing and
Communications
212.650.4221
www.urj.org/communications
urj@urj.org
Outreach and Synagogue
Community
212.650.4230
www.urj.org/outreach
outreach@urj.org
Social Action
212.650.4160
www.urj.org/csas
csas@urj.org

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF
THE UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

Biennial
Handles the arranging and implementing of the every two-year event, during which 5,000 Reform Jews gather for five days of study, worship, singing, and decision making

Development
Assists congregations with the arrangement and implementation of fund-raising campaigns for capital programs, endowments, and planned giving and administers the Fund for Reform Judaism and the Reform Jewish Appeal

Jewish Family Concerns
Helps Reform congregations deal with the rapidly changing dynamics of the contemporary Jewish family through the concept of creating caring congregations and by focusing on medical technology, aging, self-destructive behaviors, gay and lesbian inclusion, special needs, changing demographics, and premarital education

Lifelong Jewish Learning
Endeavors to educate Reform Jews, create individuals and communities of Jews with a deeper and fuller commitment to Jewish living, and provide resources to help synagogue educators and teachers in their work

List Maintenance
Maintains a record of every Union household and a database of congregational clergy and lay leaders to insure that the members receive up-to-date relevant Union communications

Maintenance of
Union Membership
Administers the Proportional Dues Program, the vehicle whereby the members of Reform congregations support the Union for Reform Judaism and Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion

Marketing and
Communications
Provides vital information to and maintains contact with congregational leaders to assist them in accessing the Union’s resources and informs them about the Union’s new developments and programs, maintains the Web site, and coordinates the e-mail discussion groups

Outreach and Synagogue
Community
Works to actively welcome all and to build vibrant, inclusive congregational communities; also provides resources to help congregations succeed in growing as sacred communities that welcome and integrate a diversity of Jews and their families

Social Action
Assists congregations in establishing effective Social Action Committees and programs, encourages the application of Judaic ethics to contemporary issues, and seeks to apply the insights of Jewish tradition to such domestic and foreign issues as human rights, world peace, civil liberties, religious freedom, poverty, intergroup relations, and other major societal concerns

UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM • 25
Synagogue Management
212.650.4040
www.urj.org/synmgmt
synagoguegmnt@urj.org

Provides congregations with management resources for all aspects of synagogue operation and administration, including a series of pamphlets on these topics available online and in hard copy; Inside Leadership, a monthly newsletter for temple board members; Communicate!, an online resource bank of more than 2,300 programs and ideas from and for congregations; and The Temple Management Manual, which is available through the URJ Press.

Worship, Music and Religious Living
212.650.4193
www.urj.org/worship
worship@urj.org

Supports programs and publications that encourage the spiritual growth of Reform Jews both individually and communally through the enhancement of Reform worship, the recognition that music is a vehicle for k’dushah (holiness), and the awareness that mitzvot can bring a sacred potential to daily life.

YOUTH DIVISION
Camps for Living Judaism
212.650.4070
www.urjcamps.org
youth@urj.org

Camps are engaged in creative education with the goal of developing a knowledgeable and Jewishly literate community for the future.

College Education
KESHER
212.650.4070
www.keshernet.com
kesher@urj.org

Establishes avenues through which college-aged youth can develop and maintain their Jewish identities within the Reform Movement.

NFTY/Junior and Senior High School Programs
212.650.4070
www.nfty.org
nfty@urj.org

These more than sixty-year-old programs offer thousands of young people the opportunity to explore and live Reform Judaism.

The Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler NFTY Israel Experience
212.452.6517
www.nfty.org/israel
nftytravel@urj.org

Sends more than 1,000 Reform Jewish teens and college students to Israel and Europe annually.

PUBLICATIONS
Reform Judaism Magazine
212.650.4240
www.urj.org/jrmag
jrmagazine@urj.org

This official voice of the Union for Reform Judaism links the institutions and affiliates of Reform Judaism with every Reform Jew.

URJ Press/
Transcontinental
Music Publications
212.650.4120
Toll free: 888.489.8242
www.urjpress.com
www.transcontinentalmusic.com
press@urj.org
tmp@urj.org

One of the largest publishers of Reform Jewish textbooks, religious school curricular materials, adult study resources, printed music, CDs, and books for both home and synagogue use; the Press and TMP publish an extensive collection of synagogue and personal study materials.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC: American Conference of Cantors</td>
<td>5591 Chamblee Dunwoody Road, Building 1360, Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30338</td>
<td>770.390.0006</td>
<td><a href="mailto:accantor@aol.com">accantor@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARZADWORLD UNION, North America</td>
<td>633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6778, 212.650.4280 Fax: 212.650.4289</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:arzawupj@nj.org">arzawupj@nj.org</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ARZA-Canada</td>
<td>36 Akenson Avenue, Thornhill, ON L4J 8C9 CANADA, 905.709.2275 Fax: 905.709.1895</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:cc@arz.org">cc@arz.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCAR: Central Conference of American Rabbis</td>
<td>355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017, 212.972.3636 Fax: 212.692.0819</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@ccar.org">info@ccar.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion</td>
<td>3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45220-2488, 850.488.8720 513.221.1875 Fax: 513.221.0321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>1077 University Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025-1796, 820.899.0925 213.749.3424 Fax: 213.747.6128</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Brookside Center, One West Fourth Street, New York, NY 10012-1186, 800.424.1336 212.674.5300 Fax: 212.388.1720</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
<td>13 King David Street, Jerusalem 94120 ISRAEL, 011.972.2.620.3333 Fax: 011.972.2.625.1478</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRAC: Israel Religious Action Center</td>
<td>18 Shlomzion Street, PO Box 31936, Jerusalem 91319 ISRAEL, 011.972.2.625.6266 Fax: 011.972.2.625.6260</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:irac@actcom.co.il">irac@actcom.co.il</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NATA: National Association of Temple Administrators</td>
<td>P.O. Box 936, Ridgefield, WA 98642, 802.966.NATA E-mail: <a href="mailto:nataorg@hotmail.com">nataorg@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NATE: National Association of Temple Educators</td>
<td>633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6778, 212.452.6510 Fax: 212.452.6512 E-mail: <a href="mailto:nateco@nj.org">nateco@nj.org</a></td>
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<td>NFTB: North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods</td>
<td>633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6778, 212.650.4102 800.765.6200 Fax: 212.650.4189 E-mail: <a href="mailto:nfthb@nj.org">nfthb@nj.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>PARDOF: Progressive Association of Reform Day Schools</td>
<td>6805 East McDonald Drive, Paradise Valley, AZ 85253, 480.991.7414 Fax: 480.951.029</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@pardayschools.org">info@pardayschools.org</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Directors of Reform Judaism</td>
<td>Renee Karp, President c/o Temple Emanuel 8500 Hillcrest Road, Dallas, TX 75225 214.736.0000 E-mail: <a href="mailto:rkarp@temudallas.org">rkarp@temudallas.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reform Pension Board</td>
<td>355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017, 212.691.1918 Fax: 212.681.9340 E-mail: <a href="mailto:pensionboard@lpb.org">pensionboard@lpb.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>RAC: Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism</td>
<td>2207 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036, 202.387.2800 Fax: 202.667.9707 E-mail: <a href="mailto:rac@nj.org">rac@nj.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>WRF: Women of Reform Judaism</td>
<td>633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6778, 212.650.4050 Fax: 212.650.4059 E-mail: <a href="mailto:wrf@nj.org">wrf@nj.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>WUPJ: World Union for Progressive Judaism</td>
<td>International Headquarters, 13 King David Street, Jerusalem 94121 ISRAEL, 011.972.2.620.3447 Fax: 011.972.2.620.3525</td>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:wupj@wupj.org.il">wupj@wupj.org.il</a></td>
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DIRECTORY OF UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM AFFILIATES AND ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS
DIRECTORY OF UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM OFFICES

Headquarters
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017-6778
212.650.4000
E-mail: urj@urj.org

Canadian Council of Reform Judaism
3845 Bathurst Street, Suite 301
Toronto, ON M3H 3N2 CANADA
800.560.8242 416.630.0375
Fax: 416.630.5089
E-mail: ccrj@urj.org

Great Lakes Council/Chicago Federation
555 Skokie Boulevard, Suite 333
Northbrook, IL 60062-2833
800.650.8242 847.509.0990
Fax: 847.239.6990
E-mail: glc@urj.org

Greater New York Council
317 Madison Avenue, Suite 814
New York, NY 10017
888.634.8242 212.286.8060
Fax: 212.650.4196
E-mail: gnyc@urj.org

Mid-Atlantic Council
2027 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Third Floor
Washington, DC 20036-1011
888.842.8242 202.232.4242
Fax: 202.483.6550
E-mail: mac@urj.org

Midwest Council
1153 Chivette Executive Parkway, Suite 140
St. Louis, MO 63132
888.692.8242 314.997.7566
Fax: 314.997.4041
E-mail: macw@urj.org

New Jersey-West Hudson Valley Council
56 Ridgewood Road
Washington Township, NJ 07676
888.750.8242 201.722.9090
Fax: 201.722.0444
E-mail: njwry@urj.org

Northeast Council
75 Second Avenue, Suite 550
Needham, MA 02494-2898
888.291.8242 781.449.0404
Fax: 781.449.0419
E-mail: nec@urj.org

Northeast Lakes Council/Detroit Federation
2324 Chagrin Boulevard, Suite 101
Beachwood, OH 44122-5655
888.282.6352 216.831.6722
Fax: 216.831.2737
E-mail: nelc@urj.org

Pacific Central West Council
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 1120
San Francisco, CA 94104-3304
888.756.8242 415.392.7080
Fax: 415.392.1182
E-mail: pcw@urj.org

Pacific Northwest Council
600 Stewart Street, Suite 838
Seattle, WA 98101-1230
888.294.8242 206.374.9393
Fax: 206.770.9857
E-mail: pnw@urj.org

Pacific Southwest Council
15700 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 1125
Encino, CA 91436
888.834.8242 818.907.8740
Fax: 818.907.8720
E-mail: psw@urj.org

Pennsylvania Council/Philadelphia Federation
1511 Walnut Street, Suite 401
Philadelphia, PA 19102
800.368.1090 215.563.8183
Fax: 215.563.1549
E-mail: pac@urj.org

Southeast Council/South Florida Federation
2901 Stirling Road, Suite 210
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312
888.289.8242 954.981.1500
Fax: 954.981.1540
E-mail: sec@urj.org

Southwest Council
12720 Hillcrest Road, Suite 830
Dallas, TX 75230
888.234.8242 972.960.6641
Fax: 972.960.6655
E-mail: sswc@urj.org
Thank you for taking on the responsibility of congregational leadership. Grounded in an ancient tradition of sacred tasks, spiritually based, and steeped in holiness, synagogue board membership can be a wonderfully fulfilling experience whereby you can grow Jewishly while working toward the sacred task of repairing the world, starting with your own synagogue and community.
THANK YOU

Your membership in a Union congregation has made the Reform Movement the largest and most vibrant branch of Judaism.