

Congregation Adat Reyim

Strategic Plan 2008-2012

Adopted by the Board of Directors
December 19, 2007

Congregation Adat Reyim

Proposed Strategic Plan 2008-2012

Presented to the Adat Reyim Board of Directors
December 19, 2007

Strategic Planning Committee

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Letter from the Congregation President

Fall, 2007

Dear Fellow Congregants,

I am looking over a document written almost 10 years earlier to the day titled “Adat Reyim Long Range Plan”. As I read through it, many items in the plan have been accomplished. Some goals include continuing a progressive conservative format that honors tradition while reflecting the needs and concerns of modern society, expand chavorot, provide a permanent library, and expand facilities for education. In some areas we fell short. Goals like attaining 400 members, adult education during Religious School, and ongoing leadership training were not attained. Of course there were new goals that we still need to achieve such as establishing and maintaining a strong fundraising philosophy, moving away from committees of one, and keeping our students in school after their B’nai Mitzvah year,

In this document you will find about who we are, where we’ve been, and more importantly where we need to go. In its final form, this document needs to be treated as our road map to the future. It needs to be followed over the next five years so that we remain on course. Leaders of the congregation must refer to it when they are called on to make decisions for the congregation and you, the congregants, need to help us implement it through volunteer efforts and congregational participation.

This work took a special team lead by a strong leader. The committee was very successful in polling the congregation for input. Although a small group of congregants put this document together, it was with the help, thoughts, and ideas of many. I would like to thank Mark Sklarow for the leading the committee which included Sami Besalel, Lisa Eidelkind, Eileen Filler-Corn, Ira Gold, Dannie Halle, Fred Kraus, and Larry Kugler.

Glenn Sherman,
Proud President
Congregation Adat Reyim

Letter from Rabbi Aft

Dear Friends,

What an exciting letter to write!!! Under the leadership of Mark Sklarow and a devoted committee, (Sami Besalel, Lisa Eidelkind, Eileen Filler-Corn, Ira Gold, Fred Kraus, Danella Halle and Larry Kugler) the board and then the congregation will be reviewing and adopting a five year strategic plan. The document which follows outlines the steps we need to take in order to build a community that is committed to life long learning, spiritual growth and vitality, participating in tikkun olam (helping to repair our world through our service to others), and making a difference in the lives of our members, people in Northern Virginia and those who live in the metropolitan Washington DC community. You will see that there is a belief in the impact that Judaism has across generations through our commitment to youth as we embody the words of the prayer, l'dor v'dor nagid gadlecha, from generation to generation we declare G-d's greatness. This commitment to youth recognizes the importance of Adult Jewish learning as we model the importance of education for us as adult members of the Jewish community.

The best part of this process was that members of the committee spoke to people representing virtually every segment of our congregation. Although not everything could be included, I know that the committee reviewed each suggestion very seriously and were inspired by the depth of passion that people shared for Adat Reyim.

We look forward to your comments and hope that each of us will commit to fulfilling the dreams and aspirations which will encourage Congregation Adat Reyim to continue to be a sacred place of education, social action, spiritual growth, and social interaction with other Jewish people and people of faith throughout our community.

There is a beautiful midrash compiled by Rabbi Marc Gellman in a book entitled, *Does G-d Have a Big Toe* which describes the partnership between G-d and humanity in creating a better world. May we all be partners together as we do our share to make our world a more sacred place.

B'shalom,

Rabbi Bruce D. Aft

Introduction and Background from the Strategic Planning Committee

Welcome to the 2008 Strategic Plan. The charge to this committee was simple: to establish goals and priorities and define long-range planning to guide the leadership of Congregation Adat Reyim for the next five years.

As our foundation, we used three principles that have guided us since the inception of our congregation 25 years ago. The plan considers three paths for Adat Reyim as (1) a center for study & learning (*beit midrash*); (2) a center for worship and ritual observance (*beit tefilah*); and (3) a center for our community (*beit kenesset*).

Although our mission is easy to describe, it proved more challenging to execute. It was important for the members of this committee to bring not only our own diverse experiences, ideas and knowledge to bear on our task, but also to seek the various opinions of our membership.

To accomplish this, we performed substantial research. Some of this was dry work, analyzing what others have done for strategic planning; researching statistics into area and nationwide demographics, and interpreting the results; studying budgets in congregations similar in size and community, debating various creative approaches tried by other congregations within and beyond the D.C. area.

Other research was extremely dynamic. We embarked upon a series of town hall meetings, resulting in spirited debate and passionate testimony – revealing that our members care deeply about the issues discussed. We also conducted scores of face-to-face interviews, one at a time or in groups, of members representing different aspects of our membership.

This work was not accomplished in a vacuum, and our synagogue has experienced some tumult during the past year; changes in staff, financial burdens, and other factors complicated our mission (and sometimes served to reinforce its importance). At times, the immediacy of these issues threatened to take us off mission. On many of these ongoing here-and-now debates, the Strategic Planning Committee was asked to participate, or even take sides; we declined. The committee viewed its charter as outside of any single issue. Like any committee, we are comprised of a heterogeneous mix of personalities, and no single view predominated on *any* issue – excluding the shared respect we all hold for each other and their points of view. We strove to divest ourselves of politics; to leave our preconceptions outside the door. It is the belief of this committee that the common well-being and future direction of our synagogue is in every person's interest, and thus we tried hard to be apolitical.

In some ways, our congregation is at a crossroads. As we struggle, financially and philosophically, with what it means to be a progressive conservative congregation, we look toward the basic tenets of conservative Judaism to come up with a plan that should focus us in the right direction for the next five years.

We offer the following report with its many goals and objectives in this spirit, and express our hope that the Board debates them, adopts them, embraces them, and acts.

Sami Besalel
On behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee

Congregation Adat Reyim Vision Statement

Introduction

Adat Reyim means a “community of friends.” Founded in 1981 by a small group of families to provide a warm, spiritual home for the local area, our congregation of nearly 300 families from increasingly diverse backgrounds offers religious, social, and cultural activities geared for both youth and adults. From its humble beginnings, Adat Reyim moved into its current building in 1991 and completed a substantial addition that opened in the fall of 2002. Under the leadership of Rabbi Bruce Aft, our unaffiliated Progressive Conservative congregation has honored tradition while reflecting the needs and concerns of modern society.

Our Vision Statement

The congregation’s vision is to develop, with strong rabbinic leadership, a deeper sense of Jewish community for all congregants through a participatory congregation that offers a wide range of opportunities for religious, spiritual, educational, and social growth. We will continue to build upon our warm atmosphere and inclusive outreach to all individuals and families as we continue to grow and mature. Our vibrant congregation will strive to become more involved with local, national and worldwide secular, interfaith, and Jewish communities including support for Israel, and will strive to achieve Tikkun Olam, repairing the world through social action.

Adat Reyim will maintain its strong emphasis on Jewish education, values, and social opportunities to meet the needs of our youth within our congregation and in the broader Jewish community. We will continue to support our children and young people as they assume leadership roles in these contexts.

*Adopted by the Board of Directors
2004*

Strategic Planning Committee Timeline

Committee Charge:

Given the history and values that guided the Congregation for the last 25 years, create a vision of the Congregation we would like it to become in five years, suggesting a pathway to achieve those goals and objectives. Our Strategic Plan will be submitted to the Congregation's Board for a vote to become policy in the fall of 2007. The plan created must rest on these three pillars:

- Adat Reyim as Beit Midrash, a center for study and learning
- Adat Reyim as Beit Tefilah, a center for worship and ritual observance
- Adat Reyim as Beit Keneset, a center for community

Committee Timeline:

November, 2006	Strategic Planning Committee appointed by President Glenn Sherman
December, 2006	Organizational efforts and initial meeting; SPC members appointed, goals and methodology set, collects historical data including past planning efforts and congregational survey results.
January, 2007	SPC members review materials, including materials from national Jewish organizations, researchers, writers and surveys, materials from other congregations, begin interviews, coordinate member and leadership input; set sub committees; First Town Hall meeting held. Feedback invited via email promoted in Kol Reyim.
February, 2007	Subcommittees continue interviews with all segments of congregation, second Town Hall session held; Continue to gather and review all pertinent materials, including those from outside organizations, other congregations; Initial report made to Board regarding progress.
March, 2007	Interviews, information gathering continues. By this point interviews held with staff, religious school teachers, older students, Men's Club, Sisterhood, past presidents, finance team, pre-school faculty and scores of individuals (including Rabbi Aft) and small groups. Final Town Hall gathering held.
April-June, 2007	Final research and information gathering; SPC begins setting goals and objectives
July-December 2007	Plan is written. Copies distributed to members and congregational Board. Plan presented at November Board meeting and December Congregational meeting for final feedback prior to Board vote on acceptance.

History of Adat Reyim

In 1980 three families shared a meal after Yom Kippur and began to discuss with their neighbors forming a Jewish congregation in southwestern Fairfax County. Brief Friday evening services were held in member's homes. One year later, "The Jewish Friends of West Springfield/Burke" began meeting at the Kings Park community room. Sunday school was taught by parents in members' homes. Soon, the congregation met at Messiah United Methodist Church in Springfield. Religious school moved to the Woods Community Center complete with a principal and teachers.

The congregation officially became Adat Reyim, Hebrew for "a gathering of friends and neighbors."

Rabbi Tzvi Porath became our spiritual leader after 32 years as the leader of one of Maryland's premier congregations, Ohr Kodesh in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Religious services moved into Burke Presbyterian Church. The two congregations began holding joint Thanksgiving services. St Mary's Catholic Church joined us for this service, and the tradition continues today.

Five wooded acres were purchased for our future home. The choir was formed, and it remains a strong and vital part of synagogue life. The congregation dedicated its first Sefer Torah. By the time we held our Groundbreaking, Adat Reyim offered a Youth Group, a Sisterhood, and Tot Shabbat services for 2-5 year olds and their families.

In 1990 the synagogue building was complete. Services were held every Friday evening and Saturday morning and all holidays. Soon, we graduated our first Confirmation class at the end of 10th grade. Rabbi Bruce Aft, noted educator and experienced rabbi and counselor, became our first full-time rabbi, and has remained with us through the years. The Men's Club was established.

The congregation acquired a Torah rescued from the Holocaust. It has been fully restored and is lovingly used for special occasions as well as regular worship Services.

A weekday preschool opened and is flourishing today. Summer programs have been added as well.

In the fall of 2002, our Education/Administrative wing was completed. We now have permanent classrooms, offices for staff members, and dedicated space for our preschool. Synagogue membership is over 300 families-and many of our early families remain active members.

Some Milestones in our History

1981 The Jewish Friends of West Springfield/Burke” begins meeting for Friday evening Sabbath services once a month and major holidays at the Kings Park community room; Sunday school is taught by parents in members’ basements.

1982 Friday evening services are held twice a month at Messiah United Methodist Church in Springfield; the religious school moves to Woods Community Center in Burke.

1983 Congregation chooses name Adat Reyim, Hebrew for “a gathering of friends and neighbors”; Choir is formed.

1984 Rabbi Tzvi Porath becomes spiritual leader of Adat Reyim, after 32 years as the leader of Ohr Kodesh in Chevy Chase; Religious services are held in Burke Presbyterian Church. First Bar Mitzvah ceremony held. First interfaith Thanksgiving service held.

1985 Nearly five wooded acres purchased on the border between Springfield and Burke; First Sefer Torah dedicated. Choir is formed.

1986 First annual community Seder held.

1987 Sunday school moves to West Springfield Elementary for more room; Youth group founded.

1988 Groundbreaking ceremony held; Sisterhood founded as women’s auxiliary; Bi-monthly “Tot Shabbat” services for 2-5 year-olds. First Adat Reyim retreat is held.

1989 Saturday morning services held once a month, plus services for Bar/Bat Mitzvot

1990 Synagogue building opens its doors; Services held every Friday evening and Saturday morning plus all holidays.

1991 First Confirmation class graduates at end of 10th grade; Rabbi Bruce Aft becomes congregation’s first full-time rabbi; Men’s Club founded as men’s auxiliary.

1992 Tot Shabbat held every month; Congregation holds additional Family High Holiday services, open to the community.

1993 Congregation recognized for its unique near-perfect retention of students after Bar/Bat Mitzvah: Torah rescued from the Holocaust acquired; Religious school enrollment over 260 students; Weekday preschool opens.

1995 Holocaust Torah from Sedlcany, Poland is dedicated

1997 Wednesday minyans begin; annual woman's Passover Seder begins. Long Range Plan adopted.

2001 Folk group established.

2002 Education/Administrative wing of the synagogue is completed. New permanent classrooms, offices for staff members, and dedicated space for preschool are built.

2006 Congregation Adat Reyim celebrates its 25th Anniversary with special services and a giant gala evening. Strategic Planning Committee begins work.

Summary of Five Year Goals

Membership

1. Congregational growth of 6% annually in each of the next 5 years is essential to Adat Reyim's ability to operate and meet congregants' needs. All committees, activities and events should incorporate an outreach component and every member should be engaged in a membership outreach effort.
2. Actions designed to create a sense of community—and to actively engage congregants as part of that community serves three functions: builds a volunteer network, connects the more casual member to the congregation, and increases retention.
3. The community—members, potential members and others—must begin to see Adat Reyim as *their community's* synagogue.

Finance

4. The Congregation must raise its income to maintain a balanced budget and rebuild a reserve fund so that its vision can be fully developed.
5. Through improved training, policies, procedures and transparency demonstrate to the congregation a commitment to fiscal responsibility and accuracy.
6. Establish a fundraising plan, emphasizing a small number of major events that can become a yearly, anticipated source of revenue.

Communication

7. Improve openness, transparency and communication between the congregation's lay leadership, clergy, and membership.
8. Raise the profile of the congregation in the communities we serve in print and electronic media.

Education

9. Adat Reyim must take actions to meet its desire to have a dynamic, engaging, effective religious school that both prepares students for their B'nai Mitzvah as well as for life as a Jewish adult.

10. Programs must reflect our belief in the value of lifelong learning with commitment to education beginning with Preschool and continuing through programs for our most senior members.

11. Everything that takes place in the synagogue from community service projects to policy debates should reflect the Jewish traditions and values we want the Adat Reyim community, including congregants and children, to absorb.

Organization & Governance

12. Adat Reyim must re-orient its Board so that it operates with greater efficiency, greater openness and a stronger sense of mission.

13. The Committees must be expanded, strengthened and empowered to operate with volunteer direction and must conduct their business outside of Board meetings.

14. Ensure a succession of lay leadership through effective recruitment, training, and mentorship.

Staffing

15. While supporting a climate where volunteerism is encouraged, the congregation also needs sufficient professional staff to meet congregational needs. While the current staff expense is consistent with other congregations we should ensure that the right lay and clergy staff structure, staff members and staff training meet the congregation's stated priorities.

Rituals and Worship

16. Define, in clearly understandable terms, what we mean when we identify ourselves as a "Progressive Conservative Congregation."

17. Provide ways to experience spirituality in addition to prayer, recognizing that different paths to spirituality are reflected in our membership and in our history.

18. Continue our commitment to a meaningful B'nai Mitzvah experience, while emphasizing education, worship and celebrations are more than B'nai Mitzvah training and that this be seen as one life cycle event, not a culmination.

19. Provide opportunities for volunteer leadership in religious services.

Member Services / Programming / Social Action

20. The congregation must recognize that congregants will seek to involve themselves in the life of the congregation to varying degrees, ways and enthusiasm. Provide a diverse array of opportunities that allow members to choose a path of involvement that is right for them.

21. Increase opportunities for social action and community service to allow participation of congregants at every age, from preschool age to senior citizens.

22. Emphasize and embrace the congregation's participation in activities and with organizations based in the community: Judaic, secular, and other faith-based.

Strategic Plan Goals & Objectives

Membership

Goal 1: Congregational growth of 6% annually in each of the next 5 years is essential to Adat Reyim's ability to operate and meet congregants' needs. All committees, activities and events should incorporate an outreach component and every member should be engaged in a membership outreach effort.

Goal 2: Actions designed to create a sense of community—and to actively engage congregants as part of that community serves three functions: builds a volunteer network, connects the more casual member to the congregation, and increases retention.

Goal 3: The community – members, potential members, and others – must begin to see Adat Reyim as their community's synagogue.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- Seek professional assistance in developing a strategy to market the congregation, review ads, brochures, web presence.
- Engage every committee and every event planner to include outreach to non-members as a specific part of their mission.
- Grow the membership Committee to a half dozen members, and include representation from major synagogue constituencies and groups.
- Reach out, through words and actions, to those groups who are disproportionately under-represented (singles, inter-faith families, gay and lesbian families, and other non-traditional families) as well as those who are traditionally at the decision-point for affiliation (school-aged children, families transferred to the community), even as we appeal to all potential members.

- Plan holiday, service functions and other Judaic celebrations outside of the congregation where unaffiliated Jews may feel more comfortable establishing contact. Such outside events must have membership outreach coordinators and congregants in identifiable shirts. Through these actions we establish Adat Reyim as our *community's* synagogue.
- Utilize and promote financial incentives being offered to attract new families.

By Years Two/Three:

- Hold a club, committee, social action sign up day in the fall (perhaps tied to first day of religious school and coinciding with an open house for potential members) where groups display materials and recruit participation.
- Conduct an exit survey with resigning families to gain a better understanding of why families leave and to recommend possible changes and improvements to programming and services.
- Increase the number of out-of-the-building events to 'bring the congregation to the community' and lower the threshold for potential members to make contact.
- Explore increased opportunities for outreach to area businesses, elected officials, and community-based organizations as part of the effort to establish Adat Reyim as the community's synagogue.
- Expand outreach for new members to communities further north and south by articulating our congregation's unique strengths and welcoming those from under-served communities.

Finance

Goal 4: The Congregation must raise its income to maintain a balanced budget and rebuild the reserve fund so that its vision can be fully developed.

Goal 5: Through improved training, policies, procedures and transparency demonstrate to the congregation a commitment to fiscal responsibility and accuracy.

Goal 6: Establish a fundraising plan, emphasizing a small number of major events that can become a yearly, anticipated source of revenue.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- Continue to provide financial updates to congregation on a regular basis as a matter of policy.
- Ensure billing is accurate and easy for members to understand.
- Establish sound procedures, based on accepted accounting procedures for all financial operations. Create a manual outlining these procedures.
- Emphasize membership growth to increase income in the short run and ensure long-term financial stability.
- Institute a training plan, through use of internal or external experts for all those involved in the congregation's financial well-being including staff, Board members and volunteers.
- Establish a few major fundraising events that will become part of the regular congregational calendar from year-to-year and an anticipated source of revenue.
- Grow the reserve fund and create a plan for growing the fund to equal 50% of one year's operational expenses.

By Years Two/Three:

- Explore all possibilities for rental income from use of the building by community groups, other religious groups even if such use causes some inconvenience to us.
- Remain competitive with area congregations on dues and fees to ensure that we remain a value to those who seek membership.
- Establish an Audit Committee of members to ensure that the congregation is following its financial procedures manual and to recommend any necessary changes.
- Involve the congregation more fully in establishing budget priorities by inviting feedback throughout the budgeting process.
- Re-examine the relevancy of each named fund. To enhance donations, name a fund each month that can be highlighted and explained. Explain how donations help fund programs, activities, services, rather than mortar and salaries.

By Years Three to Five:

- Develop a planned giving program instructing members how they can include the Congregation in estate planning, wills, planned donations, donation of securities, etc.
- Examine the possibility of creating an endowment, allowing the funds to be used to seed the development of new initiatives, programs, or activities.

Communication

Goal 7: Improve openness, transparency and communication between the congregation's lay leadership, clergy and membership.

Goal 8: Raise the profile of the congregation in the communities we serve in print and electronic media.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- Use member expertise to raise Adat Reyim's profile on the Internet to ensure our presence when potential members conduct web searches.
- Settle on a brand message (*example: a Progressive Conservative Congregation bringing together families in Fairfax, Burke, Springfield, Lorton, and Kingstowne*) and use it on all materials.
- Distribute the weekly e-blast earlier in the week to allow families adequate time to plan for the upcoming Shabbat and weekend activities.
- Include more articles on recent events and programs, features on members and groups, reports from committees and similar details in the Kol Reyim to better showcase the diversity of opportunity and breadth of activities the congregation offers.
- Use existing, planned mailings as an opportunity to send regular updates to congregants regarding pending policy and program discussions, Board actions and finances. Full transparency of Board actions should be evident.
- Create a streamlined, simplified system for building use, calendar approval, media announcements, etc. and explain it fully to Board, committees, volunteers and staff.
- Increase the regularity of informational listings provided by area's Jewish and secular weeklies.
- Provide an easy way for those visiting the web site to request membership information, to be added to the email list or included in activity announcements. Be attentive in following up such requests.

- Provide staff and volunteer training on being positive, welcoming, and helpful to walk-ins and those who call for information.

By Years Two/Three:

- Alter or replace the sign on Old Keene Mill Road so that it can be clearly seen in both west and eastbound directions.
- Create a password-protected, member section of the Adat Reyim web site where Board agendas, financial information, policies under review, etc can be posted and reviewed by interested congregants.
- Explore ways for congregants to recognize Board members and committee chairs during congregational activities.

Education

Goal 9: Adat Reyim must take actions to meet its desire to have a dynamic, engaging, effective religious school that both prepares students for their B'nai Mitzvah as well as for life as a Jewish adult.

Goal 10: Programs must reflect our belief in the value of lifelong learning with commitment to education beginning with Preschool and continuing through programs for our most senior members.

Goal 11: Everything that takes place in the synagogue from community service projects to policy debates should reflect the Jewish traditions and values we want the Adat Reyim community, including congregants and children, to absorb.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- Expand the diversity of topics covered in adult education and develop a variety of ways in which programs geared toward adult members are offered. This can include guest speakers, but also longer and more in-depth classes.
- Incorporate all touchstones of Jewish life: values, history, celebrations, Israel, prayer and Hebrew in *every* grade of the religious school curriculum.
- Continue and expand, with sufficient planning time and notification to ensure maximum participation, recent efforts to involve parents and families in religious school activities and enhance parent-education opportunities.
- Provide faculty with opportunities for professional development to both improve their knowledge of subjects taught and teaching theory.
- Implement fully the Preschool business plan with strong unwavering support of the Congregation Board.

By Years Two/Three:

- Develop a curriculum that builds from year-to-year and includes all areas of study noted above to take students from pre-school through post-confirmation.
- Explore opportunities for the teaching of Hebrew and prayer based on students' skill levels rather than grade levels, especially as students of widely varying Hebrew skills enroll in the school.
- Pursue NAEYC accreditation of the pre-school as the mark of excellence that will attract new families to the program.
- Develop a closer relationship between the Preschool and the Religious School to provide for continuity of programming and curriculum.
- Determine student needs relative to LD, ED, gifted and other issues for which an Individualized Instructional Plan (IEP) and special teacher training may be called for.
- Develop better coordination between the religious school and B'nai Mitzvah planning.
- Develop a high school program that is more relevant to students' lives and involves students beyond the walls of the synagogue.
- Formalize adult education to include accredited coursework and programs, including classes offered within and beyond the building, educational trips, and other creative approaches.

Organization & Governance

Goal 12: Adat Reyim must re-orient its Board so that it operates with greater efficiency, greater openness and a stronger sense of mission.

Goal 13: The Committees must be expanded, strengthened and empowered to operate with volunteer direction and must conduct their business outside of Board meetings.

Goal 14: Ensure a succession of lay leadership through effective recruitment, training, and mentorship.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- Develop and present to potential candidates job descriptions explaining the role and expectations for officers and Committee Chairs, and which clarifies the roles and expectations of members of the Board.
- Create an organizational chart clarifying Board and lay interaction and include in staff and lay leadership training.
- Create and maintain a policy book organized by topic for easy research and historical accuracy.
- Structure Board meetings to handle policy issues and significant topics based on materials submitted in advance of meetings; Committee work should be done in committee, not at the Board table.
- Announce topics to be discussed at upcoming Board meetings in the weekly bulletin to create greater transparency; approved policies and programs announced similarly following meetings.

By Years Two/Three:

- Provide annual Board orientation and training; training should emphasize Board members' responsibility to the congregation over their specific area of responsibility or committee.
- Expand all committees to a minimum of five in order to increase their effectiveness, provide for succession of future leaders, and strengthen a sense of community.
- Create a password protected "Congregants" area of the web site where Board minutes, committee work and other information, including proposed budgets, can be posted for review.
- Update the By-Laws reflecting changes of the last several years and those necessary to successfully implement this Strategic Plan.
- Establish a direct line for all volunteers and non-board committees to have a clear line of communication with a Board member and a staff member.
- Create a Governance Committee to be responsible for board training and orientation, the nominations process, and leadership development, board mentorship, and board evaluations.

By Years Four/Five:

- Name a Board officer responsible for promoting the coordination of committees and to promote collaborative efforts.
- Reach out to committees for names of those who have been active and ready for leadership roles to inform the Nominating Committee.
- Standardize the structure of the Board and all procedures so that these do not vary from one administration to the next.
- Explore a system of mentoring or training that provides for a smooth transition of chairs and officers perhaps by establishing committee vice chairs, so new officers are fully prepared.

Staffing

Goal 15: While supporting a climate where volunteerism is encouraged, the congregation also needs sufficient professional staff to meet congregational needs. While the current staff expense is consistent with other congregations we should ensure the right lay and clergy staff structure, staff members and staff training to meet the congregation's stated priorities.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- The Congregation's lay staff should be led by an Executive Director who serves as the CEO and who is given the responsibility, authority and accountability that comes with such a position.
- The Executive Director should emphasize the 3 main areas of concern raised in this plan that fall under staff responsibility: financial affairs and fundraising, membership growth, creating stronger community/volunteer involvement.
- Training provided to staff, Board and volunteers so that all parties understand where authority lies and how processes work. This must include clarification of Board's role in policy, staff's role in implementation joined by a cadre of volunteers.
- Create accurate job descriptions for all positions
- Train staff in providing superior service, including acknowledging all member requests and inquiries and in the use of office technology.
- Implement a new evaluation process for the Executive Director that involves several representatives of the Board familiar with the Executive's work.

By Year Two/Three:

- The Executive Director should complete a thorough review of staffing needs necessary to meet the congregation mission and priorities as set in this document and by the Board.
- Develop a member handbook that accompanies the annual directory that includes information on how and when to contact lay staff and rabbi, provides information on volunteer opportunities, congregational policies, and important points of contact.

Rituals and Worship

Goal 16: Define, in clearly understandable terms what we mean when we identify ourselves as a “Progressive Conservative Congregation.”

Goal 17: Provide ways to experience spirituality in addition to prayer, recognizing that different paths to spirituality are reflected in our membership and in our history.

Goal 18: Continue our commitment to a meaningful B’nai Mitzvah experience, while emphasizing education, worship and celebrations are more than B’nai Mitzvah training and that this be seen as one life cycle event, not a culmination.

Goal 19: Provide opportunities for volunteer leadership in religious services.

Year One/Immediate Objectives:

- Define, adopt, publish and promote a clear definition as to what “Progressive Conservatism” means as a guiding principle of Congregation Adat Reyim.
- Create training and study opportunities for those who wish to take more active roles in religious services as participants or leaders.
- Respect, honor and provide for traditional prayer, while also providing opportunities for the spiritual practice of Judaism through other avenues, including nature, torah study, music, tzedakah, tikkun olam, peace studies.
- Insure that training for B’nai Mitzvah emphasizes prayer and worship throughout adulthood, in synagogue and home, as well as leading the services on the day of their celebration.

Years Two/Three

- Actively promote a climate of inclusiveness, where those with diverse Judaic practices and customs as well as non-traditional families are equally honored and respected.
- Ensure that policies, activities and system of governance reflect Jewish values as well as the definition of spirituality, worship and progressive conservatism adopted earlier.
- Expand opportunities for the congregation's post-B'nai Mitzvah students and young adults to return to participate and lead in worship.

Years Four/Five

- Determine the need for additional professional clergy considering the number of congregants, the ability of the Rabbi to successfully meet the spiritual needs of a larger congregation, and the financial impact on the budget.

Member Services / Programming / Social Action

Goal 20: The congregation must recognize that congregants will seek to involve themselves in the life of the congregation to varying degrees, ways and enthusiasm. Provide a diverse array of opportunities that allow members to choose a path of involvement that is right for them.

Goal 21: Increase opportunities for social action and community service to allow participation of congregants at every age, from preschool age to senior citizens.

Goal 22: Emphasize and embrace the congregation's participation in activities and with organizations based in the community: Judaic, secular, and other faith-based.

Objectives:

Immediate/First Year:

- Expand the number and variety of Chavarot (social groups) and offer participation to all new members.
- Expand opportunities for Social Action to address local, regional, national and international issues, to strengthen our connection to Israel and toward achieving tikkun olam.
- Provide a place for Jewish youth organizations to meet at the synagogue.
- Initiate and organize smaller events, which may have a fundraising component. These should be the domain of groups within the congregation, from Sisterhood to pre-school. Such events also involve more planners and committee members and will build a spirit of community and prepare volunteers to serve as congregational leaders.
- Develop a yearly theme to tie together activities, school, adult education, social action, and spiritual fulfillment.
- Expand opportunities for participation and remove barriers to those with physical limitations.
- Provide the opportunity and encouragement for any congregant to lead a program or initiate a new activity.

Years Two/Three

- Increase the diversity and variety of programs and activities to meet the needs of our diverse membership.
- Implement strategies to operate the building in a more environmentally aware manner.
- Seek opportunities for the congregation and our members to join on-going community-based organizations.
- Further expand opportunities for participation and remove barriers to those with mental, emotional or psychological limitations.

In Conclusion From the Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee's hope for the congregation is that it fully realizes the vision adopted by the Board of Directors in 2004 so that Adat Reyim can serve the needs of our members and reach out to the unaffiliated Jews in our community. While we have spent many, many hours researching and developing this plan, now the real work will begin. Some goals and objectives will be easy to implement, others more difficult requiring many more hours of research, thoughtful discussion, trials and errors.

To achieve success in the years ahead, the following will be necessary:

- Board approval and commitment of the lay leadership over the next five years to develop new policies and practices that will achieve the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.
- Commitment of the professional staff to implement new policies and procedures.
- Active participation by congregants on committees, sharing their time and talents, lending their voices to discussions, and providing constructive feedback that will advance these goals.
- Willingness of the congregation to be open to change, to consider new ideas and practices while honoring the traditions of our past.

In his introductory letter, Glenn Sherman likened this Strategic Plan to a road map to the future. When it is adopted by the board and embraced by the congregation, we will begin our journey. And while we are sure to experience bumps along the way, this congregation has proven itself to have the strength to confront difficult issues, find solutions, and move forward to build a Jewish community of friends and neighbors for ourselves, our families, and our community-at-large.

Danella Halle
For the Strategic Planning Committee