

Supplementary Materials for “Covenant”

Additional Questions for Congregational Leadership

1. “The Torah offers a way called mitzvah that—if we walk it diligently—guides and transforms all of life: when we rise up and when we lie down, when we sit at home and when we walk upon the way.” [p.2]
 - a. The recitation of the Shema referenced here presupposes that one will carry its ideas and ideals throughout one’s day. How does your community try to foster the idea that Judaism is the background for our whole lives instead of just a part of our lives?
 - b. How can your community draw on the potential of a holistic vision of Judaism to offer the possibility of transformation for those who cross its doors?

2. “Kaplan knew that Judaism had always included aspects of collective life that went beyond ‘religion’ in the normal sense of the word: history, language, literature, folk customs, communal organizations, and intimate connection to the Land of Israel.” [p. 2-3]
 - c. Are all of these aspects of Judaism addressed in your congregation’s activities?
 - d. In your view, which of these are most important for your congregation to focus on in its activities? Which of these aspects are already addressed by the programming of other local Jewish organizations?

3. “Conservative communities must be more than synagogues, and our synagogues must offer more than worship.” [p. 3]
 - e. Imagine your ideal congregation. What does it offer, besides worship?
 - f. How does such a community open avenues of engagement to the diverse components of Judaism listed in part 2?