

Supplementary Materials for “Looking Back, Looking Forward”

## Additional Questions for Congregational Leadership

1. “Conservative Judaism remains a path that to a significant number of Jews is joyful and profound, attractive and compelling. It offers the meaning that contemporary Jews need to live rightly and well and to raise their children that way.” [p. 34]
  - a. With a partner, suggest some congregational programs that would raise awareness and / or promote observance of selected practices that: unite Conservative Jews; “live rightly;” or contribute to raising children to “live rightly”.
  
2. Chancellor Eisen does not see “tradition and change” as an optimal slogan, but he affirms that “it does, however, get at an essential truth about Judaism and certainly at a cornerstone of Conservative Judaism.” [p. 35]
  - a. How does your community express “tradition and change” in its programs or its history?
  - b. If your congregation has a slogan or mission statement, does it reflect the concept of “tradition and change”? If not, how does it publically express its affiliation to Conservative Judaism?
  
3. “We dance around the Torah to new melodies as well as old, and power enduring commitments with new ideas. We hold that the beliefs and practices of Judaism developed by Jews over many centuries are fully compatible with the best of modern convictions and sensibilities” [p. 35]
  - a. How does your community demonstrate the “compatibility” of “the beliefs and practices of Judaism” and “the best of modern convictions and sensibilities”?

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- b. Does your community have any present or recent struggles with reconciling traditional Judaism with modern values?
  - c. As a group, discuss how your community might begin to reconcile one or two of these struggles.
  
4. Eisen sees a need to strengthen and express Judaism in a way that does not “allow Torah to be squeezed between extremes of fundamentalism and militant atheism.” [p. 36]
  - a. How does your community demonstrate leadership in promoting this Conservative Jewish commitment on a local, national or international level?
  - b. Which Jewish or non-Jewish organizations are, or could be, partners in this work?