

(PLEASE EXCUSE THE FORMATTING IN THIS DOCUMENT AS  
IT WAS TAKEN FROM 15 YEAR OLD MATERIAL)

Jerry Kaplan called many members to a gathering at his home on March 26, 2008. Approximately 35 people were in attendance. Here is the actual "speech" which he presented to the group.

Thanks to all of you who have come to my home this evening. For various reasons which we need to examine, the membership of the Temple has decreased by around 40% over the last couple of years. This has caused a deep cut in the Temple's revenue, which in turn has necessitated the temporary elimination of payroll for our Rabbi and Cantor. We are here together to have a brainstorming session on where we go from here. Obviously what has worked for our Temple in the past is not working now. This forces us to re-examine everything that our Temple provides to us and to look for new, different, and more successful ways of doing things. Hopefully, the outcome of this meeting will be to create some new thinking and ideas together with a plan for further research, examination, discussion and negotiation. This "Process" can be done quickly and we can have a lot of fun doing it, but it won't be easy. The only way that this "process" can be successful is if we get energized and if we and most of the rest of the membership become involved. We need to be very open to new ideas; be willing to make some compromises; be willing to discuss things very openly without criticism; be positive; and try to have some fun with this new adventure.

Our overall minimum goal from this process should be to retain a formal Jewish presence in the Ojai

Valley.\_

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THE "PROCESS".. OUR GOAL IS TO BRING THIS PROCESS UP TO FULL SPEED  
WITHIN 90 TO 120 DAYS

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By the end of this meeting, I am hopeful that we will have organized three committees with 6 to 10 active members each and whose members will agree to meet weekly for the next 6 weeks.

The goal is to develop creative options for solving the problems in their area and to present their

conclusions to the other committees and membership for consideration. During the following 30

days we would all work together to develop an overall plan that would be acceptable to existing members and a maximum of potential members .....Within another 6 weeks we should be able to activate the overall plan and be well on our way to solving the Temple's current problems and adding sorely needed energy and enthusiasm.

The three committees I have in mind are: Membership; Financial and Programs. Here are a few quick thoughts which might help these committees get started. Hopefully these committees will be very creative and will develop some great new ideas. I suggest that, for continuity and coordination between these committees, a Board member and an officer be a member of each of these 3 committees.

Membership: Carefully examine and interview people, one by one, to find out the real reasons for our

membership declining from about 100 families two years ago to about 60 families now. We

even from Ventura, with an emphasis on young families. They

could also interview many people to find out "what it will take" in the way of programs to get them

to join. The three basic areas could/would be: Religious, Cultural, and Social.

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of  
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membership  
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and  
another  
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potential  
members

They  
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Program Committee: Should work closely with Membership Committee in researching new types of programs and/or how to maybe take our "old" programs and with the input received, develop new ways to present those programs that more people are attracted to the Temple and will have a desire to participate.

This committee might also research potential cooperation and partnerships with other Temples or Jewish groups such as Hillel and Temple Beth Shalom. They could also obtain additional input from resources such as my son Bill Kaplan, some Rabbis, Cantors, and other Jewish and non-Jewish professionals.

Finance Committee: Research ways to raise more funds, through creative thinking.

This committee could also research ways to develop additional funds so that we could finance a Rabbi/Cantor for the next year or so while we rebuild the membership. Some ideas are to see if it's possible to refinance the building; raise

dues through different payment opportunities such as 20% down and automatic monthly charges to members' credit cards over 10 months or automatic withdrawals from bank accounts. Maybe some members would be willing to personally guarantee a note to a bank for a year or so, by which time if the membership is really activated, we should be able to raise the funds to pay off that

note. Their notes could also be secured by a 2<sup>nd</sup> Deed of Trust on the property.

Finally, I suggest that these committees meet on different days of the week so that

Board members and others could attend more than one meeting a week. We need as

much participation as possible in all of these areas.

**Alan's personal comments about this meeting and subsequent important events (written in March of 2023). .....**

I had "joined" the Temple about a year before this after being pursued by Sid and Sheila. This was the first time that I actually attended any event, and this only happened because a friend who was a member at that time, Gayle Kennedy, insisted that I should attend this meeting. I recall that I only knew 2 or 3 people out of the 35 or so who were there. Jerry put pressure on everyone to sign up to be on a committee. I put my name on the Finance committee. Fred Rothenberg also signed up and became the chairman. Since that time, he has **tirelessly and consistently** chaired this committee for more than 15 years. That is more than 180 monthly Finance committee meetings!!

The other 2 committees failed very soon after their formation due to lack of effort and discipline. I ended up serving on the Finance committee from its inception in 2008 until 2018 when I was elected President.