

III. MEMBERSHIP

III.A. Membership: Guidelines

III.A.1. JRC Community Covenant

Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation is more than the total of individuals who belong to an institution. At JRC we deeply value our relationships with one another and with our community. As Jewish tradition teaches, with any sacred relationship there is a sense of *brit* or covenant--a shared understanding of our mutual commitment to one another.

Thus, our JRC Community Covenant is a document that will help us explore the specific nature of our congregation's responsibilities to its members, and in turn, our own responsibilities to the community that is JRC. Characteristically, we consider this to be a work in progress, realizing that we will continue to study, modify and interpret our Covenant in ways we deem appropriate to meet the ever-changing needs of our community.

Our Community Covenant is not intended as a set of enforceable requirements or standards with which to judge our individual members. Rather, it is a general expression of our own communal and personal expectations. We recognize and cherish the diversity of our membership and understand that each member will interpret and express the terms of our Covenant in different ways and at different times. It is our hope that this *brit* will help us to understand the true meaning of community and especially to understand what JRC truly means to us.

III.A.1.a.

III.A.1.a.i. Members can expect JRC to help the members understand and feel an attachment to the Jewish People as a whole, around the world and across time.

III.A.1.a.ii. *JRC expects its members to acknowledge their attachment to the Jewish People with pride and personal commitment.*

III.A.1.b.

III.A.1.b.i. Members can expect JRC to teach and practice the values and virtues of Reconstructionist Judaism.

III.A.1.b.ii. *JRC expects its members to learn, uphold, and model those values and virtues.*

III.A.1.c.

III.A.1.c.i. Members can expect JRC to provide spiritual guidance through our clergy and lay leadership.

III.A.1.c.ii. *JRC expects its members to make Jewish spirituality a personal priority.*

III.A.1.d.

III.A.1.d.i. Members can expect JRC to provide a warm, welcoming, and inclusive community.

III.A.1.d.ii. *JRC expects its members to respect our diversity and welcome newcomers to our community with a spirit of acceptance.*

III.A.1.e.

III.A.1.e.i. Members can expect JRC to provide a diverse array of congregational activities.

III.A.1.e.ii. *JRC expects its members to participate and become involved in congregational activities as much as possible.*

III.A.1.f.

III.A.1.f.i. Members can expect JRC to provide quality Jewish educational opportunities to children and adults alike.

III.A.1.f.ii. *JRC expects its members to take Jewish learning seriously.*

III.A.1.g.

III.A.1.g.i. Members can expect JRC to provide serious and challenging B'nai Mitzvah training.

III.A.1.g.ii. *JRC expects its members to take their children's education seriously and to participate in it.*

III.A.1.h.

III.A.1.h.i. Members can expect JRC to provide spiritually moving and meaningful religious services.

III.A.1.h.ii. *JRC expects its members to enhance our worship by offering their presence, participation, skills, and willingness to learn.*

III.A.1.i.

III.A.1.i.i. Members can expect JRC to provide them with a Jewish communal outlet for Tikkun Olam/Social Action involvement.

III.A.1.i.ii. *JRC expects its members to lend their experience, knowledge, and energy to help us in our efforts to transform and heal the world.*

III.A.1.j.

III.A.1.j.i. Members can expect JRC to maintain the highest level of financial responsibility.

III.A.1.j.ii. *JRC expects its members to meet their financial obligations fully and generously.*

III.A.1.k.

III.A.1.k.i. Members can expect JRC to welcome and respect their input and concerns about JRC.

III.A.1.k.ii. *JRC expects its members to be forthcoming with their concerns and advice.*

III.A.1.l.

III.A.1.l.i. Members can expect JRC to provide opportunities for congregational leadership.

III.A.1.l.ii. *JRC expects its members to be generous with their time and energy to help our community become the best it can be.*

(5/10/2000; "rabbi and cantor" replaced with "clergy" in III.A.1.c.i. 11/7/2018)

III.A.2. (blank)

III.A.3. Accessibility

In keeping with the principles of Torah and in light of our understanding of Reconstructionist values, JRC will make every reasonable effort to make services, meetings, programs, activities and ritual observances accessible. *(2/14/1996)*

III.A.4. Gender Inclusion

III.A.4.a. *(Approved 1/11/1988; rescinded and replaced 3/9/2016)*

III.A.4.b. *(Approved 3/9/2016; duplicated, thus rescinded on 2/8/2017)*

III.A.4.c. JRC publicly affirms its commitment to the full equality and inclusion of people of all gender identities and gender expressions and advocates that the Reconstructionist movement affirm its own commitment to the full equality and inclusion of people of all gender identities and gender expressions. *(3/9/2016)*

III.A.4.d. JRC affirms its commitment to the full equality and inclusion of people of all gender identities and gender expressions and hereby commits to adopting procedures consistent with the guidelines proposed by the JRC Gender Inclusion Task Force. The Gender Inclusion Procedures are here:

<http://www.jrctogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Gender-Inclusion-Policies.pdf> *(2/8/2017)*

III.A.5. Membership Growth *(Approved 1/11/1989; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

III.B. Membership: Participation

III.B.1. Adult Education

III.B.1.a. *(Approved 11/9/1977; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

III.B.1.b. *(Approved 11/9/1977; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

III.B.1.c. *(Approved 3/8/2000; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

III.B.2. Kallot

III.B.2.a. Family Kallah is for members only. *(Approved 3/14/1973; "Family" added as clarification 11/7/2018)*

III.B.2.b. The congregation shall not subsidize the cost of Family Kallah. *(Approved 3/6/1977; "Family" added as clarification 11/7/2018)*

III.B.3. JRC Plan for Youth Programming

Mission: JRC makes a congregational commitment to youth programming with the long term goal of providing an environment that encourages our young adults to live in a Jewish way – and take their Judaism with them wherever they go. The full plan is here:

<http://www.jrctogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Updated-JRC-Plan-for-Youth.pdf> *(2/8/2011)*

III.B.4. Membership for Early Childhood Center Families

All families enrolled in JRC's Early Childhood Center for school-year programs will be given automatic JRC membership and considered full JRC members during the fiscal years their children are enrolled in the ECC. Enrollment will be indicated by completing an ECC application, paying the tuition deposit, and completing a contract and tuition-payment plan. ECC families will receive a letter that explains their automatic membership, lists the dues levels charged to non-ECC members, and asks them to make a financial commitment beyond their tuition in an amount that feels comfortable to them. A basic

commitment level will be recommended. They will also receive all forms sent to new and renewing JRC members.

Automatic membership will expire when a family graduates or withdraws from the ECC or does not have a child enrolled in a school-year program. Families with younger siblings in the ECC and older siblings enrolled in the Religious School will continue to enjoy automatic JRC membership until they have no children enrolled in the ECC. They will pay the applicable tuition rates for both the ECC and Religious School. The current 10% member discount on ECC tuition will be eliminated. Maintenance Fund contributions will be delayed for ECC families until the year after a family leaves the ECC if later than the second year of membership. (4/15/2015)

III.B.5. High Holidays

People without High Holiday tickets will be allowed to attend High Holiday services should they come to the door. (7/19/1995)

III.B.6. High Holiday Tickets for Young Adults

III.B.6.a. (Approved 10/10/1989; rescinded and replaced 8/2016)

III.B.6.b. JRC will offer \$18 High Holiday tickets to young adults, ages 22 to 35, not covered under their family's membership (which ends at age 25), and young adults who are not affiliated with JRC, in order to enhance JRC's visibility, encourage young adults to experience the warm and welcoming community that is JRC, introduce them to our clergy, and to support young adults as they begin their professional lives and continue their search for a spiritual community. (8/2016)

III.B.7. Honorary Memberships

III.B.7.a. (Approved 7/13/1977; rescinded 4/10/2019)

III.B.7.b. (Approved 9/12/1979; rescinded 4/10/2019)

III.B.8. Non-Jewish Participation

Non-Jewish members are allowed all rights in the congregation except leading service alone or becoming president of the congregation. (Approved 4/6/1977; "spouses" replaced with "members" 11/7/2018)

III.B.9. Non-Member Participation

III.B.9.a. (Approved 9/12/1979; rescinded and replaced 4/10/2019)

III.B.9.b. Non-members may participate in certain congregational activities, but may not lead services, give drashot alone, attend kallah, serve on committees or task forces, participate in Religious School unless on a trial basis, or participate in other activities designated as for members only. Non-members may not participate in Adult or Junior Choir unless at the discretion of the Cantor and/or Choir Director. (4/10/2019)