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OPINION SURVEY OF MEMBERSHIP  
OF THE  
ADATH ISRAEL CONGREGATION

Conducted by  
Long Range Planning Committee

during

Last Quarter of 1974 Calendar Year

Survey compiled by:

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The membership questionnaire was originated by the Adath Israel Long Range Planning Committee to gather facts concerning the membership of Adath for planning purposes.

The survey was broken down into the following sections:

1. Personal information about members and their families.
2. Adult Education
3. Children's Education
4. Physical Plant
5. Religious Services and Administration

Only 40%, 221 of 507 members, actually responded to the questionnaire. The survey was designed to be completed by personal interview but many of the required interviews were never completed. However, there is a great deal of useful information and we hope to make practical use of it.

1. Ages of Our Members

Over 75	4.0%
65 - 75	16.0%
55 - 65	26.0%
45 - 55	29.0%
35 - 45	17.0%
25 - 35	<u>8.0%</u>
	100.0%

2. Years Lived in Trenton Area

Over 20	75.5%
10 - 20 Yrs.	12%
5 - 10 Yrs.	6.5%
Up to 5 Yrs.	<u>6.0%</u>
	100.0%

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3. Years of Membership in the Adath

Over 20 Yrs.	54%
10 - 20 Yrs.	23%
5 - 10 Yrs.	11%
Up to 5 Yrs.	<u>12%</u>
	100%

4. Ages of Our Children

		<u>Total Population Estimate</u>
Pre-School (Under 5)	18	45
School Age	57	143
Hebrew Hi	42	105
College Age	35	88
Over 21	59	148
Married or No Longer a Local Resident	<u>77</u>	<u>193</u>
	288	722

5. Where Do Our Members Live?

Trenton	179	35%
Yardley	97	20%
Lawrence	32	6%
Ewing	144	29%
Others	<u>52</u>	<u>10%</u>
	504	100%

6. Where will Our Members be residing 5 Years from Today?

86% of our members plan to remain in their present location.

14% intend to relocate but only

3% intend to move away from the local area and

11% will relocate within our Trenton area

7. What attracted Our Members to join the Adath?

23% - Children's Education

21% - High Holiday Services

19% - Identification with Jewish Community

16% - Family Ties

8% - Respect for Parents

6% - Children and Youth Activities

1% - Cemetery Privileges

Other reasons mentioned were:

... Convenient Location (Hospital nearby)

... A warm welcome from the Rabbi

... Hebrew School was in Yardley

... Knew other members

... The Tea at the Palats

8. How Can We Improve our Service to Our Members?

- Move synagogue or school to Yardley

- Establish minimum dues for young, new members

## How Can We Improve our Service to Our Members? (Cont.)

With regard to synagogue services

- more English
- shorter services, especially Sabbath
- increase youth participation

With regard to general synagogue operation

- recognize children who attend THA
- increase social activity - more affairs
- increase warmth at Oneg Shabbat

## 9. Which elements of Our Synagogue are Most Important to the Membership?

- 33% - Religious Services
- 32% - Children's Education
- 18% - Youth Activities
- 9% - Lay Administration
- 6% - Men's Club and Sisterhood
- 2% - Physical Plant

A significant number of our members indicated a willingness to participate in religious services as Torah readers, Maftir readers, and leaders of daily services. These names are being referred to the Chairman of the Ritual Committee.

10. Adult Education

Only 46% of our members have participated in Adult Education activities of the Adath.

Of the 54% who do not participate the principal reasons are "No Time" or "No Interest".

The opinion of our Adult Education Program was as follows:

- 11% - One of the best ever seen
- 36% - Satisfactory
- 18% - Average
- 33% - Declined to evaluate
- 2% - No opinion

11. Children's Education

How do you rate the education given to the children in the Adath Israel Religious School?

- 14% - Excellent
- 36% - Very Good
- 34% - Good
- 15% - Fair
- 1% - Poor

12. How do you rate the following factors that enter into the operation of the Adath Religious School:

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
1. The Organization	73%	27%
2. The Principal	82%	18%
3. Teachers	74%	26%
4. Curriculum	81%	19%
5. Library	76%	24%
6. Physical Plant	81%	19%
7. Children's Attitude	52%	48%
8. The Rabbi	100%	0%

13. Which of the listed factors are most important to the success of the school?

Answer: The teachers and the curriculum

Which of the listed factors are least important?

Answer: The physical plant

4. Has the overall quality of the Adath School changed?

50% - For the better

34% - Remained the same

16% - Weakened

Suggestions offered to improve our school were many and varied in content. These will be referred to our Board of Education for use in future planning.

15. What is your feeling about Junior Congregation?

77% - Favored continuation

10% - Unnecessary

8% - Should be revitalized

5% - Join regular service

LAY ADMINISTRATION

1. How do you rate the Lay Administration at Adath Israel?

12% - Excellent  
 36% - Very good  
 36% - Good  
 14% - Fair  
 2% - Poor

2. A number of suggestions to improve the Lay Administration were received in the survey. Most often heard were suggestions to increase the participation of our younger members. All of your ideas will be passed along to the administrative group.

PHYSICAL PLANT

1. How do you rate our physical plant?

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Building	94%	6%
Parking Lot	81%	19%
Classrooms	84%	16%
Sanctuary	96%	4%
Auditorium	96%	4%
Kitchen	84%	16%

There were a number of suggestions made to improve the building such as:

- Brighten the classrooms
- Improve the interior appearance
- Improve the ladies room
- Provide improved security
- Improve the chairs in Lewis Auditorium

All of these suggestions are being referred to the Building Committee.



3. Are you satisfied with the present location of Adath Israel?

63% - Yes

37% - No

4. Is Adath in need of a new building?

22% - Yes

78% - No

5. If Adath Israel were to relocate, where would you propose the building be situated?

Note: Only 27% of those surveyed answered this question. Of those who responded, suggestions were as follows:

Yardley	32%
Ewing	20%
Lawrence	22%
To suburb	26%

6. How far would you be willing to travel to attend activities and services at Adath Israel?

15 - 20 Minutes	63%
20 - 30 minutes	22%
Anything	8%
10 minutes	7%

#### RELIGIOUS SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION

1. How do you rate the quality of the religious services at Adath Israel?

Excellent	25%
Good	68%
Fair	5%
Poor	2%

2. What are your feelings about the following:

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Unsatisfied</u>	<u>No Strong Opinion</u>
The Rabbi	79%	4%	17%
The Cantor	87%	4%	9%
The Officers	68%	7%	25%
The Board	60%	10%	30%

## 3. How often do you attend Friday Evening services?

Almost always	10%
Frequently	13%
Seldom	68%
Never	9%

## 4. How often do you attend Saturday morning services?

Regularly	4%
Often	8%
Rarely	64%
Never	24%

Many of our members offered meaningful suggestions to improve these services; these ideas will be conveyed to our Ritual Committee.

## 5. How do you rate these elements in our religious practice?

The Rabbi

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Poor</u>
Sermons	60%	40%	-
Pastoral Duties	66%	32%	2%
Leadership Qualities	69%	31%	-
Relationship to congregants	75%	21%	4%

The Cantor

Training of Bar and Bat Mitzvah	97%	3%	-
Ability as a Cantor	86%	13%	1%
Musicianship	86%	12%	2%

What do you consider the most important items to enhance our religious services as listed:

A. The Sermon

More political	24%
More Judaic	26%
Other	5%
Remain as is	45%

B. Length of Service

Too long	32%
Too short	0%
Remain as is	68%

C. Music

More Cantor	27%
More Choir	32%
More Congregation singing	30%
Less Cantor	2%
Less Choir	2%
Remain as is	7%

D. Prayer Books

Should be changed	23%
Remain as is	76%

E. English in the Services

More	30%
Less English	5%
Remain as is	65%

F. Young People leading Adult Services

More	77%
Less	19%
Remain as is	2%
Participate only	2%

G. Seating for High Holidays

Open Seating	18%
Family Seating	32%
Remain as is	50%

H. Separate Children's Services on the High Holidays

More emphasis	38%
Sit with Parents	61%
Remain as is	1%

I. Dialogue

More	56%
Less	36%
Remain as is	8%

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

1. Only 1/3 of the families having children eligible for Youth Activities reported that they do participate. A number of reasons were listed; for example, the children who go to Trenton Hebrew Academy are often not notified. This information, of course, will be supplied to our Youth Commission.