



SURVEY ON REFORM SYNAGOGUE INTERFAITH INCLUSION POLICIES AND PRACTICES

December 12, 2019

Methodology

- Survey link sent to lists of congregational rabbis and presidents compiled by CFRIJ by consulting the URJ Congregation Directory
- Responses received from 418 congregations, representing just under 50% of the URJ's 843 member congregations
- Size of responding congregations largely parallels size of URJ congregations as a whole, with some skewing to larger ones
- After inconsistent multiple responses eliminated, survey report analyzes responses from 385 congregations
- Complete survey report available at
<http://www.cfrij.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/URJ-Survey-Report.pdf>

Leadership Roles

Partners from different faith traditions		
	can serve as	do serve as
Board members	43%	21%
Officers*	24%	13%

* But not necessarily as President

Ritual Participation

Partners from different faith traditions can		
	Yes	No
Lead candle lighting*	68%	32%
Have/join in Aliyah*	70%	30%
Pass Torah	78%	22%

* But not necessarily by themselves or saying the words

Dual Education; Officiation

Have children in religious school receiving formal religious education in another religion	
Yes	20%
No*	80%

* As far as we know

Some or all clergy, at weddings of interfaith couples	
Officiate	88%
Co-officiate*	22%

* But maybe offer a blessing

Messaging, Programming and Training

Publish policies and practices re: interfaith families in terms of leadership and ritual participation on website	18%
Offer programs that address issues that relate particularly to interfaith families	40%
Have a committee that addresses engaging interfaith families	14%
Provide training on how to serve the specific needs of interfaith families	10% (for lay leaders)/ 13% for staff

Discussion

- What will lead to more engagement, permission or boundary maintenance/restriction?
- Half full or half empty? Is it good that 68% allow members of a different faith to lead candle lighting, or bad that 32% don't?
- Do we need to change our posture on children being raised "both"?
- Given 32 significantly inconsistent multiple responses from the same congregations, and only 18% publishing their policies, do we talk explicitly and effectively enough about our attitudes and policies on interfaith inclusion?
- Are we justifiably self-satisfied, or complacent? Are we doing enough, or do we need to do more?