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EFORM JUDAISM MAGAZINE'S SUMMER 2011 COVER STORY ENCOURAGED REFORM AND UNAFFILIATED JEWS THROUGHOUT THE U.S. AND CANADA TO JOIN THE MAGAZINE'S ONLINE THINK TANK CONVERSATION ABOUT WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO STRENGTHEN THE JEWISH FUTURE IN NORTH AMERICA.

In this issue, we offer readers a sampling of the hundreds of viewpoints and suggestions we received in response to four of the twelve questions we posed, with attributions—including age ranges—as appropriate, depending on the original information provided.

The submissions below have been edited for clarity and to fit the space. Responses to the other questions are slated to appear in future editions.

If you have not yet contributed to the Movement-wide conversation, please give us your perspectives on the remaining questions. See “Call to Action,” page 41—and if you missed the original articles on “Reforming Judaism,” visit reformjudaismmag.org/summer_2011. Your input is valued—and you may see your ideas in a future edition.

“If it is possible for the Orthodox to pray in the back of an airplane, why can’t we meet anywhere the community desires?”

#1 Rabbi Lawrence Englander says that “Jews are seeking out the Jewish community to fulfill current needs...rather than regarding synagogue membership as a lifetime commitment.” Do you agree? If yes, what needs to happen to make affiliation more compelling?

□ Gloria Becker, 40-59, Congregation Rodeph Shalom, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: I believe Jews are seeking out the community for both reasons. And it’s really OK when affiliation begins out of a need; we need to stop punishing ourselves for it. There is nothing more compelling than need. The more important question then follows: “What do congregations do with the people who begin with a need?”

□ John Crawley & Linda Radtke, 40-59, Sunny Isles Beach, Florida: The “supreme challenge” is how to make Reform Judaism more personal, rather than appealing to only one race, one income level, one education level. Many Jews become disillusioned and leave our faith because they do not feel welcomed.

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We must take a lesson from the Christians. They send out large numbers of buses to transport their people to services, events, and other gatherings; we do not. Christians often visit and call their people, offer food baskets, and cut the lawns of the elderly and disabled; we do not.

We need to contact each individual Jew and make him/her feel part of our communities of faith. Every Jew must know that he or she counts—that what he/she feels or thinks is important, heard, acted upon. Without the individual person, there can be no community.

□ Anonymous, 60+, URJ congregant, California: My husband and I have belonged to a congregation all of our lives but find the increased use of Hebrew alienating. We also find congregations generally unwelcoming when new people appear. When we have gone to church services with friends, people come over and greet us and try to make us feel welcome. Temples generally don’t do this.

□ Jon Kabbe, 60+, Temple Emanu-El, Oak Park, Michigan: The research evidence is clear: Americans are the most individualistic people on the planet. The more individualist we become, the more we tend to treat each other, and organizations, from a utilitarian perspective. The underlying premise is that by getting more of what I want, I will be happier—but the research is quite clear: The good life does not work that way.

Reform Judaism has lost its value in a competitive marketplace of ideas for a life of well-being. The val-

