

Yavneh: A Jewish Renewal Community
Third Annual Report to the Congregation
May 10, 2014/10 Iyar 5774
Rabbi Raachel Jurovics

As we near the end of our fourth year of engagement with the faith life of the Triangle's Jewish and multi-faith community, we again express gratitude for the generous welcome offered by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, which provides us with space for worship, learning, and social events.

We also appreciate the many generous donors and congregational members who have helped us meet our expenses during our fourth year, including all those who are currently contributing to our spring fundraiser.

Yavneh is committed to **remaining** a synagogue without walls for the long term – that is, **a synagogue without a building fund**. We do this not only to spare our members the expense of building and maintaining a new facility, but also out of respect for our planet, upon whom we should not “pour more concrete” when existing facilities can meet our needs.

In addition to our web presence and social media outreach, we depend on person-to-person invitations to help recruit new members, an important part of our growth toward financial sustainability. As well, we have continued development of an online learning center that we hope will evolve into a secure source of income for our congregation; at the moment, we are awaiting the outcome of our first grant application and are preparing our second.

Some of what follows will sound familiar, because we have established some healthy patterns in our early years of operation:

Membership/Participation

- Yavneh retains a solid member base for a new congregation;
- Our Selichot social-learning-worship event, which included a beautiful teaching by Rabbi Steve Sager, was well attended and appreciated;
- We averaged about 100 people at each High Holy day service last fall, worship wonderfully enhanced by the spectacular voice of Cantor Karen Kumin and by Kol Yavneh, our volunteer High Holy day singers;
- Our Shabbat and festival services are reliably attended, and our welcoming and warm praying community seems deeply appreciated by participants and visitors alike;