



## **JCoSD: Who Are We?**

*by co-founder Rabbi Josh Burrows*

JCoSD is a cooperative-inspired, progressive, highly democratic, post-denominational synagogue that utilizes community organizing principals and training in order to function as a collaborative. Sound complicated? It's not. Let's put it in simpler terms.

Your journey into JCo begins by first getting to know this community, and allowing this community to get to know you. We connect you to fellow congregants. Our founding clergy will get to know you. Based on your life story and interests, we help you build and enjoy your JCo experience. We help you create a meaningful Jewish life for you and your family, and in turn you can help your fellow JCo-ers create the Jewish lives of their dreams. This is what we mean when we say that we are cooperative inspired. This is what it means to be a collaborative.

### *What do we mean by "progressive"?*

JCoSD does not belong to a Jewish denomination. We are pluralistic in our approach to Jewish practice. Our rituals and services are inspired by various approaches to Judaism -- from Orthodox to Reform to Renewal to Humanist. Our clergy perform interfaith and same-sex weddings. And in general we encourage creative, individualized approaches to Jewish practice.

### *What do we mean by "highly democratic"?*

Any decision that effects JCo members directly must be decided by a direct congregation-wide vote. Our board meetings are open to the community and highly participatory. Ideally, all of our members will come to all of our board meetings. As a collaborative, it's important that JCo-ers know that this community is yours, and as such you have the power to decide who we are and what we do.

### *What do we mean by "post-denominational"?*

What makes JCoSD different from other congregations is the way we organize as a community, not our particular approach to Judaism. We want all Jewish people to feel welcome in our community. Even in our early stages, we already have JCo-ers who identify as Reform, Conservative, Renewal, Reconstructionist, Humanist and secular. Our members range the political spectrum as well. When we say that we are post-denominational, we mean that, to us, it doesn't matter what denomination to prefer, or how you grew up. We are all Jewish, and we can create a community that supports all of our varied approaches to this

### *What do we mean by "using community organizing principals and training in order to function as a collaborative"?*

Our goal as a collaborative is to inspire congregants to become collaborators with fellow JCo-ers in our projects and activities. For those JCo-ers who are inspired to become leaders in our midst, we create opportunities to be trained as community organizers. Together, the team of JCo organizers works to inspire and guide members toward achieving our goals of building a loving, close-knit synagogue community.