

USCJ-Hayom Strategic Planning Commission

A Summary Profile: the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Submitted by



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Draft, June 4, 2010

Purpose

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- ❖ This document is a summary profile describing The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) as it is currently constituted in the Spring 2010, as well as the context within which USCJ operates.
- ❖ The purpose of this summary profile is to provide a shared factual baseline for the members of the Strategic Planning Commission and the UAI consulting team.
- ❖ This profile, along with the supporting data used to develop it, will be used as a reference document throughout the planning process, and will be updated as needed.

Outline

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- ❖ USCJ Context: Conservative Judaism
 - ❑ Challenges
 - ❑ Institutions & Organizations
 - ❑ Synagogues
- ❖ USCJ
 - ❑ Programs and Services
 - ❑ Financials
 - ❑ Governance
 - ❑ Organization
- ❖ Conclusion

USCJ Context: Conservative Judaism

CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM FACES
QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE
CHALLENGES

Conservative Judaism faces a number of well-documented, widely discussed challenges

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- The number of younger adult Jews -- adults age 25-44 – is shrinking relative to those 55-74 in the American Jewish population.
- The number of in-married young couples is shrinking, with commensurate growth in non-married and intermarried.
- There is a reduction in the proportion of in-married young couples (the prime market for synagogue affiliation) where either or both adults identify as Conservative, with commensurate gains for Orthodoxy, Reform, and non-denominational identities.
- The identity of American and Canadian Jews has shifted from identities of belonging and affiliation to **identities of purpose** and meaning. In line with larger societal trends, they are less invested in group identities, institutions, boundaries, and explicit norms, and more interested in quality and relevance of their experiences.

Challenges to Conservative Judaism (cont'd)

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- Many Jews in their 20's and 30's appear to be allergic to, or at best not interested in, being labeled or categorized. Therefore, by definition many are not interested in a Jewish denominational label, such as the “Conservative movement.”
- The “best and the brightest” – the products of Ramah camps, Nativ and other programs in Israel, Schechter Schools, List College and USY – are migrating to post-denominational or modern Orthodox settings. They are creating a numerically small, but culturally significant, resurgence of Jewish life in five areas: communities of prayer, self-directed learning, culture, social justice, and new media.

Challenges to Conservative Judaism (cont'd)

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- The proportion of “Conservative-style” communities that choose to affiliate with the USCJ is declining. Such non-affiliating communities include: conventional organizations that have dis-affiliated for a variety of reasons; independent minyanim; “rabbi-led-emergent” communities; others.
- There are fewer self-defined Conservative Jews and fewer members of Conservative synagogues.
- They are older, on average, than Reform, Orthodox or Reconstructionist Jews.
- Conservative congregational leaders are concerned with challenges in four areas, all starting with the letter M: members, money, meaning, and movement. (And, perhaps we can add a fifth: minyanim.)

Institutions & Organizations

THERE ARE 22 SEPARATE
INSTITUTIONS & ORGANIZATIONS
IDENTIFIED WITH CONSERVATIVE
JUDAISM

The only formal vehicle for coordination – the Leadership Council of Conservative Judaism (LCCJ) has no budget, no permanent leadership or staff, and no power

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- The LCCJ meets twice year
- It has a rotating chair (and professional)
- The LCCJ maintains a website about Conservative/Masorti Judaism

The LCCJ has 16 members

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□ Synagogues

- ❖ United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
- ❖ Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs
- ❖ Women's League for Conservative Judaism

□ Jewish Education

- ❖ Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS)
- ❖ Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies (AJU)
- ❖ Solomon Schechter Day School Association
- ❖ National Ramah Commission & Ramah Camps

LCCJ (Cont'd)

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- Professional Organizations
 - ❖ Rabbinical Assembly
 - ❖ Cantors Assembly
 - ❖ Jewish Educators Assembly
 - ❖ Jewish Youth Directors Association
 - ❖ North American Association of Synagogue Executives [NAASE]

- International, Zionist & Israel
 - ❖ Masorti Olami
 - ❖ Mercaz USA
 - ❖ Masorti Foundation
 - ❖ Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies

Six other organizations are identified with Conservative Judaism that are not LCCJ members

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- ❖ The Joint Retirement Board for Conservative Judaism
- ❖ Mercaz Olami
- ❖ Mercaz Canada
- ❖ Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism
- ❖ Kibbutz Hannaton
- ❖ The Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano

Survey of Conservative Congregation Leadership



One quarter of Conservative congregational leaders report their congregations in serious financial difficulty

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	Number	Percent
In serious difficulty	147	24
In some difficulty	152	25
Tight, but we manage	214	35
Good	78	13
Excellent	28	5
Total	619	100

In contrast, 5 years ago, only 8% were in serious financial difficulty

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	Number	Percent
In serious difficulty	47	8
In some difficulty	126	21
Tight, but we manage	242	40
Good	153	25
Excellent	44	7
Total	612	100

60% strongly agree that their congregation wants to grow

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	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	4	<1
Disagree	10	1
Neutral/ Unsure	31	3
Agree	329	36
Strongly agree	552	60
Total	926	100

Only 24% strongly agree that their congregation celebrates their denominational heritage

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	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	18	2
Disagree	81	9
Neutral/ Unsure	223	24
Agree	383	42
Strongly agree	216	24
Total	921	100

Only 17% strongly agree their congregation is willing to change to meet new challenges

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	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	35	4
Disagree	91	10
Neutral/ Unsure	214	23
Agree	427	46
Strongly agree	155	17
Total	922	100

Only 13% report that their congregation has a lot of rotation in leadership roles

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	Frequency	Valid Percent
The same people tend to serve	142	20
Although there is some rotation, it tends to be among a limited number of people	480	67
We have a lot of rotation among persons in volunteer leadership roles	90	13
Total	712	100

42% report that there are mixed views within their leadership regarding satisfaction with USCJ

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	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	56	9
Somewhat satisfied	118	19
Mixed views within Leadership	254	42
Somewhat unsatisfied	97	16
Very unsatisfied	83	14
Total	608	100

Congregations are more likely to seek help from USCJ than any other source in every area except fund-raising

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	Other Congregations	USCJ professionals or lay leaders	Rabbinical Assembly	JTS faculty or administrators	Other
Worship	44%	58%	32%	13%	34%
Adult Education	42	55	16	20	41
Education of children	35	61	4	7	52
Finance & Administration	20	66	2	1	41
Fund-raising	15	51	2	1	56
Governance or leadership development	13	63	7	2	44
Lay-professional relations	13	58	23	5	36
Personnel	17	64	33	11	34
Congregational programming	33	60	8	4	38
Policy and planning	19	61	7	2	49

USCJ Synagogues

USCJ HAS 652 AFFILIATED
CONGREGATIONS WITH
204,000 MEMBERSHIP UNITS

The Seaboard/Southeast Region has the largest number of congregations (120) and the largest number of membership units (43,400)

District/Region	# Congs.		# Membership Units	
	#	%	#	%
Northeast	119	18%	30,400	15%
Metny	100	15%	27,000	13%
Mid-Atlantic	107	16%	34,400	17%
Seaboard/Southeast	120	18%	43,400	21%
Midwest (Working Title - District name TBD)	115	18%	41,300	20%
Pacific Northwest Region	33	5%	10,000	5%
Pacific Southwest Region	58	9%	17,800	9%
TOTALS	652	100%	204,200	100%

44% of congregations have fewer than 200 members; but they account for only 14% of membership units

Congregation Size (by membership units)	# Congs.		# Membership Units	
	#	%	#	%
Very Large (1,000+)	24	4%	30,700	15%
Large (800-999)	22	3%	19,700	10%
Medium Large (600-799)	40	6%	27,000	13%
Medium (400-599)	89	14%	43,400	21%
Small (200-399)	187	29%	54,200	27%
Very Small (under 200)	290	44%	29,200	14%
Totals	652	100%	204,200	100%

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Over the last nine years, USCJ has lost about 6% of its congregations and about 14% of its membership

The largest declines in membership units have been in the Northeast (30%)

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Districts/Regions	# Congregations			# Membership Units		
	2001	2010	% Change	2001	2010	% Change
Northeast	134	119	-11%	43,600	30,400	-30%
Metny	109	100	-8%	31,700	27,000	-15%
Mid-Atlantic	112	107	-4%	38,100	34,400	-10%
Seaboard/Southeast	113	120	+6%	48,000	43,400	-10%
Midwest (Working Title - District Name TBD)	134	115	-14%	49,400	41,300	-16%
Pacific Northwest Region	32	33	+3%	10,000	10,000	0%
Pacific Southwest Region	59	58	-2%	20,500	17,800	-13%
TOTALS	693	652	-6%	241,300	204,200	-15%

The largest congregations have declined the most, both in number of congregations (33%) & in membership units (38%)

Congregation Size (by membership units)	# Congregations			Membership Units		
	2001	2010	% Change	2001	2010	% Change
Very Large (1,000+)	36	24	-33%	49,400	30,700	-38%
Large (800-999)	23	22	-4%	20,700	19,700	-5%
Medium Large (600-799)	50	40	-20%	34,900	27,000	-23%
Medium (400-599)	115	89	-23%	55,800	43,400	-22%
Small (200-399)	187	187	0%	54,500	54,200	-1%
Very Small (under 200)	254	290	14%	26,000	29,200	12%
TOTAL	665	652	-2.5%	241,300	204,200	-15.5%

USCJ Programs and Services



The USCJ is responsible for more than 40 separate national programs and services

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- ❖ Synagogue Programs
- ❖ Age Specific Programs
- ❖ Education Programs
- ❖ Social Justice Programs
- ❖ Israel Programs

Synagogue Programs include:

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- ❖ Leadership Training
- ❖ Teacher Training
- ❖ Synagogue Resources
- ❖ Synagogue Administration

Age Specific Programs

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- ❖ Youth
- ❖ College Age
- ❖ Seniors

Age Specific Programs: Youth

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- ❖ Kadima
- ❖ United Synagogue Youth (USY)
 - ❖ International, Regional, and Chapter Organization
 - ❖ USY International Convention
 - ❖ USY on Wheels
 - ❖ HeChalutzim
 - ❖ USY Pilgrimage
 - ❖ Nativ

Age Specific Programs : College-Age & Seniors

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- ❖ College-Age (KOACH)
 - ❖ Campus Program
 - ❖ Trips & Conferences
- ❖ Seniors (HAZAK)
 - ❖ Local Chapters
 - ❖ HAZAK Camp
 - ❖ HAZAK Israel Trip

Education Programs

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- ❖ Placement
- ❖ Solomon Schechter Day School Association
- ❖ Education Consultation Services
- ❖ Early Childhood Education

Social Justice Programs

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- ❖ Operation Isaiah
- ❖ Disaster Relief Fund
- ❖ Public Policy Advocacy

Israel Programs

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- ❖ Fuchsberg Center in Jerusalem
- ❖ Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem

Financials



The FY2010 Budget is nearly \$20,000,000; projects a 1% shortfall

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■ Revenue	\$19,401,000
■ Expenses	<u>\$19,593,000</u>
■ Gap	(\$192,000)

USCJ revenue is heavily dues-dependent; program expenses exceed program revenue (see next slide)

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FY2010 Budget	Amount	Percent
Dues	\$9,248,000	48%
Program Revenue	7,691,000	40%
District/Regional Revenue (Net)	918,000	5%
Fund-raising	1,193,000	6%
Other Revenue	350,000	2%
Total	\$19,401,000	100%

USCJ central staff expenses are somewhat larger than district/regional staff; program expense exceeds program revenue by about \$2,000,000

FY2010 Budget	Amount	Percent
Central Staff Compensation	\$4,625,000	24%
District/regional Staff Compensation	3,740,000	19%
Program Expenses	9,766,000	50%
Administration	1,161,000	6%
Fuchsberg	300,000	2%
Total	\$19,593,000	100%

Governance



Governance

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- ❖ Board of Directors
- ❖ General Assembly
- ❖ Council of District Leadership
- ❖ Convention, Committees, & Commissions

Board of Directors

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- ❖ Meets not less than 4 times each year
- ❖ Composed of all elected international officers of USCJ (President, 6 VPs, Financial Sec'y, Secretary, Treasurer), Int'l Vice President of each district along with one other district rep, past Int'l Presidents of USCJ, Chair of the Council of District Leadership, president of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, Int'l President of USY, & chairs of the 16 largest committees of USCJ
- ❖ Six individuals appointed by the president and approved by the Board of Directors serve 1 year terms, do not vote, and are not counted toward the maximum number of Board members
- ❖ The Executive Vice President of USCJ, serves as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors without a vote, \
- ❖ Additional members as to bring the total number of board members to 75, -- "fair and proportional representation for all countries in which affiliated congregations are to be found."

Board of Directors

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Duties and Powers

- ❖ Create and organize Districts, and regulate their operations, including the approval of District Bylaws.
- ❖ Establish or discontinue additional committees, commissions and subordinate groups, and designate their powers and duties.
- ❖ Suspend, discipline or remove for cause any officer or member of the Board, or without cause any member of any subordinate group, commission or committee established, appointed or confirmed by the Board.
- ❖ Determine when a vacancy occurs in the Officers and Board of Directors and recommend to the General Assembly that it fill such vacancy.
- ❖ Fix and determine the date, time, place, duration and agenda of all conventions.

Board of Directors

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Duties and Powers Cont.

- ❖ Establish and adopt policies to facilitate the operation of the United Synagogue.
- ❖ Engage, regulate and terminate the services of executive and administrative personnel of the United Synagogue, which functions may be delegated, in whole or in part, by the Board of Directors to the Personnel Committee or the Executive Vice President, except as to the Executive VP, who shall be engaged, retained or terminated only by the Board of Directors.
- ❖ Appoint a Parliamentarian, who shall interpret the Bylaws and all rules and procedures at the Convention, meetings of the Board of Directors and of the General Assembly, and shall advise the President concerning such matters.
- ❖ Recommend dues and assessments to the General Assembly for approval.
- ❖ Approve the budget of the United Synagogue.

General Assembly

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Composition

- ❖ General Assembly meets once a year
- ❖ Composed of the members of the Board of Directors, 3 congregation presidents or immediate past presidents from each of the Districts (1 each from a small, medium and a large congregation in that district), and 3 additional representatives from each of the Districts, a representative from each of the associates of the Conservative Movement
- ❖ Representatives of other nonprofit organizations whose purpose and objectives are consonant with the purpose of the United Synagogue, a representative from any other constituent organization of the Conservative Movement, the chairs of any USCJ committees not included as members of the Board of Directors, and other members “so as to provide fair and proportionate representation to each country in which an affiliated congregation may be found.”

General Assembly

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Duties & Powers

- ❖ Provide guidance in matters of policy, program and leadership development to the Board of Directors.
- ❖ Admit or reject, discipline, suspend or expel Affiliates.
- ❖ Recommend to the Board that it establish and discontinue additional committees, commissions and subordinate groups, and that the Board designate their powers and duties.
- ❖ Elect the Officers and members of the Board of Directors, and fill any vacancies in those positions.

General Assembly

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Duties & Powers Cont.

- ❖ Establish and adopt policies not in conflict with those adopted by the Board of Directors.
- ❖ Approve dues rates and assessments for the United Synagogue upon recommendation of the Board of Directors.
- ❖ Approve the plan recommended by the Board for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the United Synagogue.
- ❖ Receive the Audit Report of the United Synagogue.
- ❖ Enact resolutions of interest to the United Synagogue.

The Council of District Leadership

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- ❑ The Council of District Leadership provides a forum for the districts to assist each other and their member synagogues in providing services, leadership training, and development for their congregations and the USCJ, and in otherwise fulfilling their missions to their constituents.
- ❑ At the conclusion of the term of the Chair of the Council in December, 2011, the Council's composition will be composed of -
 - ❖ The International Vice-President of each District
 - ❖ The immediate past International Vice-President of each District
 - ❖ Three other representatives elected by each District from among its governing body
 - ❖ The immediate Past Chair of the Council
- ❑ The Chair is elected for a single term of two years from among the membership of the Council at the Council's business meeting at such time and place as determined by the Council

Convention

❖ Convention

❖ The USCJ Convention is convened at least once every four years for the purpose of focusing on the accomplishments of, and the challenges to, the United Synagogue and its member congregations.

❖ Convention delegates may adopt resolutions, guidelines, and policy statements to assist the Board of Directors in governing the affairs of the United Synagogue and setting its agenda, and may take such other actions not inconsistent with the Bylaws, or not contrary to law, as they deem appropriate.

Committees, & Commissions

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❖ Committees & Commissions

There are 20 committees and 5 commissions, appointed by the President and listed below, that are currently identified as active by USCJ.

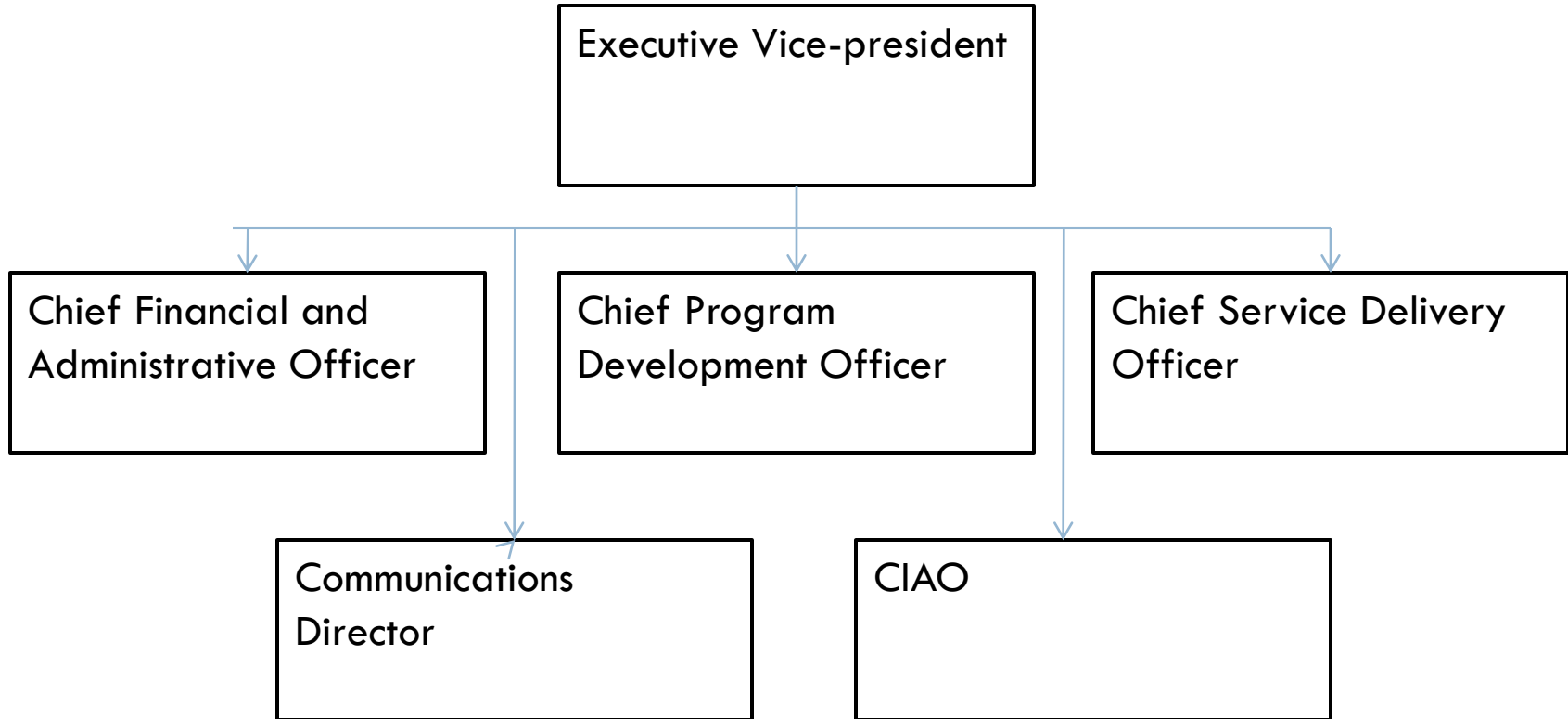
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| ❖ Alumni Committee* | ❖ Finance Committee | ❖ Strategic Planning Committee |
| ❖ Audit Committee | ❖ HAZAK Committee | ❖ Synagogue Services Committee |
| ❖ Budget Committee | ❖ K'sharim Committee | |
| ❖ Building Committee | ❖ KOACH/College Committee | ❖ Commission for Increasing Halacha |
| ❖ Communications and Marketing Committee | ❖ Legal Affairs Committee | ❖ Israel Commission |
| ❖ Congregational Standards Committee | ❖ Membership Committee | ❖ Commission on Jewish Education |
| ❖ Convention Committee | ❖ Personnel Committee | ❖ Joint Commission on Placement |
| ❖ Development Committee | ❖ Project Reconnect Committee | ❖ Youth Commission |
| ❖ Direct Mail Committee | ❖ Public Affairs & Public Policy/Social Action Committee | |

*Those Committees/Commissions whose chairs serve on the Board of Directors appear in blue.

Organization



Table of Organization



Conclusion

- USCJ faces substantial external and internal challenges
- But, this is the moment for USCJ to marshal all the intellectual, spiritual, and material resources of the hundreds of Kehillot, thousands of leaders, and hundreds of thousands of members to create a dynamic and powerful central organization to energize sacred communities.