

**Or Hadash Chosen for Pilot Program for Young Families
By Shelley Kapnek Rosenberg**

Coming out of its celebratory Silver Anniversary year, Or Hadash: A Reconstructionist Congregation in Ft. Washington has committed itself to engaging young families in the life of the congregation, making this a major focus of synagogue efforts for the next several years. For that reason, it has been selected as one of only five area congregations to join the two-year pilot program of The Harold and Renee Berger Synagogue Network for Young Families, an initiative of Jewish Outreach Partnership in cooperation with the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia.

Synagogues need to develop comprehensive strategies to not only attract young families, but to help them build commitment on the part of those families to congregational life. The Berger Network will assist its five pilot congregations in developing a systematic approach, with measurable goals and objectives for outreach and engagement. Through workshops and consultation with a facilitator, Or Hadash and the other congregations will develop a work plan and then will be able to apply for up to \$5,000 to provide financial incentives, in conjunction with its comprehensive plan.

Or Hadash Membership Chairperson Robyn Pollack is excited and enthusiastic about the opportunities the Network will provide. “This is something that we are already addressing; this area is a priority for us. We have congregants on the Membership, Inreach, Publicity, and Education Committees, as well as the board as a whole, committed to this endeavor. This program will enable us to implement our programs more effectively.”

Jewish Outreach Partnership Executive Director Rabbi Philip Warmflash commented, “Or Hadash was invited to become one of five pilot congregations of the Berger Synagogue Network based upon the quality of the information contained in its application and the membership engagement and leadership initiatives that the synagogue has undertaken over the past few years. Or Hadash appears ready to envision and accomplish the goals of the Berger Network and to work cooperatively with JOP and with the other synagogues in the Network.”