



# Shaping our Future at Temple Isaiah

## *Vision*

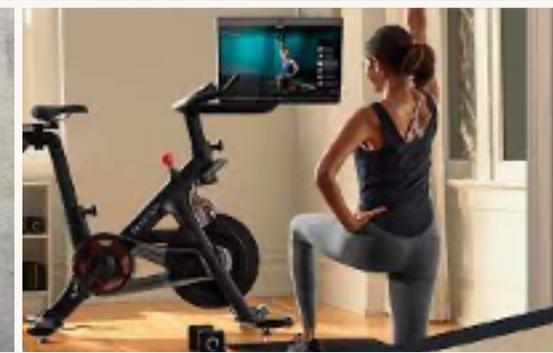
Phase 2 – Design – Survey Results

26 August 2021



# Isaiah exists in a constantly changing world that is...

- ... **diverse** (1 in 7 Jewish young adults without kids are LGBTQ+; Jewish of Color represent up to 15% of American Jewish Population)
- ... **remote and distanced** (in metro-Boston the percentage of Jews living in the suburbs shrank from 58% to 47% from '05 to '15)
- ... **intermarrying** (71% of non-orthodox Jews married after 2000)
- ... **thinking differently about religion and institutions** (32% of Millennials define themselves as Jews of no religion)
- ... **tech savvy**
- ... **justice-minded**
- ... **busy**



# Those trends may not be reflected in Isaiah's population today – but they will in future generations

How do we ensure Isaiah continues to thrive?

How do we make it even better?

With all the changes around us, how do we...



...become stronger?

...think big?

...be innovative?

...set and achieve goals?

...spend wisely?

...remain financially viable?

...find our next senior rabbi?

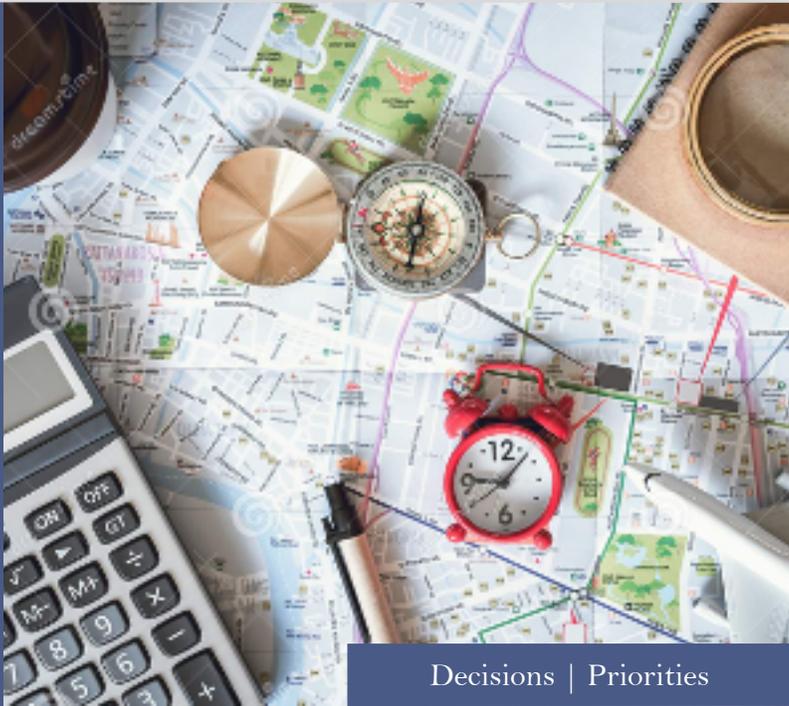
...align what we do to needs?

VISION

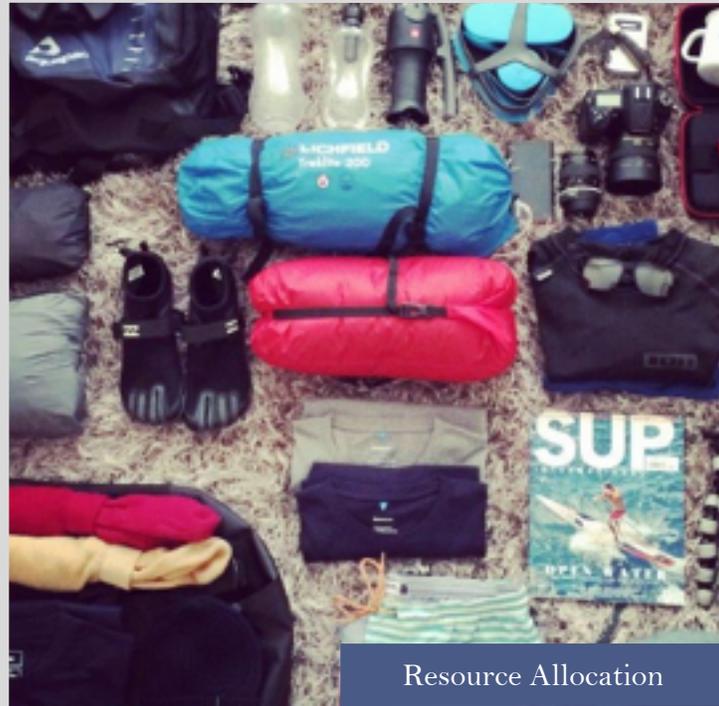


Destination

STRATEGIC PLAN



Decisions | Priorities



Resource Allocation



Agility

# Vision Contents

SH'MA Statement and V'AHAVTA
Why we exist
<i>Deepening Lives, Inspiring Purpose, Together</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Everything we do we do in order to deepen lives and inspire purpose together. This will always be true no matter what form Temple Isaiah takes.</li></ul>

VISION
Who we want to be
A clear, specific, compelling picture of what Temple Isaiah will look like in 2040

STRATEGY
Plan to fulfill the Vision and how it will be pursued
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Detailed quantitative and qualitative goals</li><li>Priorities, actions, and owners</li><li>Timing and resource allocations</li></ul>

## 1. VISION STATMENT

A high-level, clear, and pithy statement that is easily remembered and referred to

## 2. ASPIRATIONAL OUTCOMES

Clear understanding and high-level articulation of:

- WHO Temple Isaiah serves and their needs
- WHAT Temple Isaiah offers to the people they serve
- WHEN offerings are available to the people Temple Isaiah serves
- WHERE people go to access the offerings Temple Isaiah provides
- HOW Temple Isaiah organizes and behaves to deliver offerings to people they serve

## 3. ACTIONABLE CHOICES

- Few (3-5) metrics that define success and can be regularly measured and tracked
- Clear decisions about what is within or outside the bounds of the organization

# How We Are Creating Temple Isaiah's Vision



Identify Needs

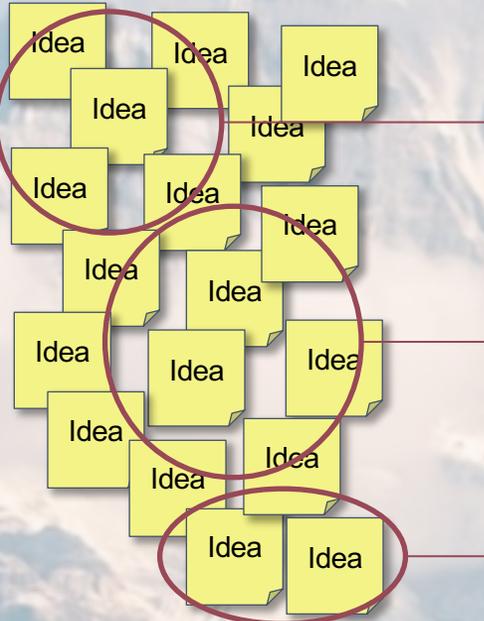
Brainstorm + Distill

Survey

Craft Final Vision



**How Might We**  
live a more spiritual  
life, finding meaning  
in our lives by  
connecting with  
something bigger  
than ourselves?



**Test Importance and Satisfaction of Select Needs**

**Test Attractiveness of Key Concepts and Delivery Models**

Temple Isaiah Vision

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# How We Are Creating Temple Isaiah's Vision

DISCOVERY

DESIGN

DRAFT

Identify Needs

Brainstorm + Distill

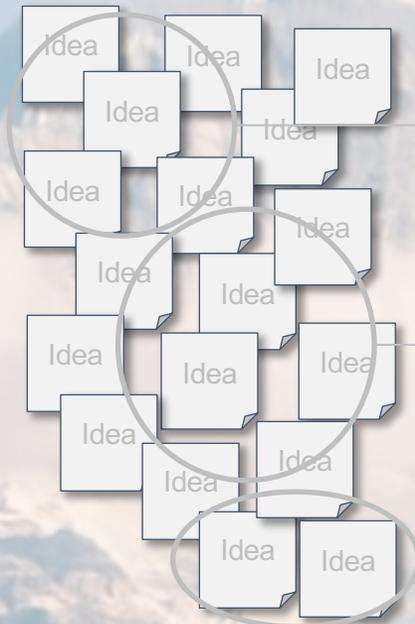
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Test Attractiveness of Key Concepts and Delivery Models

Temple Isaiah Vision

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# Discovery Phase - understanding the community, both present and future



## The Ultimate Guide to EPIC Conversations

for "How to get people to tell you anything"

What are EPIC Conversations?  
EPIC Conversations are defined by:

- **Empathy** - Connecting to the emotion another person is experiencing not how they experienced the same situation
- **Respect** - Proving what matters to the person to whom you're talking
- **Insight** - Exploring with an open mind and the willingness to be wrong and/or surprised
- **Curiosity** - Having a conversation, not an interrogation

**How to have an EPIC Conversation?**

- **Listen and learn** - During the conversation, the person you're talking to is the most interesting person in the world, so your goal is to understand them and why they think and act in certain ways. You are not there to convince them of something.
- **Remember that people decide with their hearts and justify with their heads** - The first things people will tell you will usually be logical, rational, and reasonable because, in their gut, they know that is how you gain trust and respect. But the truth is often much deeper. People are driven by emotions how they want to feel and perceptions show they want others to perceive them. Your job is to find the emotions and perceptions that drive them.
- **Forget that you speak English** - Ask people what they mean when they use adjectives or adverbs. Words like "good," "convenient," "easy," have different meanings to different people.

**EPIC Conversation Tips & Tricks**

- **Pick 3 things you MUST learn** so that you don't spend the whole conversation reading the interview guide and firing questions.
- **Always ask conversational questions** - Encourage people to tell stories.
- **Follow where they lead** - It's ok to go off topic a bit, sometimes that's where the most important insights are found. But always make sure that you come back to the topic and learn your 3 things.
- **GO SO** - Engage, Observe, Listen, and Respond.
- **Ask "Why?"** - Curious!
- **Let the skill people use** - Don't be afraid!

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DISCOVERY PHASE

### Discovery Research Discussion Guide

franklin institute

**1. Prepare the RESEARCHER for the Discovery Phase**  
 a. Prepare your own research agenda and focus (what you want to learn about)  
 b. Use **interviewer** for your research agenda and focus (what you want to learn about)  
 c. Use **interviewer** for your research agenda and focus (what you want to learn about)

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**DISCOVERY PHASE**  
 Discovery Research Discussion Guide
   
  
 franklin institute

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# Who we talked to

## 65 Individuals

*33 Interviews and 3 Focus Groups*

Teens

Adults without children (incl. 20's & 30's)

Families w/young children

Families w/school-age kids

Empty Nesters

Retirees

GenXers

## Representing our Diverse Community

Members: very active, somewhat active, inactive

Non-members

Geographic diversity

LGBTQ

Jews of Color

Jews by Choice

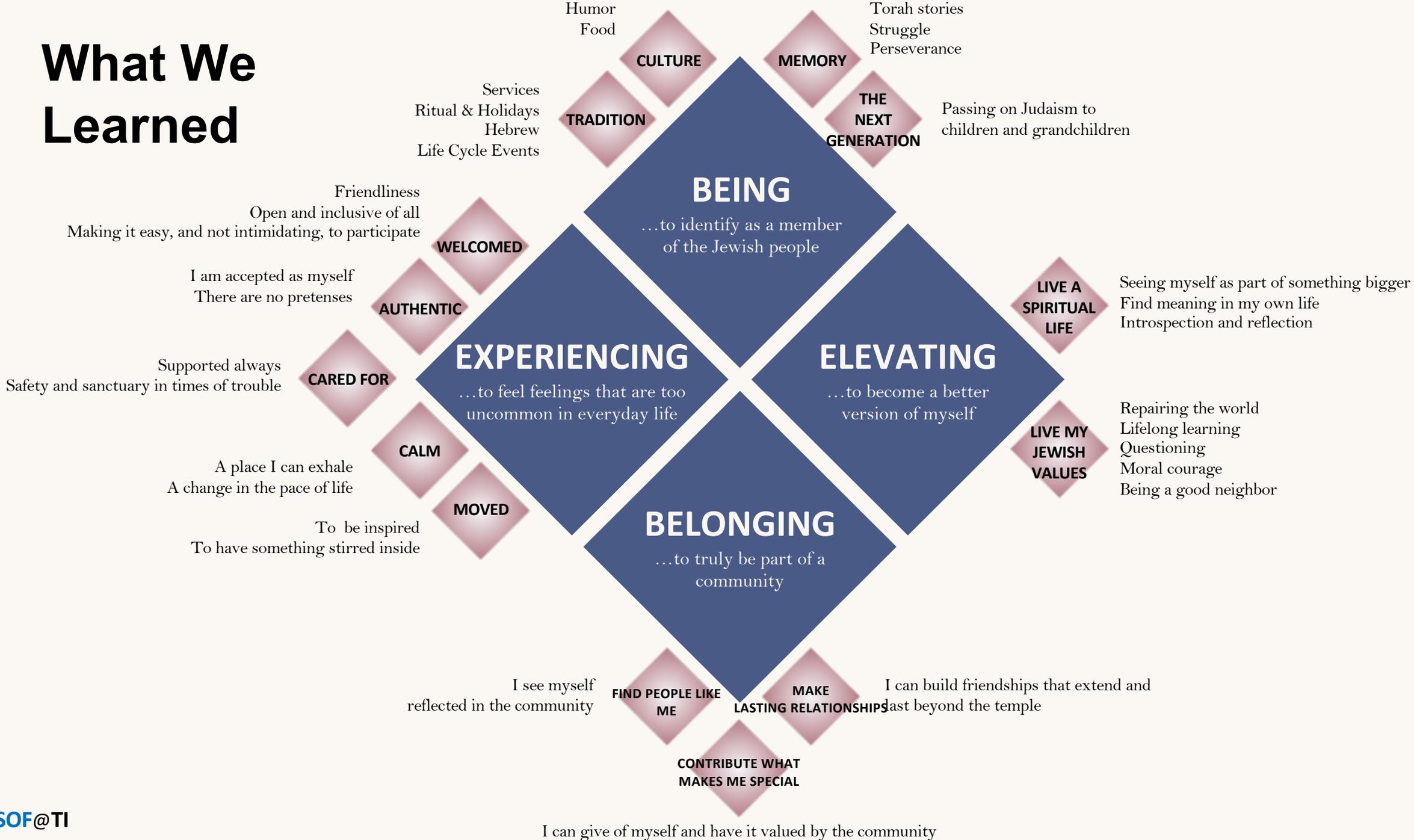
Interfaith

Disabilities

More observant (non-Reform)



# What We Learned



# How We Are Creating Temple Isaiah's Vision

DISCOVERY

DESIGN

DRAFT

Identify Needs

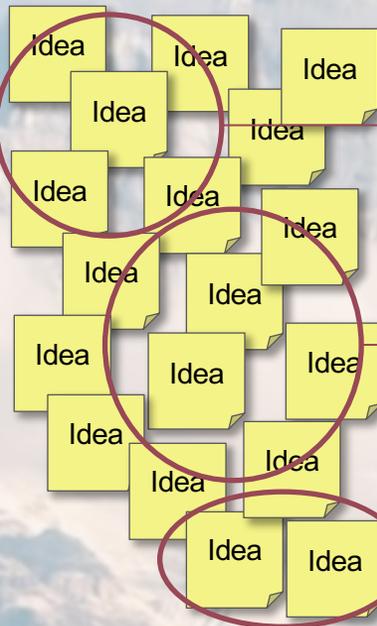
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How Might We live a more spiritual life, finding meaning in our lives by connecting with something bigger than ourselves?



Test Importance and Satisfaction of Select Needs

Test Attractiveness of Key Concepts and Delivery Models

Temple Isaiah Vision

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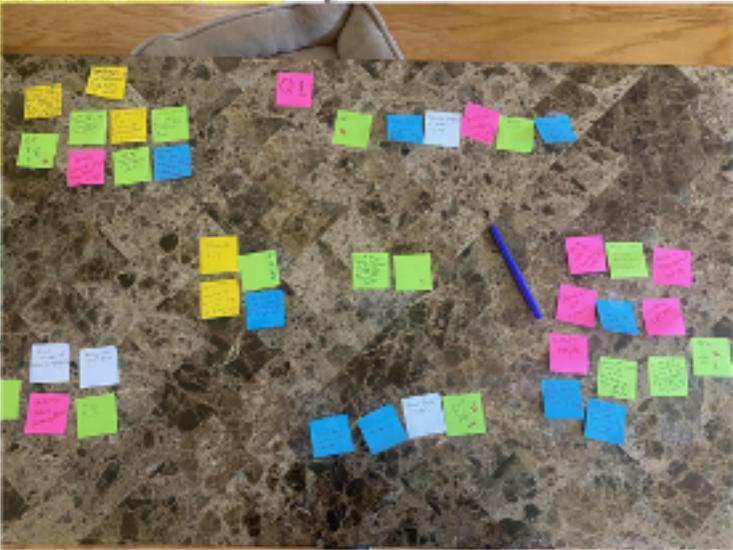
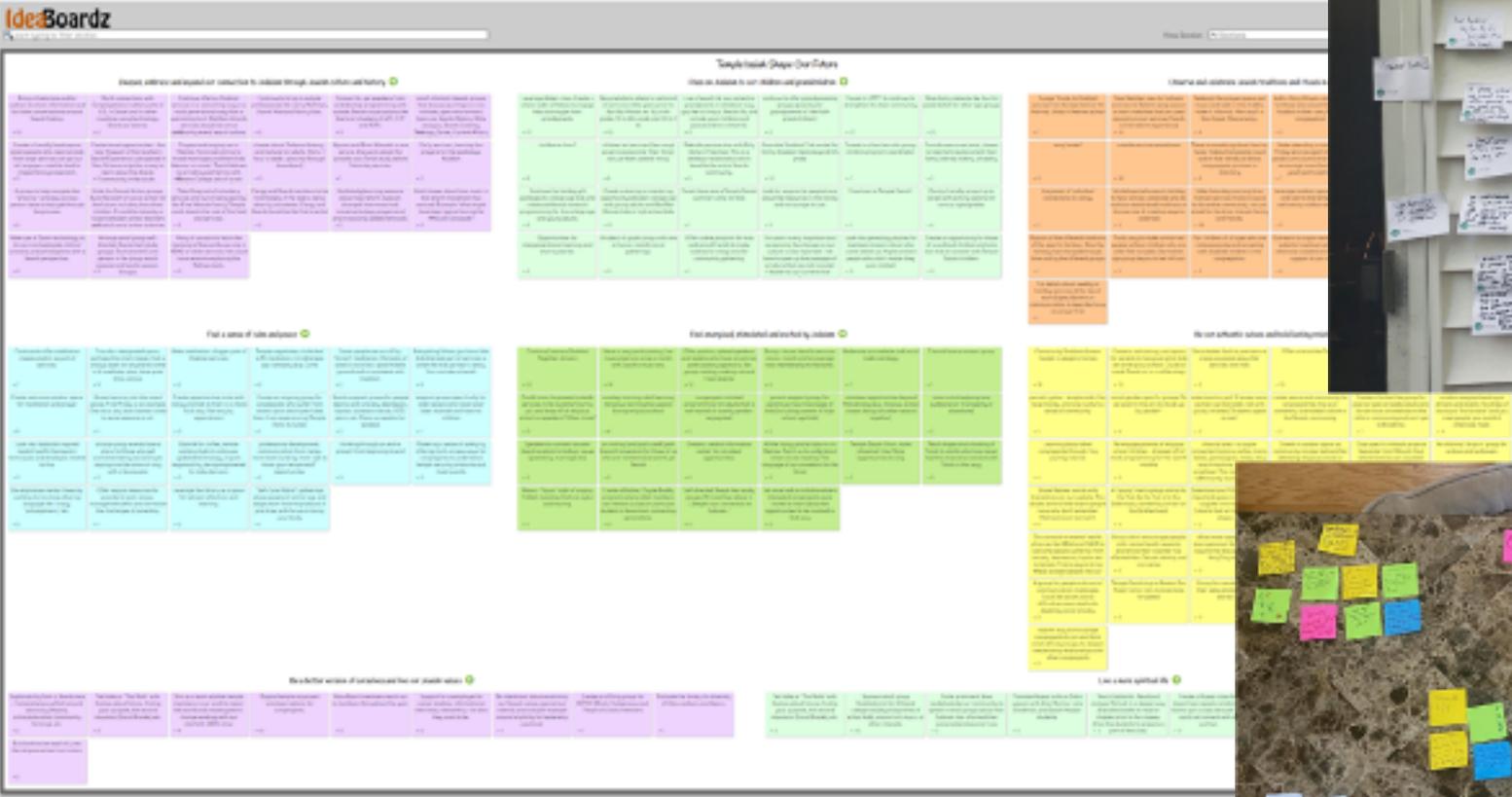
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# Brainstorming informed the needs and concepts we tested...and is informing choices already



# We then tested the needs, concepts and ideas in a congregational survey: 317 respondents (38% of HH's assuming 1 per)

## 1. Needs:

Which needs are most important and how well is Temple Isaiah delivering on them?

**Shaping Our Future Survey**

**Part 1: Needs**

\* 1. **How IMPORTANT is it to you that your Jewish community helps you do each of the following?**  
Rate each on a scale of 1 to 6, where 1 is "Extremely Unimportant" and 6 is "Extremely Important."  1

\* 2. **How SATISFIED are you with the current way Temple Isaiah (TI) helps you to achieve the following?**  
Rate each on a scale of 1 to 6, where 1 is "Extremely Unsatisfied" and 6 is "Extremely Satisfied."  1

	Extremely Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Identify as a member of the Jewish people	<input type="radio"/>					
Pass on Jewish identity from one generation to another	<input type="radio"/>					
Live a more spiritual and reflective life	<input type="radio"/>					
Engage in service and the practice of repairing the world	<input type="radio"/>					
Engage in lifelong learning and questioning	<input type="radio"/>					
Truly be part of a community	<input type="radio"/>					
Build lasting friendships and relationships	<input type="radio"/>					
Feel moved and	<input type="radio"/>					

## 2. Emerging concepts:

How well do key ideas resonate with the needs discovered?

**Shaping Our Future Survey**

**Part 2: Emerging Concepts**

We took what you told us in the brainstorming stage and crafted some concepts for what a temple could offer. Each idea includes (a) a need and (b) a concept for what Temple Isaiah could be.

Please read each concept and then, using a scale of 1 to 6 in which 1 = Extremely Poorly and 6 = Extremely Well, tell us **how well does this concept describe your IDEAL temple community?**

\* 4. **Concept A: Strengthening Identity Through Jewish Culture and Learning**

**Need:** The Jewish people are connected by our rich, evolving culture and by our ever-present thirst for learning, knowledge and questioning.

**Concept:** Temple Isaiah (TI) is known widely as the temple where practice, culture and learning become one. I am able to immerse in Jewish learning and culture through ancient and contemporary lenses of food, music, humor and art.  1

Extremely Poorly   Poorly   Somewhat Poorly   Somewhat Well   Well   Extremely Well

\* 5. **Concept B: Connecting Generations to Jewish Life and Each Other**

**Need:** The Jewish people are distinguished by our long history and perseverance. Our

## 3. Executional preferences:

How much help/guidance do people want in accessing offerings? Are more centralized or distributed models preferred?

**Shaping Our Future Survey**

**Part 3: Engagement**

Now that you have told us a bit about what you want Temple Isaiah to offer, we want to understand how you want to engage with those offerings.

Each of the following three questions describe two scenarios. Select the one you tell us why.

\* 13. **Shabbat:**  
The following are two alternative stories for what the "Future of Shabbat" could look like.

**Shabbat Story 1:** Congregants come from far and wide to gather, greet each other together in the sanctuary. The highly-spiritual services are led by a dynamic clergy with a broad appeal. Those who can't attend in person can watch online from home.

**Shabbat Story 2:** Shabbat takes place all over the Temple Isaiah community in many ways. In addition to regular services at the Temple, the TI community has created different Shabbat experiences to serve many different desires. For example, some utilize the "Shabbat Kits" provided by TI to have their own, private celebration at home, while others gather in parks and community centers for lay-led services.

**Which Shabbat story do you prefer?**  1

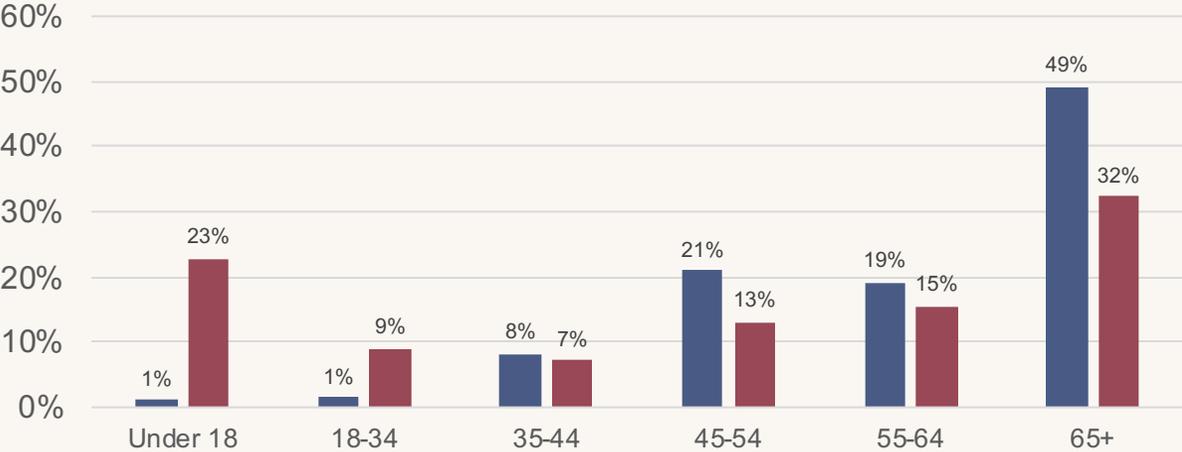
Shabbat Story 1

Shabbat Story 2

# Cross section of age cohorts included, but underrepresented <35 years old

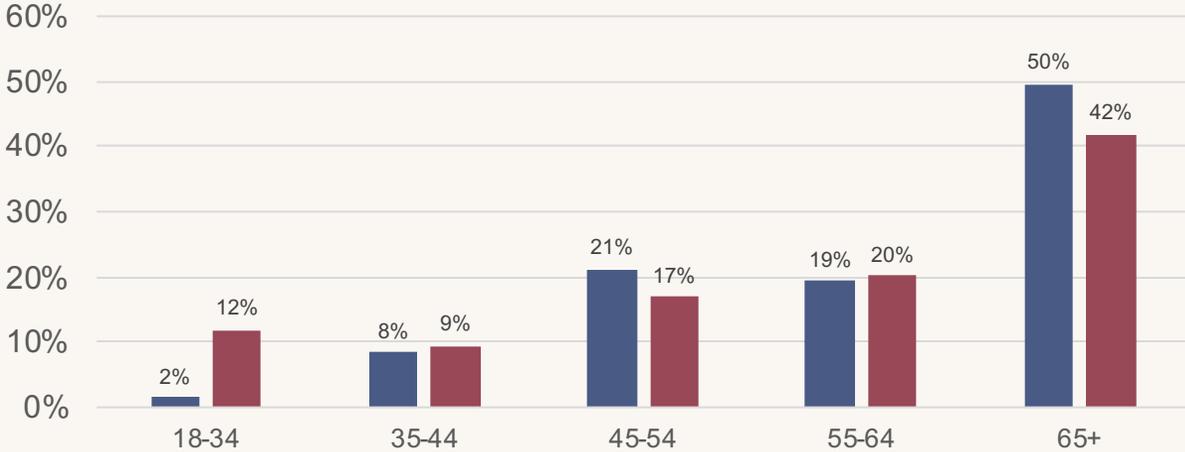
Respondents by Age

■ Survey Respondents ■ All Congregants



Respondents by Age (excluding children)

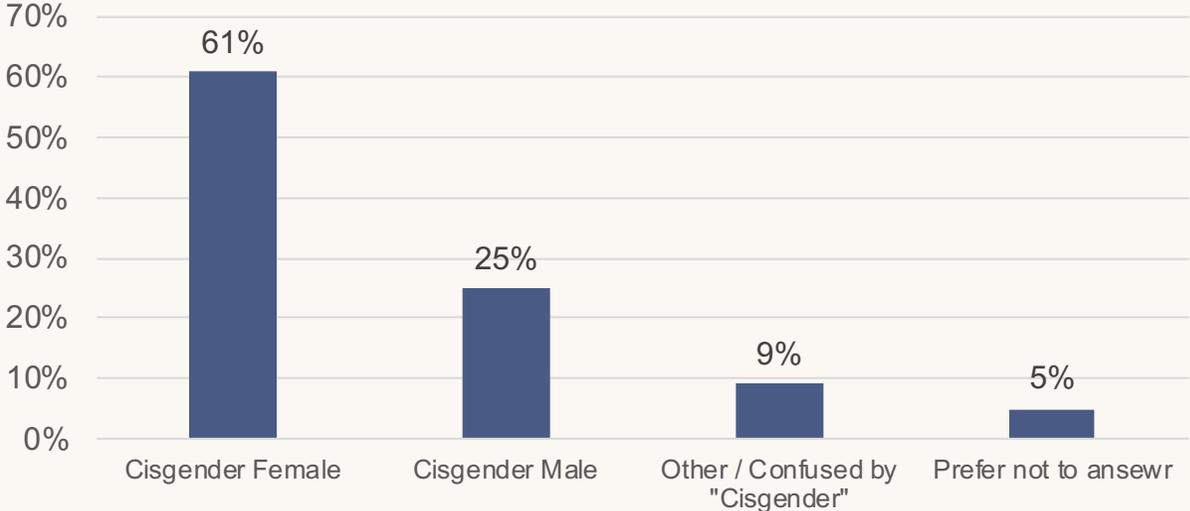
■ Survey Respondents ■ All Congregants



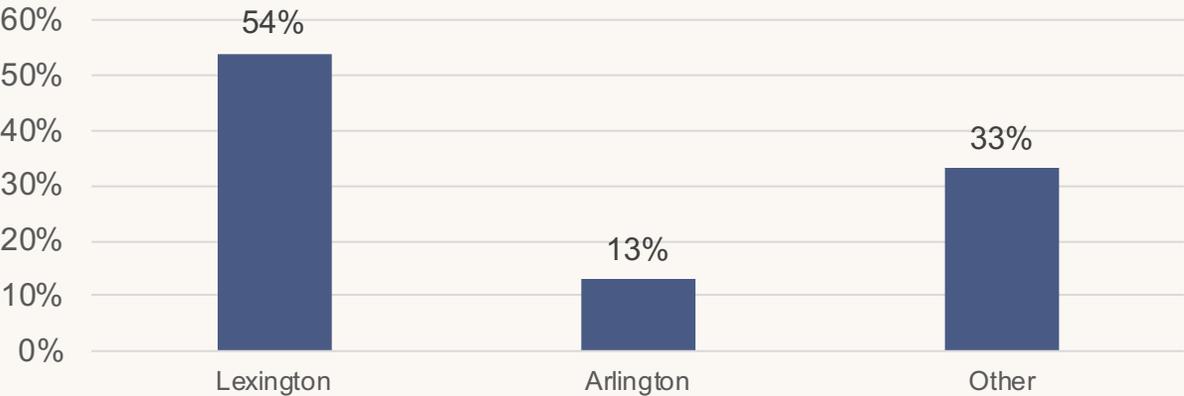
Data above does not include 50 respondents who did not specify age

# Respondents are diverse (but females overly represented)

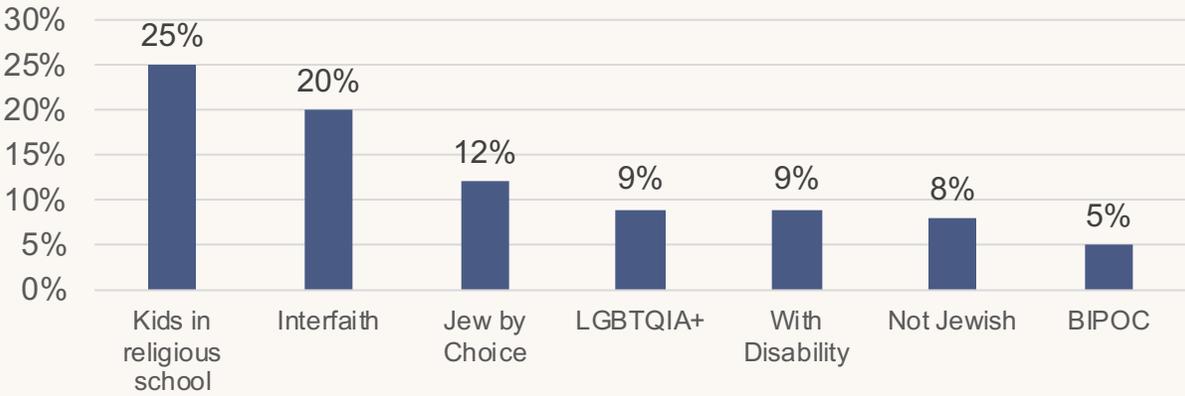
Respondents by Gender Identification



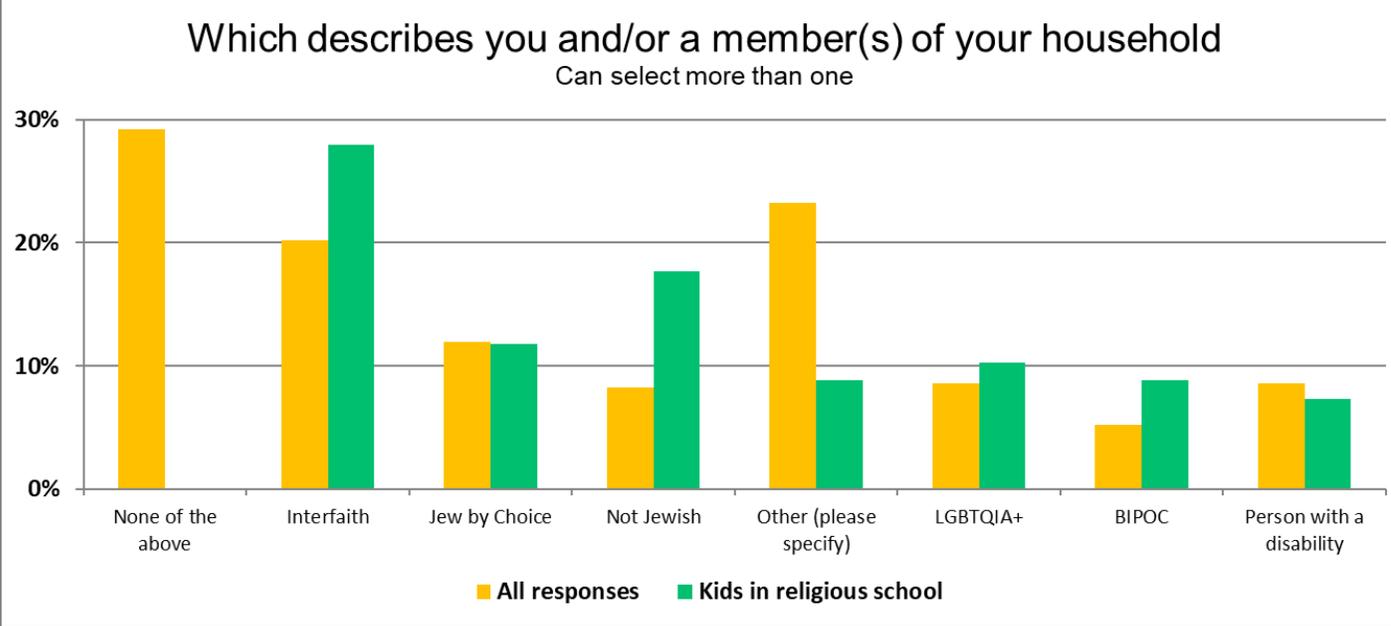
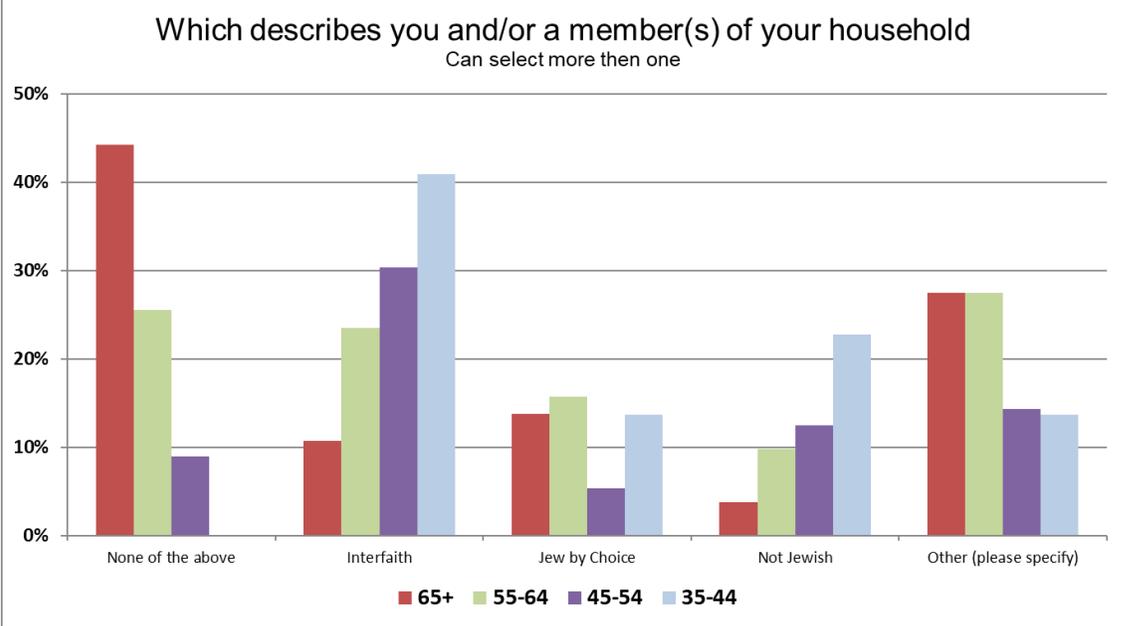
Respondents by Home Address



Respondents by Other Characteristics

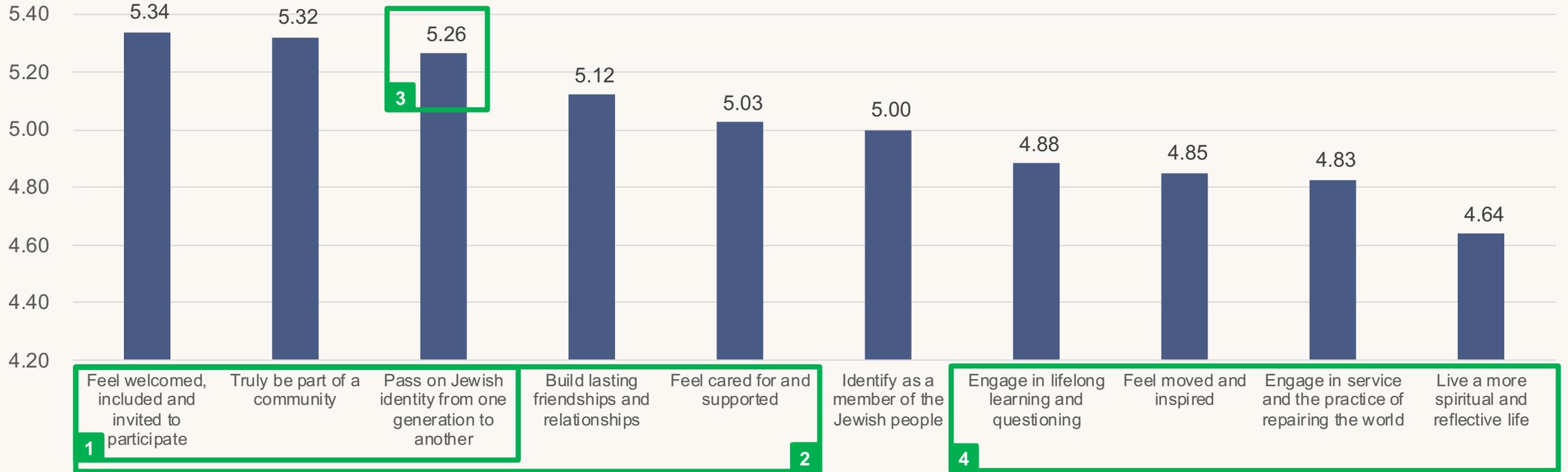


# Our younger members and school-age families are driving change in congregational makeup



# We have many important roles to play in people's lives

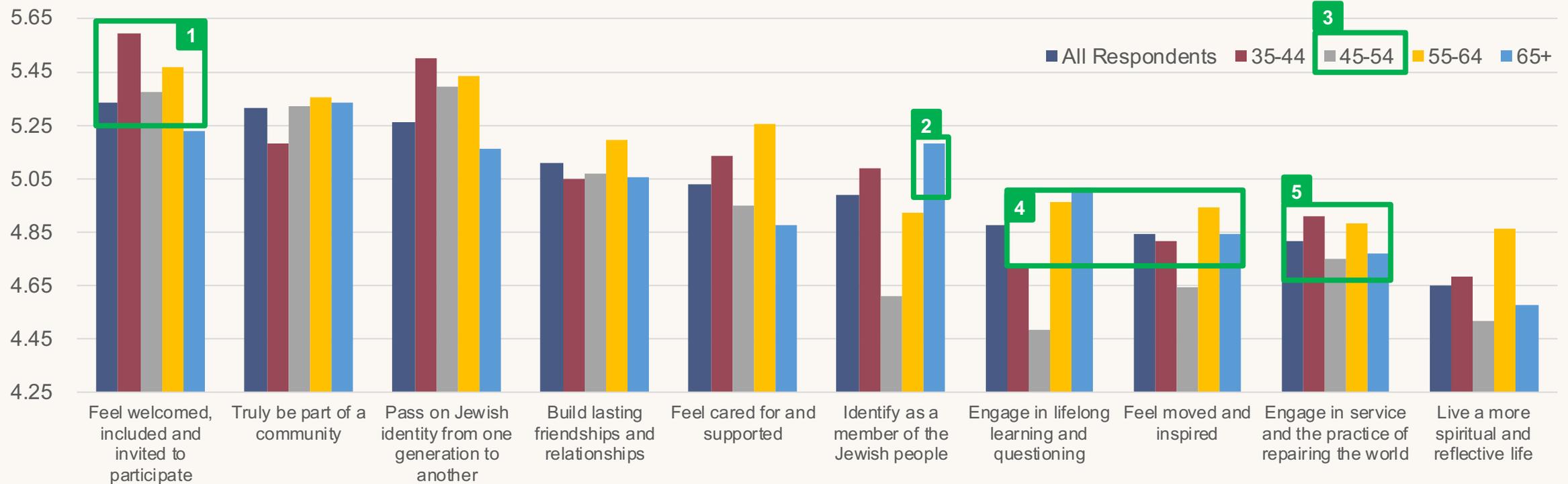
How important is it to you that your Jewish community helps you do each of the following (1 to 6)?



1. All age groups, with one exception (65+ = Identify), had the same top three needs (although in different order)
2. 4 of the top 5 are community-related needs
3. Outside of community-related needs, passing on Judaism is most important
4. Top 6 can be seen as the “base” and the last 4 as “aspirational”

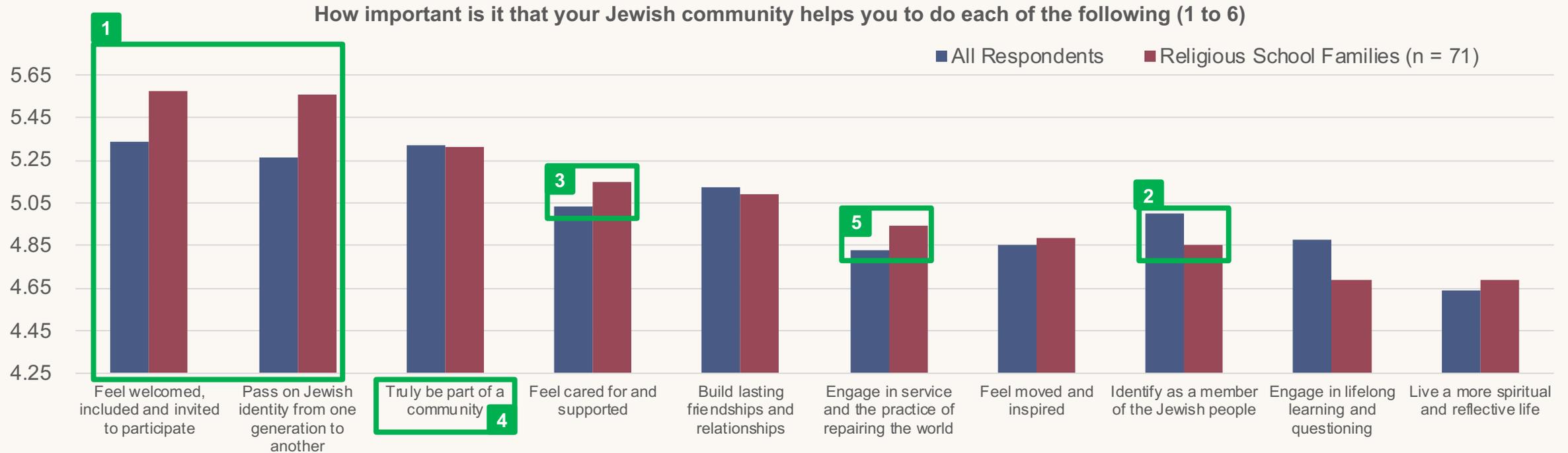
# A diverse community has diverse priorities: Age

How important is it that your Jewish community helps you to do each of the following (1 to 6)?



1. The youngest group needs to feel welcomed and confident in passing on Judaism; higher proportion of interfaith means they need more help.
2. 65+ express identity through synagogue membership
3. The 45-54 group is the most focused in what they are looking for from a Temple
4. Lifelong learning is far more important to the older groups than the younger ones; a similar pattern is true for feeling moved and inspired
5. In the “aspirational need” set, the most consistent ratings are for Engage in Service, which is most important to the young

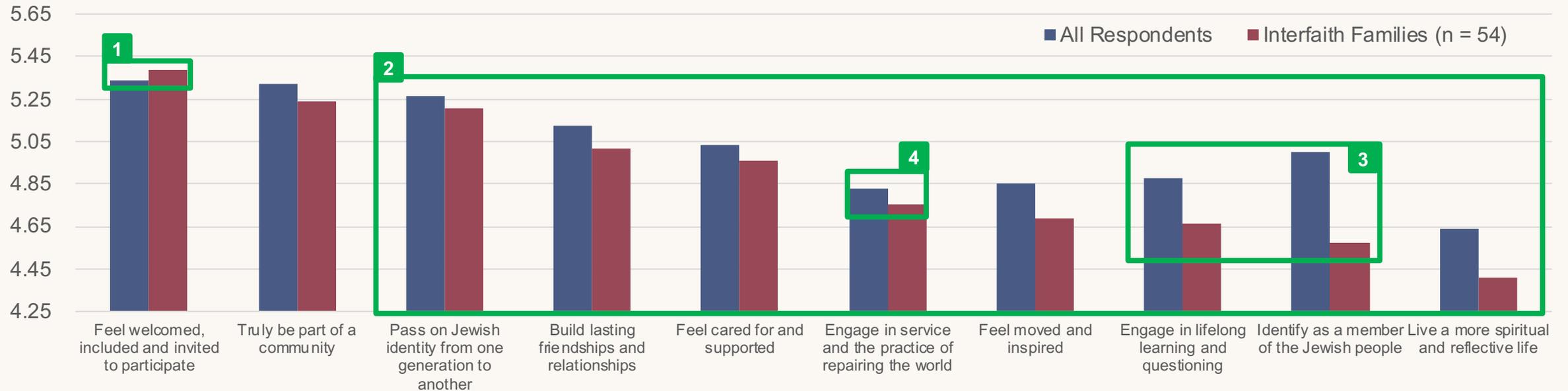
# A diverse community has diverse priorities: School Families



1. The very important “top 2” are the same as for 35-44 (not surprising)
2. Own Identity as a Jewish person drops: Identity as a Jew is driven by passing on to kids
3. It’s not easy being a parent: “Feel supported” increases
4. Being part of the community remains important: comments about community building for parents, not just kids
5. Religious school parent interviewees talked about moral community for their kids: increase in importance of repairing the world

# A diverse community has diverse priorities: Interfaith

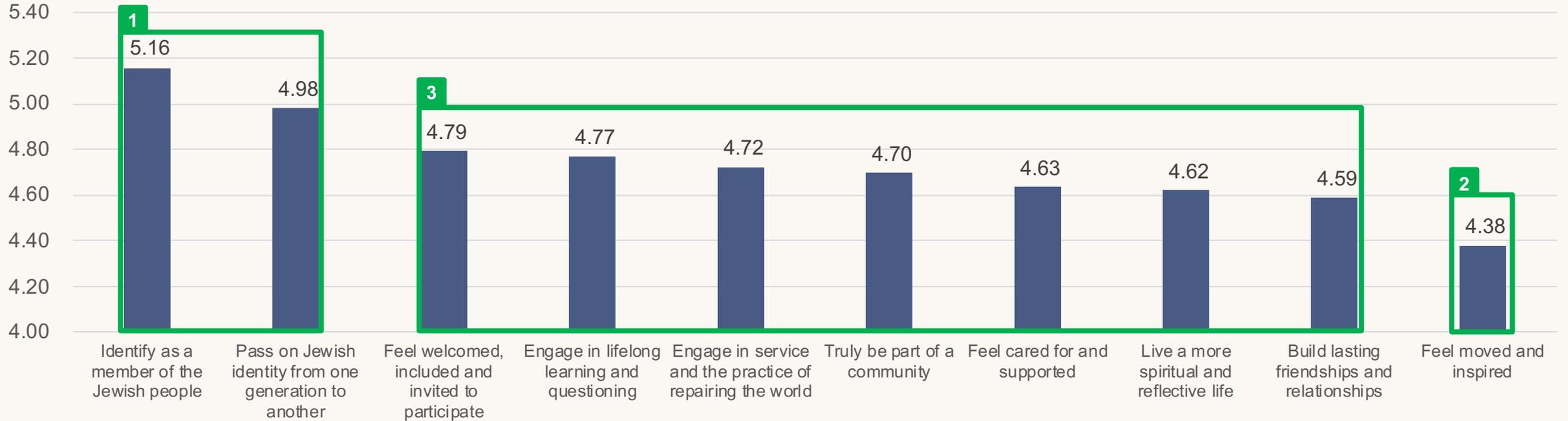
How important is it that your Jewish community helps you to do each of the following (1 to 6) (n=71)?



1. The ranking is similar to the whole population, but feeling welcomed is even more important
2. Overall, importance scores are lower across the board: feeling welcomed and included is their pillar
3. “Identify” and “Lifelong Learning” drop significantly
4. “Engage in Service” is a higher priority

# TI has a strong core, but lacks differentiation / identity

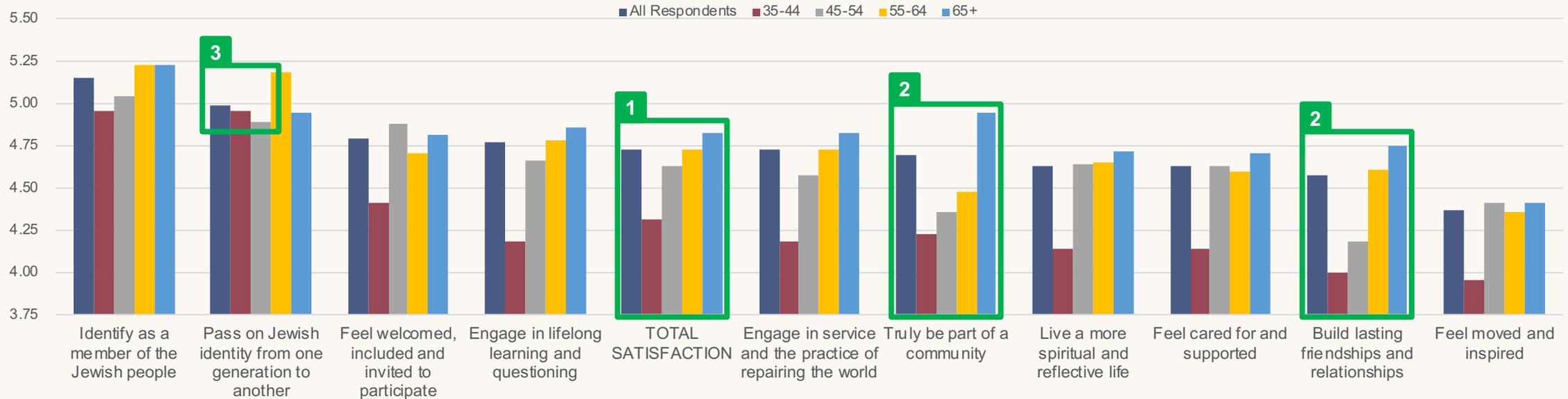
How SATISFIED are you with the current way Temple Isaiah (TI) helps you to achieve the following (1 to 6)?



1. The basics of Jewish identity—feeling it and passing it on—are our greatest strengths
2. Moving and inspiring people is where we are weakest
3. Everything else in between without a lot of difference
4. Do we give people enough of a reason to be a member beyond their “obligation” as a Jew? Can this sustain us as Jewish identity changes?

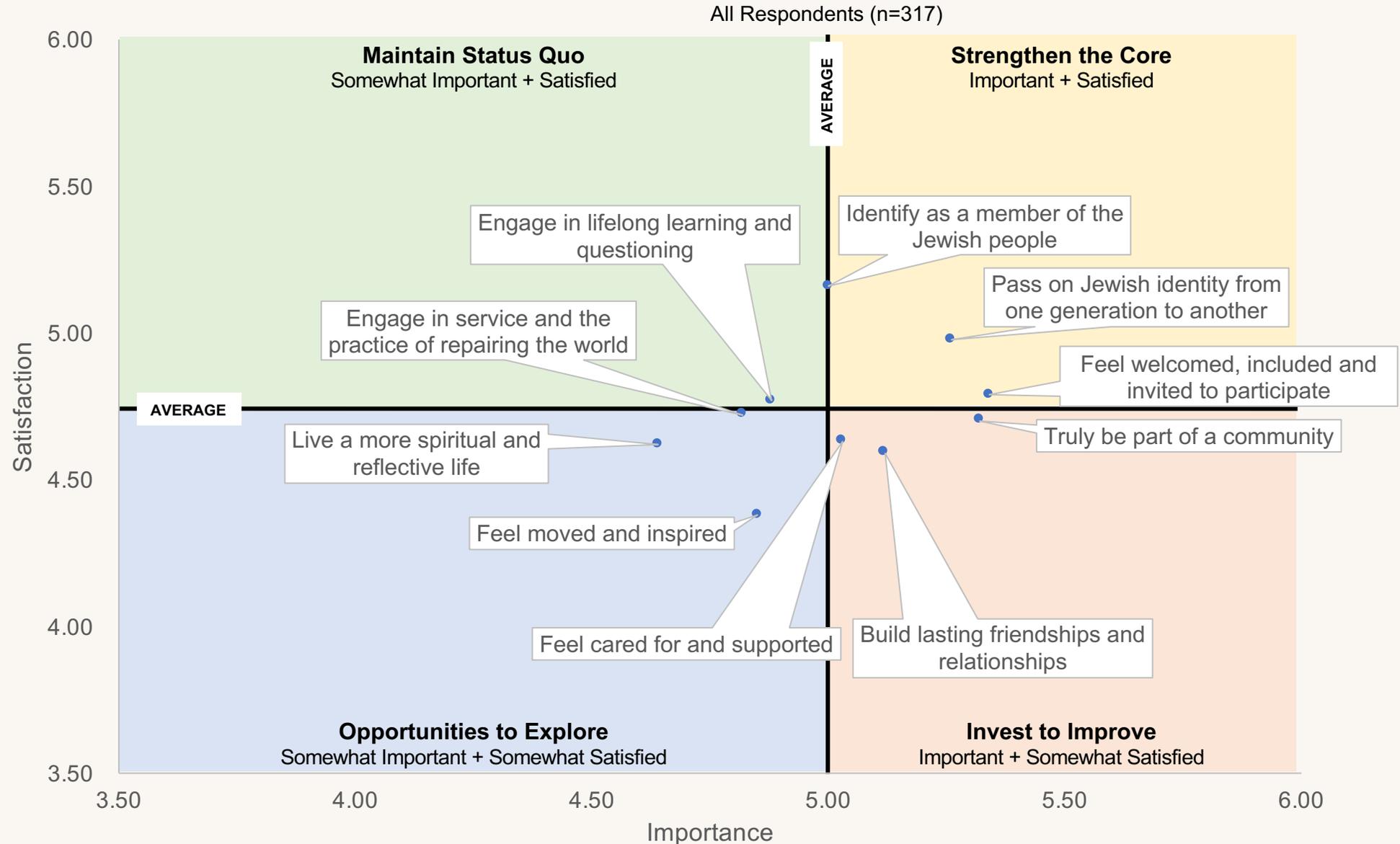
# Our older members are more satisfied

How SATISFIED are you with the current way Temple Isaiah (TI) helps you to achieve the following (1 to 6)?

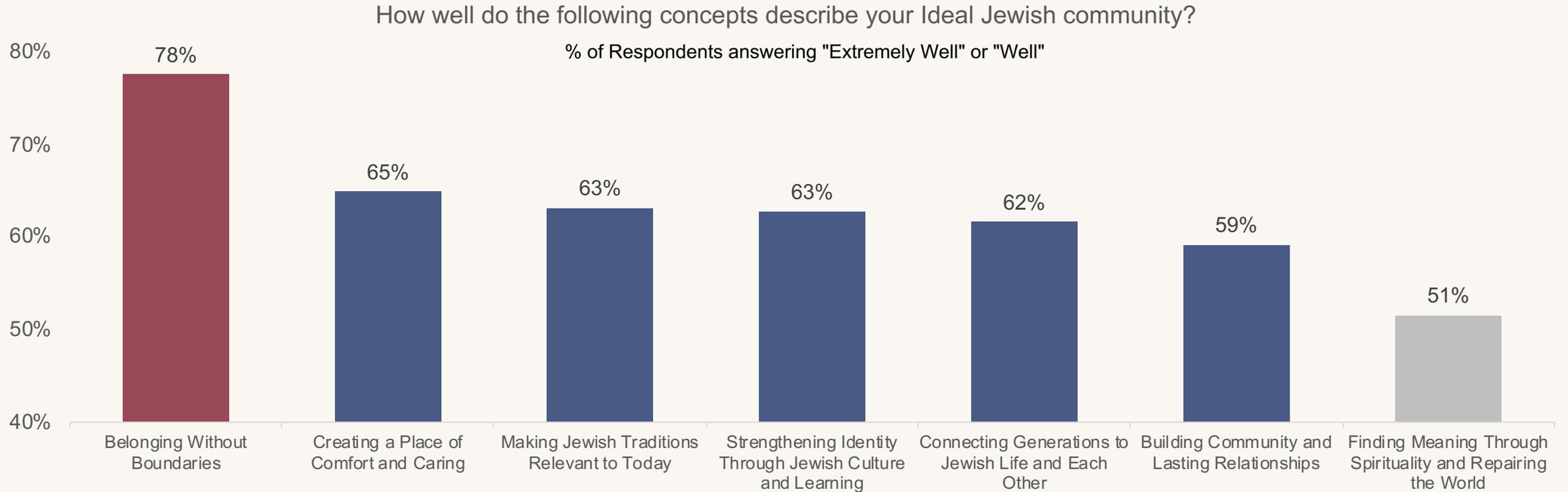


1. 35-54, and especially 35-44, are significantly less satisfied than 55+
2. The biggest age differences are for “truly be part of a community” and “build lasting relationships”; the younger groups don’t feel meaningfully connected
  - Don’t just connect kids, connect parents too: “A Jennie for the rest of us.”
  - There’s an “in crowd” and it can feel difficult to break in (esp. 55-64)
  - COVID diminished feeling of connection among these cohorts
3. The two youngest cohorts (our school’s patrons) are less satisfied with “Pass on” than the average
4. 65+ and over concerned about access, being ignored and connecting with the next gen; they really like Zoom

# We must improve our foundations

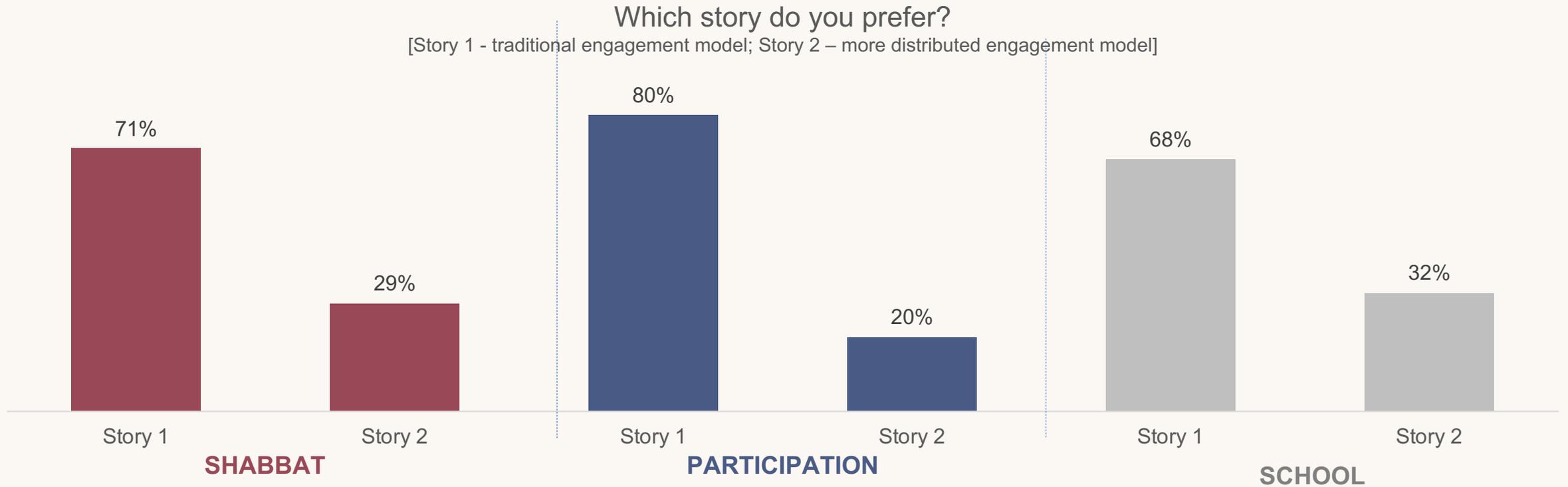


# Concepts (see slide 34 for concept detail presented in survey)



- Our community finds inclusiveness and welcoming very compelling
- The lowest ranking concept was confusing to many respondents
- Everything else is equivalent
- When forced to rank concepts, “Building Community and Lasting Relationships” came out on top (mirrors findings from needs)

# How We Engage (see slide 35 for story detail presented in survey)



- Desire to be together, physically, is a key to community
- Concern that breaking into too many small groups erodes community (especially for worship)
- Want professionals to take lead; quality and structure resonate...helps build community and is a reason to join. Can still leave room for individuals to initiate
- Story 2 resonates most strongly for school; there is a desire for hybrid; more appetite for #2 with older kids
- More openness to new models among younger cohorts. However, they don't have the bandwidth to take the lead; need to make things easier for them

# The Case for Change

- Our congregants' needs are shifting:
  - From religious identity and lifelong learning...
  - ...to community, inclusiveness, and service
  - With the need to Pass on Judaism growing even stronger (and more challenging to deliver)
  - Supported by data from this survey on age, religious school families and interfaith, as well as considerable secondary research from outside our community
- While we deliver well in several key areas, we face challenges in current performance
  - Lack of differentiation/identity may be increasingly detrimental over time
  - Satisfaction (all age groups) with highly important, community-related needs is lower than average
    - Several of these needs may grow in importance over time
  - Younger cohorts are least satisfied and feel disconnected from the community
  - Everyone desires engagement to be easier and more seamless
- It's possible these trends will accelerate
  - The youngest Jews are coming within geographic reach (can't afford Boston), while young families that traditionally seek Lexington are exploring other suburbs

# Vision: must be relatable and aspirational

- “Community” must be a central theme
  - This is today’s critical gap...congregants need to see it addressed
  - A physical place can remain an important part of our Vision for community, yet should not be a barrier to inclusiveness
  - Must accommodate changes in how community is achieved
- Must embrace “Inclusiveness” (Belonging without Boundaries)
  - The most universally aspirational concept for our congregation
- But we don’t need to be bound by key survey takeaways. Our Vision should inspire and stretch.
  - Our community lacks inspiration; Vision can help fill that gap
  - The more “aspirational” needs are fair game

# Strategy: The first priorities are becoming clearer

- Must continue to invest in “Passing on Judaism”
  - Highly important across all age groups and cohorts
  - Only becoming more challenging (ie. Interfaith)
  - Seek continued innovation and excellence in Religious School, Youth Groups, Young Family Programming, etc.
- Must focus on raising satisfaction with “community” aspects of synagogue experience
  - Lower-right (and near lower-right) quadrant needs
  - Especially younger and middle-life cohorts
  - Desire for smooth, well-delivered experience
  - But can't leave 65+ behind
- Inspiration stands out as a gap. How can we fill?
- Key takeaways for Senior Rabbi search
  - Inspirational
  - Community-builder
  - Connect across generations
  - Visionary leader of change
- Our operational model and internal capabilities will need to change in order to support these priorities

# How We Are Creating Temple Isaiah's Vision

DISCOVERY

DESIGN

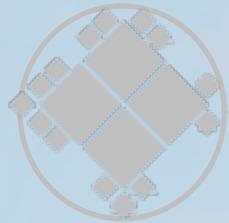
DRAFT

Identify Needs

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Test Importance and  
Satisfaction of Select  
Needs

Test Attractiveness of  
Key Concepts and  
Delivery Models

Temple Isaiah Vision

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# Vision Contents

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Why we exist
<i>Deepening Lives, Inspiring Purpose, Together</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Everything we do we do in order to deepen lives and inspire purpose together. This will always be true no matter what form Temple Isaiah takes.</li></ul>

VISION
Who we want to be
A clear, specific, compelling picture of what Temple Isaiah will look like in 2040

STRATEGY
Plan to fulfill the Vision and how it will be pursued
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Detailed quantitative and qualitative goals</li><li>Priorities, actions, and owners</li><li>Timing and resource allocations</li></ul>

## 1. VISION STATMENT

A high-level, clear, and pithy statement that is easily remembered and referred to

## 2. ASPIRATIONAL OUTCOMES

Clear understanding and high-level articulation of:

- WHO Temple Isaiah serves and their needs
- WHAT Temple Isaiah offers to the people they serve
- WHEN offerings are available to the people Temple Isaiah serves
- WHERE people go to access the offerings Temple Isaiah provides
- HOW Temple Isaiah organizes and behaves to deliver offerings to people they serve

## 3. ACTIONABLE CHOICES

- Few (3-5) metrics that define success and can be regularly measured and tracked
- Clear decisions about what is within or outside the bounds of the organization

# Where we go from here

Week starting Monday	AUG					Sept			
	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27
Working Group Meetings	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Board Meetings				█		█		█	
Congregational Meetings									
<b>DESIGN</b>									
Prepare for Design Research & Brainstorming									
Conduct Design Research & Brainstorming									
Synthesize Design Research & Brainstorming									
Congregational Survey	█	█	█	█					
<b>DRAFT</b>									
Draft Vision Statement(s)	█	█	█	█					
Socialize Vision Statement					█	█			
Revise and finalize Vision							█	█	█

↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Share survey data with Board	Discuss survey data with Board	Conduct strategic 1:1s for feedback on the Vision	Send proposed Vision to Board	Discuss/ approve proposed Vision

# BACKUP

# Concepts as Presented in Survey: How Well Do They Describe Your Ideal Jewish Community?

Concept Title	Need Statement	Concept Description
<b>Concept A: Strengthening Identity Through Jewish Culture and Learning</b>	The Jewish people are connected by our rich, evolving culture and by our ever-present thirst for learning, knowledge and questioning.	Temple Isaiah (TI) is known widely as the temple where practice, culture and learning become one. I am able to immerse in Jewish learning and culture through ancient and contemporary lenses of food, music, humor and art.
<b>Concept B: Connecting Generations to Jewish Life and Each Other</b>	The Jewish people are distinguished by our long history and perseverance. Our dedication to passing on connection, Torah and tradition is what has ensured our survival through the ages.	Temple Isaiah is where generations come together to pass on, continue, shape and form our identity as both an ancient and a modern people.
<b>Concept C: Finding Meaning Through Spirituality and Repairing the World</b>	I am looking for ways to find meaning and purpose in my life. I want to dig deep into who I am in order to make myself - and ultimately the world - better.	Temple Isaiah nourishes the individual spirit, supporting me to reflect on my life and become my best self. I discover meaning through Jewish values, find my purpose, and change the world.
<b>Concept D: Building Community and Lasting Relationships</b>	In a fast paced, competitive world I am looking for deep, authentic relationships. I live far from loved ones and lack time and opportunity to forge deep connections.	Temple Isaiah is about building bonds with one another and finding connection through Judaism. Isaiah is my home away from home, where there's always a friendly face, I can be myself, and relationships last a lifetime.
<b>Concept E: Making Jewish Traditions Relevant to Today</b>	Traditions connect me to my identity, heritage and others. But they also can feel outdated, disconnected from modern life and are difficult to share with people newer to Jewish practice.	Temple Isaiah brings Jewish traditions into my modern life and culture, connecting my treasured ancient traditions with the issues, challenges, and realities of today. Isaiah creates modern practices that work for me and all the people in my life.
<b>Concept F: Creating a Place of Comfort and Carinf</b>	Life isn't easy. Some days are absolutely wonderful while others are overwhelming. I need a place to feel seen, known and cared for, no matter what is going on in life.	Temple Isaiah is a sanctuary from the daily demands of my life. I am welcomed to the community and they listen to my needs. I am comforted and cared for in times of trouble, celebrated with in times of joy, and inspired and uplifted all the days in between.
<b>Concept G: Belonging without Boundaries</b>	Judaism is an ancient tradition that has thrived by constantly adapting. In today's world, Judaism will thrive by welcoming and embracing the broadest group of people and diversity of thought it possibly can.	Temple Isaiah welcomes anyone who considers themselves Jewish, or wants to foster a connection to Judaism, with open arms. It helps me craft my own Jewish identity on my terms, no matter who I am or how I have experienced Judaism in my life.

# Scenarios As Presented in Survey

## SHABBAT

### STORY 1

Congregants come from far and wide to gather, greet each other and worship together in the sanctuary.

The highly-spiritual services are led by a dynamic clergy and have broad appeal. Those who can't attend in person can watch online from home.

### STORY 2

Shabbat takes place all over the Temple Isaiah community in many different ways.

In addition to regular services at the Temple, the TI community has created many different Shabbat experiences to serve many different desires. For example, some families utilize the "Shabbat Kits" provided by TI to have their own, private celebration at home, while others gather in parks and community centers for lay-led services.

## PARTICIPATION

### STORY 1

Temple Isaiah offers programs and services for every life stage and age group.

Community members don't need to worry about a thing. To find out and join, they just subscribe to an online calendar, get updates via all of TI's regular channels, or just reach out to a committee member.

### STORY 2

Isaiah provides guidance, tools, and on-line resources to help community members design what they want, when they want it.

Of course, Isaiah offers signature programs and events like Shabbat Services and the Mazon dinner, but most of what TI does is help the community create for the community.

## SCHOOL

### STORY 1

Isaiah offers a leading-edge program where kids end each year having met specific learning goals.

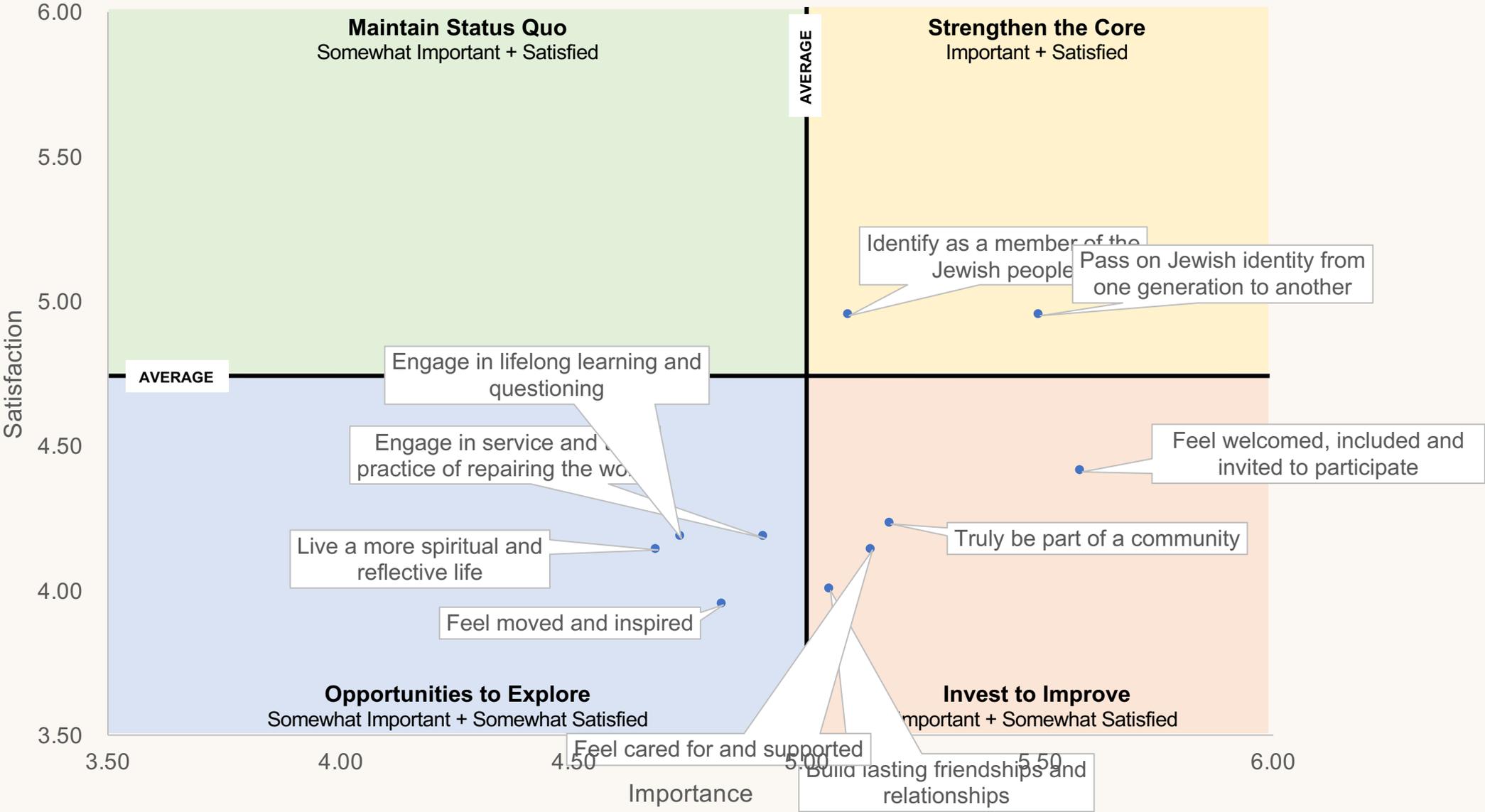
The curriculum is rigorous, but fun. Students are together twice a week and classes integrate media resources, field trips, and self-paced Hebrew tutoring.

### STORY 2

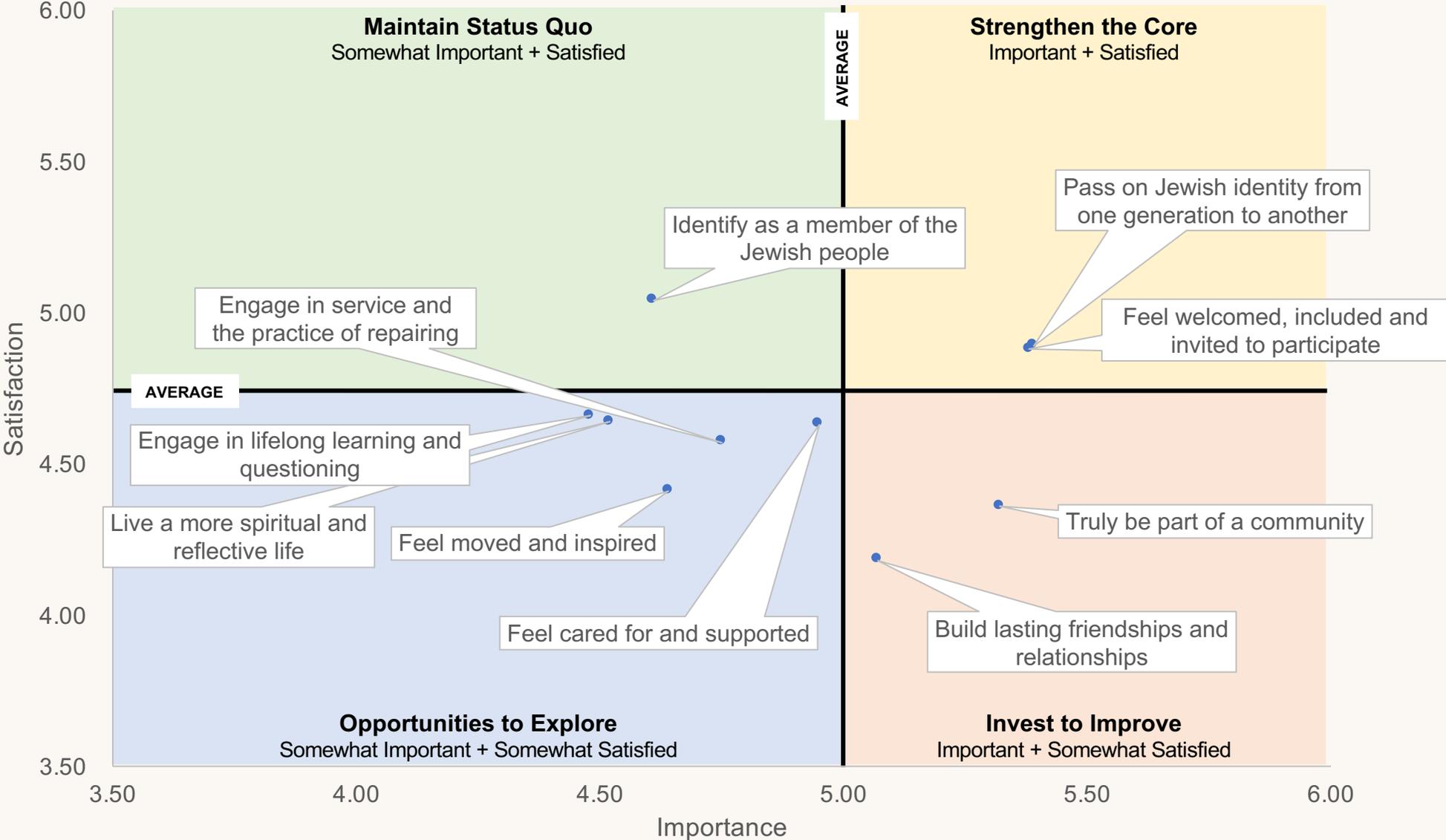
Isaiah offers a flexible Jewish learning experience where students pick from a variety of options during scheduled times of the week.

Students have a number of credits and subjects they need to complete over the year, but can do it at their own pace, focus, and location. Once a month, students come together with their entire age group for an immersive experience that's fun and stimulating.

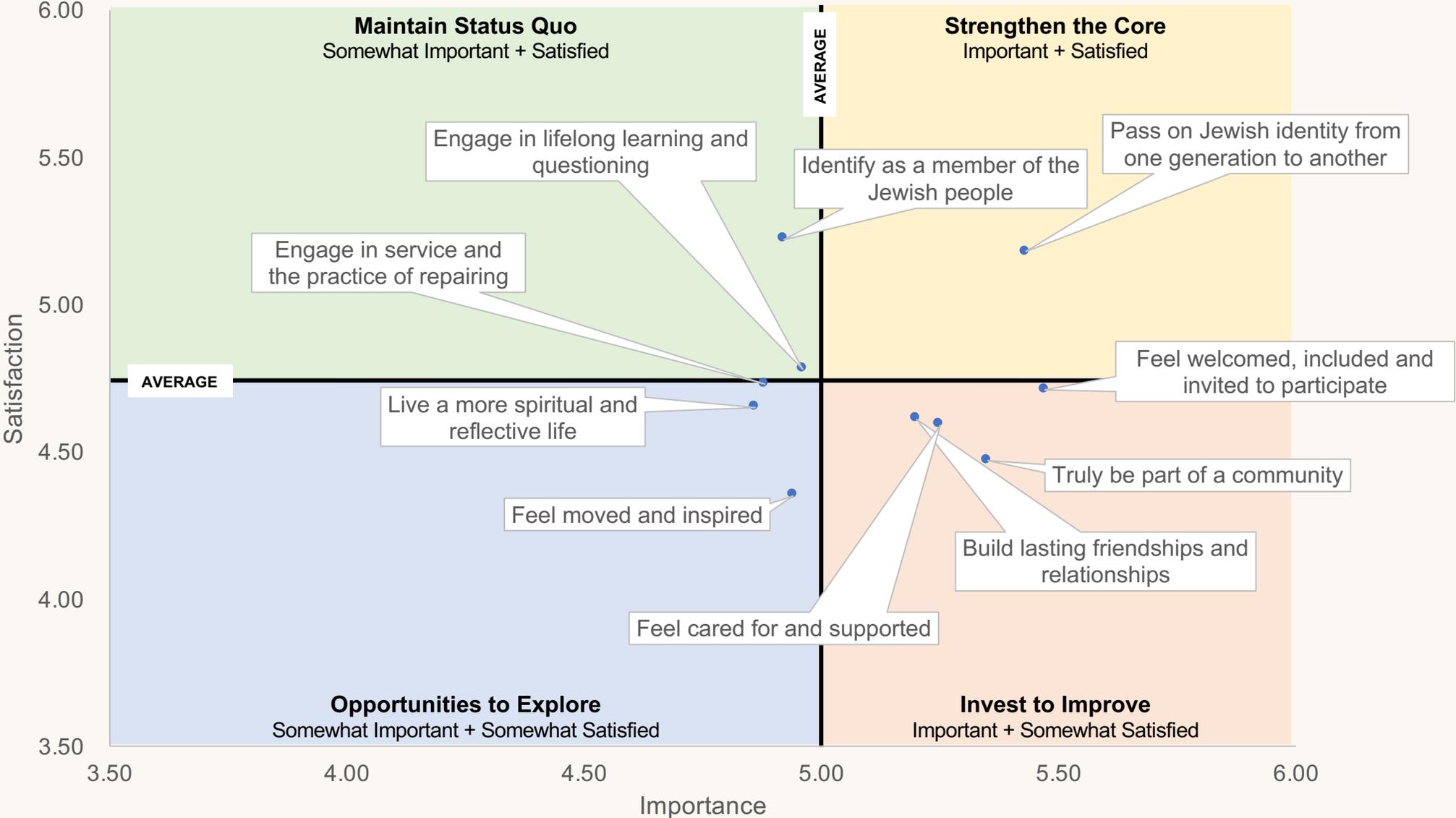
# Priority Map (35-44 years old; n=22)



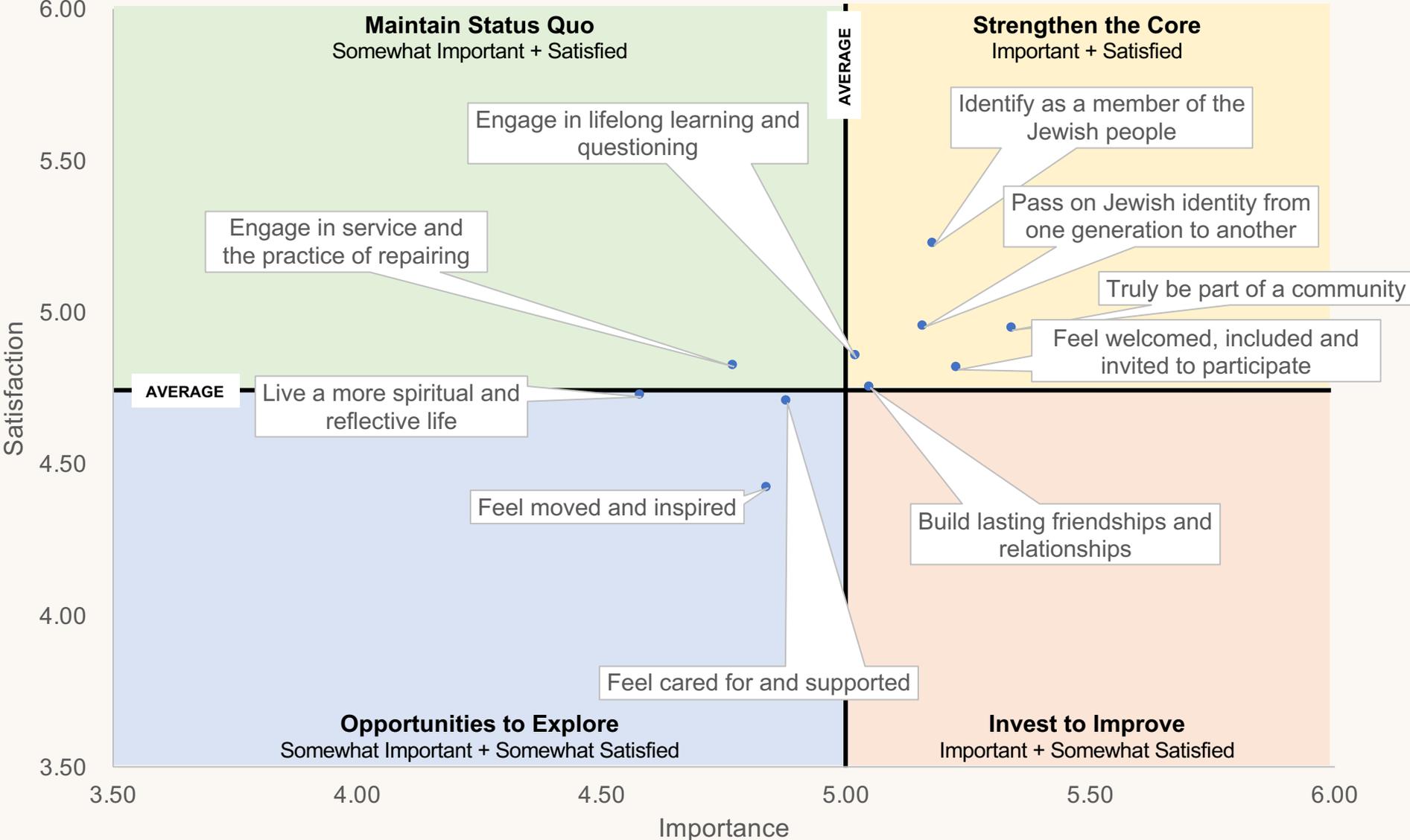
# Priority Map (45-54 years old; n=56)



# Priority Map (55-64 years old; n=51)



# Priority Map (65+ years old; n=131)



# Priority Map by Age

Age	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	22	56	51	131
Feel welcomed, included and invited to participate				
Truly be part of a community				
Pass on Jewish identity from one generation to another				
Build lasting friendships and relationships				
Feel cared for and supported				
Identify as a member of the Jewish people				
Engage in lifelong learning and questioning				
Feel moved and inspired				
Engage in service and the practice of repairing the world				
Live a more spiritual and reflective life				

