

# **DC Minyan Dialogue: A Community Report**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the winter of 2009, DC Minyan (DCM) leadership decided to conduct a strategic planning process to identify the community's overall priorities and inform future leaders' decisions. In order to meet this goal DCM held a series of community conversations and also made the questions asked of conversation participants available through an online survey. This report collects and analyzes the feedback that members shared about DCM's mission, programming, and structure. In the sections below you will find summaries of the data as well as concrete suggestions for addressing the priority concerns identified throughout the process.

One core aspect of the DCM that members appreciate is their sense that they control their community's destiny. They also feel committed to the sometimes-painful balancing act between tradition and egalitarianism. For these reasons, large numbers of respondents support the lay-led style of leadership and do not seek a full-time rabbi or halakhic authority for their community. That said, there is strong support for having relationships with rabbis and/or social service professionals who could assist the community in making halachic decisions, play a role in lifecycle events and provide pastoral care.

There is some anxiety about the future leadership and makeup of DCM, given the large number of members who move to the suburbs each year. Members want to ensure that there is an educated leadership well into the future and would support programs to help families stay in DCM, such as increased children's programming. Respondents also support efforts to educate the current and future leadership of DCM.

Many of the frustrations that people voiced relate to feeling disempowered despite the lay-led structure or not understanding how decisions that affect the community are made. Increasing transparency in community decision-making is important. Steps that the community can take toward this end include posting FAQ's on the website, diversifying the leadership, increasing volunteer opportunities, and strengthening the Leadership Council's role.

Overall, people find DCM to be a friendly community, though they recognize the need to be more friendly and welcoming. Respondents had a variety of suggestions for improving the friendliness at DCM, focusing on the need for more small group events like Shabbat clusters and the recent Chanukah celebration evenings. They also recommended that the leadership take a stronger role in setting a tone of friendliness, through announcements and mingling during Kiddush.

Participants shared their views on a number of halakhic issues. The "10 and 10" policy for counting a minyan was criticized by a number of people. The responses reveal the need to educate the community about the policy's origins and keep open the possibility of changing the policy, based on textual analysis and a transparent, communal decision-making process. The kashrut policy may need adjustment as well to accommodate the strong desire to have more Shabbat clusters; the various kashrut policies in other independent, halakhic-minded minyanim could help provide a model. By contrast, there is strong support for the separate seating policy.

Participants value and are inspired by a wide variety of DCM programs, focusing particularly on the Shavuot retreat, the High Holidays, and Shabbat morning davening. A number of respondents suggested holding Shabbat morning davening each week, as opposed to every other

week. There was also support for another retreat-type activity during the year, perhaps even in DC, to strengthen the friendships that begin at the Shavuot retreat.

The DCM Dialogue process was a successful in a number of ways as is evidenced by the fact that a majority of the membership participated and embraced the opportunity to offer feedback about DCM. Participants clearly enjoyed engaging in these broader communal questions and thinking about the future of their minyan. The community conversations were also a good way for people to get to know each other in a small group setting. We hope this process has laid a foundation for further such reflections on DCM's past and future as it continues to grow and develop as a community.

## ABOUT DC MINYAN

DC Minyan is a traditional egalitarian Jewish community located in Dupont Circle, in the heart of our nation's capital. DC Minyan seeks to provide a warm and intellectually-engaging environment for prayer, study, and growth.

DC Minyan meets for Shabbat morning services on the first and third Shabbat of every month, Friday evening services on the second and fourth Shabbat of each month, and for selected holidays and special events. Seating is separate for men and women without a mechitzah. Minyan services are held at the DC JCC, located on the corner of 16th and Q streets NW.

DC Minyan leaders seek to create an environment that will welcome, enrich, and challenge Jews from all backgrounds. The community's goal is to provide an inviting space for the members of the DC community to share their ideas, their aspirations, and their prayers. As a lay-led community, the Minyan derives its strength and its warmth from you.

## INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In the winter of 2009, the DC Minyan (DCM) leadership decided to conduct a strategic planning process in order to identify the community's priorities and inform future leaders' decisions. The impetus for this process was two-fold. First, there was a general desire among the leadership to plan for the future, beyond the day-to-day decision-making that dominates Steering Committee (SC) and Leadership Council (LC) business. Second, the leadership had begun to apply for grants and learned that grant-making institutions look to an organization's plans and vision when deciding whether to award funds.

In order to organize and oversee this process, the DCM leadership recruited Deena Fox, Jeremy Kadden and Lilah Pomerance, all of whom are active members of DCM. Jeremy and Lilah both served on the DC Minyan Steering Committee and Leadership Council; Deena previously helped to conduct a similar strategic process at Kehilat Hadar in New York City. They acted as a separate, independent team in conducting the DCM Dialogue and developed this report, which they then presented to the DCM leadership.

The three decided that the most important element of this process would be to identify the community attitudes toward DCM's mission, programming, and structure. To plan for the future, it would be essential to know what people like about DC Minyan, what they would like to see improved, what they think the primary challenges are in the years ahead, and what their vision is for DC Minyan's future.

Having identified information gathering as a first step, the group wrote a questionnaire to collect the answers to the identified questions (and more). Participants could complete the survey through one of two methods:

1. Members could attend a "community conversation," explained below. Immediately after participating in the conversation, attendees filled out written surveys.
2. Members and nonmembers could complete online surveys at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com). The member version of this online survey was identical to the one provided at the community conversations. The nonmember survey had many of the same questions, but asked why people chose not to become members of DCM.

Community conversations, referred to generally as "DC Minyan Dialogue," were held on 10 evenings throughout June and July, with over 100 DCM members participating. For the first part of the evening, participants split into pairs to discuss a set of questions about DC Minyan. One member of each pair "interviewed" the other member, and then they reversed the roles. These questions were pulled from the questionnaire, so after each pair had an opportunity to share their responses, they reflected and recorded their thoughts privately. In the final part of the evening, all of the meeting participants came together to discuss their reactions and thoughts about DCM and the "dialogue" process.

The surveys contained several types of questions:

1. Simple demographic questions: age, neighborhood of residence, marital status, etc.
2. Questions about general feelings regarding DC Minyan. Responses to these questions were on scales from "Agree Strongly" to "Disagree Strongly."
3. Long form/Free form/Essay questions.

It is important to keep several factors in mind when reviewing the data:

1. **The participants were self-selected.** Only eight non-members participated in the survey. At the same time, there was a remarkably high turnout among members (approximately three-quarters of the entire membership), so we have generally tried to refer only to what “members” said, and not generalize to the entire group of people who attend DC Minyan events. It is possible that those members and non-members who are most dissatisfied with DCM did not participate in the process.
2. **The language in the “long form” responses is subject to interpretation.** For example, in identifying their favorite thing about DCM, many people wrote “community,” while others wrote “the people.” It is quite possible that “community” refers to the communal support one receives through meals, while “people” might reference the friends one has at DCM. However, it’s also quite possible that these two responses refer to precisely the same idea – that they both enjoy the sense of community that comes from being around people they like. We have attempted to avoid lumping categories together as much as possible, and when we do so, we have tried to identify those groupings clearly.
3. **The “long form” answers allow for a great deal of variety, which means that the “top” answer in some categories received only a small number of responses.** For example, in identifying their greatest frustration about DCM, the most frequent response (social concerns) was mentioned only 25 times out of 150 surveys. As only 16% of responses, it may not be an overwhelming trend, but, as the highest single category, it gets the most attention in our report. We have nonetheless been careful to state the numbers of responses as often as possible, and use terms like “plurality” or “majority” only when clearly warranted. There may also be a value in following up on some of the questions with more scientific survey questions and responses. We will point out a few of them in the report.

However, there are critical advantages to this type of survey. The responses may be more nuanced than they would have been if participants had simply rated aspects of DCM on scales of 1-10. Participants were able to think broadly about their hopes and frustrations and were not directed to decide between categories chosen by the drafters. Given that respondents had a great deal of freedom to shape the data in this report, it is helpful to think both about what members identified as core strengths and weaknesses of DC Minyan and about what they did not mention. The issues that members identified as central to this process may be ripe for further conversation and more targeted research.

There were a total of 151 responses to the member surveys (out of 248 members) and eight responses to the non-member surveys. Out of those 151 member responses, 116 participated by attending a community conversation and 35 filled out the online survey. As not everyone responded to every question, the average number of responses to each of the long form questions was 120.

Given the high participation rates, it is clear that members responded very positively to DC Minyan Dialogue, welcoming the opportunity to share their thoughts and express their feelings about DCM. A number of respondents used the final question “Anything to add?” to state their support for the Dialogue process, as well as their appreciation that they were asked about their opinions. Members would likely respond positively to future opportunities to share their ideas and discuss the future of DCM. We recommend that the Dialogue be the first step in an ongoing process of self-reflection and community dialogue.

We would like to thank the hosts who opened their homes and fed the hungry masses during the community conversations: Jeremy Brosowsky and Beth Tritter, Rachel Hutt, Avi Kumin and Isabel Friedenzohn, Aaron Wolf, Noa Rabinowitz, Jessica Lieberman and Bill Jaffe, Jana and Jeremy Kadden, Deena Fox, Lilah Pomerance and Dan Gordon, Eva Davis, and Judy Herbstman.

We would also like to thank the following hard-working people who helped with data entry and analysis: Adina Alpert (analyst extraordinaire), Shai Ramirowsky, Noa Rabinowitz, Isabel Friedenzohn and Rachel Hutt.

## About This Report

This report covers several aspects of DCM. The first section focuses on DCM's general demographics, its mission and its essence. The second deals with issues related to DCM's leadership and governance, focusing particularly on volunteers and issues related to transparency in decision-making. The third looks at community and social issues, focusing on becoming a welcoming community and retaining members in a variety of age groups. The fourth section considers halakhic issues the DCM community faces and discusses community members' responses to the idea of having a rabbinic authority. The fifth section looks at DCM's programming and identifies those events that members found to be the highlights of the year.

Each thematic section begins with a text box containing a collection of quotes pulled from the response forms, followed by a discussion/analysis of the data. Most of the sections end with "programmatic suggestions" from the data we received.

Following these thematic sections, we have included a list of our "priority recommendations." These are recommendations that emerged from the data. As there are dozens of suggestions in the report, we thought it would be helpful to highlight a smaller group of ideas for the DCM leadership to consider as they strive to meet community needs over the coming months and years.

Finally, we created an appendix with some examples of the raw data that were used in drafting the report.

## DEMOGRAPHICS, ESSENCE, MISSION AND CHALLENGES

“DCM sits between movements and ideologies, which keeps it fresh. I wouldn't want DCM to become affiliated with a particular set of ideas or groups that might cause it to stagnate.”

I love “[t]he combination of the intellectual rigor of the Orthodox community with the progressive and egalitarian ethos of the Conservative movement.”

“Greatest joy: Tefillah! The davening is beautiful and the inspiring fact that it is egalitarian is essential to me. I most look forward to sitting down in shul and praying. It is the highlight of my week.”

I would not want to change “[t]he way in which the community has a say on halacha. I would not want to cede control to a rabbinic authority though I would welcome rabbinic advice.”

### Demographics

The majority of members who participated in DC Minyan Dialogue (65%) have been a part of the community for three years or more, suggesting that members develop loyalty to the community. Almost 50 percent of respondents also attend DCM at least twice a month with an additional 20 percent attending every week. Among the participants, the most highly attended Minyan event is Shabbat morning services, with 94 percent of respondents attending that service at least occasionally.

DC Minyan members are heavily concentrated in terms of age and geography. Sixty-seven percent of the Dialogue participants were between the ages of 26 and 35. The next largest group was those people 25 and under, at fifteen percent. Only five percent of participants were over fifty-one. Of the members who participated, about 60 percent live with a spouse or partner and about 25 percent have children. Forty-eight percent of the survey respondents live in Dupont Circle or Adams Morgan. Another 11 percent of respondents live in the U street corridor. Seventy-five percent said that they are not likely to continue coming to DCM if they move out of the area.

### Top Ten Ideas Associated with DC Minyan

Community/Inclusiveness/Supportive	52
Egalitarianism	25
Ruach/Songs/Davening	25
Lay Led/Participatory/Volunteer	23
Inspiring/Passion/Spiritual/Joyful	21
Intellectual/Knowledge/Self Aware	20
Youth	15
Welcoming/Sincere	14
Religious/Halakha	11
Traditional	10

As part of DC Minyan Dialogue, participants were asked to describe DCM's essence, its core mission. By far, survey participants most highly associate DCM with a sense of "community." That term received 52 "votes," more than double the votes received by any other category. The next highest responses (each with 25 votes) were egalitarianism and ruach/songs/davening. The theme of a "lay-led" community (23) emerged again and again throughout the survey as well. DCM members like the feeling of controlling their community's destiny. Far from turning people off, the sometimes-painful balancing act between tradition and egalitarianism attracts people. As this report will show, frustration rises when people do not feel that control, and do not know how decisions are made.

DCM members also love vibrancy – in davening, learning, and social contexts. Members want to learn more, engage more, meet new people, and help influence the direction of DCM. While people are frustrated by cliquy-ness, they nonetheless love the people and community.

## Top Challenges Facing DC Minyan

Many respondents (76) raised demographic issues as a critical challenge in the coming years. Thirty-one respondents mentioned the "exodus" from the downtown Washington area – whether people are moving to the suburbs or to other communities entirely. Twenty-eight respondents mentioned the need to "balance" different generations' needs, including families with young children, young singles, and older community members. Seventeen focused exclusively on children and the need for more programming that focuses on their needs – whether through Tot Shabbat or more formal schooling.

Leadership issues were the next most popular response to this question with 46 mentions. Seventeen respondents were concerned about the capacity to remain "lay-led" and 19 mentioned the challenge of maintaining a critical mass of learned community members and sustaining a high level of knowledge for leadership. Many specifically mentioned concerns about finding enough people to read Torah, lead services and educate the community in Judaism and halakha.

Other issues that were mentioned frequently included:

1. Twenty-seven (27) members identified halakhic issues as their primary concern, with some mentioning the 10-and-10 policy specifically.
2. Twenty-two (22) members referred to space concerns – about being at the DCJCC generally, and particularly in the gym on the High Holidays.
3. Seventeen (17) respondents mentioned the need to sustain the "start up" energy and feel. There is some fear of stagnation; a number of these responses mentioned the need to keep DCM developing while adhering to its founding principles

The themes that emerged in this section will re-appear throughout this report. Members of DC Minyan who participated in the Dialogue process have a relatively consistent vision of DC Minyan as a place for excellent davening, developing relationships with like-minded Jews, and creating a lay-led traditional community. Members also seem to share many of the same concerns about DC Minyan's future. The recommendations that we have included at the conclusion of this report are intended to lessen anxieties that people expressed about DCM's leadership, friendliness, programming and relationship to halakha.

# LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND VOLUNTEERISM

## Leadership and Governance

“DCM leadership is very open to suggestions from lay members and membership of the leadership team, so long as you can offer to put muscle behind your suggestion.”

“I wanted to open a discussion of the minyan's policy on egalitarianism, and I think I opened the topic for discussion successfully. But the process by which change can ever be entertained is opaque even to the leadership.”

“My largest frustration is the leadership structure. There is no easy way for anyone other than the steering committee to express its opinions, and since the SC and generally the LC members are appointed by SC members, there is no way for an outsider to "break in". Like much of DCM's halakhic decision-making, there is a mesorah in leadership that has no divine origin. The leaders get to appoint their friends to help them do things without any input mechanism from the community. There are no real checks on the SC's power.”

“It feels like we are 'not allowed' to talk about changing the seating policy or 10 and 10 policy - overall lack of transparency. I feel like DCM is bound to the decisions made by the founders 7 years ago, when instead we should continue to grow and change. Right now, it feels like we are turning into a stagnant community that is afraid to change - like orthodoxy.”

The DCM community is very committed to its lay-led structure. However, the lay-led nature of the group also comes with challenges. Many in the community are concerned about DCM's capacity to maintain an educated base of leaders and participants. Forty-six people listed remaining lay-led or keeping an educated leader base as a top challenge in the coming years. Of those, 19 said that DCM will be challenged to keep an educated group of leaders and 17 said that it will be a challenge for DCM to remain lay-led. Though this is clearly a prevalent anxiety in the community, it has not proven too difficult a challenge to maintain leaders or service participants in recent years.

Another key challenge presented by the leadership structure is the fact that the current leaders choose incoming leaders and members of the Leadership Council. This creates a closed circuit and means that leaders must take aggressive steps to create a diverse and representative team rather than looking only to their own social circles. Creating opportunities for the LC to meet new members might counteract this tendency.

A third concern related to the leadership structure is that decision-making is perceived as opaque and mysterious. In fact, not only do uninvolved members of the community not understand how some decisions are made, but even leaders may not know how to make significant changes to DC Minyan structure and practice. While some decision-making will necessarily be done on an ad hoc basis, it would be helpful for the processes that do exist to be publicized. As decisions about resources, programming, and halakha are made in the future, publicizing brief explanations for the changes might reduce the community's sense of confusion over how decisions are reached.

We do want to note that there were no questions specifically asking former or current leaders about their experiences helping organize the DCM. We would suggest a future questionnaire along these lines to help develop, support and reinvigorate our leadership positions.

### *Programmatic Suggestions*

In order to diversify the community's leadership, the LC might be asked to host new members in their homes or attend another event with a small group of new members. This would offer the current leaders an opportunity to meet new members and encourage them to become active by volunteering.

Some of the challenges around transparency relate to institutionalized processes for decision-making that are based on the DCM by-laws. A few FAQs on the website would be an excellent first step toward greater awareness of DC Minyan's decision-making processes. It would be helpful for current leaders, possibly alongside some past leaders and DC Minyan members with professional experience in community building, to define a process for making major community decisions. As we will discuss with regard to halakhic decision-making, any process for making these choices would likely benefit from the engagement of both the community members and the leadership. A study component or discussion of logistics and resource considerations should be completed publicly before finalizing these significant decisions. Though the ultimate decision may not be the result of a formal vote, community members should have opportunities to share their views openly before the leadership comes to a conclusion on these matters.

It may also be advisable to give a more public role to the Leadership Council. Very few members of DCM seem to know much about the LC, and giving LC members a more public role would increase the transparency, enhance the LC's feeling of investment in DCM's future, and allow the SC to delegate more responsibilities to the LC. The DCM leadership may want to consult with an expert in organizational management who might suggest ways to improve the leadership structure to address these issues.

It is also likely the DCM membership would support programs to educate leadership for the next "generations," given the anxieties expressed about remaining a lay-led community. DCM might choose to invest in a teacher to come to Washington to work with Gabbais and Steering Committee members in order to educate them about issues related to leading a lay-led minyan. Alternatively, DCM could invest in sending a leader or group of leaders to a course offered for such training.

## Volunteerism

“I am currently volunteering... One obstacle to my giving more of myself is that it sometimes seems that the minyan places more emphasis on ‘getting through the week’ than on thinking creatively about how to elevate ourselves beyond the status quo. I think we should put more stock in incubating creative ideas for minyan evolution.”

“I would be inspired to do more if DCM started to meet more frequently for services on Shabbat. I would be willing to volunteer to build and maintain that.”

“It often feels like either you have to be very involved or nothing. Also, all of the very involved seem to all be friends which makes sense but it is intimidating nonetheless.”

“Hmm - I don't think I ever really volunteered. I was asked - to read torah, to organize an event, to give an appeal, to take a turn on the LC. And each time I said yes and was happy to do so. I think DCM needs to do more asking people to take on specific tasks rather than wait for folks to volunteer.”

“I like to be involved in my community. Taking a leadership role and assuming responsibility feels empowering.”

Many DC Minyan members noted that they feel they have a responsibility to offer their skills, time, and resources to assist DC Minyan. They are most motivated to volunteer and take on leadership roles by their desires to increase their involvement in the community, and meet people. Eighteen percent of the respondents stated that they would like to be more involved in the community. It is notable that many people who identified as volunteers explained that they first became involved because they were asked to do so by a member of DC Minyan's leadership. Many community members expressed their belief that there is significant value in leaders reaching out to ask new members to assist rather than waiting for them to offer their skills unsolicited. It can be challenging for the leadership in any community to identify the people who are interested in volunteering, but the data suggest people would rather be “over-asked” – at least to do small tasks – than not to be asked at all.

Concerns that members have about volunteering tend to relate to time constraints and organizational openness. The most common reason respondents cited for not doing more for DC Minyan was that they are constrained by other time commitments. These individuals often noted that they feel getting involved in DC Minyan requires a very significant time investment. Though community leaders have made concerted efforts to reach out to members of the community, some still perceive the leadership as being composed of a small, closed group of friends. This is intimidating to some who feel they are outside this group but would like to get involved. Conveying a clear message about the range of volunteer options available to DC Minyan members and reaching out further to people from a variety of social groups to take on these roles could expand DC Minyan's volunteer base.

### *Programmatic Suggestions*

In recent months, the announcements in the DCM emails have attempted to rectify the aforementioned misperception by soliciting volunteers for short-term projects. As specific short term volunteer opportunities emerge, these should be marketed clearly in the weekly

announcements. The opportunities might also be listed on the website with explanations of the time commitments and qualifications for each. Consistent encouragement of a culture of volunteerism through announcements and targeted outreach may spur people to volunteer independently remove some of the burden of reaching out from the leaders' shoulders.

Members who did volunteer mentioned that many of them did so because they had been asked. It is important that the leadership actively reach out to both new and long-time members to ask that they take on new roles within the community. It appears that many people are happy to help if they know that they are needed, but do not think to volunteer. When people are approached about assisting, they become more invested in the community. The DCM leadership may choose to create internal targets for the number of new members asked to participate in services and programming over the course of the year to encourage a culture of expanding resources. Whichever process is chosen, it is important that new and returning members receive this communication soon after making a commitment to the community.

## COMMUNITY & SOCIAL ISSUES

*This section focuses on two issues: creating a welcoming community and maintaining a multi-generational community.*

### Creating a Welcoming Community

“I do feel welcome but understand why people do not always feel welcome. As in any community, set cliques form and it can be difficult to cross over or have different groups mingle. I think an important way to make DCM stronger is by integrating new members. We should have a new member dinner to which all current members are invited at least once a year.”

“I feel welcome among people I already know, but not among people I don't know. The general atmosphere seems to be that people don't try to meet new people. Small Shabbat dinners to which people are randomly assigned could help, especially if there are good icebreakers. However, I'd had so-so experiences with those in other communities - if dinners are organized by kashrut, then I probably know a lot of people I'll eat with. Also important that hosts don't make it part of a larger meal, but rather that hosts keep it a DCM getting-to-know-you thing.”

“It's always hard to break-in to social circles. Activities of 6-10 people help old and new people meet each other.”

“I do NOT feel welcome. ‘Established’ DCM members seem to all know each other and be friends and do little to reach out socially to new members or members outside their social circle. During announcements, the piece about being welcoming and asking members to introduce themselves feel empty especially as someone who has attended DC Minyan for the last six years. Being welcoming and becoming a welcoming community is a tone set by current and past leadership.”

The leadership of DCM has long heard complaints about DC Minyan’s friendliness. Therefore, it may be surprising to learn that among the members who participated in the Dialogue process, 79 respondents said that they feel welcome. Nonetheless, even among those who feel welcome, 40 said DCM is socially divided or cliquey. This seems to indicate a sense that while the participants feel socially comfortable at DC Minyan, they recognize that others may not share that experience. Fifteen people expressed this view more strongly, saying that they are only somewhat comfortable at DC Minyan. Finally, a third group of participants (20) said that they do not feel welcome. There is clearly room for growth in this area, but it is heartening to note that so many Dialogue participants feel personally comfortable and welcomed at DC Minyan. We believe that people come to DCM for community and want to expand their social circles, so DC Minyan should assist by offering additional opportunities for them to do so.

### *Programmatic Suggestions*

As people are looking for opportunities to meet one another, small group activities are critical. Hosted meals were the most popular programmatic suggestion related to this issue (25) as they offer a relaxed environment in which members of the community can get to know one another. People described many variations on this theme, including Shabbat clusters, new member meal

matching, regular Friday night dinners in people's homes, larger community meals with assigned seating and name tags and a policy of making room for people who did not sign up at community meals such as setting aside 10 or so places for walk ins. One problem that arises in this context is the challenge of the current kashrut policy. This issue will be discussed further below. In addition, six participants suggested that additional social events would improve the tone at DC Minyan and four people recommended new member events as an opportunity to create a welcoming tone.

Other recommendations related to strengthening the leadership's role in establishing a warm community and in increasing efforts to reach out to members of the community. One way to accomplish this would be to enlist the LC further in efforts to invite new members into their homes, engage people in committee work, and expand the group of service leaders. In this context, it may be important to give the LC a more public leadership role. Seven people suggested that members of the leadership introduce themselves and/or announce new members during announcements (as discussed earlier in this report). Four requested that the announcement regarding new members be rephrased as they do not find it welcoming. Two members specifically said it is unwelcoming to publicly announce that a lunch is full, and that it would be better to announce that efforts will be made to accommodate those who did not sign up in advance.

Fifteen people proposed ideas for establishing assigned "welcomers" in the form of greeters or Kiddush ambassadors. Icebreakers during Kiddush is another formal way to encourage people to mingle and meet new people after services.

## Maintaining a Multi-generational Community

"I think this [having a multi-generational community is] really important for sustainability, perspective, and resources, although not immediately important for me personally right now. I really enjoy the multi-generational nature of DCM and I think that as it continues to grow, more thought will need to be put into how DCM can provide the necessary services for the community, i.e. supplementary schooling, bar/bat mitzvah tutoring, and other important lifecycle events."

"I wish we had more older folks to learn from, and I'm not sure where to look or how to engage more of them."

"I'm one of the oldest people around and having a multi-generational community is therefore important. The community is immensely welcoming, and I doubt there is much it could do to attract a more demographically diverse crowd. The Minyan's age distribution is a function of the demographic realities of the larger community, not of any "welcoming deficit."

"[A multi-generational community is ] important, but I don't want supporting kids to come at the expense of other demographics. Because of so many kids, the lobby becomes a place to hang out after Tot Shabbat -- it's loud and distracting and sends a message that we're not serious about davening."

“As a parent with a young child, I appreciate the Minyan's efforts to incorporate babysitting and other programming for small children. That said, I think it's impossible to meet the needs of all constituents at once without undermining the needs of certain groups. For example, the more children who are in shul, the lower the potential for spiritual davening, which appeals to all, but especially those without kids. I wouldn't want to see an expansion of the Minyan's programming in an attempt to meet the needs of families when most families move to the suburbs because of real estate pressures anyway, and the annual influx of young Jewish singles in DC could be better-served by the Minyan if it focused on them.”

In broad strokes, 48% of respondents felt it was either “very” or “somewhat” important to have a multi-generational community at DCM (23% and 25% respectively). Over a third of participants (37%) did not feel it was important, though some of these seemed to recognize that this is a value that may become more important to them over time. Others feel that DCM is already developing as a multi-generational community with the addition of so many young children in the last few years and is not likely to have a significant demographic shift that will allow it to become even more diverse. Whatever weight they placed on establishing a multi-generational community, members were interested in considering how to make the current members feel comfortable and in encouraging diversity in the membership.

The primary obstacle to developing a more generationally diverse community, however, is the “suburban exodus.” Thirty-one participants mentioned the “exodus” as DCM’s greatest challenge in the future, and it will likely continue to have an impact at DCM as families move away to find more space outside the downtown area. It is unclear how DCM can stem that tide, and respondents did not have suggestions that would prevent families from moving away, but there are several programmatic suggestions that may help to maintain demographic balance that welcomes community members of all ages.

### *Programmatic Suggestions*

Suggestions ranged from enhancing the DCM’s image of being intergenerational to engaging with specific demographic groups. For example, two ideas related to the website including posting intergenerational pictures and a web description that describes DCM as an intergenerational community. Other suggestions included encouraging and welcoming DCM attendees who are in an age minority as well as reaching out to people of all ages through partnerships with other communities.

Several suggestions focused on children. For example, people recommended that DCM expand Tot Shabbat programming to two groups, older and younger children; create a preschool; integrate children into services to a greater level; make it easier to attend DCM by offering babysitting at events and by having events at “family friendly hours” like Sunday afternoons; and create teen programming when the time is right.

Participants also suggested programming relating to baby boomers and singles. The suggestion was made to have more “adult only” programming and events in order to accommodate the needs of singles and baby boomers who might prefer not to socialize with toddlers and their parents. Finally, meet and greet events for interns, particularly in the summer, were suggested as ways to reach this group of potential DCM members.

## HALAKHA AND RABBINIC AUTHORITY

“I like feeling empowered and like I have control and say over where the community goes. It also leads to more people being involved and caring about the minyan.”

“I would not want to cede control to a rabbinic authority though I would welcome rabbinic advice.”

“I like that the Minyan is not an institution like a typical shul - we are a lay led community with no rabbi or building fund.”

DCM’s biggest challenge is... “sustaining the Jewish education of the leadership – a high level of knowledge is required for gabbaing, etc. There is a need for educating the community in halacha, etc.”

“I don’t think DCM needs a formal Rabbi. I think one of the great things about DCM is that they make decisions as a community and that there are enough knowledgeable members to do so.”

Never change “the current balance DCM strikes in being traditional/conservadox - combining the seriousness and the intellectual rigor of the Orthodox community with the progressive and egalitarian ethos of the Conservative movement.”

DCM’s biggest challenge is... “stagnation – need to keep it developing while adhering to founding principles.”

“I feel like DCM is bound to the decisions made by the founders seven years ago, when instead we should continue to grow and change. Right now, it feels like we are turning into a stagnant community that is afraid to change - like orthodoxy.”

DC Minyan members want to feel that they are engaging in and controlling their community’s destiny. DCM’s lay-led nature, and the fact average community members have opportunities to grapple with halakhic and philosophical questions are among the aspects of the community that members value most. When asked to describe DCM in three words, 23 members chose words like “lay led” and 20 chose words like “intellectual” or “self-aware.”

Members seem to enjoy the way that DCM straddles movements, taking egalitarian qualities from the Conservative movement and structural elements from Orthodoxy. Twenty-five members said they would use the word “egalitarian” to describe DCM and 80 out of 90 respondents said they are comfortable with DCM’s level of egalitarianism, with only three saying they were uncomfortable. Far from turning people off, the sometimes-painful balancing act between tradition and egalitarianism appears to attract members.

Members also enjoy the davening at DCM a great deal. Twenty-three percent of respondents said the High Holidays (which can so often be seen as boring) are the highlight of the DCM year, and 18% stated that the weekly Shabbat davening is their highlight of the year. Forty-six respondents said they would describe DCM as “inspiring” or having a lot of ruach.

However, members expressed frustration about situations in which they feel they do not have that sense of control over decision-making. In addition, members are frustrated that they feel decisions are made in an opaque manner. If decisions are made without sufficient communication and without sufficient communal input, they feel that some of DCM's core qualities – of being lay-led and communal – are undermined.

### *Programmatic Suggestions*

#### Rabbinic Authority:

DCM members overwhelmingly support the current lay-led leadership style of DCM. Eighty-two respondents said they do not want a full-time rabbi and 11 respondents said DCM should never change its lay-led nature. A number of people said they are attracted to DCM because it is different than the rabbi-led synagogues they grew up with.

Support is also strong for the current system of “behind-the-scenes” rabbinic support for DCM. Sixty-nine members said they like the idea of having someone to answer halakhic questions and generally advise the leadership. Strengthening the current model to create formal relationships with halakhic advisors also might be an appropriate response to the community feedback.

There is also significant support (24 responses) for having a rabbinic figure to help with lifecycle activities and pastoral care. DCM may seek to identify and build relationships with a group of rabbis in the Washington area that members can contact in order to help with weddings, funerals and general pastoral needs.

#### “10 and 10”

The “10 and 10” policy, which states that a minyan consists of 10 men and 10 women, is a source of frustration for a number of DCM members. Nine people identified it as their greatest frustration with DCM and a few of those respondents were frustrated that there is a perceived “gag order” that inhibits discussion of the policy. Many respondents value the thoughtfulness of DCM, and some feel this policy undermines DCM's sense of vibrancy and intellectual challenge. Only one person stated explicitly that they would not want DCM to change the “10 and 10” policy. Of those who expressed strong feelings about the “10 and 10” policy, most are opposed.

At the same time, however, the “10 and 10” policy is a fundamental, long-standing practice of DCM that should not be changed lightly. Eighty of 90 respondents stated that they are comfortable with the level of egalitarianism at DCM, and only three said they are uncomfortable. Thus it seems that the policy is not impeding most people's comfort at DC Minyan.

Based on this data, we therefore recommend DCM conduct a thoughtful, multi-step community conversation about this policy, with an eye toward educating the community about the history of the policy, having an open discussion about it, discussing the threshold that needs to be reached for addressing/revisiting such issues now and in the future and keeping open the possibility of changing it. While the ultimate policy is enormously important, it is equally important that there be a community conversation about the policy, conducted in a thoughtful, text-based way, including a serious examination of the halakhic sources for counting a minyan, an open community conversation about DCM's past attempts to grapple with those sources, and a

transparent decision-making process. The process should be conducted over a sufficient period of time to give all members the opportunity to engage in the conversation and air all views.

Given the survey responses regarding transparency, it is necessary that the process be as open, thoughtful and transparent as possible. Furthermore, a multi-step process would demonstrate that DCM sets a high bar for changing fundamental policies and that it is not taken lightly.

### Separate Seating

By contrast, the data show there is much greater polarization regarding the DCM policy of separate seating for men and women. Eight respondents identified that as their greatest frustration with DCM, but ten respondents said that they would never want to DC Minyan to change the policy. We therefore do not recommend DCM embark on a process to change the policy, as it might cause a deep rift in the community, pleasing only as many people as it would drive away.

### Kashrut Policy

There is also some frustration with the DCM kashrut policy, which states that all DCM events – including meals in individual homes – must be strictly kosher. While there were no complaints about the kashrut policy vis-à-vis Kiddush and the communal meals at the DCJCC, DCM members have a strong desire to host and participate in small meals in individual homes, either through hospitality or through a more formal “cluster” program (27 respondents recommended more small group meals). Since there are only a few strictly kosher homes in the community, the kashrut policy has historically been a major hurdle for the hospitality and “cluster” meals. It may be worth revisiting the policy, in that context. It may be that additional leniencies are possible within the current system (Hadar’s policy, for example, is somewhat more lenient) or it may be appropriate to pair people for meals based on kashrut preferences, rather than maintaining a single standard. Other communities may also face similar struggles and a discussion with them may be fruitful.

## PROGRAMMING

“I felt very connected to the community and could access my spirituality through the davening. That's why I moved closer and why I continue to come.”

The highlight for me is “Shabbat mornings. Yes, I would increase our Shabbat mornings to four times a month. I think this would alleviate a lot of the clique issues as people would see their friends more and have more time to talk to strangers. By simply seeing people more often, there would be a greater feeling of community. I think the DCM needs to consider upping to 4x a month on Shabbat AM very seriously in order for it to grow and really lay down roots.”

“The davening and leyning are consistently of the highest quality and the feeling of community is strong. For me, the Shabbat service lies at the core of what DCM is.”

“The highlight for me is community events, like community lunches or dinner. While I love services, I think it's so important to have opportunities outside of services to be part of the community, and these meals attract all the different people and sub-communities within DC Minyan to come together. It's a chance and opportunity to really meet and get to know other people and to feel like a part of the community. I would like to see more programming beyond services that bring people together, so that DCM is not just a minyan, but a community.”

“I used to feel spiritual, but have lost that since I'm often preoccupied with my son. I would add more opportunities for enriching family celebrations. It's often hard for parents to participate unless it's really kid-friendly. Babysitting doesn't always help because I want to spend time with my son on Shabbat since I work full time and don't get enough quality time.”

“I went to the Shavuot Retreat. I think it was important to have that opportunity to get to know other members better. I'd like more opportunities like that. More sit-down Shabbat lunches (or dinners) would be great in that regard. More social/educational/social action events would be great too.”

The three DC Minyan programs that had by far the most votes as the highlight of the DC Minyan year were Shavuot (37), the High Holidays (32), and Shabbat morning davening (22). It was particularly impressive that Shabbat morning received so much support as the question asked for a single highlight, which may have encouraged people to identify a once-a-year event. It is also noteworthy that all of these events focus heavily on prayer, the core mission of DC Minyan. However, the most popular event, the Shavuot Retreat, mixes prayer with social opportunities. The potential to interact with other DC Minyan members outside of services is clearly a draw for many participants and people note that they have found the Retreat to provide a unique opportunity to build new friendships within the community.

It should be no surprise, then, that many people suggested developing additional opportunities to meet DC Minyan members in warm, small settings. Increasing the number of organized hosted meals (8), or community meals (6) were the most popular programmatic suggestions in this area.

Though the social opportunities that DC Minyan provides are critical to developing a sense of community, the core of DC Minyan is its role as a place of Shabbat prayer. Of those who

completed the survey, 75 members stated that they attend only on Shabbat morning, while only five said that they attend only Friday night. Another 31 attend both services to some degree. Since the majority of DC Minyan members participated in the Dialogue process, this means that either the few who did not participate in the survey are Friday night attendees, or that most people who attend only on Friday night do not join DC Minyan. This raises the question of whether DC Minyan's resources are being used well on Friday night services. An analysis of the costs of the service and the potential for using those funds for additional Shabbat morning services should be explored given that 35 members said they would attend more frequently if services were available. Additional information in the form of a targeted survey might be necessary to confirm interest levels on this issue.

### *Programmatic Suggestions*

Members were very creative and offered a wide range of suggestions for additional programming. Many of the suggestions relate to themes that have been identified throughout this report. Requests related to various types of educational programming, increased service frequency, and social programming.

The suggestions offered are listed below in descending order of popularity:

- More hosted meals (8)
- Community lunches/lunch and learns/dinner and learns (8)
- Shabbat services every week (4)
- Social justice programs/volunteering in the broader community (4)
- Classes to teach skills (3)
- Mini-retreat/shabbaton (3)
- Social programming (2)
- Rosh Chodesh programming
- Panel discussions on relevant/controversial issues in modern Judaism (e.g. ethical kashrut, homosexuality, abortion)
- New members paired with Shabbat dinner at members' home
- Hannukah
- Oneg Shabbat/ Farbrengen
- Speaker series
- Seudah shlishit
- Programming for older members
- Cultural programming for people who don't relate to services
- More community holiday celebrations – sukkah events, etc
- DC Minyan speed dating
- Daily minyan on non-workdays
- Formal dinner, practical halacha classes, women's programming
- Group trip to Israel or a service trip
- Annual picnic

## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants in the survey made dozens of suggestions to improve DC Minyan. We have collected here what we consider to be the “top ten” suggestions that emerged from the data. Most of these are on this list because they were mentioned by a large number of participants and, we believe, respond to the concerns revealed by the data.

We submit these suggestions together with this report to the Steering Committee and Leadership Council for their consideration. We recognize that the leadership will need to evaluate these and other suggestions in this report in the context of broader DC Minyan operations and resource limitations, and that it will take time to implement any of them.

### **Enhancing Community**

1. Increase the frequency of small group events – meals in particular.
2. Make announcements more “friendly.” Introduce the LC more often, announce new members and do not publicly turn people away from lunch-and-learns. Rephrase the “welcoming” announcement. Have leaders who are introduced stand in visible locations during announcements so new people can identify them easily.
3. Establish targets for each member of the leadership (LC, SC, gabbaim, former SC, former LC, former gabbaim) to engage new members and uninvolved members. Reaching out to expand the active volunteer base in DC Minyan will deepen members’ commitment and promote sustainability.
4. Hold a retreat or “shabbaton-in-the-city” during the fall or winter. This could help to increase the sense of community and lower the barriers to meeting new people.

### **Developing Leadership**

5. Give the Leadership Council a more public role. This will help to enhance their sense of “ownership” and responsibility for DCM and improve transparency.
6. Invest in current and future leaders. Formally educate the leaders, by having rabbis or community leaders teach classes to DCM’s gabbaim and leaders about the logistics of running a minyan. It may even be worth sending leaders to Mechon Hadar (or similar institutions) occasionally for courses on these specific issues.

### **Supporting Halakha/Ritual/Pastoral Care**

7. Develop relationships with DC Jewish community leaders – rabbis and other professionals – who would be willing to assist DCM Members with halakhic questions and lifecycle events. Post their bios, backgrounds and contact information on the DCM website, so people in the community may reach out to them directly.
8. Post an FAQ section on the website outlining DCM’s ritual and halakhic policies, as well as the process that was put into place for arriving at those decisions.
9. Review the kashrut policy. DCM seeks to ensure that all members are comfortable with the kashrut at DCM events, but there may be creative ways to ensure that every individual is comfortable without imposing a single kashrut policy for events like small group meals, for which there is overwhelming support.
10. Reconsider the “10 and 10” policy of counting a Minyan. It is – at the very least – worth conducting a more direct education campaign about the policy, explaining the origins of DCM’s decision, keeping open the possibility of changing the policy. Given members’ responses to the Dialogue questions it seems likely that the community would respond well to a transparent process of educated reconsideration.

## APPENDIX I - SAMPLE OF THE DATA

### *Top Challenges DCM Faces:*

Demography, Generally: 76

- Suburban exodus: 31
- Balancing different generations: 28
- Children: 17

Leadership issues: 46

- Remaining Lay led: 17
- Keeping an educated leader base: 19
- Rabbi: 5
- Transparency: 5

Halakhic issues: 27

- 3 of those mentioned 10/10 specifically

### *Greatest Frustration at DCM:*

Social issues: 25

- Cliquey-ness: 17
- Welcoming: 8

Religious issues: 17

- Sep seating: 8
- Not egal enough: 9

Leadership: 11

Want to meet weekly: 10

Other issues included (no problems, stagnation, gym, divrei torah, gabbai issues, education programs, Fri/Sat integration, Kashrut, GLBTQ issues)

### *Greatest Joys at DCM:*

Social issues: 20

- People: 9
- Community: 11

Davening/Ruach: 17

Vibrancy: 7

Lay Led: 7

Others included (non-judgementalism, education, Beit Midrash, Egal, Dialogue, Jeremy Kadden's davening, HH Davening, Hebrew prayers)

***Don't Go Changing:***

Egalitarianism: 15

Lay led nature: 11

Ruach/Vibrancy: 11

Separate Seating: 10

Balance of Tradition and Egalitarianism: 9

***Recommendations to improve perceived welcoming-ness at DCM:***

Small events, generally: 31

- Shabbat Cluster/Small group meals: 25
- More hospitality: 2
  - Two people mentioned the hurdle of the Kashrut policy
- Small group events: 4

Leadership issues: 24

- Leadership needs to do more: 14
- General improvement of tone: 6
- Transparency would help: 4

More events, generally: 15

- More social events: 6
- Community meals: 4
- New member events: 4
- Shabbaton: 1

Assigned roles for welcoming: 15

- Ambassadors/Kiddush minglers: 9
- Greeters: 6

Improving community meals: 13

- Name tags (at meals, mostly): 5
- Assigned seating at meals: 5
- Don't publicly turn people away from lunches: 3

Announcements, generally: 11

- Announce new people publicly: 4
- Make Announcements more friendly/genuine: 4
- Introduce each other at announcements: 3

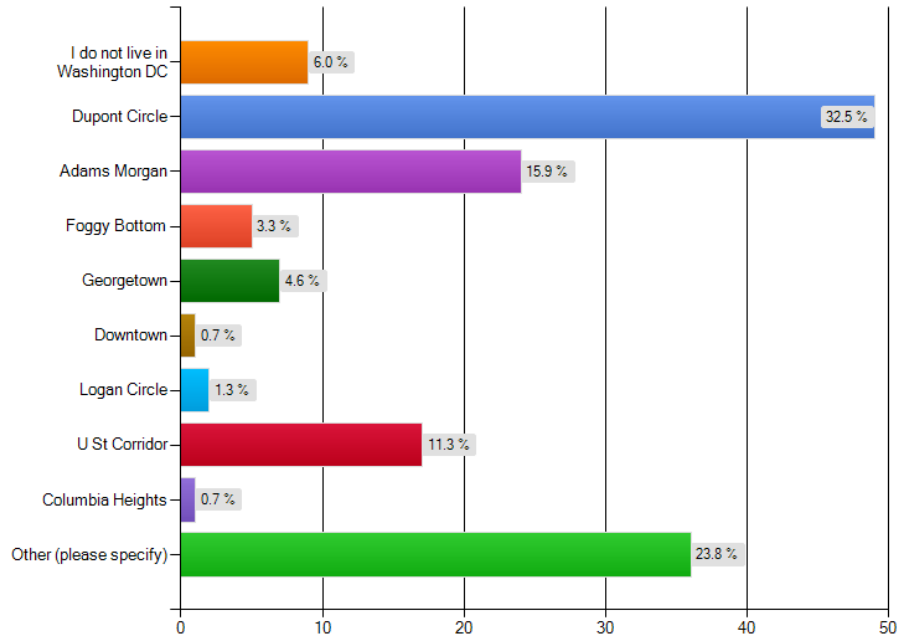
***Favorite event of the DCM year:***

Shabbat morning	18%
Purim	7%
Aichah	2%
Kids leading	1%
High holidays	23%
Simchat torah	2%
Shavuot	27%
Community meals	5%
Kabbalat Shabbat	2%
Beit Midrash	1%

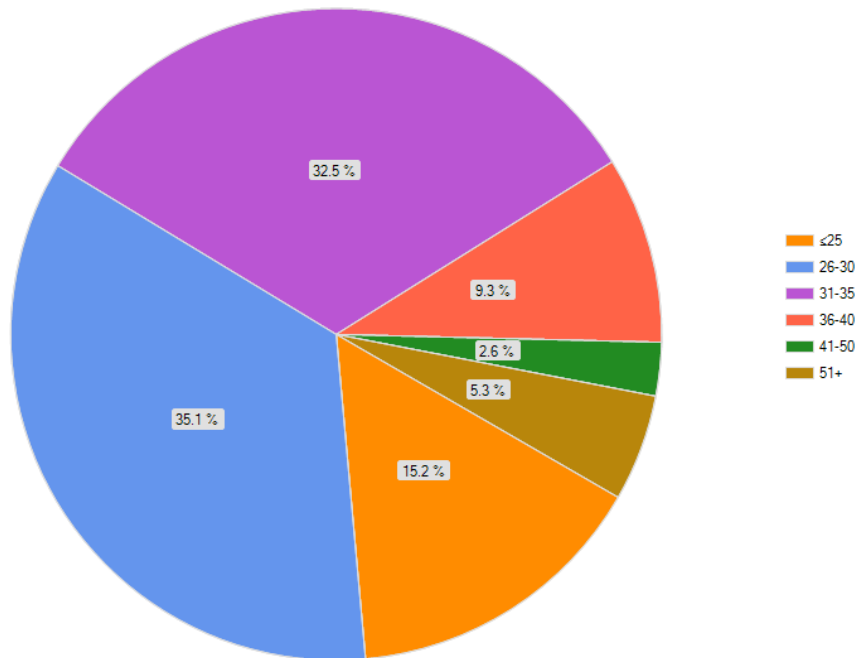
***How do you learn about events at DCM?***

Email	75%
Word of mouth	26%
Website	11%
Shul announcements	28%

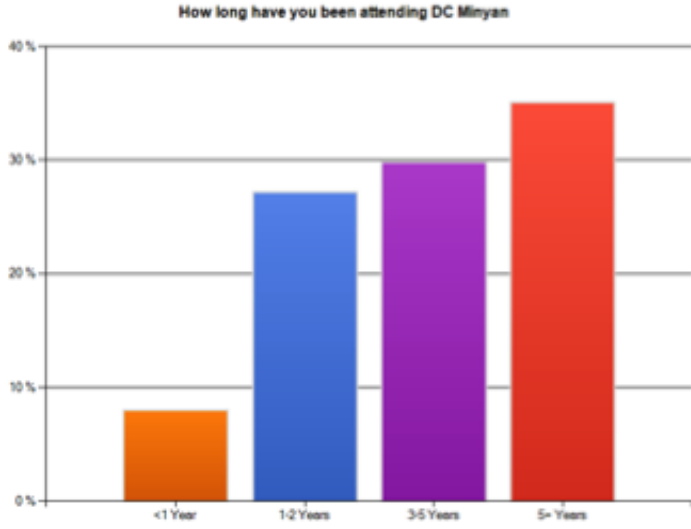
**What neighborhood in Washington DC do you live in (if applicable)**



**Please indicate your age range:**

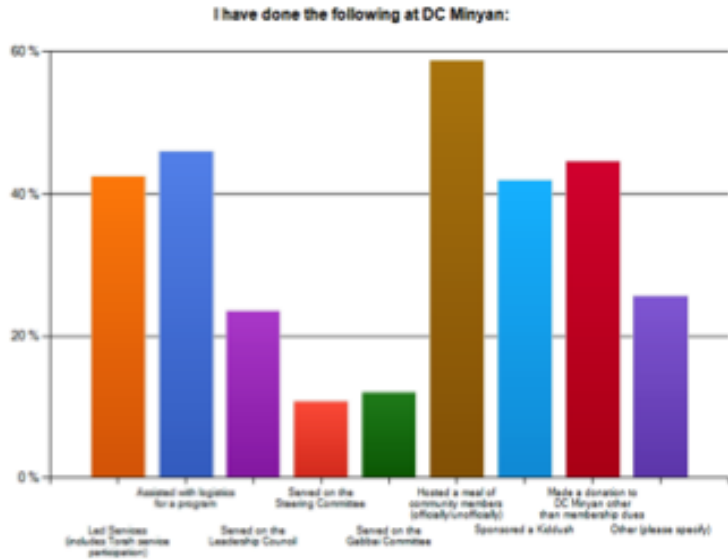


# How Long Have You Been Attending DC Minyan?

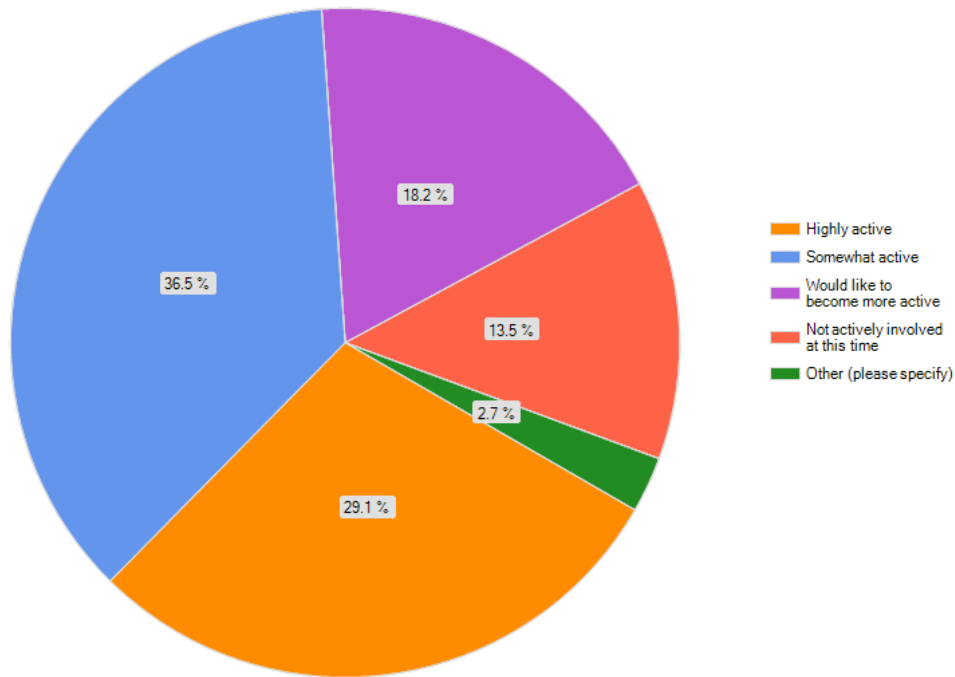


- More than 50% of respondents are longer term attendees.
  - Are DC Minyan attendees less transient than typical DC residents?

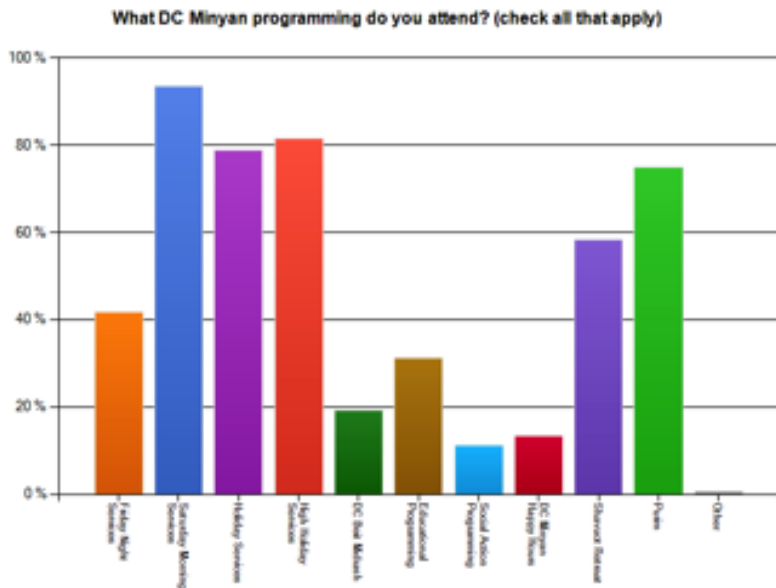
# I Have Done the Following at DC Minyan:



How would you characterize your level of involvement in DC Minyan?



## What DC Minyan Programming Do You Attend?



- Most respondents attend DC Minyan's religious programming, especially Shabbat morning, Purim, Holiday and High Holiday services
- 94% of respondents who attend Friday night also attend Saturday morning
- Only 42% of respondents who attend Saturday morning also attend Friday night

## APPENDIX II- QUESTIONNAIRE

### DC Minyan Dialogue Questions

Thank you so much for filling out this form; it will help to ensure that your feedback and ideas are included in the synthesis document that we create at the conclusion of this process. Please let us know if you have any questions. You can also email us with questions or suggestions at [dialogue@dcminyan.org](mailto:dialogue@dcminyan.org) after today's event.

#### **Community Snapshot:**

1. How long have you been attending DC Minyan?

<1 year      1-2 years      3-5 years      5+ years

2. How frequently do you attend DC Minyan?

Weekly      Twice a Month      Monthly      Occasionally      High Holidays  
Other\_\_\_\_\_

3. What other synagogues/minyanim do you attend? How regularly do you attend?

4. What DC Minyan programming do you attend? (Circle all that apply)

- Friday Night Services
- Saturday Morning Services
- Holiday Services
- High Holiday Services
- DC Beit Midrash
- Educational Programming
- Social Action Programming
- DC Minyan Happy Hours
- Shavuot Retreat
- Purim
- Other:\_\_\_\_\_

5. Where do you live?

Washington DC  
Baltimore

Maryland Suburbs  
Other:\_\_\_\_\_

Virginia Suburbs

If you live in Washington DC, which neighborhood do you live in?

Dupont

Adams Morgan

U St

Columbia Heights

Foggy Bottom

Georgetown

Capitol Hill

Shepherd Park

Other\_\_\_\_\_

- If you moved out of DC, would you still attend DC Minyan even if you lived further away? (yes/no)

6. Please indicate your age range:

25 and under

26-30

31-35

36-40

41-50

51+

7. Please indicate your gender:

8. What is your current profession? (i.e., teacher/doctor/lawyer/student, etc):

9. Are you married or living with a partner? (yes/no)

10. Do you have children? (yes/no)

- If so, how many children do you have?
- What are their ages?

0-2

3-5

5-8

8-13

14-18

adult

11. How would you characterize your level of involvement in DC Minyan?

Highly active

Somewhat active

Would like to become more involved

Not actively involved at this time

12. I have (circle all that apply):

- Led services (reading Torah or leading t'fillah)
- Assisted with logistics for a program
- Organized a program
- Served on the leadership council
- Served on the Steering Committee
- Served as a gabbai
- Hosted a meal of community members (officially or unofficially)
- Sponsored Kiddush
- Made a donation to DC minyan other than for membership

13. Are you a member of DC Minyan? (yes/no)

Please indicate your level of agreement for the statement below using the following options:  
Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

14. I feel that DCM is halakhically in-line with my beliefs.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

15. I understand how DCM makes religious decisions.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

16. I prefer a lay-led congregation and community.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

17. I understand how DCM makes organization/policy decisions.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

18. DCM provides the right amount of programming.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

19. DCM provides the type of programming I am seeking.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

20. DCM provides the right amount of opportunities for involvement.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

21. I am looking for more ways to help at DC Minyan.

*Strongly Agree*    *Somewhat Agree*    *Neutral*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

### **A Deeper Look**

1. What drew you to DC Minyan? Why do you come to DCM, if you do? Why did you become a member?
2. If you volunteered previously with the DCM, what inspired you to do that? What other roles would you like to play at the Minyan? What might inspire you to do more? What are the obstacles to your volunteering?
3. How do you learn about events at the DCM?
4. What is the highlight of the DCM year for you? What are the qualities of the event make it a highlight? Would you want to see it repeated in some form? If you could add one program or series of programs to the calendar, what would it be?
5. How important is a multi-generational community to you? If it is important, how can the community welcome and sustain different demographic groups (e.g. families with young children and children in school, baby boomers)?

6. Do you feel welcome at DCM? Why do you feel welcome or unwelcome? What ideas do you have to make DCM feel more welcoming?
7. What are DC Minyan's top three challenges in the coming years?
8. What is your largest frustration with DCM?
9. Has there been a time when you wanted to change something with the DCM? Did you try to reach out to the leadership? What did you try? Were you successful?
10. What is one thing you would never want DC Minyan to change about itself?
11. DCM makes ritual decisions on the basis of precedent, consultation with an array of DCM members, assessment of community members' thoughts, and advice from Rabbi Ethan Tucker. Are you looking in the long-term to have a full-time, rabbi in your shul or religious community? Would a formal consulting relationship with a rabbinic authority meet your needs? What other needs, outside of halakhic authority, would you need met (e.g. pastoral care)?
12. Do you feel that you are halakhically to the left or to the right of where the DCM is? Do you feel halakhically comfortable at the DCM? If you are uncomfortable, please tell us why. Are you comfortable with the level of egalitarianism? If you are uncomfortable, please tell us why.
13. Which services (Friday night/Saturday morning) do you attend? If you attend only one, why do you attend one and not the other? Do you think greater integration should be achieved between the two and, if so, how could DCM achieve it? Would you attend either service more frequently if it were available?
14. What are three words that come to you when you think of the DCM? What do you think is the core (neshama) of the DCM?
15. Anything else you'd like to add?

Thank you for participating in the process! Over the next few months, we will be collecting information through the community conversations and surveys and we will make the results available to DC Minyan members in the fall. If you have any questions, feel free to contact [dialogue@dcminyan.org](mailto:dialogue@dcminyan.org).

If you would like to leave your name and email address so we can follow up with you, please feel free to do so here, though it is purely optional.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you once again!