A BOOK OF WELCOME

Name of Congregation: Congregation Beth David
Address: 2932 Augusta Street
   San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Phone Number: (805) 544-0760
Number of Members: 186
UAHC Region: Pacific Southwest Council
Rabbi: Norman Mendel
Outreach Chair: Jayne Simon

Brief Description: This is a book of welcome which contains: a letter of greeting, a prayer, good food recipes for the Jewish holidays and personal stories about the recipes.

Program Goal: To make a warm connection between the congregation and our newest Jewish souls. To build a bridge of support and friendship with new Jews-by-Choice.

Target Population: New converts to Judaism
Number of Participants: Varies from year to year
Staffing Required: Someone to collect recipes and a good typist.
Total Cost of Program: Materials for book
Source of Funding: General budget funds

Logistics: Materials for notebooks: label makers, computer for entry, plastic page covers. We present the book at Shabbat services when there is a conversion.

Instructions to Facilitator: Ask congregants for their favorite recipes and the anecdotes that surround the particular dish. Make sure they know that their recipes will help new Jews to make their own Jewish memories during the holidays and Shabbat. Write a warm and supportive letter of welcome to our community as a forward to the cookbook.

Evaluation of Program: Those who have received these books have thoroughly enjoyed the recipes but have also said they have felt able to make a connection with the members of our congregation who have contributed their stories. Those who contributed felt closer and became more involved with our “new members” and with Outreach efforts in our synagogue.

Follow-up: We call the recipients of the book after six months and then after a year. They say they use the book often and that they appreciated the opportunity to connect with the writers (members they had not known before). They felt welcomed and nurtured in a special way.