

RABBI DEBORAH KAIZ BRAVO, R.J.E.

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EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE AS RABBI

2015-PRESENT **Spiritual Leader and Rabbinic Guide**

Makom NY: A New Kind of Jewish Community

Long Island, NY

- Created in partnership with volunteers a new kind of community, one without walls that is primarily geared toward the unaffiliated and disengaged Jews on Long Island
- Vision, plan and implement all aspects of this community as entrepreneurial rabbi
- Create new and different partnerships in the greater community
- “Find Jews” in unusual ways and through different means, including outreach via funeral homes, grocery stores, gyms and more
- Create and lead intentional worship in multiple sacred spaces, facilitate adult study and children’s learning, fundraise in order to give Makom NY financial stability
- Meet specific needs of a variety of Jews, including interfaith, young adults, college students, families with children with special needs, singles, empty nesters and more

2012-2015

Senior Rabbi, North Shore Synagogue

Syosset, NY

- Served as Senior Rabbi of 700-family Reform congregation
- Supervised senior staff, including Associate Rabbi, Cantors, Director of Lifelong Learning, Director of Youth Engagement and Nursery School Director
- Worked in partnership with executive director and leadership of congregation to vision and plan for changing landscape of Jewish community
- Planned and implemented worship, adult, youth and family learning, pastoral needs, social justice activities, membership and marketing events
- Re-imagined role of congregation in greater Jewish and secular community
- Brought dynamic and energetic team of staff together to move forward with vision
- Enhanced worship to reach congregants of all ages, with a weekly full sanctuary
- Worked weekly with B’nai Mitzvah students, confirmation students, adult learners, including finding a place for all kinds of learners within the community
- Planned and implemented Shabbat and holiday services; overseeing worship activities
- Worked intensely in 2012-13 to solidify the merger of Temple Beth Elohim with North Shore Synagogue, completed July 2013, bringing 162 new families
- Brought Judaism to people and built relationships by opening my home to hundreds of congregants for Shabbat and holiday celebrations
- Created relationship with 175 nursery school students and their families through weekly Shabbat experiences and Tot Shabbat service and craft
- Participated in religious school regularly, building relationships with students and families; re-designed weekly t’fillah, chats with rabbi, family programs and more
- Led intergenerational trip to Israel, first one in many years, with 5 b’nai mitzvah

2006-2012

Rabbi, Temple Emanu-El

Edison, NJ

- Served as solo Rabbi at 250-family Reform congregation
- Brought new energy and excitement to members of congregation and greater community through changing worship, increased visibility and clearer vision

- Supervised staff and partnered with lay leaders regularly
- Reinvigorated worship: created well-attended musical services on Fridays and Saturdays; family, tot and healing services
- Re-imagined High Holy Day services, added tot services and created “big tent”
- Enhanced Selichot services: joined with greater Jewish community, for evening of song and prayer, with over 150 in attendance annually
- Organized and taught adult B’nai Mitzvah classes, conversion classes, weekly lunch n’learn and Shabbat morning Torah study
- Pastored to aging congregation through counseling and hospital visits.
- Introduced congregation to live musical experiences, including Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, Danny Maseng, Peri Smilow, Rick Recht, Dan Nichols
- Enhanced congregation’s relationship with Israel, leading first 3 congregational Israel trips within 4 years; led the congregation in a pilot program through ARZA
- Worked to enhance an already active social action agenda, including a 5-day Mitzvah Mission to New Orleans with 44 individuals from 10-80 years old.
- Collaborated with URJ and Greenfaith, an interfaith environment organization, to become certified green congregation after 2 years of audits, study and planning.
- Provided interfaith learning to Temple community, including pulpit exchanges and dialogue; participated in all community-wide interfaith programming.
- Re-designed Chai School program for 8th-12th graders, introducing NFTY, RAC L’taken weekends, leading congregational teen Israel trip and URJ Camps, thereby increasing post B’nai Mitzvah retention to up to 80%

2001-2006

**Associate Rabbi, Director of Religious Education
Congregation B’nai Jeshurun**

Short Hills, NJ

- Served as Rabbi and Rabbi Educator at 1100-family suburban Reform congregation
- Organized and taught Adult B’nai Mitzvah, senior classes and Torah study
- Reinvigorated Temple’s annual Mitzvah Day, with over 600 participants annually
- Restructured membership committee and worked continually to seek prospective members, welcome new members, retain long-time members and interfaith families
- Helped congregation transition to new Senior Rabbi, Educator, Executive Director and Experiential Education Coordinator, assisted with marketing, administration
- Oversaw certain scholarships, funds and development opportunities
- Created and taught in 7-4-7 program for 7th graders and Chai School program for 8th-12th grades, including confirmation and post-confirmation, hosted at own home
- Established early childhood programming including Hebrew language classes, monthly Tot Shabbat service and family programs attended by hundreds.
- Participated with clergy team in all aspects of life cycle, pastoral work, worship, family programs and education, and as liaison to committees and auxiliaries.
- Wrote new curriculum for religious school of 400 students from kindergarten through 10th grade; restructured Hebrew program with new books and goals
- Supervised and guided 35 teachers of all grades; hired and oversaw youth director
- Led weekly services for all students; taught Parashat HaShavua
- Proposed and managed budget for entire education program
- Created and implemented family Shabbat dinners and services, grade-level family programs, including adult education components; restructured holiday programs
- Taught, coordinated and restructured 10th grade Confirmation program, including trips to Washington DC and Jewish New York City
- Wrote, created and directed “Children’s Voices of Healing”, a video with Debbie Friedman and religious school students, distributed to those who were homebound

- 1998-2001 Assistant Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation Washington, DC**
- Served as rabbi at 3000-family urban Reform congregation.
 - Taught Adult B'nai Mitzvah class, Confirmation class, city-wide URJ Introduction to Judaism course, weekly Bible class and Torah study, lectured for adults and community
 - Partnered as liaison to sisterhood; led monthly Rosh Chodesh services and discussions; created first annual Women's Seder with Debbie Friedman
 - Facilitated programs for Young Professionals and middle-age singles
 - Designed and implemented holiday celebrations, creative Shabbat services, Tu B'Shevat Seder, Rosh Hashanah Family Service and Havdalah for day school
 - Created and facilitated new Kabbalat Shabbat monthly family program and service
 - Collaborated with development director in securing funding for youth programs
 - Supervised first full time youth director and entire informal youth program
 - Initiated and organized post Confirmation program for 11th and 12th graders
 - Created and coordinated full-weekend retreats for eighth and ninth grade students
 - Participated in all aspects of life cycle events; led services, preached and taught; regularly visited congregants in hospitals and counseled those in need.

EXPERIENCE WITH FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION / TEACHING

- 2000-2015 Faculty, NFTY Summer Israel and Eastern Europe Trip, Camps Harlam, Crane Lake and 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy**
- 1998-2012 Regional Rabbinic Advisor, NFTY - Garden Empire and Mid-Atlantic Regions**
- 1993-1996 Director, Cincinnati Reform Jewish High School, Cincinnati, OH**
Directed school for over 225 high school students from four Reform congregations
- 1995-1996 Day School Teacher, Yavneh Day School, Cincinnati, OH**
- Summers 1987-1995 Staff Unit Head, Unit Head, Counselor:**
URJ Olin Sang Ruby Union Institute, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin
- Summers 1994, 1995 Teen Experience Coordinator, Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), Bloomington, Indiana and Amherst, Massachusetts**

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

- 2008-2011 New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies**
Courses in Fundraising and Development
- 2005 Reform Jewish Educator (RJE) Title**
Granted by National Association of Temple Educators
- June 1998 Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH**
Rabbinic Ordination, Masters of Arts in Hebrew Letters
Rabbinical Thesis: *The Relationship Between Teacher and Student in the Yeshivah Model: Past, Present and Future.*
- 1996-1997 Chaplain Intern, Jewish Hospitals of Cincinnati**
Participated in chaplaincy program through HUC-JIR and Jewish Hospitals.
- 1993-1995 Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH**
Master of Education, concentrating in administration and supervision, with emphasis on educational counseling. Graduated with honors.

1991 **Washington University, St. Louis, MO**
Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Jewish and Near Eastern Studies.
Dean's list. Semester abroad at Haifa University.

SAMPLING OF BOARDS, CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, COMMITTEES, ARTICLES

2016-2017 **Participant**, Rabbis Without Borders Cohort, CLAL

2012-2015 **Member**, Action Learning Teams, Advancing Women Professionals

2008-Present **Executive Committee Member and Member**, New York Board of Rabbis

2008-Present **Rabbinic Partner**, Big Tent Judaism (Formerly Jewish Outreach Institute)

2013-2015 **Programming Vice President**, CCAR Board of Trustees

2013 **Teacher**, New York Board of Rabbis, Summer Sermon Seminar

2012 **Article**, eJewishphilanthropy, NJ Jewish News, "Liberals Are That Way Too?"

2007-2012 **Co-Chair and Member**, CCAR Convention Program Committee
Chaired National Convention in 2012 in Boston.

2011 **Chair**, WRN National Convention in Long Beach, NJ

2011 **Member**, HUC-JIR, NY, Admissions Committee

2009-2011 **President**, New Jersey West Hudson Valley – Association of Reform Rabbis

2009-2010 **Member**, NFTY Strategic Planning Committee

2005-2009 **Member**, URJ Junior/Senior High School Committee

2008-2010 **President**, Metuchen-Edison Area Interfaith Clergy

2009 **Author**, Chapter in URJ's Tot Shabbat Handbook: A Practical Guide for Engaging Young Families in Congregational Life, "Essentials in Conducting Tot Shabbat".

2005-2009 **Presenter**, URJ 's National Biennial in Toronto, ON and Houston, TX
URJ/NATE Symposium on Adolescence

2008 **Article**, Women's Rabbinic Network Newsletter, Issue on Health Concerns
"When Hello Means Goodbye: Issues of Loss at Birth"

2007-2012 **Member**, Jewish Federation of Middlesex County, Endowment Committee

2007-2009 **Member**, Women's Rabbinic Network Board of Directors, HUC-JIR New York Liaison

2005-2009 **Teacher**, NFTY National Conventions

2005 **Article**, URJ *Torah at the Center*, Issue on Adolescence
"Open Your Heart, Open Their Minds: Connecting with Today's Teens"

2005 **Member**, Partnering Communities and Teen Task Forces, Metrowest JCC

2004 **Presenter**, 1st Annual ECC Educator Conference in New York, NY