

Rabbi Geoffrey Brown to Join Temple Israel

(Vestal, NY; 24 May 2017) Temple Israel is pleased to announce that Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will be engaged as full-time Rabbi of Temple Israel.



Rabbi Geoffrey Brown was ordained in April 2017 at the Academy of Jewish Religion, a non-denominational Jewish seminary in Yonkers, NY, that trains Rabbi candidates to serve a broad range of congregational needs. His previous education includes an MA in Jewish Studies from Gratz College in Philadelphia, a BA from Drake University (Biology and Hebrew), and a year at Tel Aviv University in Israel.

Rabbi Brown has served as Interim Rabbi at Temple Israel from November 2016 through May 2017. He impressed all with his openness and spirited engagement. During his bi-monthly weekends at TI, he has lead Shabbat Services, provided scholarly meaningful sermons, taught interesting study sessions, made pastoral visits, and brought energy to everything he touches. His contribution has only been limited by his time on site. "Over months of davening and learning together, Rabbi Brown has demonstrated that he is a great fit for us," said TI President Richard Schneierson. "Rabbi Brown has connected well with TI and our community, and we are pleased that he has accepted our offer to join Temple Israel."

Rabbi Brown brings to Temple Israel a wealth of experience, including various rabbinic, teaching, and summer camp positions at numerous Jewish institutions. Most recently, he served as Interim Rabbi in York, PA. He was formerly Director of Jewish Student Life at UNC Chapel Hill, NC; and previous to that, Hillel Director at the College of William & Mary. He served as Jewish Education Council Director at the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater in Virginia Beach, VA, after a stint as Head of Religious School at Or Atid Congregation in Richmond, VA. In addition to his dedication to Jewish institutions, Rabbi Brown cares deeply about the environment, and he served five years as Administrator of the Environmental Quality Institute in Asheville, NC. Early in his career, he was Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center in Asheville, NC.

Rabbi Brown has already secured a home in Vestal, a short walk from TI, and will take up his post after the July 4th holiday. After living the past five years in Harlem, this avid cyclist is looking forward to the green spaces and open roads of the Southern Tier. His wife Elissa is also an accomplished educator, currently Director of the Center for Gifted and Distinguished Lecturer at Hunter College with oversight to Hunter Campus Schools.

The first Shabbat services with Rabbi Brown as full-time Rabbi of Temple Israel will be 7-8 July. Rabbi Brown commented: "I have been very impressed with the dedication of the Temple Israel congregation in their perseverance through difficult times, and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to serve the needs of our congregation and to work with the lay leadership to grow Temple Israel and fulfill our egalitarian Conservative mission." Please join the Temple Israel family in welcoming Rabbi Brown and Elissa to our community.

~ Arthur B. Siegel