

Temple Beth Tikvah Rabbi Search Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Why are we conducting a search for a new Rabbi?

On June 30, 2012, Rabbi Kogan will be leaving Temple Beth Tikvah. We are now engaged in a search to find a new rabbi to partner with us in the next phase of the life of Temple Beth Tikvah.

2. Who selects the new Rabbi?

As directed in our by-laws, the President of the Board of Directors, Wendy Bluemling, has appointed a Rabbi Search Committee (RSC) to search for and recommend a new rabbi to the Board of Directors. The Search Committee is chaired by Suzanne Frisch and is composed of 12 additional voting members plus Wendy Bluemling, President, ex officio and Al Goldberg, President-Elect, ex officio.

The members of the Search Committee are:

Allison Barasz
Sandy Brand
Ellen Buller
Rick Calvert
Barb Chupp
Sue Groll
Nancy Kahrmanis
Alan Meyers
Heide Mueller-Hatton
Ben Muskin
Joel Silidker
Walter Spigelman

The Rabbi Search Committee is comprised of a diverse and dedicated group of congregants. This group represents a wide range of the Temple Beth Tikvah community, but at the same time is small enough to work effectively and efficiently on behalf of our congregation. Within the next month, the committee will submit an application to the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) which is the rabbinic organization of the American reform movement. The committee will then begin a methodical process of reviewing resumes, interviewing applicants and meeting candidates for the position of our rabbi. The Search Committee is charged with selecting one candidate to recommend to the Board of Directors as our next rabbi. The Board then has the responsibility to decide if they approve the candidate. Ultimately, the Board of Directors makes the final decision to hire the new rabbi. ([Back to page 1](#))

3. What is the process for selecting a new Rabbi?

The Rabbi Search Committee has been appointed and begun its work on behalf of our congregation.

The committee's work involves identifying and representing the needs and desires of the congregation, research, communication, recruitment, interviews, making an offer and contract negotiation. We would like to hear from you, our congregation, on the qualities and skills that we are seeking in our new rabbi. If you have thoughts that you would like to share please contact the Search Committee at rabbisearch@templebethtikvahct.org.

As a member of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), TBT is required to participate in a search process governed by the Rabbinical Placement Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. The CCAR provides the application form for our rabbi search and posts the application to its online database of congregations searching for rabbis.

Our application is prepared by the Search Committee to provide information about our congregation's shared values, philosophy, history, future goals, community and staff.

Eligible rabbis interested in our position may request that the CCAR forward their resumes and background information to the TBT Search Committee.

We will keep you informed of the search process on a monthly basis with articles in the Shofar and on the website. You may also receive occasional email updates and announcements from the RSC. ([Back to page 1](#))

4. What is the timeline for the search?

Our search officially began on May 15, 2011 with the charge from the President of the Board to the Search Committee. It is our goal to adhere as closely as possible to the following timeline:

Spring 2011: President appoints Search Committee members; Rabbi Search Committee organizes, sets goals and outlines tasks, develops initial application to CCAR, invites congregational feedback on application, delineates strategies for initial interviews & candidate visits.

Summer 2011: RSC posts "final" CCAR application if changes or updates are needed; RSC begins to review resumes and conduct initial telephone interviews.

Fall 2011: RSC continues to review rabbi applications, conducts interviews and makes site visits to selected candidates' congregations if appropriate.

Late Fall 2011 – Early Winter 2012: Final Candidates are invited to TBT for personal interviews and to participate in services at TBT; after deliberation, RSC recommends a candidate to Board for approval. Board approves new Rabbi.

Spring 2012: Transition Committee begins work to welcome new Rabbi.

July 1, 2012: Temple Beth Tikvah welcomes new Rabbi. ([Back to page 1](#))

5. What characteristics and skills are you looking for in the new Rabbi?

The RSC is using the wealth of information gathered in our 2008 congregational survey and focus groups and the 2009 - 2010 congregational conversations paired with the lessons from our experiences and reflections during the last three years to understand the nature of our community, our vision of TBT and to describe the qualities and behaviors we seek in a rabbi. As we move forward in the search process, the RSC desires your input to supplement this information about who we currently are and what we are looking for. We are searching for a rabbi with the skills and personal attributes to help us achieve our goals, even as we recognize that no one person (rabbi) is “perfect.” ([Back to page 1](#))

6. How much experience is required to be considered as a candidate for the position of Rabbi at Temple Beth Tikvah?

The CCAR stipulates that only rabbis with three or more years of rabbinic experience can apply for positions as rabbi at Temple Beth Tikvah because we have between 301 and 599 member households. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

7. What opportunities will there be for congregants to participate in the search process? How can I share my thoughts about the search process or other ideas I have with the Rabbi Search Committee?

The committee wants to hear from you in the search for our new rabbi.

1. Respond to the CCAR application after it is posted for your comments on the TBT website (expect this in early June 2011).

2. Send an email to rabbisearch@templebethtikvahct.org with your comments.

We encourage you to share your thoughts about the search process, your vision for the future of Temple Beth Tikvah and other relevant topics with members of the RSC. You can send your comments or speak to any of the search committee members. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

8. Why is the search process kept confidential?

The Rabbinical Placement Commission rules and procedures require that the names and resumes of candidates remain confidential. A chief reason for confidentiality is that the mere suggestion or rumor that a rabbi is considering another congregation may tarnish his or her current employment relationship to the great detriment of all parties. In addition, the RSC must address many personal facts about applicants that are not appropriate for the public domain. Only by assuring confidentiality will the RSC achieve open and frank discussions by and about those who apply.

The Rabbinical Placement Commission, however, does require that a rabbi notify at least one officer (preferably the president) within his/her present congregation if the rabbi does submit a resume. After the RSC identifies its final candidates, they will be invited to visit TBT. At that time, their names and credentials will become public. In order to assure the highest ethical standards of practice in our search, however, the remainder of the search process must and will remain confidential. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

9. Will my communications with the Rabbi Search Committee be confidential?

Yes. The RSC wants to be as open, informative and accessible as possible in conducting the rabbi search, while at the same time protecting the privacy of applicants and fostering complete candor in both committee deliberations and in private communications with congregants and others. These somewhat competing goals will require that the RSC solicit advice from the members of the congregation and Board of Directors as it deems appropriate and that all deliberations of the RSC take place in executive session and be kept strictly confidential. It is our ethical obligation, as well as the CCAR placement rule, to honor this confidentiality.

We will respect your privacy as well. All input that we receive will be held in the strictest confidence and will be shared only within the RSC. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

Please understand that anonymous input will not be accepted or considered.

10. How are you advertising the opening?

We will post the position with the Central Conference of American Rabbis which is the primary resource for Reform Rabbis searching for a pulpit. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

11. Why are we posting only with the Reform movement?

Each accredited rabbinical seminary (the Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, University of Judaism, the Jewish Theological Seminary and Yeshiva University) is affiliated with a specific movement of Judaism and the movement's umbrella organization of member congregations.

Temple Beth Tikvah is formally affiliated with the reform movement. The reform seminary, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, specifically serves the needs and concerns of Reform Jews. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

12. Will we hear about the process as it proceeds? How?

Yes, the RSC will post monthly updates in the Shofar and on the TBT website at www.templebethtikvahct.org. In addition, you may on occasion receive updates from the RSC by email. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

13. How will the Rabbi Search affect our search for a new Cantor?

After careful consideration, the Board of Directors decided that it is in TBT's best interest to hire a new rabbi before we hire a new cantor in order for our new rabbi to be our partner in the selection process. Therefore, per the Board's request, the Cantor Search Committee has contracted with a cantor who will be available for the High Holy Days and on four occasions next year to provide us with special musical weekends. In addition, we are extraordinarily fortunate to have our cantorial soloist, Rick Calvert, who will be with us for many Shabbat services, special occasions and religious school. Our choir, under the direction of Frank May and with the support of Walter Stutzman has scheduled additional Shabbat services to further enhance our musical experience.

Our Cantorial Search Committee will resume the active search for a new cantor at the request of the Board once the rabbi search is completed. [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

14. How can I contact the Rabbinic Search Committee with my comments?

Please send an email to rabbisearch@templebethtikvahct.org with your comments or you can send your comments or speak to any of the search committee members. Click here to see your search committee members ([TBT Rabbi Search Committee Members Link](#)). [\(Back to page 1\)](#)

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