

# Congregation B'nai Israel

A PROGRESSIVE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN NORTHAMPTON, MA

## Rabbi for Spiritual and Ritual Life Job Description

Congregation B'nai Israel, a vibrant, progressive Jewish community in Northampton, Massachusetts, is seeking a passionate, dedicated, and visionary spiritual leader to meet the needs of our ritually diverse and rapidly growing community. As the leader of spiritual and ritual life, this individual will oversee an array of weekday, Shabbat, and holiday services and programming that they will facilitate with our team of lay leaders. They will also serve as CBI's internal and external voice to represent the needs, values, and desires of a synagogue deeply committed to social justice and tikkun olam. This individual will lead and work collaboratively with staff and two existing rabbis— who serve as the Director of Youth and Family Education and Engagement and the Senior Director of Jewish Life and Abundance Farm and are together serving as co-interim rabbis this year—to co-create the robust Jewish campus that we are on the path to building.

## About CBI

Congregation B'nai Israel (CBI) is a 120-year-old progressive, USCJ-affiliated synagogue with over 500 member households in Northampton, Massachusetts, the heart of the Western Mass Five College area. We offer a full range of youth and adult education programs including a licensed preschool, twice-weekly religious school, a food-justice farm, and a variety of traditional and alternative religious services. We share a campus with the Lander-Grinspoon Academy, a pluralistic K-6th grade day school. We collaborate closely with and are adjacent to the Northampton Survival Center, our community's local food pantry.

In recent years, CBI has defied national trends to enjoy robust growth. Our innovative programming and opportunities for social justice have drawn a diverse community, both in life experience and sensibility. We boast a long-standing, dedicated, and intergenerational membership committed to change; long-term, passionate, and visionary rabbinic and professional leadership; lay leadership committed to exploration and risk for the sake of moral integrity, spiritual vibrancy, and relationship to Israel; and an organizational structure that strives for transparent collaboration and shared leadership. CBI is currently in the quiet phase of a capital campaign that will allow our campus and physical infrastructure to support our growth.

As we look to the future, we see ourselves as committed to meeting the moral and spiritual challenges of our time with a dedication to mining the healing possibilities of our evolving Jewish tradition and relationships.

## About Northampton

CBI is located in Northampton, Massachusetts, which is a lively, diverse city of some 40,000 famed for its arts and music scene, charming downtown commercial life, progressive politics, and strong LGBTQ+ community. The city is surrounded by farmlands and beautiful New England woodlands, mountains, lakes, and streams with immediate access to extensive hiking and nature preserves. It has been named one of America's best small cities.

The Five College area surrounding Northampton provides a unique cultural and intellectual environment that is home to a wide range of scholars and professionals, many associated with

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CBI. The community is filled with many transplants, who still take advantage of our proximate location to Boston and New York City (and the greater Springfield metro area) while finding joy in the slower pace of life of our small city setting.

## Responsibilities:

- Meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of the community
  - Conduct and facilitate regular weekday, Shabbat, and holiday ritual
  - Hold halachic and ritual decision-making authority
  - Provide or facilitate the provision of pastoral care to members of the community
  - Serve as teacher and educator for community and staff
- Facilitate prayer and creative ritual opportunities
  - Demonstrate commitment to fostering multiple minyans, micro-communities, and different types of ritual, including cultivating more lay-led efforts
  - Determine and implement the ritual offerings needed to meet a growing and spiritually diverse community
  - Envision and support offerings including the regular Shabbat morning services, lay-led musical Kabbalat Shabbat services, and alternative spiritual practice
  - Coordinate amongst our team of lay leaders and provide guidance and mentorship as well as any necessary instruction
- Guide the community with visionary leadership and strategy for the future
  - Lead the expansive nature of CBI's position in the Valley as a Jewish leader and potential to be a community campus for the decades to come
  - Support the dynamics between the shul, religious school, educational farm, havurot, and many minyans
  - Provide spiritual, moral leadership, and guidance for the community internally and externally—in the Northampton community and beyond
  - Collaborate with local Jewish and other faith leaders
- Holder of the big tent of the community
  - Work to understand and hold the vast political, religious, spiritual, and age diversity in our community, with members at many different life stages, religious practices, and relationships to Israel-Palestine
  - Be able to engage with community members from across those spectrums
  - Address the many community facets and needs from a big-picture perspective, enabling a sense of collective to exist
  - Work collaboratively, in particular with senior staff, to support the transforming needs of our synagogue, campus, and greater communities

## Requirements:

- 6+ years of pulpit, ritual, or chaplain experience leading a community
- Fluency and comfort with the norms and practices of the Conservative movement, of which our shul is a member

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- Comfort with the other Jewish movements including Reconstructionist, Renewal, and traditional egalitarian, as elements of these traditions are part of our current prayer offerings
- Proven leadership and ability to guide the community through heated moments domestically and internationally
- Experience supporting marginalized Jewish communities and transforming organizations to become more inclusive
- Excellent written and oratory abilities alongside well-honed listening skills
- Deep connection to and literacy with Jewish text study and education
- Ability to multitask, stay on top of multiple responsibilities, and manage competing deadlines with sensitivity
- Musicality a plus
- Experience being part of a senior team with fundraising expectations preferred

## Timeline:

Prefer applications by February 29

Preferred start date: July 1

**Compensation:** \$130,000–\$150,000 plus benefits

## How to Apply:

Email your resume, cover letter, and divrei torah or public speaking (ideally video) to [info@cbinorthampton.org](mailto:info@cbinorthampton.org). In your cover letter, please speak to your top 3 rabbinic strengths and include examples of how these have manifested in your career.

## Questions:

If you have any questions about this role, please email [info@cbinorthampton.org](mailto:info@cbinorthampton.org).

***Frequently cited statistics show that women and underrepresented groups apply to jobs only if they meet 100% of the qualifications. Congregation B'nai Israel encourages you to break that statistic and apply. No one ever meets 100% of the qualifications. We look forward to your application.***