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RabbiJonathanFalco.com

Rabbinic Experience

Isaac M. Wise Temple, Cincinnati, OH

August 2021 – Present

Rabbinic Intern

- Instituted summertime adult education classes accessible for both online and in-person participation
- Revamped the Religious School's 6th Grade Jewish History curriculum reflecting a modern approach to Jewish identity building
- Edited the Jr. High curriculum to revolve around the application of Jewish values to contemporary issues
- Created & instructed "That Thing Called Judaism," a two-part, nine-week course for those curious or new to Judaism
- Tackled ambitious questions of Jewish theology and history through teaching classes on topics like: Theodicy, Booze & Jews: Jewish involvement in the alcohol industry during Prohibition, and Soviet Jewry: The Third "Speed Bump" for 20th Century Jewry

Congregation Gates of Prayer, New Iberia, LA

August 2021 – Present

Monthly Student Rabbi

- Transitioned community to in-person services after a year of COVID-19 disruptions
- Restored Jewish communal engagement to pre-pandemic levels despite inertia and COVID restrictions
- Melded elements of southern culture with aspects of Jewish history to strengthen localized Jewish identity

Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Bluefield, WV

May 2020 – August 2021

Tri-weekly Student Rabbi

- Grew High Holiday attendance by 30% and Shabbat service participation by 20% over previous levels
- Provided spiritual nourishment to local WV Jewish community via Zoom amid isolation & lockdowns during COVID-19
- Introduced & coordinated cantorial soloist accompaniment for High Holiday and regular Shabbat services
- Inspired congregants to embrace their connection to Jewish Peoplehood through classes on Jewish resiliency and triumph in the face of persecution

Congregation Mount Zion, Sioux Falls, SD

August 2019 – May 2020

Bi-weekly Student Rabbi

- Enriched Jewish life through Shabbat worship and Havdalah, drawing participants from metro regions of Sioux Falls, Minneapolis, and Sioux City
- Designed and implemented Intro to Judaism 'Master Class' session addressing a wide-berth of topics ranging from the discussion of "Who is a Jew" to the place of Hebrew and Yiddish in our Reform tradition
- Conducted regular adult education classes on a variety of underappreciated subjects like Jewish Resistance during WWII
- Fostered interfaith dialogue by inviting local religious studies college courses and faith groups to experience Shabbat
- Nurtured and supported elderly and ailing congregants through phone calls and visits to hospitals and assisted living facilities

The Valley Temple, Wyoming, OH

May 2019 – August 2019

Summer Rabbinic Fellow

- Drafted and edited an approachable, accessible, and modern siddur for the observance of *Selichot*
- Secured approval for up to \$10,000 in grant funding for ads on Google through the Google for Nonprofits initiative
- Shadowed lifecycle events and provided rabbinic coverage during Senior Rabbi's vacation and sabbatical
- Led immersive explorations on the meaning and history of two central pieces of Jewish liturgy: *Un'taneh Tokef* and *Kaddish*
- Tutored Hebrew to students for their *b'nei mitzvah* and to adults to improve fluency in Shabbat liturgy
- Led captivating Saturday Torah study sessions commanding crowd sizes that featured prominently on the Temple website

United Hebrew Congregation, Terre Haute, IN

August 2018 – May 2019

Monthly Student Rabbi

- Integrated contemporary prayer interpretations with elements of traditional liturgy to create a vibrant worship experience
- Advanced 3 different levels of Saturday Torah Study corresponding to skill level: for beginner, advanced, and interfaith groups
- Developed Confirmation class for young adults geared toward addressing gaps in their Jewish education

- Represented Jewish community of Terre Haute at the Protecting Places of Worship Forum, a city-wide meeting dedicated to preventing hate crimes in places of worship

Educational Experience: Formal and Informal

Isaac M. Wise Temple, Cincinnati, OH

May 2020 – Present

TJF Summer Rabbinic Fellow (Summer 2020)

- Redesigned b'nei mitzvah preparation program making a more wholistic, exciting, and meaningful family experience
- Re-envisioned Gates of Community, a meaning-making guide for students and their families through the b'nei mitzvah process
- Innovated upon Confirmation program and handbook to excite new families and encourage continued involvement

Religious School Teacher (August 2020 – May 2022)

- Assembled the 6th Grade Jewish History curriculum from scratch with adaptable virtual lessons for COVID-19 impact
- Celebrated Yiddishkeit & folklore as a means through which to connect and appreciate Jewish cultural traditions
- Explored artistry of synagogue architectural design and the evolution of its construction through the ages

Adult Educator (June 2020 – May 2021)

- Commanded the highest number of registrants on record for an adult education program
- Offered a selection of fascinating study topics, including: Medieval Judaism, The Hidden World of Jewish Craftsmanship, and Got Kosher? The Story of Kashrut in America
- Established and strengthened relationship to the community in anticipation of serving as their Rabbinic Intern

B'nai Mitzvah Tutor (Fall 2019 – Present)

- Built a mnemonic system to facilitate memorization of Hebrew letters, vowels, and their sounds
- Engendered appreciation for Jewish communal life through teaching the meaning and history of the prayers & blessings
- Ensured contextual understanding of their assigned Torah portion and Shabbat service rituals

University of Cincinnati

August 2018 – May 2019

Teacher Assistant

- Assisted the instructor with teaching First Year Hebrew both in the classroom and by holding office hours
- Graded and corrected online student module submissions
- Designed creative and relevant lesson plans for introductory college-level Hebrew language

Camp Daisy and Harry Stein, Prescott, AZ

Summer 2018

Activities Director

- Promoted Jewish literacy by incorporating Jewish values and content into regular camp activities
- Oversaw all camp-wide elective activities throughout the duration of the summer
- Supervised and supported the specialist staff in their role as leaders & informal educators

Hillel International

July 2015 – July 2017

Ezra Fellow

- Acquired and developed skills to be an effective Jewish educator for college-aged students
- Led discussions on Jewish identity, continuity, and current affairs for both Hillel professionals and college students
- Maintained a schedule of continuing education through study of Jewish text study with a chevruta on a weekly basis

Brandeis Collegiate Institute (BCI), Los Angeles, CA

Summer 2013

Participant

- Investigated controversial topics within the Tanakh and analyzed them through a modern lens
- Explored Jewish pluralistic living and learning through creative modes in the arts

Temple Beth Am, Yorktown Heights, NY

2006 – 2010

Teaching Assistant/Office Manager

- Facilitated Hebrew class activities and prepared Hebrew school class materials
- Tutored students in Hebrew for Bar and Bat Mitzvah
- Performed administrative duties for the synagogue including answering phones and creating marketing materials
- Led construction of the annual Sukkah

Community Engagement & Leadership

Opening the Ark Project

May 2020 – Present

Board Member, Volunteer

- Contributed to the reconstruction of the historic wooden ark of Sidra, Poland prior to its destruction by the Nazis in 1942
- Illuminated a forgotten era of Jewish artisanship in the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth between 16th-17th century

American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Leffell Fellowship

March 2019 – May 2020

Leffell Fellow

- Participated in rigorous educational sessions designed to support the American-Israel relationship from the pulpit
- Attended the 2019 AIPAC Policy Conference with special breakout groups for fellows to meet AIPAC leadership & lobbyists
- Lobbied Sen. Mike Rounds (R-SD) and former Majority Whip Sen. John Thune (R-SD) in support of Iron Dome funding

Rabbinical Student Association (RSA)

March 2019 – May 2020

RSA Secretary

- Managed study-body communications for all of the Cincinnati campus amid the COVID-19 shutdown
- Informed faculty, students, and staff of all upcoming student-led functions and campus-wide initiatives via email blast
- Recorded, organized, and distributed the minutes from RSA Executive Board meetings

3rd Year Class Representative

- Represent the Class of 2022 at school functions and RSA board meetings
- Coordinated and run the *Tu B'shvat* program for 5780
- Connected the Class of 2022 to the greater student body with up-to-date campus life info

Adath Israel Congregation

August 2018 – May 2019

Substitute Teacher

- Provided coverage for the Religious School's Jr. High class for subjects including the Holocaust and Jewish life in America

Education

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Expected Ordination May 2022

Rabbinical Ordination

Thesis: Politicking & Peoplehood: An Exploration

University of Cincinnati – West Chester Hospital

August 2020 – May 2021

Student Chaplain & Pastoral Education Student

Emory University, Atlanta, GA

Class of 2014

Bachelors of Arts: Jewish Studies

GPA: 3.526

REFERENCES UPON REQUEST