

Congregation Beth Shalom

Rabbi Job Description

(September 9, 2018)

Congregation Beth Shalom is a welcoming, inclusive, pluralistic, non-affiliated community synagogue in the university town of DeKalb, Illinois, 60 miles west of Chicago. Our small, egalitarian congregation, whose members come from a broad spectrum of Jewish backgrounds, functions with the intimacy of a chavurah. A part-time rabbi has traditionally served as the spiritual and educational leader of our congregation. We are very stable financially, so fund raising is not a part of the job. But recruiting new members is a congregational priority and an activity in which the rabbi is expected to take a leadership role. Because of the death of our previous rabbi, we are looking for a new half-time rabbi. We hope that our new rabbi will regard this position as a primary professional one.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Rituals

- Lead services, with the assistance of a volunteer cantor
 - 10-12 Friday night services annually
 - 4-6 Saturday morning services, with Torah reading
 - High Holidays with cantor [Rosh haShanah (evening, mornings first & second day), Yom Kippur (evening, morning, concluding)]
 - Holidays (Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Hanukkah, Purim, Pesach, Shavuot)
- Deliver a d'var torah and/or lead a Torah discussion at services
- Lead blessings and prayers at monthly Shabbat potluck
- Plan holiday services in conjunction with ritual chair
- Coordinate participation in services, as appropriate, of cantor, our choir, and other congregants
- Conduct life-cycle ceremonies, such as bris, weddings, conversions, funerals, as needed

Education

- Serve as principal and lead teacher for our small religious school, including developing curriculum and teaching
- Implement structured religious experiences that combine both cultural and religious aspects of Judaism
- Develop and coordinate family educational and holiday programs
- Implement adult education programming in consultation with adult ed chair
- Prepare B'nai mitzvah students, if any, including teaching Hebrew, Torah portion, haftarah, and Torah service prayers
- Instill a pride in being Jewish in our youth
- Develop teen programming

Outreach & Pastoral

- Take leadership role and actively participate, with board, in recruiting new members
- Maintain on-going out-reach to retain current members
- Represent the congregation and Judaism at events in the larger community
- Visit Jewish residents of local retirement and nursing homes and those in hospitals
- Work with NIU (Hillel if mutually desired; Jewish graduate students; community interfaith ministerial group)

Communication

- Write column for congregational newsletter
- Be available via telephone, email, texting, etc.
- Contribute to congregational presence on social media
- Attend monthly Board of Directors' meetings
- Write occasional article for local newspaper
- Hold regular office hours

Qualities in our ideal candidate

- Openness to all, including congregants in inter-faith families and LGBTQ individuals
- Hands-on attitude
- Strong desire to join us in revitalizing and growing our congregation
- Flexible and accepting of our local traditions and the knowledge that we are adaptable
- Warmth and compassion
- A passion for education for all and a willingness to learn as well as teach
- Creative imagination and ideas to help us grow
- Sense of humor
- Openness to interfaith efforts in the larger community
- Regard for this half-time position as a primary professional commitment

WHO WE ARE

Congregation Beth Shalom is an unaffiliated community synagogue – a pluralistic, inclusive, participatory, and egalitarian blending of many Jewish traditions. We welcome members of all ages, family structures, and religious backgrounds.

Our home is in DeKalb, Illinois, 60 miles west of Chicago and the home of Northern Illinois University (NIU). We are the only Jewish entity in the county and the only synagogue for at least 30 miles in every direction.

Our members come from a wide spectrum of Jewish traditions, primarily Reform and Conservative, but also interfaith, Orthodox, and secular. We respect each other's traditions, appreciate each other's talents, share each other's joys and sorrows, and work together to shape our congregation to serve our members. We do everything that larger congregations do, just often on a smaller scale.

We are served by a part-time rabbi who conducts services, directs the religious school, counsels, leads adult education programs, and performs other rabbinical functions. Our religious, educational, social, cultural, and social action offerings are flexible to meet the ever-changing needs and practices of our members.

Our local Jewish community has existed for almost 100 years. While the congregation has third-generation members, most of us come from across the United States and from several other countries. About half of our congregants are current or retired NIU faculty or staff members. Our diverse talents enrich our community. We include people such as the accountancy professor who served as our treasurer, the amateur trumpet player who learned to blow the shofar, the member who designed and made the hangings for our High Holy Day lecterns, and the math professor who started and directs our choir.

Our synagogue has been at 820 Russell Road in DeKalb, north of the NIU campus, since the 1960s. The building also is used by NIU Hillel. We also oversee the Garden of Shalom cemetery in DeKalb.

To apply to this position send an e-mail, together with a **Letter of Interest** and a copy of your most recent **Resume**, to:

Rabbi_Search@BethShalomDeKalb.org

The review of applications will begin on October 15th, 2018 and will continue until the position is filled. Our desired starting date is January 1, 2019.