

**Congregation Beth Shalom**  
**Rabbi Job Description**  
**(March 1, 2024)**

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. Recruiting new members is a congregational priority and an activity in which the rabbi is expected to take a leadership role. Because of a career change by our previous rabbi, we are looking for a new part-time rabbi. We hope that our new rabbi will regard this position as a primary professional one. Compensation will be in a competitive salary range.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Rituals**

- Lead services, with the assistance of a volunteer cantor
  - 12-13 Friday night services annually
  - 4-5 Saturday morning services, with Torah reading
  - High Holidays with visiting cantor [Rosh haShanah (evening, mornings first & second day), Yom Kippur (evening, morning, concluding)]
  - Holidays (including 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
- 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
- Develop programming at all levels, including teens and young adults
- Offer education toward conversion, as needed

### **Outreach & Pastoral**

- Take a leadership role and actively participate, with the Board, in recruiting new members
- Perform ongoing out-reach to engage and 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 Northern Illinois University (NIU) (Jewish students, the interfaith ministerial group, the larger university community)
- Support the social action initiatives of the congregation

### **Communication**

- Write a column for each issue of the congregational newsletter
- Be available via telephone, email, texting, etc.
- Attend monthly Board of Directors' meetings
- Write occasional article for local newspaper and be available for other local media

- Be available for congregants through office hours and appointments as needed, either in person or by video conferencing

### 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
- Flexibility and acceptance 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 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 is available as well for use by NIU Hillel. We also oversee the Garden of Shalom cemetery in DeKalb.

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

[RabbiSearch@BethShalomDeKalb.org](mailto:RabbiSearch@BethShalomDeKalb.org)

The review of applications will begin on March 31, 2024 and will continue until the position is filled.

- Our desired starting date is July 1, 2024.