

# RABBI JACOB HERBER

## RESUME

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As a rabbi with over twenty years of partnering in spiritual leadership and strengthening congregations, as centers of excellence, I am eager to share a passion for Judaism and Jewish Learning. I strive to partner with colleagues, lay leadership, and communities to build vibrant, welcoming environments for diverse populations. I am a dynamic pulpit rabbi, educator, mentor, programmer, fundraiser, guide and spiritual resource for adults, children, youth, families, affiliate group, and individuals of all ages.

### Key Rabbinic Accomplishments

#### **Organizational Leadership, and Fundraising**

- Worked with synagogue leadership to seamlessly and successfully merge our congregation with another local Conservative congregation.
- Initiated a leadership development and recruitment program in order to identify and cultivate future lay congregational volunteers, committee members, chairs and trustees in conjunction with key lay leaders.
- Formulated and led sessions on long range visioning and organizational planning, providing concrete direction and institutional benchmarks and goals for the synagogue.
- Proposed, led, and helped implement the effort to replace a traditional dues paying structure with an innovative *tzedakah* membership model.
- Partnered with lay leaders to lead multi-million-dollar capital and endowment campaigns resulting in the successful redesigns and renovations of two synagogue campuses. Successfully solicited major gifts with key donors.
- Collaborated with lay leaders to successfully retire the synagogue's \$200,000 deficit.

#### **Lifelong Jewish Learning**

- Created programs for students and families in collaboration with Educational Director and teachers including Hebrew, holiday programming, and weekly Shabbat engagement, which provided for our students meaningful connections to their clergy, their synagogue, and their Jewish heritage.
- Re-envisioned B'nai Mitzvah education, wrote new parent/student handbook, and added a family education component that strengthened the level of parental involvement and knowledge, and enhanced the entire experience for families: 100% participation. These changes resulted in students continuing beyond the *b'nei mitzvah* and families maintain their congregational membership.
- Demonstrated a strong sensitivity to special needs students, tailoring each educational experience in a way to foster student success and a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of pride in their Judaism.
- Enhanced the level of learning and scholarship for exceptional students who sought out a higher level of rigor.

- Taught Confirmation class, developing dynamic, relevant curriculum to engage teens and keep them active and connected to Jewish life and community. Travelled with students to the Chesed Fund in Chicago to do *gemilut basadim*.
- Established weekly Shabbat afternoon study class encouraging and training participants to engage traditional and modern commentaries, Midrash, philosophical, and other Rabbinic texts, in order to develop a deeper understanding of and connection to the Torah and to successfully bolster our Shabbat mincha/ma'ariv minyan.
- Helped design and taught in community-wide Introduction to Judaism course in response to a request by several prospective converts and other Jews desiring a course on basic Jewish customs and practices.
- Developed and implemented programming for senior members of the synagogue related to health and wellness, Israel and other contemporary issues.
- Taught congregational adult education courses introducing learners to the *Halakhab* of the Conservative Movement, Jewish philosophy and Conservative theology, Jewish mysticism and *mussar*.
- Taught the Shalom Hartman Institute's ground-breaking iEngage series empowering congregants and members of the Jewish community to engage in a conservative, positive, and respectful discourse about Israel.

#### **Ritual, Life Cycle, and Pastoral Care**

- Created long-term relationships with families as we prepared for *b'nei/b'not mitzvah* that energized and challenged the students, and introduced moments of learning throughout the *b'nei mitzvah* service, including a participatory *b'nei/b'not* family education program.
- Customized wedding and naming ceremonies that reflect the uniqueness of the couple or family, generating a personal, meaningful, and memorable. Often this resulted in them joining the congregation.
- Delivered personalized eulogies that capture the essence of the loved one in a reflective mode that families often request the text for future reading.
- Offered sensitive and compassionate pastoral care to those in need, both within and outside the synagogue, including home hospital, and hospice visits, meals and coffee appointments, and phone calls and Skype when all efforts to schedule a face-to-face meeting have been exhausted.
- Developed a hybrid Shabbat morning service format providing worshippers with opportunities for inspiring spiritual and intellectual growth by alternating week-to-week between traditional sermons and an adapted Shalom Hartman Institute *beit midrash* format of *shiur* and text study.
- Designed and implemented original, creative “Shabbat-in-the-Round” and “Shabbat Under the Stars” Kabbalat Shabbat services, which increased attendance and participation for those who were not Shabbat attendees.
- Understanding the importance of creating new portals for young families, restructured monthly Tot Shabbat and Kehillat Yeladim experiences; created/implemented Tot, Childrens' and Teen High Holy Day worship experiences. All of these programs utilized new liturgy and structures resulting in increased attendance and participation. Many stated they welcomed these contemporary modes of liturgy.

- Crafted and instituted an inter-generational Rosh Hashanah *tashlikh* service that grew during 15 years from 20 to over 100 participants.

### **Inter-Religious Dialogue, Programming, and Community Relations/Advocacy**

- Organized annual Interfaith Thanksgiving service; directed local clergy, edited liturgy, designed marketing materials, and prepared keynote remarks for the communal worship experience attended by 400-500 people annually, providing an opportunity for connection to the greater faith community.
- Represented the Jewish community on the Milwaukee Interfaith Council’s Religious Leadership Cabinet.
- Served as the Milwaukee JCRC representative at interfaith community programs advocating for religious tolerance and understanding.
- Collaborated with local African American pastor to bring together our respective communities to bridge our religious divide, build trust, and combat antisemitism and racism through interfaith dialogue, study, and cultural programs.
- Taught public and parochial middle and high school students about Judaism and the synagogue in the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center’s program “From Knowledge and Fear to Knowledge & Understanding.”

### **Program Development**

- Organized, solicited, and secured financial sponsors for successful Scholar-in-Residence weekends featuring internationally celebrated scholars from The Shalom Hartman Institute, respected faculty from the Jewish Theological Seminary and the American Jewish University, and other speakers of note. These programs were very well attended by congregants and members of the larger Jewish community.
- Developed and organized successful intergenerational *shabbatonim* attended by 150-200 adults, teens, and children, building a strong sense of community for the congregation through inspiring, meaningful, and fun educational, social, recreational opportunities and worship.
- Led the effort to create and implement a post-confirmation Hebrew High School program partnering with other community synagogues to keep 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students connected to the synagogue and Jewish learning, forging critical relationships with students.
- Spearheaded the reestablishment of congregational connections with CHUSY Region and Camp Ramah Wisconsin, recruiting students and campers for both, and securing funding to sub-vent camp scholarships, growing both four-fold.

### **Selected Professional Development**

<i>Leadership and Anxiety in the Synagogue</i> Seminar on developing self-differentiated rabbinic leadership	New York, NY
<i>Rav Hamakhsbir</i> Seminar on kashrut supervision	New York, NY
<i>Leading Through Communications: Conservative Rabbis in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i> Seminar on effective communication in the rabbinate	Baltimore, MD

## **Congregational/Organizational Experience**

Shalom Hartman Institute of North America <i>iEngage Consultant</i>	2018 - Present New York
Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid <i>Rabbi</i>	2003 - 2018 Glendale, WI
Har Zion Temple <i>Assistant Rabbi/Senior Rabbi</i>	1996 - 2003 Penn Valley, PA

## **Additional Community Activities, Affiliations, Leadership, and Honors**

### **Professional Organizations**

- Rabbinical Assembly (RA): Executive Council, Chair of Commission for a Vital and Connected Rabbinate, Strategic Planning/Vision Implementation Leadership Team, Leadership Liaison for Zera'im Project, CEO Review Committee

### **Local Rabbinic Associations**

- Wisconsin Council of Rabbis: two-term Past President
- New York Board of Rabbis
- RA Wisconsin Cluster

### **National/International Affiliations**

- Shalom Hartman Institute Rabbinic Advisory Board
- State of Israel Bonds National Rabbinic Board of Directors

### **Honors**

- *Rabbi Mordecai Waxman Rabbinic Leadership Award*, Masorti Olami
- *Community Leadership Award*, Wisconsin JNF

## **Education**

Shalom Hartman Institute RLI Fellowship Program Senior Rabbinic Fellow	2010-2013 Jerusalem, Israel
Jewish Theological Seminary Rabbinic Ordination and Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters <i>Joseph Zubow Memorial Prize in Codes</i>	1990-1996 New York, NY
University of California A.B. History, Cum Laude <i>Departmental Citation for Outstanding Work in History</i>	1981-1985 Davis, CA

# RABBI JACOB HERBER

## PERSONAL STATEMENT

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Rabbi Jacob Herber is excited by the prospect of serving as the rabbi of Herzl-Ner Tamid, a congregation known for its welcoming approach, strong lay leadership and synagogue professionals, devoted volunteers, engaged members, and for its strong connection with the State of Israel. He also loves the Seattle area and the Pacific Northwest.

Rabbi Herber loves being a pulpit rabbi. He began his rabbinate as the Assistant and then Senior Rabbi of Har Zion Temple in Philadelphia. Rabbi Herber was then blessed to serve as the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid, Milwaukee, Wisconsin's only USCJ affiliated congregation, for 15 years.

In 2018 he was invited to join the staff of The Shalom Hartman Institute, North America, where he works on the Institute's national rabbinical programs and teaches rabbis of all denominations how to teach "Hartman's Torah," most especially its iEngage video lecture series. He is now excited by the prospect of returning to synagogue life where he feels most professionally fulfilled. Rabbi Herber is passionate about building a vibrant and welcoming congregational community, leading worship services that are engaging and inspiring, teaching people of all ages and backgrounds, being there for people when they are celebrating life's joys or facing challenges, preaching, guiding people on their journeys to Judaism, supporting the State of Israel, tikkun olam, and engaging in interfaith work.

Rabbi Herber is blessed with two children. Mychal lives in Washington, D.C. where she works as a press officer at the Embassy of the State of Israel. Adin is currently a freshman at UNLV.

Rabbi Herber is a former competitive cyclist. Today, he simply enjoys riding his bike, cross country (skate) skiing, reading, playing his Fender Strat, and sharing his spare time with his loving dog, Reggie. A native New Yorker, Rabbi Herber is passionate about his New York Yankees, New York Rangers and is also an enormous supporter of the English Premier League's Chelsea Football Club.