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**Temple Israel Announces New Senior Rabbi**

*Rabbi Elaine Zecher selected as new, and first female, Senior Rabbi of Temple Israel*

**Boston, MA:** The Rabbinic Search Committee, the Temple Israel Board of Trustees, the Leadership Council, and the congregation have selected Rabbi Elaine Zecher to be the new Senior Rabbi of Temple Israel of Boston, beginning July 1, 2016.

Together as a community, we have articulated who we are, where we want to go, and what qualities we need in a new Senior Rabbi to get us there. Rabbi Zecher shares our vision of a community strengthened by the integration of activism, study, worship, and meaningful personal connections. With the selection of Rabbi Zecher, we are afforded the opportunity to be a community drawing on its history to help create its future.

Rabbi Zecher has been deeply committed to our congregation since 1990, when she started as our first female rabbi. Today, she is the first female Senior Rabbi in our 162-year history. Rabbi Zecher has been instrumental in adding to the spiritual and intellectual richness of our congregation through innovative initiatives such as the Purple Service, the Learner's Minyan, and Families with Young Children programming, and an impressive variety of courses for adults and students, including Modern Midrash.

Her impact is also felt far beyond our congregation. Rabbi Zecher has close relationships with interfaith leaders throughout the Boston area, and serves on the Mayor's Interfaith Advisory Task Force. Under her leadership, we can ensure our congregation's deep commitment to social justice will continue to develop.

Rabbi Zecher is a prominent figure in the Reform Movement, as she has served as the Vice-President for Leadership of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), chaired its Worship and Practices Committee, and brought her creativity to the national rabbinic and biennial meetings. Most recently, she has been a central force in the creation of the new *machzor*, *Mishkan HaNefesh*, which we now use on the High Holy Days.

The Rabbinic Search Committee, the Board of Trustees, the Leadership Council, and the congregation believe that Rabbi Zecher will be an exceptional leader of Temple Israel, and will provide a clear voice in our congregation, the City of Boston, and across the Reform Movement.

Our congregation is proud that after such a rigorous and thorough search process, we have found our final candidate within our own community – demonstrating once again our leadership in the Reform Movement.

**About Temple Israel of Boston:** Temple Israel is a diverse, urban, Reform Jewish congregation where all are welcome to live Judaism together through discovery, dynamic spirituality, and righteous impact. We welcome the opportunity to comment further on this story.

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