

RABBI HANNAH ELKIN, MAJE, MTS

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Claremont Colleges

Claremont, CA

Hillel Director and Jewish Chaplain

(2021-Present)

Sole rabbi and director of Hillel at the Claremont Colleges and Jewish Chaplain at the Claremont Colleges Services' Chaplains Office. Serve as spiritual leader, organizational leader, and role model for 700 Jewish undergraduate students, 150 Jewish graduate students, Jewish faculty and staff, and local community members.

Organizational and Relational Leadership

- Develop and implement overarching vision and strategic plan for Hillel at the Claremont Colleges, including fundraising, engagement, and programming goals and strategies.
- Partner with campus stakeholders and Hillel International staff to radically transform the organizational structure of Hillel at the Claremont Colleges by hiring and training new staff, recruiting new board members, and dramatically boosting fundraising in order to increase and enhance the Jewish life experience on campus.
- Oversee and manage day-to-day operations of Hillel at the Claremont Colleges; continuously adapted policies and problem-solved for ongoing impact of Covid-19.
- Develop relationships with key donors; annually secure operating budget through fundraising campaigns.

Campus Jewish Life and Education

- Oversee and partner with all Jewish organizations at the Claremont Colleges to build inclusive, diverse, and engaging opportunities for Jewish life and community.
- Secured Holmes Fund Grant for creative artistic programming in Jewish music at the Claremont Colleges.
- Build relationships and coordinate initiatives with college administrators to address antisemitism on campus.
- Plan and facilitate weekly Shabbat services and dinners attended by over 50 students; design, execute, and lead High Holy Days services, Passover seders, text studies, and special programs.
- Supervise and mentor student leaders to plan and execute holiday programs and other events.
- Guide, assist, and encourage students in their Jewish conversion process.
- Partner with Chaplains Office to represent Jewish voice in interfaith programs, initiatives, and responses.

Student Mentorship and Pastoral Support

- Supervise, guide, and empower student leadership board to support community engagement strategies and weekly programming; developed and led curriculum for student board leadership retreat.
- Provide pastoral care to Jewish and non-Jewish students as they navigate self-discovery and identity formation.
- Appointed Chaplains Office member of the Claremont Colleges' Student Mental Health Taskforce; network and collaborate with campus staff on student mental health initiatives and issues.
- Create and teach text studies on Judaism and mental health.
- Supervise and mentor Hebrew Union College rabbinic intern on campus chaplaincy and Hillel leadership.

Temple Emanuel of Beverly Hills

Beverly Hills, CA

Rabbinic Intern

(2019-2021)

- Helped support learning, worship, and engagement at 600-family congregation.
- Engaged congregants in Shabbat morning Torah study and led Shabbat services with clergy team.
- Co-taught Introduction to Judaism classes with Associate Rabbi; sat on conversion *b'tei din*.
- Managed young adult group (YoPro) by organizing programs for Shabbat and holidays, partnering with lay leadership board, and engaging new members and group leadership.

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- Partnered with Honeymoon Israel LA (HMI) staff and lay leaders to plan innovative Reimagined Contemplative High Holy Day services; engaged leaders through workshop on High Holy Day themes and rituals for HMI and temple young adults; supported lay leaders' production of creative, original ritual pieces for virtual services.
- Oversaw Religious School's teen teaching assistant program, including leadership trainings, community building, and classroom supervision.
- Assisted in organization and execution of Religious School's transition to virtual programming in response to Covid-19 pandemic; consulted with Rabbi-Educator and advised faculty on technology and teaching practices.

Beit T'Shuvah

Los Angeles, CA

Spiritual Counselor

(Summer 2019)

- Provided spiritual and emotional support to clients struggling with the challenges of addiction recovery.
- Taught Torah study and facilitated weekly processing groups for Beit T'Shuvah residents.
- Partnered with spiritual counseling staff to address concerns and needs of Beit T'Shuvah residents.

Leo Baeck Temple

Los Angeles, CA

Rabbinic-Education Intern

(2018-2019)

- Assisted in administration of the Religious School, supervised faculty, edited lesson plans, led school programs and prayer services, and built relationships with students and parents.
- Oversaw planning of the annual Religious School weekend-long retreat; with 24-hour notice, comprehensively reorganized, planned, and led retreat after retreat site was impacted by wildfires.
- Partnered with lay committee to plan and execute Yom Limmud, the congregation's community day of learning.

Temple Beth El

Charlotte, NC

Rabbinic Intern

(Summer 2018)

- Led services and shiva minyanim, delivered sermons, taught weekly Torah study, and made pastoral visits as part of clergy team.
- Designed and led creative Tisha B'Av text study and ritual focused on contemporary justice issues.
- Created programming for congregation's community weekend retreat and led retreat as Scholar-In-Residence.

Temple Ner Ami

Camarillo, CA

Student Rabbi

(2016-2018)

- Served as spiritual leader for congregation of 100 Reform Jewish families during monthly visits and holidays.
- Led services, delivered sermons, taught multiple adult learning courses, and provided pastoral care.

URJ Greene Family Camp

Bruceville, TX

Summer Education Director

(Summer 2014-2016)

- Oversaw immersive Education program for 900 campers, aged seven to seventeen.
- Designed and executed multiple all-camp programs; organized and led creative Shabbat and weekday services.
- Supervised two Assistant Education Directors; worked with faculty of regional clergy and educators.
- Wrote and taught immersive Jewish education curricula and programs for each camper age group.

EDUCATION

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Los Angeles, CA

- **Rabbinic Ordination (2021)**
 - Recipient, *Myrtle Lorch Pfaelzer-Monroe Award* for the Outstanding Female Rabbinic Student
 - Rabbinic Thesis: *A Complicated Woman: Meanings of Piety and Transgression in the Book of Judith*

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- **Master of Arts in Jewish Education** (2019)
 - Recipient, *Rabbi Mordecai Soloff Award* for Excellence in Jewish Education
 - Curriculum Guide: *Intimacy Ed.: A High School Curriculum for Creating Respectful Relationships*
- **Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters** (2018)

Harvard Divinity School

Cambridge, MA

- **Master of Theological Studies** (2015): Focus in Jewish Studies and Women, Gender, and Religion

Middlebury College

Middlebury, VT

- **Bachelor of Arts**, magna cum laude (2013): Major in Religion; Minor in Modern Hebrew

Continuing Education

- **New Directors Institute Leadership Training, Hillel International, 2021-2022**
- **Prepare and Enrich Pre-Marital Facilitation Training, HUC-JIR, 2021**
- **Clinical Pastoral Education, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, 2017**

PUBLISHED ARTICLES

- “The Purpose of Jewish Education is to Log In to the Jewish Network,” *eJewishphilanthropy*, February 2019, <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/the-purpose-of-jewish-education-is-to-log-in-to-the-jewish-network/>.
- “Perfection, But at What Price?” *Project 929*, October 2019, <https://www.929.org.il/lang/en/author/45610/post/45716>.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIPS

Jewish Center for Justice

Los Angeles, CA

- **Seminary Cohort Fellow** (2019-2021)

HUC-JIR Taskforce on Safer Campus Community

Los Angeles, CA

- **Los Angeles Campus Student Representative** (2020)

American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

Washington, D.C.

- **Leffell Rabbinic Fellow** (2017-2019)

References available upon request

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

Every person wants to feel seen and accepted for who they truly are. Should we not want that same embrace from our Jewish tradition and community? I view my rabbinate as the sacred work of helping others feel noticed, heard, challenged, and guided by Judaism. I know many Jews may feel disconnected from a tradition that they believe will not accept them or lacks relevance to their lives. However, I also know that this belief does not need to be the reality. I aspire to build accessible and relevant Jewish communities, use the tools of Judaism to make people feel seen and cared for, and teach the depth of Jewish tradition to help people gain insights into the sources and themselves through a lifetime of learning.

A core aspect of my rabbinate is finding creative ways to draw people into Jewish community that accepts, energizes, and empowers them, while building welcoming communities for people of all ages seeking spiritual connections. In my role as Jewish Chaplain at the Claremont Colleges, I created and led a diverse range of High Holy Day worship experiences, including the “HHD in One Hour or Less” service to supplement the traditional services. This service engaged students with different spiritual needs and knowledge of traditional liturgy by weaving together poetry, music, text studies, and meditations that addressed the holidays’ core themes. The students connected with the material and each other, creating a meaningful and accessible religious experience. This creative approach to the High Holy Days drew in Jewish students who did not attend the traditional services and made them feel like they belonged in this Jewish space.

In addition to building collective community experiences, I seek to connect with and listen to individuals’ needs in order to use the tools of Judaism to help each person feel heard and cared for. My work with recovering addicts at Beit T’Shuvah and institutional responses to gender-based violence at Harvard and HUC-JIR proved how crucial this work is to my rabbinic philosophy and practice. At Beit T’Shuvah, I sat with people struggling with addiction and witnessed how listening

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to their stories and studying ancient Jewish sources could guide and support them on their path toward healing. This empathic approach also underlies how I counsel individuals in abusive relationships or who experienced sexual violence. In these moments, I can show people that they can be heard, that their rabbi knows their pain matters, and that Jewish sources and practice can help. To continue to focus on this work, I joined the Claremont Colleges' Committee on Substance Abuse and Mental Health and meet regularly with campus Title IX coordinators in order to support the Claremont Colleges' community.

The third tenet of my rabbinate is teaching the richness of Jewish texts and traditions to challenge learners to gain new insights about Judaism, themselves, and the world around them. Teaching is one of the most inspiring and renewing aspects of my rabbinic work: even teaching a simple session on *parashat ha'shavuah*, the weekly Torah portion, can have a powerful impact on congregants, campers, or students. I love seeing learners of all ages rediscover or explore for the first time the sacred texts we return to each year, helping them uncover how these sources can guide, comfort, and enlighten us wherever we are in life. Jewish learning opens us up to continued growth and transformation throughout our lives if we remain curious, and teaching allows me to guide learners of all ages to explore texts, ideas, and perspectives in a new and challenging light. I aim to teach, preach, and pastor in a way that respects the capabilities of the community as spiritual and intellectual seekers, and challenges them to think deeply and critically about their Judaism and its role in their lives.

The sacred work of helping others feel seen, heard, challenged, and guided by Judaism stands as the core of my rabbinate. These goals and values guide me and drive my work serving my community.