



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Temple Beth-El Announces Arrival of New Rabbi *Rabbi Stephen Slater to begin June 15*

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—After undergoing an extensive yearlong search, Temple Beth-El of Birmingham is pleased to welcome Rabbi Stephen Slater as lead rabbi beginning June 15.

Slater visited Birmingham in February as part of the interview process and received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the congregation. The Temple Beth-El Board of Directors voted unanimously to offer him the lead clergy position.

“I am excited for Rabbi Slater and his family to arrive in June,” said Jacob Halpern, president of Temple Beth-El’s Board of Directors. “We have had many conversations since he was hired and I can feel the passion, excitement and energy that I know he will bring to Temple Beth-El.”

Slater is currently finishing up his final year of study and ordination at Hebrew College in Boston. He has most recently served as spiritual leader at Congregation Shaaray Tefila in Glens Falls, NY, and rabbinic intern at University of Rhode Island Hillel in Kingstown, RI. Prior to rabbinic school, Slater taught at Milken Community High School in Los Angeles, as well as the Hebrew schools IKAR in Los Angeles and Romemu in New York City. He has a master's degree in Jewish studies from Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel, and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Hillsdale College.

Slater’s areas of expertise include teaching Jewish thought, storytelling, setting goals for spiritual development, song-filled prayer services, mentoring young leaders and volunteer engagement, among others. His unique background and focus on Jewish outreach are a welcomed addition to the Temple Beth-El family.

Slater arrives in Birmingham with his wife Bethany, a doctoral candidate in comparative theology, and their daughter Anav. The Slaters are expecting their second child, a baby boy, to join the family sometime around June 25. “We have a deep sense of anticipation that our new life in

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Birmingham will be an important one for our growing family,” Slater said. “Growing can be daunting because it changes us. Yet growth is the only way to remain attentive to God's presence in our lives. So it is with a sense of adventure that we will soon be picking up and shipping out all of our belongings, and then starting a four-day drive to Birmingham. We are eager to be there with people, and excited to discover new friends and partners in our holy work.”

Hailing from Detroit and growing up in West Africa, Slater speaks fluent French and Hebrew, and has lived in and traveled throughout Africa, Europe and the Middle East. The avid outdoor explorer and soccer fan loves to travel, and also enjoys discussing history, philosophy and international economics.

Now in its 110th year, Temple Beth-El is an inclusive and welcoming congregation that fulfills the spiritual, educational and social needs of its members. It is a center for Jewish living for its members and the general Birmingham community. For more information, visit the Temple Beth-El website at www.templebeth-el.net or email Lindsey Herring at lherring@templebeth-el.net.

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