

Rabbinic Fellows 2016 – 2017



Rabbi Scott Bolton became the rabbi of Congregation Or Zarua in 2012. Before joining Or Zarua, Rabbi Bolton was the rabbi, head of school, and advanced Judaic studies educator at numerous institutions. Rabbi Bolton's other experience includes holding numerous positions at the International Association of Fire Chiefs in Washington, D.C., and owning and operating an art and design business. He has served on numerous boards and committees including the International Advisory Board of the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation and the Education Committee of the Good People Fund. Rabbi Bolton received his rabbinic ordination from the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies of the American Jewish University in 2000.



Rabbi Matt Carl became the rabbi of East Midwood Jewish Center in 2014. For several years prior to this position, Rabbi Carl was the rabbi at Brooklyn's Congregation Mount Sinai, creating programs for the younger generation and unaffiliated Jews. He also previously served as the rabbi of Battery Park Synagogue and as director of Community Engagement at Hazon. In 2000 he was a member of AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps, and currently volunteers with their alumni network. He graduated from the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) and Machon Schechter in 2008, where he specialized in Talmud and Rabbinics. While at JTS he trained as a chaplain at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.



Rabbi Ira Ebbin arrived in Merrick in July 2010 to assume the pulpit of Congregation Ohav Shalom. Prior to this position, his career took him to synagogues in Westchester, NY, Stamford, CT, and Montreal, Canada. Rabbi Ebbin has held numerous community positions in New York and Connecticut, ranging from the Vaad Hakashrus to the Anti-Defamation League. Rabbi Ebbin attended rabbinical school at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) of Yeshiva University, where he was ordained in 2001.



Rabbi Howard J. Goldsmith serves as the rabbi of Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester, and as a rabbinic advisor and maven for Lab/Shul - StorahTelling, a Torah through arts organization. He attended Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), from which he received rabbinic ordination in 2007. After ordination, Rabbi Goldsmith served as the assistant rabbi of Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York and co-chaired Cornell University's Hillel's Jewish Student Life Advisory Council. While at HUC-JIR he served a wide range of communities including a camp, hospital, and Jewish community center.

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Rabbi Andrew Gordon joined Temple Sinai as associate rabbi in July 2012. Rabbi Gordon served as the first assistant and associate Rabbi of Scarsdale Synagogue – Temples Tremont and Emanu-El from 2008 – 2012. As a student, Rabbi Gordon served congregations in Pound Ridge, NY, Livingston, NJ, Williamsport, PA, Rocky Mount, NC, and Wellesley, MA. He also served as the student chaplain in the palliative care unit of Mount Sinai Hospital. In 2008, he received his rabbinic ordination from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.



Rabbi Alysa Mendelson Graf became the rabbi of Port Jewish Center (PJC) in July 2014. Prior to coming to PJC, Rabbi Mendelson served Temple Israel in Westport, CT, as assistant and then associate rabbi. She was ordained by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in 2004. While at HUC-JIR, Rabbi Mendelson held numerous rabbinic intern positions in New York and Virginia. Throughout her rabbinate, Rabbi Mendelson has been an active member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and of the Women's Rabbinic Network (WRN), serving on the WRN board for nine years and currently serving as its co-president. She was also selected to be a STAR (Synagogues: Transformation and Renewal) Fellow.



Rabbi Eytan Hammerman became the rabbi of the Jewish Community Center of Harrison in August 2014. He had previously served in Temple Beth Shalom in Mahopac, NY, for four years. Rabbi Hammerman was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in 2010. While studying at JTS, Rabbi Hammerman directed the Office of Student Placement and developed religious and educational programs in various communities. Before becoming a rabbi, he served as director of the Jewish Youth Philanthropy Institute in Rockville, MD. Rabbi Hammerman founded a Masorti (Conservative) synagogue in Madrid, Spain – Comunidad Masorti Bet-El – and continues to serve on the board of the international Masorti Movement. Rabbi Hammerman has been appointed to numerous committees and delegations representing Conservative Jewry in North America, Israel, and overseas.



Rabbi Joel Levenson has been the associate rabbi at Midway Jewish Center since 2013. Previously, Rabbi Levenson served as the rabbi of congregations in Connecticut and New Jersey. In addition, he has worked for more than 15 years at Camp Ramah, and in 1991 he served as the international president of United Synagogue Youth (USY). Due to his strong bonds in the local community, he was asked to deliver the opening prayer for the United States House of Representatives, the 112th Congress, Second Session. He serves on the board of Mercaz USA, the Zionist organization of the Conservative movement, as well as on the United Jewish Communities and State of Israel Bonds National Rabbinic cabinets. Rabbi Levenson was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2001.

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Rabbi Chaim Marder has served as the rabbi of the Hebrew Institute of White Plains since 1995. Prior to arriving in White Plains, Rabbi Marder served as a rabbi in Providence, RI, and in Riverdale, NY. Rabbi Marder is involved in many communal organizations including the Vaad Harabonim, Vaad Hakashrus, and the Westchester Board of Rabbis. He is a former vice president of the Rabbinical Council of America and was recognized by UJA-Federation of New York with its annual Rabbinical Award. Since 2004, he has served as the chair of the department of the Professional Rabbinate at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School. Rabbi Marder received his rabbinical ordination from Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) of Yeshiva University.



Rabbi Shaul Rappeport became the rabbi of Lido Beach Synagogue in 2013. He was ordained by the Rabbinical Institute of Pretoria, South Africa, and the Ariel Institute in Jerusalem in 2004. Prior to coming to Lido Beach, Rabbi Rappeport was the rabbi of Ohev Sholom Congregation in Williamsport, PA. Rabbi Rappeport also serves as the director of Rabbinic Services and Outreach for Puah, the world's first Jewish organization established to provide services and address issues pertaining to struggles with fertility and other intimacy and reproductive issues. Rabbi Rappeport is an alumnus of CLAL's Rabbis Without Borders Fellowship (2013 – 2014).

Rabbi Marcus Burstein z”l was selected for the second cohort of the Rabbinic Fellowship but was unable to participate due to his untimely passing. May his memory be a blessing.