



Rabbi Mona Alfi is fueled by a passion for *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) and a vision for reaching out to Sacramento's diverse Jewish community. As the spiritual leader of B'nai Israel, Rabbi Alfi hopes to foster a caring community that is engaged both in the life of the synagogue and in our broader society.

"The purpose of religion is not only helping us get closer to God, but in getting closer to God, we should be motivated to become more engaged in the world and in people's lives," she said.

Merging religion and social action has been at the center of Rabbi Alfi's career. She served three years as the Executive Director of the Hillel at Davis and Sacramento, worked for five years as B'nai Israel's assistant and associate rabbi, and spent four years as the chaplain for the California State Assembly from 1998-2002. Rabbi Alfi is currently the Chaplain of the California State Senate, appointed in August 2008.

These positions have enabled Rabbi Alfi to cultivate relationships with varied branches of the local Jewish and non-Jewish community – young and old, gay and straight, single and married, interfaith and traditional families.

As a rabbi at B'nai Israel, she created a Rosh Chodesh study group for women, a downtown Torah study session for working adults and an intergenerational retreat to foster meaningful communication. As a mother, she helped found the first Jewish preschool in Yolo County.

Rabbi Alfi has written prayers and Torah commentaries and published an essay about the 1999 bombing of B'nai Israel in "Chicken Soup for the Jewish Soul." She was ordained in 1998 by the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in New York, and received a Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters at HUC-JIR's Los Angeles campus in 1996.

Beyond her leadership at B'nai Israel, Rabbi Alfi was on the Board of the Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis from 2001-2003, and served as president of the Rabbis' Association of Sacramento from July 2007 to June 2008.

Rabbi Alfi was raised in Southern California in a family that mixed the traditions of her Ashkenazi mother and her Iranian-Jewish father. This heritage of blended traditions has informed Rabbi Alfi's view of Judaism as a dynamic religion that changes to reflect society, and is not monolithic in its expression.

"There's not a single right way to be Jewish, but a lot of right ways to be Jewish," she said.

Rabbi Alfi and her husband Glenn are delighted to be raising their sons as third generation members of B'nai Israel.