

Rabbi Shoshanah King-Tornberg is excited to join the B'nai Israel community in deepening our connection to Torah and Jewish life. She believes that learning enhances what it means to be a Jew and lends meaning to the special moments in our lives. Learning is also a vehicle through which we can build meaningful relationships and communities.

Rabbi King-Tornberg has made Jewish education a hallmark of her rabbinate. Focusing on educational leadership and administration during her studies in rabbinical school, she engaged in three years of Jewish educational internships and achieved a Masters in Jewish Education (MAJE) in 2004 from the Rhea Hirsch School of Education, and rabbinic ordination in 2006, from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

She served as the assistant rabbi of Congregation Beth Emeth in Albany, NY for 3 years, prior to joining the leadership team and community at B'nai Israel. During her time in Albany, she was able to leverage her training and passion for education to create innovative learning for community members of all ages.

In addition to her commitment to learning, Rabbi King-Tornberg has served to enhance other Jewish values through her commitment to various community organizations and social justice issues. While in New York, she served as the treasurer of the Capital District Board of Rabbis and as a member of the Clergy Advisory Council for Concerned Clergy for Choice, an arm of Family Planning Advocates of New York State. She has volunteered for Reform Jewish Voice of New York State and been a member of the Adirondack Coalition for Choice and the Empire State Pride Agenda. In addition, Rabbi King-Tornberg served in a planning capacity for the AIDS Council of Northeastern New York.

The rabbi is author of a widely-used ceremony to commemorate a Jew's coming out of the closet as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. This ritual has been published on www.ritualwell.org. Portions of the ceremony have also been republished in the women's spiritual anthology, To Speak Her Heart.

Rabbi King-Tornberg was raised mostly in Kansas City and Toronto, and has spent time in Boston and New York City. She lived in the San Mateo area in her very early years. "I felt pride and authenticity in my parents' commitment to an informed and thoughtful Reform Jewish practice," says Rabbi King-Tornberg. "It is this kind of thoughtfulness and this kind of quest for meaning that I try to bring into both my personal and professional life."

The rabbi joins the B'nai Israel community with her wonderful family, Laura King-Tornberg and their two children, Ruth and Elijah.