



Central Reform Temple Boston

a progressive jewish congregation

Central Reform Temple 2021 Rabbinic Search Role Description

Our Community and History

Central Reform Temple of Boston, affectionately called CRT, had its beginnings in 2004, out of a recognition that there was a need for a progressive, Jewish experience for a variety of constituencies in the city center. Central Reform Temple (originally called “Boston Jewish Spirit”) was conceived by Rabbis Howard Berman and Devon Lerner as a special outreach to interfaith and multicultural families, LGBTQ people, individuals from all racial, religious, and non-religious backgrounds, and all spiritual seekers interested in an accessible encounter with the liberal ideals and traditions of Reform Judaism.

We are a community of people of all ages, worshiping in the historic Emmanuel Episcopal Church at 15 Newbury Street. Our close-knit congregation is committed to serving as a house of prayer for all people. We worship in the progressive tradition of American Reform Judaism, nurturing spirituality and learning, and working for justice and peace in our community and the world. We meet bi-weekly for Friday night Shabbat services, experience the High Holy Days together as well as Sukkot, Hanukkah, Passover, and other festivals and observances, and engage in an array of learning and cultural programs throughout the year.

During the pandemic, we developed a hybrid service format that allows members to attend in person, if they are vaccinated and wear masks, or they can choose to participate via Zoom. Zoom participants and in-person members and guests can see and hear each other live. Virtual participants can say the names of loved ones in need of healing during the healing prayer, and everyone has the opportunity to socialize, through a monitor, before and after the service. Going forward, we intend to continue with this hybrid format, which has increased attendance and helped members feel more connected to the congregation and each other.

CRT has a documented covenant relationship with Emmanuel Church: each congregation is faithfully rooted in its own distinct religious traditions and deeply committed to our shared spiritual roots. We engage in compassionate encounters between Judaism and Christianity that affirm the difficult challenges of history and aspire to new levels of understanding. We share the conviction that spiritual ideals, human creativity, and commitment to principles that elicit deep interpersonal connections are the underpinnings for advancing our core values. We cherish the same ultimate hopes for humanity.

Our Hopes and Dreams

In this time of transition, members of CRT have been engaging in an ongoing process, identifying what brought us to the community, what keeps us here, what aspects of our life together are important and should be honored, and what is important to us. We are dedicated to remaining a clergy-led faith community. We are looking for a half-time rabbi who can serve us liturgically, educationally, programmatically, and pastorally, and who will embrace and foster our relationship with Emmanuel Church.

Expectations

Community & Hospitality: It has been said by many in our congregation, in many settings and in many ways, that “we come for the people who gather together at CRT.” Our hospitality and friendliness emanate from the core of who we are. Our music, our liturgy, our expansive approach to Torah and learning have made CRT a place for everyone looking for a spiritual home. Our next rabbi must be committed to fostering this culture of hospitality and community and maintaining CRT as a liberal Jewish presence in the city center.

Relationships: CRT is a place where we are able to live our values as a Jewish community in the 21st century – our dedication to individuals, couples, and families, and our commitment to making this home a place of kindness and welcome to all who enter. This is most visible in the love and support that Emmanuel Church and CRT demonstrate in sharing a home and the values of *Tikkun Olam*. Our next rabbi will need to commit to these values and relationships.

Services, Holy Days & Festivals: The congregation is strongly liberal in its ritual and practices, describing itself as a progressive Reform congregation. We participate in services that are primarily in English using the Union Prayer Book as its foundation. Services are rich in music, participatory, and welcoming of all spiritual seekers.

Teaching & Learning: Our next rabbi has the opportunity to build on our foundation of rich learning experiences. There is a desire for more teaching and educational opportunities. People are open to continued and new experiences - weekday study sessions, Shabbat Torah study, history walks through the city, learning sessions led by congregants who are doing interesting work or avocational pursuits, and finding ways to extend our community relationship throughout the month (especially on non-service Shabbatot).

Social Justice: There is a growing desire for a deeper commitment and opportunity to engage in social justice work. Because the community is small, we seek ways for members to work together on a cause or action, perhaps collaborating or joining forces with other organizations with established programs. Our next rabbi can be influential in building pathways for the congregation.

Family: CRT is seeking novel ways to support and educate families, including children and grandchildren of current members as well as young adults with hopes for future children. We are looking forward to our next rabbi's bringing new ideas and a fresh perspective in this area.

Responsibilities

- Leading bi-weekly Friday evening Shabbat services
- Leading High Holy Day services (Erev Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah morning, Tashlich, Kol Nidre, Yom Kippur day)
- Providing for other festival celebrations (e.g., Sukkot, Chanukah, Purim, Passover)
- Leading adult education (e.g., Torah study, engaging other teachers, etc.)
- Officiating at life-cycle ceremonies for our members
- Providing pastoral care to our members
- Participating in the Back Bay Clergy Association (an interfaith community)
- Joining the Emmanuel Center Board (the collaboration between Emmanuel Church and CRT)
- Working with interested members to develop innovative ways to include and educate, together, children and their families.

Requirements

- Rabbinic ordination required
- Learned in areas of Torah, Jewish literature, customs, ceremonies, history, culture, and spirituality
- Able to transmit significant knowledge of Torah (both in its narrower and in its broadest understandings)
- Post-graduate training in counseling/pastoral care is desirable
- Previous congregational and/or directly related experience is desirable
- Demonstrating a deep commitment to providing a welcoming, spiritual environment for our Jewish community
- Experience with social media and other outreach skills are a plus
- Able to work closely with the Rector at Emmanuel Episcopal Church

Salary Range/Package: \$60,000 to \$75,000

For Interested Candidates:

Please email your resume and cover letter to Rabbi Devon Lerner, Search Committee Chair.

Rabbi Devon Lerner

Search@centralreformtemple.org

781-308-8158

Central Reform Temple of Boston

15 Newbury Street

Boston, MA 02116

<http://www.centralreformtemple.org/>