

# RABBI DOUGLAS BENJAMIN SAGAL D.D.

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## SENIOR RABBI

LEADERSHIP ♦ WORSHIP ♦ PREACHING ♦ PASTORAL COUNSELING ♦ SOCIAL JUSTICE

### CAREER PROFILE:

**PASSIONATE, SPIRITUAL SENIOR RABBI WITH 29 YEARS OF CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP**, with a purpose to serve a caring, thriving, mission-driven, congregation, seeking a visionary, inspirational, leader to partner with in the future; Adept at building alternative religious educational and interfaith programming, intergenerational experiences and youth engagement; Highly immersed in developing community outreach and social justice engagement, with a desire for communal involvement

EDUCATION // MENTORING // INTERFAITH // JUDAISM  
FUNDRAISING // INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIPS // PROGRAMMING  
COMMUNICATION // RELATIONSHIP BUILDING // TEACHING  
REFORM/TRADITIONAL WORSHIP LEADER // COMMUNITY OUTREACH  
BIBLE STUDY // TORAH AND HAFTARAH CHANTING

### CAREER PROGRESSION:

**SEABROOK JEWISH COMMUNITY AND CHAPLAIN SEABROOK SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY  
TINTON FALLS NJ  
RABBI AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAIN** **JANUARY 2025-PRESENT**

**RABBI OF ACTIVE INDEPENDENT JEWISH COMMUNITY OF SEABROOK IN TINTON FALLS NJ AND JEWISH  
CHAPLAIN TO SEABROOK SENIOR LIVING**

**CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL RUMSON NJ**

**RABBI**

**SERVE AS RABBI FOR 280 FAMILY CONGREGATION**

**RUMSON, NJ**

**8/19-11/24**

**\*RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL WORSHIP, LIFE CYCLE, PASTORAL, EDUCATIONAL DUTIES**

**\*SUPERVISING MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SECOND CENTURY CAMPAIGN**

**\*CREATING MULTIPLE PROGRAMS FOR INTERFAITH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**TEMPLE EMANU-EL WESTFIELD**

**Westfield, NJ**

**SENIOR RABBI**

**07/2002-0/7 2019**

**Served as a Senior Rabbi and rabbinic leader for an 1100 family congregation for the past 17 years, implementing educational innovation and social justice**

- Train, supervise and mentor senior professional staff of 10
- Deliver pastoral care, worship, preaching, teaching, counseling, interfaith activities, community involvement and fundraising, in partnership with the lay leadership, creating vision for the future of the congregation

### ***Selected Achievements:***

- ✓ Supervised the complete re-imagination and implementation of religious education, including the establishment of a school for children with profound special needs
- ✓ Revived social justice programming, in the areas of hunger, homelessness, gun violence, assisting refugees, and providing tutoring and college tuition for "I Have a Dream" students
- ✓ Devised new opportunities for adult learning, including offsite learning opportunities and special programs for lawyers, physicians, and business professionals

- ✓ Created new worship experiences such as an alternative High Holyday service, multiple worship for adults and children, and currently pioneering another High Holyday alternative family service
- ✓ Established an outdoor classroom, creating multiple new programs in the area of Bar/Bat Mitzvah prep
- ✓ Exceeded all previous records over 300k in this year's Kol Nidre appeal and 100k in last year's spring fundraiser
- ✓ Faculty Member URJ Camp Harlam; Founding Rabbi Harlam Rabbinic Advisory Board
- ✓ President NJ Region of Reform Rabbis since 2016
- ✓ Organized and led town-wide "March Against Anti-Semitism and Racism" May 2019

**KAM ISAIAH ISRAEL CONGREGATION**

Chicago, IL

**SENIOR RABBI**

07/1999-07/2002

**Provided extensive leadership for a 538 member congregation in the areas of significant preaching, leading and planning of worship, program development, staff leadership, education, significant counseling and pastoral work, educational programming, and community involvement**

- Orchestrated the institution of Caring Committee to assist those in physical need or in mourning with meals and visitation
- Instituted first "Lunch and Learn" noontime discussion class in downtown Chicago
- Established "Introduction to Judaism" class and hosted "New Member" Havdalah gatherings

**RABBI DOUGLAS BENJAMIN SAGAL**

P. 2/2

- Taught classes in Talmud, Jewish Mysticism, Jewish History, Jewish Spirituality, Weekly Torah Portion, Confirmation Class and B'nai Mitzvah
- Created and facilitated Jewish-Arab dialogue group and coordinated Jewish-African American study group
- Introduced Tikkun Leyl Shavuot study evening and introduced Tashlich service
- Imparted conversion classes for Jews-By-Choice and developed and led congregational retreats

***Selected Achievements:***

- ✓ Collaborated with youth group to plan hosting of NFTY winter retreat and Kallah for the first time in 25 years
- ✓ Featured presenter, CCAR President's Kallah, October 1999, "Abraham Ibn Ezra as a Rabbinic model"
- ✓ Chair, Ritual Practice, Rabbinic Advisory Committee, Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute
- ✓ Executive Board Member, Hyde Park/Kenwood Interfaith Council

**BETH SHALOM CONGREGATION**

Deep River, CT

**SENIOR RABBI**

07/1990- 07/1999

**Led a 200 member family congregation; Appointed 1st full time Rabbi in congregation's history leading worship services, serving as a provisional Cantor, counseling members, providing pastoral work, officiating life-cycle events, instituting community involvement, and operating the religious school**

- Tripled membership and more than tripled religious school enrollment through intensive outreach, developing a caring community and innovative programming
- Significantly increased attendance of Friday night worship and expanded monthly Friday night family services, by instituting innovative joyful worship and outstanding preaching
- Installed regular Saturday morning Torah study minyan and instituted and taught weekly class in Talmud
- Supervised the creation of pre-school play group, instrumental in developing congregational choir and established and performed with congregational Klezmer band
- Selected to conduct a recorded Friday evening Shabbat worship service for broadcast to hospitalized Jewish patients at Middlesex Memorial Hospital, in Middletown, CT
- Established Jewish participation in annual community Interfaith Thanksgiving service; Feature speaker 1991
- Formulated Black-Jewish dialogue group with area African-American Church and introduced Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Lecture Sabbath
- Instituted interdenominational bereavement support group and assisted in the creation of Holocaust curriculum in local school

***Selected Achievements:***

- ✓ Faculty member, NFTY Summer Institute 1995 -1999
- ✓ Chosen for first pilot program preparing selected Jewish leaders for future Jewish Life and Synagogue Management, sponsored by the UAHC, Hebrew Union College, Spielberg Foundation, 1997- 1998
- ✓ Invited speaker for CCAR Convention on "Redefining Success in the Rabbinate", 1997

- ✓ Aided congregation in raising \$1.3MM in building fund, instrumental in new building planning and design and supervised merger with another congregation

## **EDUCATION:**

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion D.D. 2015

Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT

Master's in Sacred Theology

Thesis: "A Comparison of Jewish and African-American Preaching"

Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, NY

Ordained – Rabbi, MAHL

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

B.A. in History

Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem, Israel, Rabbinic Leadership Institute, Cohort 6

Named Hartman Senior Fellow July 2019 Jerusalem, Israel

Jewish Theological Seminary, NY summer 1983

## **ADDENDUM**

### **PUBLICATIONS:**

"The Discovery of Midrash in African-American Preaching," Judaism, Winter 2000

Commentary on "Vayishlach" Torat Hayyim, UAHC Dept. of Adult Education, December 2000

Featured character in Today I am a Boy, by David Hays, Simon & Schuster, 2000

(Memoirs describe the relationship of an adult Bar-mitzvah and Rabbi Sagal)

"Sixteen Sermons," published by Congregation Beth Shalom, June 1999

"Teaching Torah as Peshat" Jewish Spectator, Winter 1997

"Teaching Torah" Shma Magazine, October 1997

"Agunot in Liberal Judaism," Jewish Spectator, Winter 1995

"Milk and Honey," two sermons from sermon anthology published by the UAHC, 1992

IdeaBook, Editor, UAHC Department of Education, 1990

Lecture Princeton Theological Seminary "Jews and Christians in Dialogue" January 2020

Scholar in Residence Temple Emanu-El Montreal March 2020