

Temple Israel Center Welcomes New Senior Rabbi Annie Tucker

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Temple Israel Center, (TIC) White Plains, welcomed new Senior Rabbi Annie Tucker, 42 on Monday, July 15, 2019.

In her previous position as Senior Rabbi of Beth Hillel B'nai Emunah, Wilmette, IL, Rabbi Tucker introduced new opportunities for adult learning and deepened her community's commitment to Disability, Keruv (Interfaith); LGBTQ inclusion as well as social justice efforts.

Asked what drew her to the rabbinate, Tucker replied, "It was really a journey over many, many years. I grew up in a very strong Conservative synagogue (in Lexington, MA) with a very involved Jewish family but we weren't particularly observant.

"Over the years, especially through preparing for my Bat Mitzvah and then going to Camp Ramah in New England which was a really strong influence on me, eventually going to college and exploring Jewish life there, I found that the idea of teaching, learning and being involved in Jewish community was really appealing to me."

Regarding her vision for TIC, Tucker answered, "One of the things that I know about TIC is that it is a place that is really deeply committed to education, not only for young people but also for adults. One piece of my vision is to continue to build upon and deepen that engagement. A second piece has to do with social justice, being involved in community, creating a culture of welcome and inclusion..."

"My last piece, with one of the blessings of a very large com-



Senior Rabbi Annie Tucker

munity is that there are so many different micro communities, different ways to be involved. I hope to strike unity and joint purpose, being part of one collective whole.

"My High Holiday message will be about new beginnings, transition and change. The spiritual theme of the High Holidays is transition and change on a personal level as well as transition and change for the community, reflecting on these themes of the Holiday Season."

The new Rabbi at Temple Israel Center in White Plains, Rabbi Annie Tucker, is a graduate of The Jewish Theological Seminary and The University of Pennsylvania. She has been Senior Rabbi of Beth Hillel B'nai Emunah in Wilmette, IL for the last 6 years and previously served as Associate Rabbi of The Jewish Center in Princeton, NJ.

"We are so excited to welcome Rabbi Annie Tucker to our community," said Marc Berman, President of Temple Israel Cen-

ter. "Rabbi Tucker will build on our strengths and expand our horizons through her recognized leadership, deep knowledge of Judaism, innovative ideas and inclusive approach."

The new Rabbi brings a broad and impressive diversity of talents to Temple Israel Center and the greater Westchester Community. Educational innovation, lifelong learning, and social justice programming are just a few of Rabbi Tucker's priorities as she begins her tenure at Temple Israel Center.

"I am thrilled to be joining such an intellectually rich and vibrant congregation characterized by soulful worship, deep commitment to Jewish tradition and values, and a powerful sense of community," Rabbi Tucker said.

"My heart has always been in the Northeast, and I am blessed to be returning home closer to family, friends, and the amazing community of Westchester County! I am excited to partner with dynamic institutions and colleagues in the greater New York City area to model pluralism, inclusion, and the many great things that can be achieved when people work together."

Rabbi Tucker becomes Temple Israel Center's fourth Senior Rabbi in the last 80 years. The congregation's previous Senior Rabbi, Rabbi Gordon Tucker (of no relation), retired in 2017 after serving in the role for 24 years.

"I look forward to building upon the incredible legacy of Rabbi Gordon Tucker to create a congregation grounded in meaning, belonging, justice, and Torah," said Rabbi Annie Tucker.