Her moment is our moment.

A special issue welcoming Rabbi Pomerantz as our new senior rabbi
For 24 years at Temple Beth Sholom, Rabbi Pomerantz has...

engaged community
touched souls
spoken from the heart
developed leaders
cultivated relationships
connected our community
inspired hope
ignited passion
empowered her team
deepened our love of Israel
preserved tradition
nurtured minds
cared deeply*  

Now it’s her moment to lead.
And it’s our moment to forge a new path.
Her moment is our moment.

* These are quotes about Rabbi Pomerantz from unsolicited letters from congregants.
The first time I set foot into Temple Beth Sholom, it was Purim. I had been offered a rabbinic position and I wanted to see firsthand what the congregation was like. The Purimshpiel was Aladdin, and there was my new senior rabbi, Rabbi Glickstein, dressed as the big blue genie. I instantly fell in love with this place where there was laughter mixed with learning, and where everyone was welcome. The extraordinary character of Temple Beth Sholom, our "secret sauce," is our personal warmth and haimish nature.

I am fortunate to have known Rabbi Kronish and to have shared the pulpit with Rabbi Glickstein. Rabbi Kronish’s entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to social justice and civil rights continue to inspire me, along with Rabbi Glickstein’s passion for Israel and visionary leadership. Both of these rabbis have helped to shape me into the leader I am, deeply rooting me in the history, traditions and culture of Temple Beth Sholom.

It is the privilege of a lifetime to become the third senior rabbi in Temple Beth Sholom’s history. It is a role I assume with humility, following in the footsteps of two such great men, and a role I assume with confidence that I will guide Temple Beth Sholom into a vital and secure future as we create a Kehilla Kedosha, a sacred community, together.

We are living at a time when the ground is shifting beneath our feet. From 24/7 technology, to the freedoms we are afforded as Jews in the United States, to the civil unrest we are currently experiencing, we are living in an era of unprecedented change. All of this uncertainty magnifies the importance of the stability of our synagogue as a central communal institution. Temple Beth Sholom must maintain its precious legacy and, at the same time, offer something utterly compelling, unique and transcendent to maintain its relevancy. I believe that our value proposition is in the sense of belonging and community we provide, the purpose we help our congregants discover and live, and the opportunity to experience a sense of holiness even as we live in a material world. No other Jewish organization provides the power of sacred connection the synagogue offers.

This is why I am calling my rabbinic column in HaKol “Sacred Connections.” This name speaks to the powerful nature of our interconnectivity as a synagogue community and my own personal commitment to developing sacred connections with you, my congregants, and among you, my congregation. Together with my entire clergy team (Rabbi Robert Davis, Cantor Lisa Segal, Rabbi Amy Morrison and welcoming Rabbi Ethan Bair) and staff, we hope you will engage and re-engage in Temple Beth Sholom. Come join us and discover the myriad of possibilities for enrichment, belonging, learning, celebrating and flourishing together.

Rabbi Kronish once created a cantata on the occasion of the dedication of our synagogue’s sanctuary: “Forward, forward, to the future,” it began. May we too go forward with strength, resilience and vision. I am grateful to be your partner and leader in this holy enterprise.

Sacred Connections

Message from Rabbi Gayle Pomerantz
Opportunities to Connect

We invite you to share some special moments with Rabbi Pomerantz.

**Jul 17**
Conversation & Breakfast with Rabbi Pomerantz
9:00 am - 10:30 pm
RSVP ASAP to Noemi: noemi@tbsmb.org
Limited space

**Jul 18**
Conversation & Lunch with Rabbi Pomerantz
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
RSVP ASAP to Noemi: noemi@tbsmb.org
Limited space

**Sep 1**
Havdalah & Drum Circle with Rabbi Pomerantz for Families
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm
RSVP ASAP to Noemi: noemi@tbsmb.org

**Fall’18-Spring’19**
Conversation & More with Rabbi Pomerantz
Intimate receptions at congregants’ homes to be scheduled next fall and winter.
For more information, contact Noemi: noemi@tbsmb.org

**Nov 9**
Our Moment to Celebrate: Rabbi Pomerantz’s Installation
Shabbat services followed by congregational dinner. All welcome
Hannah Gelber is a 17-year-old senior at Miami Beach Senior High School. A member of Temple Beth Sholom her entire life, she has been an active BESHTY board member and is currently a Berman Fellow. Hannah will be heading to the University of Michigan this fall. Having known Rabbi Pomerantz since her own baby naming 17 years ago, Hannah felt very lucky to have the opportunity to sit down with Rabbi Pomerantz and ask her a few questions.

**When did you choose to become a rabbi? And why?**

I grew up going to Jewish events, I was president of my temple youth group and went to URJ Camp Coleman. However, the idea of becoming a rabbi never occurred to me because there were no women rabbis. It wasn’t until I went to my rabbi asking for a letter of recommendation to go to law school when he said to me, “You should be a rabbi.” I resisted that thought, but after college I deferred law school to go to Israel and do volunteer work. While in Israel, I bumped into a friend from college who was going to rabbinical school there. I asked her if I could sit in on one of her classes and the very next day I went. It was like a light bulb went on in my head: This is what I should be doing! Why am I resisting this?

**When you were 17 years old, what did you care about most?**

I think when I was your age I really cared about changing the world. I was a page in Washington, D.C., my second semester of senior year. I was very interested in how we affected change in the world. Though I was somewhat disillusioned by the political process, I still knew I wanted to find an outlet to make a difference. That’s still my driving force today.

**You are the first woman to lead a large reform congregation in the southeastern United States. What do you think will be the impact of this breakthrough?**

I am very honored to be a pathfinder in this arena. I think that women clergy have already helped make the temple a more networked model, which I plan to continue, as opposed to a hierarchical model. I also hope that young people will look at my role today and not see any limits with what they can do because of their gender, sexual orientation or color of their skin. I want everybody to feel fully actualized and know that they can dream big.

**How has raising children affected your rabbinate?**

I think that raising children is the most awesome and humbling thing that you can do in this world. You start out thinking that you are fully in control, but as they grow, you realize that you are not. You can teach and nurture, but ultimately you need to step back and let them step into their own lives. So I think that has helped me as a leader because I realize that all relationships are sacred partnerships; I cannot be in control of everything and need to let people figure their own way. Being a parent has also made me less judgmental and more empathetic and understanding.

**How do you define being successful?**

There is no one measure of success, I think it is important to set goals and to not be complacent. It reminds me of the prayer Dayenu which means “it would have been enough.” I think that there is a tension between being grateful for what we have but at the same time yearning for something better and more impactful. I hope I never get to a point where I feel finished or think that there is nothing more to be done.

**What does a perfect day look like to you?**

Today is a perfect day. I got to ride my bike in this beautiful weather, I was able to write this afternoon, I am having this meaningful conversation with you, I am going to a new couple’s house to put a mezuzah up and dedicate it, and I get to have dinner with my family tonight. A perfect day to me is a mixture of being out in the world, connecting with people, and movement towards bettering.
Message from President Jeff Graff

If someone had asked me ten years ago what I would be doing in June 2018, I never could have imagined that I would be addressing Temple Beth Sholom as the president of the congregation. It is truly an honor and a blessing to be able to do so.

We are about to begin the next exciting chapter in our story at Temple Beth Sholom. I’m reminded of one of my favorite songs from the 90’s, “Closing Time,” by Semisonic, which ends with “every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end.” This verse resonates with me at this time of new beginnings for our congregation.

My new beginning as president comes from the end of the term of our most recent past president, Karen Rivo. I am grateful to Karen for her leadership and mentorship.

We welcome new beginnings for Nikki Baron, Glen Dryfoos, Allison Greenfield, Josh Laurence, Jordan Schwartz and Jonathan Sepsenwol as they join our board of trustees. In turn, I thank the board members whose terms have ended for their dedicated service to the congregation.

Most significantly, I am humbled to begin my tenure as president on the same day Rabbi Gayle Pomerantz officially becomes the third senior rabbi in our temple’s history. I am excited to work with and support her as she brings forth her vision and leadership to the congregation. I share her passion for Judaism and her devotion to Temple Beth Sholom; I am thrilled to establish a sacred partnership with our new senior rabbi.

We say the Shehecheyanu prayer at special occasions and at new beginnings as a thank you for reaching this moment. I find the words of the Shehecheyanu most fitting as I give thanks to the board of trustees and the congregation for allowing me the honor to serve as president.

Message from Incoming Rabbi Bair

I became a Reform rabbi because of our movement’s commitment to inclusivity and innovation, and its call to enact our values in the world.

Ordained in 2011 at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, I have spent the last five years as the senior/solo rabbi at Temple Sinai in Reno, Nevada. There, I’ve excelled in reaching out to unaffiliated families, developing lay leaders, and strengthening the congregation’s culture of social action. I am proud that Temple Sinai was one of the first religious organizations in Nevada to sponsor a Syrian refugee family. Before that, I served as the Hillel rabbi at the University of Southern California, and as an advocacy officer for American Jewish World Service.

I’m very excited that at Temple Beth Sholom I will get to focus on my passions: social action and creating musical, meaningful prayer experiences for all ages. Yet my greatest privilege as a rabbi is supporting families in times of joy and sadness. I look forward to bringing the intimacy of a small congregation to all my work at Temple Beth Sholom and to connecting with each of you soon.

My wife, Nadya, and I have been married since 2010. She is a photo historian and Iyengar yoga teacher. Our daughter, Chaya Miriam, was born in January. As a family, we enjoy singing and cooking together, spending time outdoors, traveling the world, and welcoming Shabbat guests into our home.
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