

Roles of Rabbi and Rabbi Emeritus

October 7, 1999

QUESTION:

What are the roles of the Rabbi and the Rabbi Emeritus?

ANSWER:

The Rabbi is the chosen spiritual leader of the Congregation. The Rabbi has the full responsibility for the administration of the rabbinic functions in the Congregation. The Rabbi Emeritus is an honored former Rabbi of the Congregation. The Rabbi has the obligation to accord the Rabbi Emeritus proper honor and courtesy.

The Rabbi Emeritus is welcome to sit on the Bimah at all services, and on the platform or at the head table at all significant occasions in the Congregation's life, if he/she so desires. If the Emeritus prefers to sit with the Congregation or to be absent, such wishes shall be respected.

The Rabbi Emeritus may participate in conducting the Synagogue service, preach and/or teach only when invited to do so by the Rabbi of the Congregation. In accepting the invitation to participate, the Emeritus will follow the forms of worship and rituals then prevailing.

The Rabbi of the Congregation is expected to officiate at life-cycle functions for members of the Congregation. If a member requests the Emeritus to participate, the Emeritus must first consult with the Rabbi before responding to the request of a member. Only after consultation and at the invitation or request of the Rabbi of the Congregation may the Rabbi Emeritus officiate at a life-cycle function. This process is in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

The CCAR Code of Ethics states:

"No Rabbi should offer and/or render such pastoral attentions to members of other congregations, as will disturb the relations between Rabbinical colleagues, between congregations, or between a Rabbi and a member of his/her Congregation."

Adherence to their respective roles will promote harmonious and productive relations for the benefit of the Congregation.

These principles are taken from the UAHC Guidelines for Rabbinical - Congregational Relationships and the CCAR Code of Ethics. Affirmed by the Temple Board on October 7, 1999, based on the recommendation of the Religious Practices Committee