

Dear Members,

We are excited to offer the first update on the status of the Rinat rabbinic search process. The Rabbinic Transition Committee, chaired by Seymour Adler, prepared and distributed a survey to the shul membership in August. Nearly 50% of the shul's membership, 405 members, completed the survey. The Transition Committee held 11 focus groups, attended by more than 100 people, which supplied invaluable qualitative data to accompany the survey's quantitative data. With input from the Rabbinic Search Committee, the Transition Committee formulated a job description on the basis of the feedback provided by the survey results and focus group discussions. Copies of both the survey results and the job description have been uploaded to the shul's website, where they can be viewed under the "Rabbinic Transition" link. We would like to thank the entire Transition Committee—Seymour Adler, Leah Adler, Doug Dubitsky, Tavi Koslowe, and Becky Wolf—for the hours of hard work it put into preparing the survey, conducting the focus groups, analyzing the results, and incorporating them into the final job description. Undoubtedly, this will significantly assist us in our mission to identify the most suitable candidates.

The YU Department of Jewish Career Development and Placement, directed by Rabbi Ronald Schwarzberg, posted the job description on its website last Thursday, officially launching the search. The full-time position is open to all RCA-eligible rabbis.

We expect to begin receiving in the coming weeks from Rabbi Schwarzberg's office applications, which include a cover letter, resume, 3-5 minute video devar torah, and a letter of recommendation. All applications are submitted to us via the YU Department of Jewish Career Development and Placement. The Search Committee will begin its deliberations as soon as it receives applications. Candidates deemed worthy of further scrutiny will participate in a 45-minute interview over Zoom. The Search Committee will further narrow the field and offer multi-hour second-round interviews to select candidates in December and early January; health precautions will almost certainly require that such interviews be conducted over Zoom. By mid-January, the Search Committee expects to select 2 or 3 finalists who will be invited for a Probah in Teaneck in February or early March. Probahs will either be held in shul or in large outdoor tents, but we will pause the process if public health concerns prohibit us from introducing the finalists in person. Assuming the search process is brought to completion, membership will vote to select our next rabbi by mid-March, and the new rabbi will join the shul next summer.

We intend to conduct the search in an open and transparent way to the fullest extent possible, with the goal of each member feeling included and his or her views respected. Toward that end, we encourage you to share your thoughts with any individual member of the Search Committee or to email the Committee as a whole at [searchcommittee2020@rinat.org](mailto:searchcommittee2020@rinat.org). Notwithstanding the overriding need for transparency, it is critical that we maintain the utmost confidentiality surrounding this process, and committee members have already signed Non-Disclosure Agreements forbidding them from sharing details of our internal deliberations. Other than the names of finalists invited for a Probah, committee members will never reveal the identities of the candidates being considered. Disclosing such information would jeopardize the search process, discourage the best candidates from applying, cast our Shul in a terrible light, and would likely compromise an applicant's current position and relationship with his congregation and community.

May Hashem bless our wonderful shul and this important endeavor with great success.

Chavie Acton

Elie Berman

Noam Block

Josh Goldsmith

Tully Harczstark

Avi Katz

Leora Kukin

Ari Mermelstein, Chair

Sara Prager

Passi Rosen-Bayewitz

Suzy Schwartz