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## ***Rabbi Information and Application Packet***

Greetings:

Thank you for asking for information about our available position as Rabbi for our Temple. Pages 1-9 of this packet are informational and are provided for you to more completely understand our Temple, its congregants, our history, and the area within which we are located. If you are interested in applying for this Rabbi position, please furnish a signed application containing all of the requested information found below on page 10. Please submit your Application to “Rabbi Search Committee” at the above address.

We will begin to process applications on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012. This application packet itself is readily available to others at <http://www.juddrobbins.com/RabbiSearch.html>. In keeping with the high ideals of Judaism, our congregation will not exclude a candidate from consideration based on age, gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, or marital status.

### *Leadership*

Co-Presidents	Sherry Friedman, Bonnie Frol, Lee Weisel
Previous Rabbi and length of tenure	Rabbi Marc Sirinsky (18 years)
Chair of Rabbi Search Committee (RSC)	Judd Robbins
Rabbi Search Committee (RSC) Email	<a href="mailto:tesrsc@gmail.com">tesrsc@gmail.com</a>
Note: Our Rabbi attends Board meetings	

### *Staff*

Cantor/Director of religious school	Bella Feldman
Office Manager	Mark Madge
Director of preschool	Robin Heald

### *Congregation*

Total number of member units today: 175			
Families :115	Single members : 60	Children at home: 58	
Age distribution under 50=43%, 50-75 = 43% over 75= 14%			
Demographic projections are: growth is primarily among retired people, with smaller growth in young professional families.			

*Our Mission Statement:*

Temple Emek Shalom is committed to providing a welcoming home to a wide spectrum of Jews and their families who seek a caring, participatory community integrating contemporary Jewish life with traditional Jewish values. We are also committed to offering people from all backgrounds the opportunity for fulfilling spiritual, educational, and social experiences that foster Jewish continuity; L’Dor v’Dor.

*Synagogue Facilities*

Our synagogue was built in 2002. Our beautiful sanctuary has a maximum capacity of 500 and is a flexible space with social hall and auditorium. The building includes a commercial kitchen, library, youth lounge, conference room, office suite and 6 classrooms.

*Prayer Books:*

Weekly: Renew Our Days (with additional, creative texts and services for many festivals and family services)  
High Holy Days: Renew Our Days (also creative Machzor for family and children's services)

*Our School Programs:*

The goal of Jewish education at TES is to deepen Jewish identity and knowledge through experiential, hands-on learning. Our 6 teachers serve 35 children and work with families to cultivate a deep sense of community. We see our task as empowering families to help their children live more meaningful Jewish lives.

Under the direction and leadership of Cantorial Soloist Bella Feldman, the HaRav Kook Religious School at Temple Emek Shalom (pre-K-7th grade) recently implemented a new approach to Jewish learning. This approach reflects the changed needs and lifestyle of families with young children and is in keeping with Temple Emek Shalom's culture of trying innovative and creative programs to meet our congregants' needs.

The religious school calendar includes one special family Sabbath service per month and one lesson that is sent home to study together as a family each month. In addition, the new program meets twice monthly on Sundays from 10 am to 2 pm. This schedule allows families to balance their children’s secular extracurricular activities with religious school without having to choose between them each week.

Each year is organized around three overarching core subjects. All individual subjects—Hebrew, Judaic studies, drama, art, and music—are taught with the themes in mind. Integral parts of the curriculum are the arts and creative activities such as drama, cooking and photography to enrich and reinforce the curriculum. The result is truly experiential learning, facilitated by enthusiastic teachers.

Sunday sessions conclude with a family service open to the community. This year we are using a new prayer book, featuring contemporary interpretations of each prayer written by Rabbi Marc Sirinsky. Parents are strongly encouraged to join their children for the service.

The new curriculum is infused with the importance of family in Jewish life. As the school's mission statement says, "Through cooperation and engagement—with family supporting school and school supporting family—we show our children that Jewish living is an important part of all our lives, and that we want Jewish values to be an important part of theirs as well."

### *Pomegranate PreSchool for the Arts*

Pomegranate Preschool for the Arts, located in the TES building, is a Jewish preschool with an art-centered curriculum. Its primary goal is to offer three- to four-year olds an arts immersion program that encourages self-expression and socialization. We celebrate Jewish holidays, and incorporate a Jewish sensibility both in our relationships with each other, and in our respect for the earth. Pomegranate is open to families of all religious faiths. Each child is regarded as an individual whose gifts, temperaments, and challenges are honored.

Throughout the week, children are offered activities in music, drama, creative writing through story-telling, and fine arts. Our music teachers are certified in the Music Together Program. Outdoor and indoor play is part of the daily schedule. Simple science experiments, and music sessions with the temple cantor are weekly activities. Each Friday we celebrate the ritual of Shabbat. Once a month, children make their own challah. Children develop their own scripts, paint backdrops, and if possible assemble costumes and props for the two plays a year, which we perform for friends and families. Twice a year, children are paired with grandparents or older congregation members for inter-generational art. Together they make an artwork based on a Jewish artist.

Pomegranate has the capacity to enroll eighteen students. There are twelve children enrolled Mondays through Thursdays. Every student is encouraged to attend on Fridays. The teacher student ratio at Pomegranate is 1:4.

*Other Congregations in our Area:*

Renewal - Havurah Shir Hadash  
Orthodox - Chabad

*Colleges and universities in area:*

Southern Oregon University  
Rogue Community College

*Important Considerations:*

*Three Most Important Qualities for Our Rabbi:*

1. Spiritual leader and motivator: our new Rabbi will inspire us to make Torah relevant in our daily lives through substantive sermons, insightful connections, and enlightening education. Our Rabbi will help us apply Torah and Jewish values to the world around us so that we may find strength in our Judaism.
2. Embraces diversity: as a congregation with diverse religious backgrounds, practices, and beliefs, both secular and non-secular, our new Rabbi will accept our differences and embrace this spectrum of Jews. While Temple Emek Shalom is affiliated with the reform movement, TES has long embodied the "big tent" approach, whereby every Jew is welcomed. We demonstrate this philosophy by offering very diverse services, ranging from a conservative Saturday morning Shabbat service (lasts 2-2 1/2 hours) and b'nai mitzvah service, to Shabbat Shirah (a musical service employing up to ten instruments), to our Eat, Pray, Sing Shabbat dinner service. We have members who follow a strict kashrut diet and those who do not. Some of us rise for the Shema and others do not. Our new Rabbi will not only embrace our differences as we do, but also will appreciate the need to be flexible when addressing the concerns of such a diverse congregation.
3. Dynamic and enthusiastic: our Rabbi will bring vitality to worship, education, sermons and congregational interactions. This energy must be more than skin deep. Our new Rabbi will help inspire a renewed appreciation for Judaism. Our new Rabbi will be the center point from which the congregation will enhance its sense of community. Our new Rabbi will infuse the congregation with a sense of purpose, bringing members together, showing us new ways of why a Jewish community matters.

*Three Most Important Priorities of our Rabbi:*

1. Worship leader: we see our new Rabbi as being a true leader, one who inspires spiritual growth and participation through meaningful worship, insightful sermons, supportive assistance through life cycle events, compassionate social action and bridging community outreach.

2. Teacher/communicator: the deep knowledge that our new Rabbi possesses will be used to apply Jewish thought, values, history and ethics to current events as well as personal congregant challenges and make Judaism relevant. Our new Rabbi will be able to make personal connections, through an engaging personal style, with congregants in all facets of temple life.

3. Religious motivator: our new Rabbi will have a deep knowledge of all that is Jewish, e.g. history, culture, philosophies, and be able to inspire and reinforce the values and rewards of participating in Jewish life. Included in this is the ability to inspire the uninterested to become members and members to become leaders.

*Three Primary Goals of Our Synagogue, while transitioning to our new Rabbi in a way that honors the essential character of our congregation:*

1. Attract and retain members --- engaging a broader section of members in activities and programs that deepen their connections to TES, and engaging in outreach to non-members, giving them new reasons to join.

2. Create meaningful worship that energizes our membership and inspires spiritual growth and a passion for righteousness.

3. Improve our financial resources and long-term ability to support our operations and facilities by expanding endowment, increasing membership, increasing fundraising activities and expanding dues revenues.

*Our Congregation's Strengths:*

1. Our Cantorial Soloist, Bella Feldman is a dynamic and graceful presence on the Bimah, a lively and creative educator, and an inspired Director of the Choir, the Purim Spiel and many other musical events. Cantor Bella serves quarter time as our Director of religious school.
2. Our preschool and Sunday school offer successful programs led by a staff of committed teachers.
3. Our diverse membership and "big tent" philosophy enriches our worship services and our educational offerings. We offer an array of worship services in order to meet our congregation's diverse religious practices.

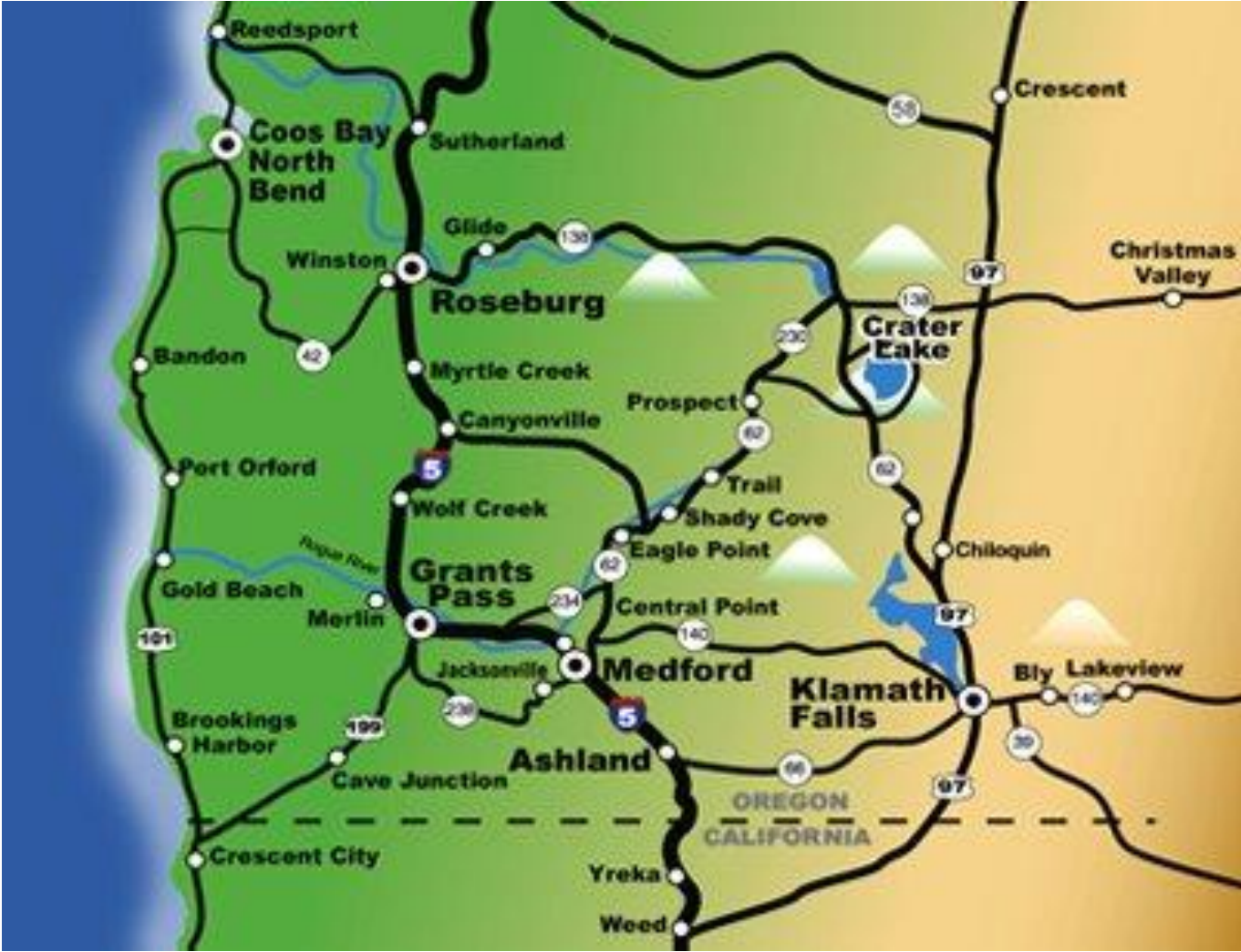
*Our Congregation's Weaknesses:*

1. We need a more stable financial base. While "dues" amounts to more than fifty percent of our income, this is because our fundraising dollars have been shrinking. We have a foundation; however, it is small and does not provide a substantial contribution to our budget.
2. We need to better engage our existing members and attract new members. We traditionally have between 210 and 185 member units. However, we are now at about 175 member units due to the current economic downturn, as well as to our expressed need for a revitalized worship experience.
3. We have been lacking broad vision and leadership to effect long term planning. It is increasingly difficult to attract members to leadership posts and to have congregants accept volunteer positions for fundraising, special events, etc. Often, the leadership is engaged in trying to ensure year-to-year functioning and is left with little time or energy to plan several years into the future.

*Remuneration:*

TES offers a salary package commensurate with experience and is competitive with other congregations similar in size and situation.

*Map of Ashland and surrounding area  
in relation to the Pacific Ocean and Northern California:*



## ***Temple History***

The 1852 census of Jackson County lists seven Jews. A Jewish section was established in the Jacksonville Historic Cemetery in 1865 and graves exist in the cemetery through the early 1900's. The first modern era burial took place in 1979.

In 1972, a small group came together and formed the Rogue Valley Jewish Community in Medford. Initially, the group met in homes and then began renting space from the First Presbyterian Church in Medford for services and a religious school. The congregation joined the Union of Reform Judaism and student Rabbis were brought in over a period of about eight years.

In 1984, the first congregational Rabbi, Rabbi Aryeh Hirschfield, was hired. After much debate, a building was purchased in Ashland, and the congregation adopted the name Temple Emek Shalom. Rabbi Aryeh's contract was not renewed for a second year and along with a small group of followers, a second congregation was formed in Ashland and named Havurah Shir Hadash. This new and separate congregation became affiliated with Jewish Renewal.

During the next decade, a series of Rabbis served our Temple Emek Shalom congregation as it grew to over 150 families. In 1993, Rabbi Marc Sirinsky was hired. Growth continued under his leadership. A parcel of land was purchased and our current, beautiful temple building was constructed in 2002. During our Year of Celebration, we held many events in our new building that were open to the community at large. Our congregation grew to over 220 members and our ties to the larger community were strengthened.

The congregation has been described by some as post-denominational, serving the needs of a diverse community. The congregation davens with several different Siddurim, including the Reconstructionist Siddur Hadesh Yameinu which is used regularly. This Machzor was developed by the Reconstructionist Synagogue of Montreal, Canada - Congregation Dorshei Emet. The minhag of our Temple is totally egalitarian and leans toward traditional in its practice. For example, the kitchen is kosher, the second day of the Haggim is observed. Most participants wear tallitim on Shabbat and kippot in the sanctuary. There is a small core of congregants who serve as Torah chanters and gabbaim. The most well attended service is the monthly Shabbat Shirah, a non-traditional service facilitated by a devoted group of musicians. Innovative music that is accessible to the congregation has been a cornerstone of this service's success.

At its height in 2011, the temple staff consisted of a fulltime Rabbi, a Rabbinic Assistant, a part-time Cantorial Soloist, a part-time educator, a part-time bookkeeper and an office manager. As we undertake our search for a new Rabbi, we are operating with a smaller staff and a cadre of dedicated volunteers.

## ***The Surrounding Area***

Ashland, Oregon is a jewel nestled in the foothills of the Siskiyou Mountains, located fourteen miles north of the California border, and is easily accessible from the Interstate, I-5. Ashland offers big city arts & entertainment in a small town package. It is home to the world renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival and offers year round cultural opportunities for all ages, including theatre, music, arts, museums, educational opportunities and community events. The charming and authentic feel of Ashland can be enjoyed walking throughout the town, browsing the local shops.

Come and engage in one of the varied theatrical opportunities of Ashland. Not only can you attend a play at the Shakespeare Festival, but other theatres offer performances throughout the year, such as Oregon Cabaret Theatre. For the film enthusiast, The Ashland Independent Film Festival, the first weekend in April, provides over 90 documentaries, features and short films.

The Ashland economy, based on tourism and higher education, showed amazing strength in 2010. Southern Oregon University in fall 2010 experienced the highest enrollment growth in its history with over 6,500 students. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, a cornerstone of the tourism infrastructure, celebrated its 75th anniversary in Ashland with the highest number of tickets sold (over 415,000) and the highest occupancy (94%). Many lodging, restaurant and retail establishments experienced strong seasons. The restaurant industry is especially competitive with almost 100 businesses operating in Ashland. The retail sector is unique and largely run by independently owned businesses, offering unique products both in-store and on-line. Numerous galleries make Ashland their home and feature local as well as national and world-renowned artists. Creativity abounds in our business core and is reflected in our manufacturing sector as well. Manufacturing in Ashland is comprised of small businesses, many with strong environmental ethics reflected in their green practices.

Exploring the outdoors in Ashland and the surrounding areas is often just a few steps from one's home. Ashlanders enjoy their "green" spaces, from hiking trails that traverse the city to numerous parks such as dog parks, parks with stages that act as musical venues, to parks thrilling all alike with water features. About 30 minutes away is Mt. Ashland, a local ski resort known for some of the more challenging runs in North America. If skiing and snowboarding is not your thing, try experiencing the Rogue River. Rafting, kayaking, fishing, canoeing, and swimming are all enjoyed on the local Rogue River. There is also Emigrant Lake just five minutes from town where you can enjoy swimming, fishing, and boating, waterskiing, water slides and even spot the local crew teams rowing.

Ashland values education. Ashland is home to three public elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. The local public schools are excellent where two out of three elementary schools are recognized as "Exceptional," a designation awarded by the Oregon Department of Education. Ashland High School is among the top 3% of U.S. High Schools and is a silver medalist in the U.S. News and World Report survey of high schools across the country. The local community donates roughly \$250,000-\$300,000 each year to support our public schools through the Ashland Schools Foundation. There are also several private secondary schools such as Willow Wind, which supports families engaged in home schooling, as well as the Siskiyou School.

Ashland is home to Southern Oregon University, a highly regarded public four year university that offers a variety of community classes as well. Rogue Community College is based in Medford, fourteen miles away and often offers courses in Ashland.

## ***OUTLINE OF YOUR REQUIRED APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS***

Below is a brief outline of the material facts that are an essential part of your rabbinical resume and application for our Rabbi position. Accuracy is essential in composing this document. Since this is the first document that our Search Committee views, it is strongly advised that you prepare it in such a way that it will engage us in a positive manner.

Please pay close attention to the personal statement (#6) and your requested recording (#9). In advance of possibly meeting with you, your printed statement as well as your recording will play a major role in our decisions about which rabbinic candidates to contact for further interviews.

1. Name, address, email, phone numbers (home and office), and how you heard about this position.
2. Professional experience in reverse chronological order, indicating significant areas of achievement and innovations.
3. Education:
  - ✓ Ordination: seminary, location, date.
  - ✓ Colleges or universities attended, indicating degrees earned and dates.
  - ✓ Non-degree, post-graduate courses.
  - ✓ If your education has included highly specialized studies, you might describe them.
4. Communal activities (Jewish organizations; general community; youth activity; giving locations, offices held, board memberships, dates).
5. Publications, giving full bibliographical details.
6. Write a statement (1-2 pages) which will give the search committee insight into your Rabbinate.
7. 1-3 References that you would be willing to submit at this time, or a statement that they will be supplied on request.
8. Some Rabbis are under contract, either oral or written, to their affiliating organizations, or other unionizing or organizational bodies. We require that you attest to us, and hold us harmless, for any conflict between your application, candidacy, and any offer of employment for this Rabbi position and any other group with whom you have established any contractual obligations.
9. Information about your compensation (salary, parsonage, benefits, etc.) history at each rabbinical position, as well as any specific compensation expectations.
- 10. A recording of you during a service, a sermon, a drash, or some other form of speech or discussion that will provide us additional insight into your speaking, leadership, and worship and motivational skills.**

Please sign your application, attesting to #8 above, and that everything contained within your application is truthful, and that you understand that falsehoods discovered later will be sufficient grounds for immediate dismissal.