**The Temple's Rabbi Michael Shulman  
Becomes 18Doors Rukin Rabbinic Fellow**

The Temple's Rabbi Michael Shulman is now part of the second cohort of the 18Doors Rukin Rabbinic Fellowship Program, which launched with a virtual kick-off retreat earlier last month.

The new Rukin Rabbinic Fellows are part of a unique community of practice, which will help them hone their skills working with interfaith couples and families. Each will participate in professional development provided by 18Doors. In addition to the virtual retreat in early 2021, there will be another retreat in Spring 2022, regular webinars, small group learning, and one-on-one mentoring.

The Fellows will each offer programs and workshops for interfaith couples in their own communities and virtually for a national audience. They will also work individually with couples seeking Jewish clergy to officiate a lifecycle event through 18Doors’ referral service, answer questions, and connect couples to existing inclusive resources and organizations.

“Working to include interfaith couples and families into our Jewish community has always been an essential value to me. This fellowship will allow our Nashville community to be even more welcoming as we not only serve but celebrate interfaith relationships and their vital part of the diversity of our Jewish future,” Rabbi Shulman said.

Twenty-one communities across the United States and Canada have Rukin Fellows, where interfaith couples and families can receive:

* One-on-one consultations with a rabbi who can provide support and answer questions
* Referrals to local organizations friendly to interfaith couples and families
* Programming for seriously dating, engaged and newly married interfaith couples and/or parents with young children to talk about how they want to bring religious traditions into their lives together

Rabbi Mark Schiftan, Senior Rabbi at The Temple, says Rabbi Shulman’s involvement in the Rukin Fellowship will be a valuable resource for Nashville’s Jewish community.

“As a congregation, and as a Jewish community as a whole, we are attempting to be ever more inclusive, whether it be in regard to skin tone, race, ethnicity, birthplace, physical or emotional challenges, or religious orientation or preference,” Rabbi Schiftan said.

“Rabbi Shulman, though his intense training as a Rukin Fewllow, will be able to lend his learned insights to the ongoing activities and future planning of the myriad of Jewish institutions, agencies, and congregations of our greater Nashville Jewish community and communal life.”

The second cohort of Rukin Fellows was officially launched at the beginning of February 2021. They will join the Fellows from the first cohort, which started in 2019. Fellows will be available to connect with couples in Boca Raton; Boston; Chicago; Denver; Fort Lauderdale; Houston; Huntington, NY; Las Vegas; Los Angeles; Milwaukee; Montreal, Quebec ; Morristown, NJ; Nashville; New York City; Omaha; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; San Francisco; Seattle; St. Louis; and Toronto, Ontario.

Rabbi Robyn Frisch, Director of the Rukin Rabbinic Fellowship, said she is thrilled with this year’s new fellows. “The fellows in our second cohort are coming in with a wide range of experience working with interfaith couples and families and an eagerness to learn best practices and take their work to the next level. I am so excited for our new fellows to be able to learn with and from each other, and most importantly, for them to serve the interfaith couples and families in their communities.”

18Doors, formerly InterfaithFamily, is here to help couples and families with one Jewish spouse and one spouse from a different religious or cultural background, connect, explore and navigate Jewish life. We understand Jewish interfaith relationships — and deliver knowledge and connection in a non-judgmental way to help you open the door to Jewish. From digital content and in-person offerings that help couples and families, to a rabbinic fellowship and learning opportunities for Jewish professionals and clergy, we deliver helpful information with a warm welcome and inclusive vibe.

Need to connect with a rabbi or cantor to officiate your wedding, baby naming or just to talk? Want to meet other interfaith couples and families like you? Or need help figuring out how to do Jewish? We’re here to help. Visit us at [www.18doors.org](http://www.18doors.org).