

# *Congregation B'nai Jacob*

*Phoenixville, Pennsylvania*



## *The Installation of Rabbi Jeff Sultar*

*Friday, April 8, 2016*

*1 Nisan 5776*

## *Program*

Bim Bam and Hinei Mah Tov led by the Religious School Students

*Hinei May Tov uma nai'im shevet achim gam yachad:*

*"How good and pleasant it is to be together with our community."*

## *Installation*

Remarks .....Naomi Adler, CEO  
Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

Installation Address and Presentation ..... Mark Snow  
CBJ President

Installation Ritual

Response ..... Rabbi Jeff Sultar

Shehechyanu

A Reception will follow the end of the service.

## *Installation Ritual*

During the Days of Awe (*Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*), a number of the most important parts of the service are traditionally preceded by what is called a “*reshut*,” which means “permission.” The *shaliach tzibbur*/prayer leader asks for the ability to pray on behalf of the *kahal*/congregation. And in many of the original versions, the *kahal* in turn grants this permission to the leader.

The following ritual is based on just such a *reshut*, one that likely dates back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century. It has been restored to the liturgy after nearly 1600 years, as it now appears in the *Lev Shalem Machzor* (Days of Awe prayerbook) that the Conservative movement published several years ago (and which we use at Congregation B’nai Jacob). The *reshut* begins with the congregation expressing their desire that the leader will, in fact, *be* their leader. The leader then responds by also expressing his desire to lead the community. Thus, this interactive *reshut*, both in the words themselves and in the back-and-forth format, express the covenantal relationship between a congregation and its rabbi. When Rabbi Sultar first encountered this *reshut*, his first thought was: “This is exactly what an installation is all about!”

*Congregation recites:*

Our God and God of our ancestors, be with the messenger of Your people Israel as he stands praying for the ability to plead before you, on our behalf.

Teach him what to say, inspire him in his speech, respond to his requests, instruct him how to properly glorify You. May he walk in the light of Your presence, and bend his knees to You. May Your people be blessed through the words of his mouth, and may all find blessing through the blessings of Your mouth.

*Rabbi Sultar Responds:*

אוֹחִילָהּ לְאֵל, אַחֲלֶה פָּנָיו, אֶשְׁאַלָּה מִמֶּנּוּ מַעֲנֶה לְשׁוֹן.  
אֲשֶׁר בִּקְהֵל עִם אֲשִׁירָה עָזוּ, אֲבִיעָה רִנָּנוֹת בְּעַד  
מִפְעָלָיו. לְאָדָם מַעֲרִכִי לֵב, וּמִיָּהוּה מַעֲנֶה לְשׁוֹן.  
יְהוּה שִׁפְתֵי תִפְתָּח, וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ. יִהְיוּ לְרִצּוֹן אֲמָרֵי  
פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוּה, צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי.

I pray to You, God, that I may come into Your presence. Grant me proper speech, for I would sing of your strength amidst the congregation of Your people and utter praises describing Your deeds.

A person may have the best intentions, but it is God who grants the ability of expression.

Adonai, open my lips that my mouth may declare Your glory, and may the words of my mouth and the thoughts in my heart be acceptable to You, Adonai, my stronghold and my redeemer.



Rabbi Jeff Sultar has served a number of congregations, including as Rabbi at Congregation B'nai Israel, a Conservative congregation in Rumson, New Jersey, as Interim Rabbi at Beth Am Israel, a Conservative congregation in Penn Valley, Pennsylvania, as Senior Rabbi at Mishkan Shalom, a Reconstructionist congregation in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and as

Rabbi at Congregation Beth Shalom, a Reconstructionist congregation in Naperville, Illinois. He has also taught and led services at several different Reform congregations.

Rabbi Sultar recently taught in the Religion Department at Temple University. He directed the Green Menorah Program of The Shalom Center, which addressed the global climate crisis from a Jewish perspective, seeking changes in individual, congregational and organizational practices, as well as advocating for changes in public policy. Prior to that he was the Campus Rabbi at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Before Cornell he was the rabbi at Choate Rosemary Hall in Wallingford, Connecticut. His appointment there represented the first time that a college preparatory boarding school had a full-time rabbi on campus.

Rabbi Sultar's passion for teaching has taken him several times to the National Havurah Summer Institute where he taught "The Earth is the Lord's: Judaism and Environment" and "Does a Golem Count in a Minyan?" He also helped develop and taught in the innovative "Jewish, Alive & American" program in Philadelphia, an intensive year-long course for people rediscovering their Judaism as adults. As a speaker for Shomrei Adamah, a Jewish environmental group, he gave talks throughout the northeast on the connection between Jewish values and environmental concerns. His essay, "Adam, Adamah and Adonai: The

Relationship between God, Humans and Nature in the Hebrew Bible" is included in Ecology & the Jewish Spirit: Where Nature and the Sacred Meet. He also contributed to the family education book Growing Together: Resources, Programs, and Experiences for Jewish Family Education.

Rabbi Sultar is a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. While there he received the Berger Prize in Practical Rabbinics and the Socolow Prize for Outstanding Essay. His undergraduate education was at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts; his concentration was in English and he also completed a program in Environmental Studies. Rabbi Sultar also participated in the Institute for Jewish Spirituality for Rabbis, a two-year program of retreats, meditation practice and weekly text study.

Rabbi Sultar lived in Jerusalem for a year, where he studied at Pardes, an egalitarian Orthodox yeshiva, actively explored nooks and crannies all over Israel, saw as many movies as possible at the Cinemateque, and paid regular visits to an Ethiopian family. Prior to his time at RRC, Rabbi Sultar was the Gaudino Fellow at the Center for Common Security (CCS) in Williamstown, Massachusetts, for which he led workshops throughout the United States on themes of global security, participatory education, and leadership. Part of the work of CSS was promulgating a model for education in which college students initiate and teach their own classes. This work grew out of a course that Rabbi Sultar helped create, and which ran for over 15 years. While at CCS he founded its Natural Security Program, which explored environmental dimensions of international security. He also taught a course on "Natural Security" as an adjunct professor at Williams College.

Rabbi Sultar has written a book (currently in search of a publisher) about the spiritual side of his solo, 27-month, 46 state, 16,000

mile bicycle journey throughout the United States, during which he bartered work in exchange for food and lodging in over 400 communities. In addition to movies, his interests also include music, art, reading, theater, travel, nature, and racquet sports of all kinds. He lets few days go by without at least a taste of chocolate. He is married to Julia Bell, has a 19-year-old daughter, Maya, and is stepfather to Miller and Elizabeth Harris.



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Rabbi Jeff Sultar

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Our mission is to provide a place, rooted in Jewish tradition, where all people feel welcome, supported and enriched. We strive to foster connections to our past, to our future and to the divine in an intimate, accepting community.



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B'NAI JACOB

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Starr Street & Manavon Street  
Phoenixville, PA 19460