

Oct 2014 Rabbi Susan Heneson Moskowitz Installation

At this point in our service, and in our program tonight, I want to say a few words about Rabbi Susie Heneson Moskowitz.

I'm a lawyer, so I'm going to give just the facts. Rabbi Susie grew up in the Baltimore area. After graduating from Randallstown High School, she went on to Duke University. In 1986, following her graduation from Duke, she entered into the five-year program in Rabbinic Studies at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, including a year of study in Jerusalem. She was ordained in 1991 and became assistant rabbi at Temple Beth El of Great Neck.

She went on to become Family Educator at the Reconstructionist Synagogue of the North Shore in Plandome, where she implemented one of the first UJA-Federation Continuity grants.

And then, in 1996, she joined Temple Beth Torah as our Rabbi Educator. When I first met Rabbi Susie, our kids were in pre-school together. She and my wife, another Susie, and several other parents, often shared car-pooling duties. From time to time I pitched in, albeit very rarely. Susie did everything she was called upon to do as our Rabbi Educator, and much, much more. In those days, her day job was to educate our kids as Jews. Off the clock, her responsibilities were to her family. She did all of that, flawlessly. Shira and Ari, who are here tonight, beaming for their mother, are testaments to that, and Steve has done pretty well, too.

And like the cream that inevitably rises to the top, our Ravsusie has risen to the Rabbinic top as well.

Among many, many other things, she is the immediate Past-President of the Long Island Board of Rabbis, a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis' Nominating Committee, a member of the board of M'yad L'yad, Chair of the UJA - Long Island Rabbinic Advisory Council, a member of the faculty at Camp Eisner, and a Certified Family Educator and Spiritual Director. She's also the creator of Temple Beth Torah's unique and very special Mishpacha University, originator of many of our community service programs, a frequent leader and speaker at conferences and symposia for SAGES and other [programs], and many other things, too numerous to list tonight.

In short, Rabbi Susie Heneson Moskowitz is a Rabbi of enormous capability, sensitivity, intellect and accomplishment. She is also a completely devoted, inspiring and compelling teacher. I began studying with her a number of years ago, after my mother passed away. Not only did I find comfort in her Saturday morning minyans, but also a depth of intellectual involvement and spiritual openness that has kept me returning – albeit most of the time late (an inside joke) – week after week and year after year.

I have learned so much from her and she has taught so much to all of us.

What better religious, spiritual guide could there possibly be? Who more dedicated, devoted, to helping us to make ourselves better, more complete persons?

And now she is our Senior Rabbi. We are indeed blessed to have her leading our Temple as Senior Rabbi.

And I would now like to introduce Gila Hadani Ward.

Gila is the Congregational Network Director – East for the Union for Reform Judaism. Her background, too, is in Jewish education, and before joining URJ, Gila served as a Hebrew High School, congregational youth program director and Director of Lifelong Jewish Learning. The URJ is a network of over 900 congregations across North America, and it is a great honor to have her join us tonight for Rabbi Moskowitz's installation. Gila . . .