

Reflections from Rabbi. . .Welcome Rabbi Kushnick!

The rabbis teach us, “kol hat’khalot kashot—all beginnings are difficult.” This wise phrase reminds us that change is rife with challenge. It can be threatening to our psyche. It can inflict emotional injury when we are least prepared. It can uncover fears we had sought to package away. The fear of change can stunt growth, causing us to spend a lifetime wondering what we could have accomplished, or what we could have done with our abilities.

At the same time, change can be so refreshing and uplifting. It can be so revealing, providing us with the opportunity to pursue new opportunities. Change can unshackle us from expectations we had placed upon ourselves. Similarly, change can keep us fresh, open to new ideas, new approaches, and the opportunity to see our world from new perspectives.

Filled with these and many more sentiments, I am so proud to introduce and welcome Talia and Rabbi Michael Kushnick, along with their little boy Nadav, to our congregation. Fresh from his ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, we welcome Rabbi Kushnick and his family into the warmth and supportive environment of our shul. Having already distinguished himself in a number of rabbinic roles during the course of his studies, Rabbi Kushnick brings a wealth of experience and a passion for the Jewish people to Plano, Texas. Together with Talia, who has dedicated her life to Jewish education (most recently, she was the Director of Jewish Education at Congregation Shaare Zedek in New York City), they make a perfect match for our congregation.



As we embark upon the next phase of our journey as a congregation we do so with a tremendous sense of humility. We have been blessed with so much success over the course of our short history. At the same time, I have been overwhelmed with my responsibility to guide the congregation to the best of my ability. I am so thankful to you, the membership of the congregation, for giving me the opportunity to continue to grow as your rabbi, enabling me to share the blessing and responsibility of leadership with a colleague. I believe you will find Talia and Michael to be beautiful human beings, blessed with a passion for touching Jewish souls, mature in their demeanor with others, and filled with excitement for their first encounter with the Jewish world following rabbinical school. I have little question they will be an integral part of our journey to build upon the significant milestones that have characterized the congregation over the course of our first 15 years.

Please join me in extending a warm Texas welcome to the Kushnick family as we wish them only success and fulfillment in their formal entrance to the rabbinate at Anshai Torah.

Rabbi Stefan J. Weinberg