

# Rabbi Abigail Treu

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Rabbi Abigail Treu is a spiritual leader who has served in a variety of roles at legacy institutions of American Jewish life.

Currently the Interim Rabbi at Congregation Agudas Achim in Columbus, Ohio, Rabbi Treu previously served as the rabbi and Director of the Center for Jewish Living and the Center for Israel at the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan. Her broad portfolio there included serving as rabbi to the 3,500 people who walked through the doors each day, ranging from the most traditionally observant Jews to those most on the margins. Her team of nine direct reports created more than 800 programs each year, innovating Jewish living for all ages and stripes of Jewish life. Highlights include the all-night Tikkun leil Shavuot attended by a record 3,800

individuals on her watch, and saw more than 10,000 participate in the pandemic zoom-based version last spring; to the more intimate programming of adult Jewish learning, the Makom Center for Mindfulness and Meditation, LGBTQ+ programming, Israel programming, and oversight of the Center for 20s+30s. Rabbi Treu led the visioning of Jewish life with colleagues overseeing the JCC's centers for special needs, arts and ideas, social responsibility, family living, and JCC Harlem. She conducted life cycle events and pastoral counseling for families in the JCC's nursery school and Jewish Journey Project religious school program, spearheaded shabbat and holiday programming, and served as the lead convener for the Upper West Side's coalition of 30+ synagogues for community-wide events including the annual UWS Celebrates Israel and Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) commemorations, as well as ad hoc convenings such as a community-wide prayer service the day after the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting. An innovative and creative spirit, she brought the start-up ImmerseNYC under the JCC's auspices, making the JCC Manhattan the first JCC in the country to feature a pluralistic, volunteer-driven, feminist mikveh project; and she piloted non-denominational, "come as you are" family high holiday services at JCC Harlem which became the cornerstone of connection to unaffiliated families with young children moving to Harlem.

Upon ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in 2008, she joined the staff of JTS as Rabbinic Fellow. In this role she traveled the NY tri-state area and nationally as a scholar-in-residence, teaching at synagogues and in people's homes and work-places as a way of connecting them to JTS. She led JTS's free, open-to-the-public High Holiday services for 10 years, beginning when she was a student, in partnership with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor. Her portfolio as Rabbinic Fellow also included a number of fundraising responsibilities including serving as National Director of Torah Fund (a \$2 million grassroots campaign of the Conservative Movement's sisterhoods, in partnership with Women's League for Conservative Judaism); Director of Planned Giving; and oversight of the direct mail and Friends of JTS fund-raising campaigns. She was a regular contributor to the weekly JTS parasha commentary line-up, distributed to synagogues and JTS's full mailing list, and for two years wrote a bi-monthly midrash column that ran as part of those eblasts. Those writings can be accessed at [learn.jtsa.edu](http://learn.jtsa.edu).

Rabbi Treu has also worked as part of the senior team of the National Ramah Commission as Director of Strategic Advancement and Reshet Ramah, weaving a web of community among Ramah alumni and their friendship circles across the country as well as in Canada and Israel. That work included working with millennials to create meaningful content for their stage of life and connecting families across the Ramah movement through initiatives like the Ramah Bar/Bat Mitzvah Trip to Israel. She has spent many summers at Camp Ramah in the Berkshires teaching campers of all ages.

Rabbi Treu has served on the board of Big Tent Judaism, working to build Jewish communities welcoming to all kinds of Jewish families, as well as on the Women's Committee and the Development Committee of the Rabbinical Assembly. She volunteers regularly with her family at the local soup kitchen and is an active parent volunteer at the Abraham Joshua Heschel School.

In 2005 she co-authored, with Dov Peretz Elkins, *The Bible's Top 50 Ideas*, and has written a number of articles and op-eds, including these pieces on intermarriage, parenting, and fasting in Jewish practice. She is currently researching a book on the Jewish value of judging people with compassion and generosity (*dan l'kaf z'chut*).

An alumna of the Clergy Training Program of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, she meditates regularly and is particularly interested in spiritually enriching paths of Jewish text study, meditation, music, and prayer. She is a Level I Reiki practitioner, a student of Mysore Ashtanga Yoga, and an obsessed knitter. You can follow her online via her new Instagram-based parsha project [@breath.of.fresh.torah](https://www.instagram.com/breath.of.fresh.torah).

Rabbi Treu lives in Manhattan with her husband, three children, and a cat named Sushi.