



Seaside Jewish Community
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**Press Release
January 18, 2016**

Rehoboth Beach, DE – Seaside Jewish Community is pleased to announce that its religious leader, Beth Esther Cohen, was ordained as a Rabbi on January 10, 2016, by ALEPH, the Alliance for Jewish Renewal. The ordination ceremony took place in Broomfield, CO, during the annual Conference of the Association of Rabbis and Cantors for Jewish Renewal.

“Our congregation is extremely proud of Rabbi Cohen, who has led us in religious study for the past seven years,” said Dr. Irwin “Buddy” Feldman, one of Seaside’s Co-Presidents. “She has supported our Jewish community in our religious and spiritual growth. She has been there when our families have been in need. She has led our Jewish community as it has grown in population and stature. At the same time, she has been an active participant in several efforts to bring together the interfaith community in Sussex County. We are honored to have her as our rabbi.”

Rabbi Cohen has been Seaside’s Religious Leader for the past seven years. Being a Rabbi is her fourth career. She graduated from the University of Illinois in Chicago and began her career working in synagogues as a youth, program and then executive director. After returning to school and receiving a Masters of Business and Public Administration from Southeastern University in Washington DC, she worked in several non-profit organizations as head of finance and then as the executive director.

The corporate world beckoned and she spent the final 12 years of what she thought was the end of her work life as a director of customer service for Verizon.

Throughout these three career paths, Rabbi Cohen was involved in her own synagogue as a worship leader, creator of liturgy, teacher, and board leader serving as President for three years. In addition, she was the representative from her synagogue to the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations, and served as its president for two years. Becoming a Rabbi was a life-long dream.

“Judaism has always been my anchor, my guidepost, my community, my center, and in my soul for as long as I can remember,” Rabbi Cohen said. “I am incredibly grateful for all that has come to me through this program and that will carry me forward into the future. I experienced the kind of transformation that so many speak of and yet is so difficult to grasp. I have come to know deeply who I am and who and what the Divine is for me. This deep understanding has made me a kinder, gentler person, and more respectful of others. Love is in the forefront of everything.”

“We are delighted and excited that Rabbi Cohen has achieved her lifelong dream of becoming a rabbi,” said Michael Saltzman, one of Seaside’s Co-Presidents. “We look forward to having her as our rabbi for many years to come.”

Seaside Jewish Community, in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, is an independent, unaffiliated, egalitarian and welcoming congregation. Its membership includes more than 275 families (more than 450 individuals) who live or vacation on Delmarva. Members come from various religious and spiritual backgrounds,

including associations with Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Orthodox Judaism.

“I am blessed to be the Religious Leader of Seaside for the past seven years,” Rabbi Cohen said. “The community has embraced the new and different approach to Judaism that comes from Renewal. Together we are continuing to build that soul filled, heart centered, and joyous Judaism.”

The ALEPH ordination program provides a comprehensive curriculum of study promoting a joyous, creative and spiritually rich contemporary Judaism that embraces both traditional and contemporary Jewish thought.

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