



Elyssa L. Cherney

Elyssa was raised in Commack, N.Y. She earned her bachelor of arts degree in sociology, and women's gender and sexuality studies at Brandeis University.

Elyssa feels blessed by the richness of learning in her life. She has received the skills of change-making as a JOIN for Justice fellow; deep listening as a student chaplain at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital; love of learning across generations at the following holy communities: Temple Beth David, Brandeis Jewish Educational Program, Keshet, Temple Sinai, Temple Emanuel, Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, Keneseth Israel and Temple Judea.

Elyssa credits rabbis, teachers, mentors and the RRC community for rich enlightenment, including study of copious texts, social-justice work and pastoral presence that ground her as she creates holy spaces for others.

She has the deepest appreciation and admiration for her parents for being fierce teachers and advocates, her three in-laws for their unending support, her four siblings for constant counsel, and her extended family and friends, whose love is uplifting and unwavering.

Elyssa is indebted to and full of love for her *bashert* (soulmate) Alan, who provides daily wisdom, resilience and espousal in making this dream a reality; her daughter, Ava Jane; and Scout, their dog—muses who constantly remind her to live life with humility and patience, and who bring about giggles and pride.

Achieving the title of rabbi has been a lifelong goal of Elyssa's. She seeks to bring more holiness into the world through *Tackling Torah*, a website that seeks to create everyday ways of engagement with Judaism, new rituals and personal practices as ways into the search for holiness in our everyday lives.

Elyssa is grateful for the opportunity to continue building local community as she starts her rabbinic career at Temple Judea.



"A tradition can live only so long as it continues to change."

– Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan

"The old becomes new, and the new becomes holy."

– Rav A. I. Kook

"Perhaps the essential message of Judaism is that in doing the finite we may perceive the infinite."

– Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel