



## Sterling Strategic Advisor Faith & Interfaith Alliances

### **Why did you decide to become a rabbi?**

I chose to become a rabbi later than many of my colleagues; I had an established career before deciding to attend seminary. This decision allows me to engage in meaningful activities such as teaching, counseling, working with families and children, and promoting justice and service in our community. Serving a religious institution aligns with my values of creating a compassionate and sustainable place for all residents.

### **What do you like most about the work you do?**

I love that my work draws upon some of the oldest texts and teachings of human culture, making them relevant to today's needs. I find it continually inspiring that ancient practices and ideas can serve as a continually relevant resource for people of conscience in the most modern and technologically advanced communities in the world.

### **What are some of the greatest challenges facing faith communities today?**

Faith communities, especially congregations relying on the support of members and parishioners, are experiencing a major sociological shift. The rates of congregation affiliation and membership have been trending downwards since the Second World War. To remain relevant and financially solvent in the 21st century, congregations and other faith-based institutions will need to deploy creative, agile, collaborative strategies to retain their place in the nonprofit market.

### **How does Congregation Emanu El work with other faith communities to serve our neighbors?**

One of Houston's great blessings is its dazzling diversity of ethnic, racial, national, and religious populations. Within the faith community, there is a city-wide commitment to collegiality and cooperation. Faith leaders of all backgrounds maintain ongoing relationships and regularly engage in shared study, worship, fellowship, and service projects to leverage our different resources for good work throughout the city.

### **As the Senior Rabbi of a large congregation, what are your thoughts on philanthropy and its role in a faith community?**

Charitable generosity is a religious obligation for many communities of faith, reflecting a commitment to care and kindness in our relationship with God. Donors often view their philanthropy as spiritual service, not merely financial transactions, connecting them to sacred texts and ancestors. Those planning charitable estate gifts find comfort in knowing their spiritual legacy will guide future generations, serving as a powerful embodiment of one's deeply held principles and values.

### **What are you looking forward to in your role as a Sterling Strategic Advisor?**

Sterling has curated a group of Strategic Advisors, all extraordinary leaders in their respective fields. It is an enormous privilege to have the opportunity to learn from their wisdom and perspectives. Most of all, I find it inspiring to see the way that Sterling's professional team harnesses the collective wisdom of the Strategic Advisors for the benefit of Houston's most visionary and influential nonprofit organizations.

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