

### Note from Rabbi Cohen:

Coming to Bet Shalom in 1981 as the congregation was in its genesis was a dream come true. To be a founding rabbi is a rare opportunity. Being a partner in creating a community such as we have built over the years has been a fulfilling part of my Rabbinic career.

In 2015, I was honored to become the Rabbi Emeritus. It was a transition that reminds me of my family status change from parent to grandparent. I have a Rabbinic study at Bet Shalom where I invite you to schedule some time with me. I would love to offer you a signed copy of the book I wrote about the sacred architecture of the congregational home we built in 2002 and where we have grown into the dynamic community we are.

Bet Shalom remains an idealistic congregation with many more dreams and goals. The people who now lead it, beginning with Rabbi Locketz and the Board, have great vision and plans for the future.

Shalom, Rabbi Cohen

### Bio

Rabbi Norman M. Cohen is the Founding Rabbi Emeritus of Bet Shalom Congregation that had 34 Charter families when he arrived in September 1981 and grew to over 800 during his tenure as Senior Rabbi. He became Emeritus in December of 2015.

In 1972 Rabbi Cohen received his bachelor's degree cum laude from Holy Cross College in Worcester Massachusetts. During this period he also studied on a Junior Year Abroad Program in Jerusalem at the Hiatt Institute of Brandeis University. He has been to Israel over 20 times, many of them leading tour groups from our congregation. One was with Bet Shalom and Mizpah United Church of Christ, our interfaith partner for many years. The last pilgrimage he led was with 40 of his Catholic classmates from Holy Cross.

He did his graduate work at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati where he earned his masters degree in 1975 and was ordained in 1977. In 2001 he was also awarded a Doctorate of Divinity. Prior to his arrival in the Twin Cities, Rabbi Cohen served the oldest Jewish congregation west of the Alleghenies, Rockdale Temple in Cincinnati, in addition to teaching at HUC and other colleges in Cincinnati. He has continued to serve

on college faculties in the Twin Cities area, including the College of St Catherine, Macalester College, the United Theological Seminary, and St Olaf College in Northfield. He is the annual Fall Semester Rabbi-In-Residence at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. He has also been the Rabbinic scholar each year for over two decades at Mary Mother of the Church in Burnsville.

In addition to congregational and academic duties, Rabbi Cohen is active in local civic and Jewish community affairs and plays an active role in Jewish Christian relations. He serves as chaplain for the Minnetonka Police Department, has been a member of the Hopkins Crime Prevention Fund Board, the International Center for Victims of Torture, and the State Board of the Minnesota Fraternal Order of Police.

Rabbi Cohen has been on the Religious Advisory Council of the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities, has served as a board member and honorary advisor to the Minneapolis Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS) and has been active with the Minneapolis Jewish Federation throughout his tenure in the Twin Cities, being twice appointed to its Executive Board. He helped to create the Jewish Free Loan Program of Minneapolis and served on its initial steering committee.

He is past president of the Midwest Association of Reform Rabbis, and the Minnesota Rabbinical Association and has been active in numerous organizations, locally and nationally. Rabbi Cohen returns to Holy Cross College every year to serve as chaplain and advisor to the Jewish students and faculty. He is a Rabbinic Mentor to HUC-JIR Rabbinic students. In the winter, Rabbi Cohen spends time in Scottsdale, AZ, where he teaches Torah at Congregation Beth Israel and Solel Congregation. He leads an annual Shabbat gathering of Bet Shalomians and other Minnesotans who winter in Arizona. He also leads High Holy Day services for the Desert Foothills Jewish Community Association.

He has authored numerous magazine and newspaper articles and the book Jewish Bible Personages in the New Testament. In his first year of "retirement", he wrote the book Sacred Architecture: The Building of Bet Shalom. A signed copy is available for every member of Bet Shalom. Just ask. Rabbi Cohen has appeared as scholar in residence in over two-dozen cities, sharing his research on the Book of Ruth, a Jewish understanding of Christianity and the New Testament, and Stereotypes and Misconceptions that Christians and Jews Have About Each Other.

He is married to the former Andrea Winnick of St. Paul. He is the parent of TJ Rubin and Saba (grandfather) of Wyatt Rubin.

