

Rabbi Kim Ettlinger is home

Within weeks of taking up her new role as Rabbi at Temple David, Rabbi Kim Ettlinger received an aliyah for her own Bat Mitzvah anniversary. Thirty years ago, as a nervous 12-year-old and a recent migrant from South Africa, she had stood in front of the same bimah and in front of many of the same, now familiar faces, albeit “all of us a little older ... I’m a child coming home” she said.

Now a confident, experienced, ordained Rabbi in the Reform Progressive Judaic movement, she said the timing for her return to Perth was perfect. She wanted her two-year-old daughter, Noa, to grow up surrounded by family, and had been planning her move from Melbourne when the Rabbinic position at Temple David became available.

Rabbi Kim’s academic journey resulting in her becoming Temple David’s rabbi includes Murdoch University in Perth; the Leo Baeck College in London, and Hebrew Union Colleges in Israel and the United States. She holds a Masters in Jewish Education and a Rabbinic degree.

Her first Rabbinic position was in San Francisco, which she held for five years before being invited to join the team at Temple Beth Israel (TBI) in St Kilda where she served for the next eleven years. Her roles at TBI included Chair of the Council of Progressive Rabbis in Australia and Co-ordinator of the Melton School of Adult/Jewish Learning, of which she is a director and teacher.

Passionate about Judaism from an early age and conscious of women like the US-born Karen Soria, who became Australia’s first female rabbi with TBI in 1981, she believes Judaism is a natural medium to build ‘caring communities’, both inside and outside of Judaism.

In her first few months in Perth, as well as settling in, Rabbi Kim has been meeting congregants to get a feel for their wishes for the Temple David community and to incorporate these into her own plans. She said the Temple David community is different to TBI (which can attract up to 5000 during the High Holy Days) and is looking forward to working with congregants as she moves forward.

Already at TD she has introduced a series of classes – ‘Spiritual Care Volunteer Training Course’ – a foretaste of things to come. She has created a Temple David YouTube channel to stream live services and extended the community newsletter, *Mah Hadash* to Facebook and YouTube.

Charmaine Ryan

