



KANE STREET SYNAGOGUE

Kane Street Synagogue Appoints Accomplished Spiritual Leader Rabbi Michelle Dardashti as its New Rabbi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2022 — Brooklyn, NY — Kane Street Synagogue has announced the appointment of Rabbi Michelle Dardashti as its next rabbi. In this role, she will serve as the senior spiritual leader of the historic congregation in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn. Rabbi Dardashti comes to Kane Street after nine years as Rabbi of the Hillel serving Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design and as Associate Chaplain for the Jewish Community at Brown University.

She will assume her new position beginning August 1, 2022.

Rabbi Dardashti expressed her enthusiasm about her new appointment:

“My family and I are thrilled to be joining the Kane Street family. The magical three days I spent with the Kane Street community last month left me brimming with excitement for all that could be. From the sweet way Search Committee members ushered me from gathering to gathering, to the brilliant questions of the seventh graders, the voices that joined me in learning and prayer, and the countless brief, yet intimate, exchanges I had with individuals, it was evident that I’d found my next rabbinic dream role. I’m filled with gratitude and emotion in accepting the honor of leading a congregation with such a storied and special history. I cannot wait to see the future we build together.”

Over more than two decades, Rabbi Dardashti has earned accolades for using her deep Jewish knowledge, soulful approach to prayer, and engagement with contemporary social challenges to convey the beauty and relevance of Judaism to people from widely diverse Jewish backgrounds. She brings to Kane Street not only a grounding in both the traditional and the progressive outlook of Conservative Judaism, but also an appreciation of and experience with the full range of denominational and non-denominational Jewish expression.

Leslie Wilsher, President of the Congregation, summed up the response to Rabbi Dardashti’s initial visit to the Congregation in early February:

“Rabbi Dardashti impressed us immensely with her warmth, her empathy, and the way she made Judaism come alive, whether through teaching, prayer, or just her own obvious love of the tradition. We felt she was the perfect person to preserve what we love about Kane Street and to imagine what we can be in the future.”

About Rabbi Michelle Dardashti

Rabbi Michelle Dardashti serves as Associate University Chaplain for the Jewish Community at Brown University and as Rabbi at Brown RISD Hillel. The daughter of an American folk singer and teacher, and an Iranian-born cantor, Rabbi Dardashti was raised on a brand of Judaism that is multicultural, meta-denominational, musical and global. She became a rabbi to share the gifts her parents' eclectic Judaism afforded her: passion, hope, wonder, gratitude, empathy, responsibility and joy.

Rabbi Dardashti worked to nurture Jewish life at Brown and RISD through teaching, leading (and supporting students in leading) services, and creating alternative platforms for spiritual engagement; and she represented Judaism at Brown University events and multifaith programs. She also launched a number of initiatives that critically explore allyship, antisemitism, activism, peoplehood, and the American Jewish relationship to Israel. Among her signature programs are the [Narrow Bridge Project](#) and [Fellowship](#), recently [covered by JTA](#).

She received a Campus Life Staff Excellence Award from Brown University in 2020 and, during her tenure, Brown RISD Hillel was recognized by Hillel International with both the “Best Place to Work” and “Outstanding Campus” awards.

Rabbi Dardashti was ordained and received an MA in Jewish Education from the Jewish Theological Seminary, where she was a Neubauer Fellow. During her time at JTS, she was trained in Congregation Based Community Organizing through JOIN for Justice and in Clinical Pastoral Education at Bellevue Hospital; she was an educator for Interfaith Community and Director of Youth and Family Education at Congregation Shaare Zedek. She came to Brown in 2013 after serving as the Marshall T. Meyer Fellow at Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in Manhattan and Director of Community Engagement at Temple Beth El in Stamford, CT.

Her writings have appeared in [Sh'ma Journal](#), *Jewschool* and *Siddur Lev Shalem* (2016), and in three recent books, *One Nation, Indivisible: Seeking Liberty and Justice from the Pulpit to the Streets* (2019), *Chaver Up: Allyship Through A Modern Jewish Lens* (2021) and *Jewish Theological Grace: Drashot In Honor of Chancellor Arnold M. Eisen* (2022, forthcoming). She is currently a [Pedagogies of Wellbeing Research Fellow](#) through M²: The Institute for Experiential Jewish Education.

Rabbi Dardashti is married to Nathan Sher, who hails from Sydney, Australia. Together they have three children: Eden (12), Miya (9), and Lavi (6).

About Kane Street Synagogue

Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes, more popularly known as **Kane Street Synagogue**, was organized in 1856 to establish a synagogue and religious, educational, charitable, and social activities to help further the cause and objectives of Conservative Judaism, and otherwise serve the needs of the Jewish community of Brooklyn.

In its almost 166 years of existence, the congregation has grown to become a diverse community that embraces people from a wide range of religious and personal backgrounds. Its members are Jews-by-birth, Jews-by-choice (converts), interfaith families, Jews who are returning to their roots, and Jews re-discovering their faith and culture. It is regarded as a community where anyone who is sincerely interested in exploring Judaism can find a place.

Together with its clergy, members share prayer leadership of Shabbat and holiday services—rich with traditional melodies, Hebrew songs, and Torah chanting. Wisdom and inspiration of Jewish tradition hold strong, but the Congregation recognizes the need for ongoing change and evolution. A modern intellectual spirit is shared by a span of generations, who meet to discover the power of Judaism to raise spirits, enrich their families, help others, and pursue personal growth.

Kane Street Synagogue is the oldest continuously-operating Jewish congregation in Brooklyn. Both the congregation and its Romanesque Revival building and sanctuary date from 1856. The sanctuary hosts weekly and holiday services, as well other congregational and community gatherings and events. The Sol and Lillian Goldman Educational Center in the adjoining building includes social facilities, an auditorium/indoor community space, classrooms, offices, a chapel, and an outdoor rooftop community space, and is home to both the Synagogue's Hebrew School, and its Preschool, Kane Street Kids.

Learn more at www.kanestreet.org.

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