



TEMPLE BETH EL WELCOMES JULIA KNOBLOCH, AWARD-WINNING POET, FILMMAKER AND SPIRITUAL LEADER AS NEW RABBI

*Rabbi Knobloch Brings Global Experience, Creative Vision and a Poet's Voice to
the Historic Port City Congregation*

San Pedro, CA – September 4, 2025 – [Temple Beth El](#), the second oldest working synagogue in Los Angeles, proudly announces the appointment of Rabbi Julia Knobloch, published poet, writer, and National Geographic filmmaker, as its new ordained spiritual leader. With a legacy spanning more than a century, the historic congregation in San Pedro ushers in a new era of creative, inclusive and globally inspired leadership.

Rabbi Knobloch officially begins her new role following her ordination at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles. Chosen after a comprehensive two-year search process led by Temple Beth El's leadership and community, where she was selected for her unique blend of artistic talent, Jewish scholarship and spiritual leadership. Her appointment marks a significant and thoughtful transition for the congregation as it continues its century-long tradition of dynamic, value-driven leadership while embracing a modern, multidisciplinary vision.

"At Temple Beth El, I see a community ready to engage not only with tradition but also with the deeper questions of identity, meaning, and belonging," said Rabbi Julia Knobloch. "It is a privilege to help shape that journey through words, ritual, and relationship, drawing on my experience as a poet, filmmaker, and spiritual leader who believes in the power of storytelling to connect, heal, and inspire."

Born and raised in Germany, Rabbi Knobloch has embraced her new role and community in San Pedro, a diverse and culturally rich port city. Temple Beth El's broad and vibrant membership spans the entire South Bay region, from the Beach Cities to Northern Orange County and Playa del Rey. Its multi-access programming also connects members across

the country, making the congregation a national model for accessible Jewish community life.

“From the moment we met Rabbi Knobloch, it was clear she brought a rare combination of intellect, creativity and deep spiritual grounding,” said Tom Rosenberg, President of the Temple Beth El Congregation. “Her ability to connect across generations, her gift for storytelling and her global perspective makes her uniquely suited to lead our congregation into the future. She embodies the kind of leadership that honors our past while inspiring what’s possible in the years ahead.”

During her rabbinical training, Rabbi Knobloch served as a student rabbi at Beth Kneset Bamidbar in Lancaster, and held internships at Temple Beth Hillel in Valley Village, Temple Beth Am in Los Angeles, and with the congregation on Kibbutz Ketura in Israel. She previously served in managerial and program executive roles at the Union for Reform Judaism and UJA-Federation of New York.

In addition to her work as a spiritual leader, Rabbi Knobloch is a former staff member of the Explorers Club in New York City and author of two published poetry collections, [*Do Not Return*](#), and [*Book of Failed Salvation*](#), as well as a third book, *Liner Notes*, slated for release in 2026. She has led creative writing retreats in Jerusalem, New York and Los Angeles, helping participants explore the sacred through language and story. Her poetry has appeared in various literary journals, and she previously served as poetry editor for Ben Yehuda Press.

At Temple Beth El, she joins Cantor Ilan Davidson, who has served the congregation for more than thirty years. Together, they bring a shared passion for infusing Jewish life with music, poetry, and the arts, while fostering interfaith collaboration and inclusive community building. “Joining this venerable SoCal congregation and beginning a collaboration with Cantor Davidson that is already off to an inspiring and wonderful start really is my personal jackpot,” Rabbi Knobloch added. “I couldn’t have landed in a better place.”

Temple Beth El is a Reform congregation, committed to progressive values and welcoming individuals and families from all backgrounds. The synagogue recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, a testament to its enduring presence and role in shaping Jewish life in Southern California.

About Temple Beth El

Established in 1922, Temple Beth El is one of Los Angeles’ oldest synagogues and a longstanding hub of Jewish life in San Pedro and the South Bay. The congregation embraces progressive values, multi-access programming, and draws members from throughout Southern California and beyond. For over a century, Temple Beth El has been

a vital force for worship, education, community service, and interfaith engagement, remaining a resilient and inclusive presence in a changing world.

For more information, visit Temple Beth El at <https://bethelsp.org/>

###

Media Contact

Miguel Ramos

Bob Gold & Associates

310-320-2010

miguel@bobgoldpr.com