



Sixteenth Annual Meeting

May 18, 2021

7 Sivan 5781



President of the Board of Director's Annual Report 2020-2021

It feels like yesterday and not two years ago that I became president. It has been both slow and fast at the same time. There were certainly many challenges with the most pressing being the pandemic. Back in March 2020 when I closed CSH, I never dreamed it would last over 1 year. Now I feel the future for CSH is bright and improving daily.

We have begun the process of re-opening as has been outlined in previous emails. Last month we started in-person bar and bat mitzvahs. We also have a task force preparing for the high holy days.

With the generous help of Arthur Epstein we have a brand-new kitchen to host events.

Cantor Sarah Freudenberger will be starting in July and I anticipate great things from her.

Under the leadership of Andrea Bernard and Janis Knight, the Center for Early Education (CEE) is making great strides as we emerge from the pandemic.

The Center for Jewish Education (CJE) led by Janis Knight started in person classes and is thriving.

We did have some budgetary issues. We needed to make cuts in staff and services. Future decisions will be made based on membership and other issues.

I also want to thank Anna Hathaway, Barri Stein, Cheryl Schwartz, Andrea Bernard, Janis Knight and Cantor Alty for all their help, support and hard work. Rabbi Michael has become my mentor and friend and was always there for me.

I could not have done all this without my board to whom I am eternally grateful. CSH will be in great hands with Ruth Estrich in charge.

Personally 2020 -2021 has been both joyous and draining. My family was blessed with the birth of our grandson, Dylan. I have however, had to deal with several health issues. Because of this I will be taking a step back from CSH to reset and enjoy my time with my family, Ellen, Elizabeth, Austin, Paul and Dylan.

Finally, I want to thank you all for the privilege and honor of being your president over the last two years.

Mark Messenger

Leadership@ShiratHayam.org



Rabbi's Annual Report 2020-2021

COVID. Zoom. Life.

What a year it's been. With COVID and the expiration of our strategic plan, it's been a year of focusing on the basics. Together, with Cantor Alty and the rest of the professional team, I have worked hard to provide pastoral support and Jewish practices that have helped us survive the pandemic.

Pastoral & Lifecycle

- We revised our pastoral care approach in October 2020. Since then, I've called over 276 people on our mi-shebeirach list.
- Together with the professional team, board of directors, and Shir Chesed, we, for the first time, checked-in with every CSH member household in spring 2020 and again in February 2021.
- I created Zoom shivas and lead Zoom funerals, live-streaming the service myself before the funeral homes offered this service.
- We enabled 9 children to celebrate their b'nei mitzvah, whether in shul or their home, in-person or 100% Zoom with the Torah brought to families' homes.
- I had the honor of crafting and leading a Zoom baby naming.

Services

- In spring of 2020, we moved all of our services online.
- Together with Cantor Alty, our High Holy Day task force, and our professional team, we delivered 100% live-streamed High Holy Day services to rave reviews.
- We modified the Shabbat services to maximize meaning for participants. Significantly, one consequence of this approach was to cut elements of the service that didn't translate well to Zoom or the non-Synaplex Shabbat morning format.
- We added the Traditional Shabbat morning minyan lead by Jan Brodie at the request of Moshe Roditi and others.
- Cantor Alty and I created Loosen, a spiritual massage to help us relax, unwind, loosen, during the initial spring 2020 lockdown.
- Together with Cantor Alty and our lay leaders, I kept the daily minyan going strong, shifting from bi-weekly participation to 3-4 times per week.

Limmud (Adult Education)

- Rabbi Meyer and I taught "Turning Points in Jewish History," more than doubling our participation compared to last year.
- I led a Tu Bishvat seder in collaboration with Congregation Ahavas Achim, increasing participation 10-fold.
- The May 6 webinar with Dr. Deborah Lipstadt marked the culmination of the community book read and the Community Call-to-Action against Antisemitism that I launched on Rosh Hashanah 2019.

Congregational Advancement

- With my Rosh Hashanah sermon I helped launch (kudos to Barbara & Alan Sidman) Tzedek LaKol, Justice for All, and our team focused on achieving racial and social justice within our congregation and community.
- I spoke with 70 people as part of Shirat Schmooze and am working to turn the conversations into action.

Rabbi Michael Ragozin

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Cantor's Annual Report 2020-2021

Below are some of my contributions.

SHIRAT HAYAM BRANDING

I have developed a unique brand of Jewish prayer and educational music:

- Modern, joyous, soulful and accessible yet traditionally rooted.
- This helps make Shirat Hayam welcoming to all ages.
- This can be leveraged to attract new members to CSH, and students to our pre-school (CEE) and Hebrew school (CJE).

INSPIRING CHILDREN

- Parents of B'nei Mitzvah students have thanked me for boosting their child's confidence, which helped them succeed on their special day.

MAKING LEARNING FUN & MEMORABLE

- Produced approximately 20 educational videos for the CEE that explore Jewish themes.
- Parents of CEE students have said their children sing our Shabbat songs at home.
- Alicia M. (mother of a CEE student) laughingly told me "one Friday morning she came to pick up her daughter prior to our Shabbat class. Her daughter was furious and made her promise to never force her to miss a Shabbat class again."
- Director of Children's Choir - The TamTams - Performances: High Holidays, Purim, and Shavuot.
- Wrote & Directed the Purim film - "Good & Evil" which starred 15 CJE students and 3 teachers.

HIGH HOLIDAYS

Designed and performed virtual High Holiday services that received wide acclaim by Shirat Hayam members and viewers across the country.

RELATIONSHIPS

I have built warm, meaningful relationships with Shirat members, CJE and CEE students through times of joy and sorrow.

RENEWAL SERVICE

Introduced a new suite of prayers (I arranged or wrote) in English and Hebrew that are contemplative, joyful and singable. "Greatest Love/Shema, Loosen, Ring the Bell, Modeh Ani, Music is God" and many more. This helped to open hearts and deepen the prayer experience.

PURIM

Wrote and directed the Purim film “Good vs Evil” - starring 15 CJE students - that Shirat members and viewers across the country raved about.

HOLY HAPPY HOUR

Recorded and performed eight prayers (I arranged or wrote).

PASSOVER

Recorded and performed four prayers (I arranged or wrote).

COVID -19 INITIATIVES

- Produced approximately 55 videos for the Congregation, Pre-K and CJE.
- This has provided a way to connect in a time of physical separation.
- Sent the congregation regular words of inspiration.
- Designed a new and well-received, modified Shabbat service with Rabbi Michael.
- Developed “Loosen” with Rabbi Michael - a Wednesday evening music service - with new music that I’ve written & arranged.
- Developed a new global promotional opportunity with JewishLIVE - a website aggregator of live-streaming Jewish content.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Featured “Cantorial” performer in Boston’s Jewish Arts Collaborative video “Creativity Connects Shabbat.”
- Commissioned by New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art to arrange the Passover prayer video “Y’varech-Dancing to Freedom.”

Cantor Alty Weinreb

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Center for Jewish Education's Annual Report 2020-2021

It has been a year like no other. CJE reinvented itself to help our students handle the challenges of the pandemic year in as healthy a manner as possible. We opened last September outdoors, learning under tents and the open sky. Our theme was *La-Bri'ut*, to Health, which was also the name of the main Judaic studies curriculum for grades 2- 7.

We focused on both physical health, through distancing and hygiene and disinfection as dictated by the CDC and our local Board of Health, and on supporting and underscoring mental health and resiliency through Jewish values, stories, and art. For our opening school-wide activity, we created a quilt with pictures of things that make us feel safe and secure. You will be able to see it hanging in the hallway when we return and you can smile at the symbols represented: cats, dogs, game controllers, houses and families, trees and nature, Jewish stars, and the Temple.

Tuesday afternoon classes were held on Zoom and our curricular pieces and activities were either specifically designed for virtual learning or modified. The virtual platform was not as effective for learning Hebrew reading and decoding and prayer in groups, so we adapted again! Hebrew teachers and I met online one-on-one with each Hebrew student in grades 3 – 6 for 20 minute lessons that focused solely on that student's learning needs. I am really pleased to say that we have seen really great growth and development of Hebrew decoding and prayer skills due to the individual attention. We were extremely fortunate that we had already adopted and used our online Hebrew and Judaica program, ShalomLearning, which is well-suited for distance learning.

This has also been the year of the Take Home Craft and Holiday Kit. High Holy Day kits were created with materials for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, supporting both our Youth Services and our Family Services. Hannukah saw us sending home materials for each child to make their own Hanukkah out of repurposed pallet wood and craft supplies. Passover preparation kits included the materials to make an individual and beautiful wooden seder plate and a matza cover.

Holiday celebrations have been a challenge but a Hanukkah family event was held outdoors in December and found us all creating light through giving to others, including collecting toys for disadvantaged children, putting together hygiene kits for a local shelter and writing cards to shut ins. Lighting the outdoor Hanukkah this year felt more special than ever and the metaphor of family hanukkiot lit nearby, small lights flickering in the gloom, was powerful. Our online Tu B'shevat seder was a hit, with students participating from home over Zoom, trying new fruits and reminding ourselves that Spring will come!

This year, various families and staff members took the lead on bringing us together outdoors as a way to keep our CJE family ties. Once a month or so, we added a CJE hike or beach walk or some other way to see one another, whether hiking in the Forest River Conservation area, geocaching in Lynn Woods, dog walking at Phillips Beach, or exploring the rockery and beaver dam in the Audubon Conservation in Ipswich for Tu B'shevat. Thank you to the parent committee who helped to plan a range of fun, interactive and heartening activities!

Our madrichim (teen aides) have been amazing. While they, too, were trying to find their footing in the virtual world, they helped our teachers and students whenever they could. They created games, showed up week after week, even taught lessons when they could. This is a very special group of young people whose names should be celebrated: Hannah R. Schwartz, Julia Rebello, Jonah Weinstein-Zanger, Amanda Sorkin, Liora Ragozin, Zach Lewis, Ellie Levine, Hannah Schwartz, Samara Krawitz, Ely Wallen, Jasmina Kurtovic, Nat Mahler, Anna Sokolov, Tess Mintzer, Madison Walker. We even had some junior madrichot help – Mimi Weisman and Caroline Oringer.

I cannot praise our CJE Faculty enough. They have persevered and taught and communicated their love of Judaism and their students through screens, sitting in tents, on the telephone. Very little has been a typical, educationally supportive environment this year – and they have learned and taught and have seen their students grow through a year of anxiety, fear, and unrelenting stress. It's not an easy job to begin with and pandemic rules made it so very difficult for teachers and students.

We usually honor our teachers at our last Shabbat class of the year, in the Sanctuary. We won't be able to honor them as a congregation in person but please know their names. It is said that "Conscientious teachers of young children are destined to sit at the right hand of God." May it be so for: Sandy Abramson, Alex Hogan, Lynne Greenberg, Andrea Vener Katz, Rachel Shwartz, Yael Sokolow, Tracy Savageaux, Jason Stark, Rabbi Ragozin and Cantor Weinreb. Many thanks for the continued support of Cheryl Schwartz and Barri Stein.

Our CJE year will end as it began – in the rear parking lot, under the sun, enjoying ice cream while maintaining pandemic rules – together as a learning community.

Respectfully submitted,



Forest River Hike



Kaia's Hanukkiah

Janis Knight, Director of Education

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Center for Early Education's Annual Report 2020-2021

The CEE has overcome many obstacles and challenges this year. Due to state COVID-19 regulations our center was closed through the first quarter of our fiscal year. The CEE officially reopened on July 13, 2020, for the summer program.

Enrollment for the 2020 summer program was lower than average this year due to the impact of COVID-19. Fall 2020 enrollment increased from our summer enrollment by 40%. By January 2021, our enrollment had doubled. As of April 2021, our enrollment had tripled. We are pleased to report that our current projections in all programs for Fall 2021 are at, or near capacity.

This year our primary focus was to maintain a high-quality program in the midst of a global pandemic. We adhered to strict regulations which were mandated by EEC our licensing agency. Our first priority was the health and well-being of our children, staff, and families.

Highlights from this year include the creation of the Preschool Learning Center, Va'ad (our new CEE Parent Committee), and outdoor Shabbat with Morah Janis.

We look forward to a happy and healthy 2021-2022 school year!

Andrea Bernard, Director of Center for Early Education

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Business Manager's Annual Report 2020-2021

Even though the synagogue was not open for in-person services, I was very busy managing several projects. In order to bolster income and cover the new COVID expenses I applied or worked with others in the application process for a number of grants. The following is a list of grants we received in 2020:

- For Physical Security Upgrades
 - Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Non-Profit Security Grant \$96,395
 - Fiscal Year 2020 State Non-Profit Security Grant \$28,707
 - CJP/JEMS Preschool Security Grant \$ 5,000
 - CJP/JEMS Synagogue Security Grant \$ 2,000
- To aid with new expenses due to COVID
 - CJP Synagogue Zoom Reimbursement Grant \$ 50
 - CJP Networks Technology Grant \$ 2,500
 - CJP Communal Security Initiative Grants (3) sanitizing supplies
 - CJP Staff Appreciation Stipend \$ 100
 - CJP COVID Response Stipend Preschool \$ 1,500
 - CJP Early Childhood COVID 19 Relief Fund \$17,500
 - CJP Early Childhood Scholarships \$ 700

To aid in the payment of payroll during this time period, I applied for two Paycheck Protection Program Loans. I am currently in the process of the applying for forgiveness of the first loan in the amount of \$351,616. I will apply for forgiveness of the second PPP loan, in the amount of \$284,073.

During the summer of 2020, I managed the installation of the items of covered by the State Security Grant and the 2 CJP Physical Security Grants. New secure doors were installed on the sides by the main kitchen and cellar areas, the locks were updated in the preschool, a new door was installed in the hallway across from the chapel, and protective window film was installed on some ground level windows. After getting the final green light on the Federal Security Grant in March, I am getting quotes from vendors to upgrade access control systems to the building and the security cameras on the property.

In addition to the managing the physical security grants updates, I oversaw the replacement of the boilers which were 15 years beyond their useful life and the complete remodel of the main kitchen. The main kitchen, now named Ida's Kitchen, was funded by Arthur J. Epstein and Bryna Litchman. Both of these projects make CSH more attractive for rentals.

As part of increasing our overall efficiency, I supervised the transition of our database software to a new system called ShulCloud. This new system makes processing of payment plans easier. Additionally, ShulCloud allows members to view their accounts, make donations, and pay their online. Please contact the office if you have not logged online to your account.

I want to thank everyone for their flexibility and willingness to adapt and change. This year reminds us to remember despite all of our best laid plans, circumstances change forcing us to modify our course to achieve our end goal. We need to appreciate the truly important things in life.

Thank you.

Anna Hathaway

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Director of Events and Programs Annual Report 2020-2021

So, to borrow a marketing campaign from Motel 6, I feel like even when our doors were closed, the light was always on. Even when we closed our doors on March 13, 2020, the employees of Shirat Hayam were back at work that next Monday, March 16, 2020. We never stopped “serving” our members. Personally, after a short stint at home, I was here working from the synagogue. It was a lonely, quiet time but for us, business continued and we continued to answer your calls and respond to all emails.

We all worked diligently to learn new skills and adapt to this new norm so that we could continue to deliver to our members and CSH community services that were so necessary while at the same time keeping everyone safe. Services (ie minyan) and programs that may have been inconsequential or had minor attendance before suddenly turned into lifelines and a connection to the outside world for many.

We’ve seen an inordinate number of deaths and suffering this past year. The cemetery groundskeeper, Dave McKenna, along with local funeral homes and our clergy were pushed to their limits. The CSH Shir Chesed team learned how to be there and support our families but couldn’t really be there for them in person. For such a caring group of people, this has been especially hard.

Towards the end of 2020, we had a big push for people to do some planning for the future and allowed them to purchase cemetery plots at the current prices before we raised them at the end of the year. Many members took advantage of this opportunity.

The uncertainty of the future played havoc with our B’nei Mitzvah families. We juggled to reschedule most fall 2020 b’nei mitzvahs to spring 2021 and beyond and yet, our families still now find themselves celebrating with new restrictions in place and no in person congregational support. The upside has been the ability to have family and friends participate remotely who might not have [ever] been able to be in person. Rabbi Michael has done an amazing job in working with our families so that each simcha is unique yet utterly fulfilling and joyous. Our families have been thinking outside the box in how they celebrate and have adapted with each change of MA restrictions. We thank them for their patience as we navigate these new waters and keep everyone safe.

While our beloved Shabbat Synaplex and kiddush lunches were halted, we look forward to the day when we can all sit together again in person. There’s been so much sorrow in the world, yet we’ve had glimpses of joy in all the births, b’nei mitzvahs, marriages, birthdays and anniversaries that have still happened. We hope there will come a time that we can celebrate and recognize all these simchas. As you may have heard, we have a shiny new kitchen that we are all excited about being able to use.

Now, as we think about opening our doors, and we look around the building, it's like time stood still. We've restricted our movements around the building and It's sad to say that I've found remnants of Purim 2020, our last in person event. I miss seeing everyone and will especially miss those who have passed and will not be here when we open our doors. This year hasn't been easy for any of us but we thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Barri Stein

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Minutes of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting
June 20, 2020
Submitted by: Jason Mahler, Clerk

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting of Congregation Shirat Hayam of the North Shore (the “Congregation”) was called to order by President Mark Messenger at 7:32 p.m. A quorum of voting members of the Congregation was present in person and/or electronically, in accordance with the bylaws. Booklets containing meeting materials and reports were presented to all voting members.

D’var Torah by Rabbi Michael Ragozin. Rabbi Michael opened his discussion of this week’s parsha by acknowledging that we are in a time of great economic upheaval, social unrest, and a health pandemic. While each of these things has happened before, it is unique that all three are happening simultaneously. He stressed that it is not only important to reach out as a community to those suffering at this time, but in times of crisis, we should always look for opportunities to renew ourselves so that we can emerge stronger. In these week’s parsha, times are tough for the people of Israel. After journeying for forty years through the desert, Miriam and Aaron die, and Moses is told he will soon die as well. However, by the next chapter, new leadership emerges to lead the people of Israel forward. It is important that we as a Congregation view this challenging time of darkness as an opportunity to grow stronger and renew our shared commitment so that we emerge as a more vibrant Jewish community.

Approval of the Minutes. The attention of the attendees was directed to the minutes of the 2019 Fourteenth Annual Meeting included in the booklets.

MOTION: It was moved that the minutes of the May 23, 2019, 14th Annual Meeting be approved. Motion seconded by Renée Sidman. Motion carried unanimously.

President’s Remarks by Mark Messenger. President Messenger thanked everyone for attending this year’s virtual annual meeting, and acknowledged it has been a hard four months for everyone. He thanked Anna Hathaway for her hard work; Rabbi Ragozin for being a source of strength; Cantor Alty for his inspiring music and videos; and Barri Stein, Cheryl Schwartz, Janis Knight and Andrea Bernard for their wonderful efforts in helping to lead and guide the Congregation in our response to the pandemic. President Messenger also thanked and acknowledged the contributions of our outgoing Board Members: Nathaniel Weiss, Jessica Heller, Adam Packer, Alex Shube and Larry Groipen. He also thanked two people on the current Board for their efforts over the last year: Ruth Estrich and Bethany Hipsh. Finally, President Messenger welcomed the new Board Members, and provided updates as to the schedule for reopening live, in-person minyans, and current plans for holding High Holiday services online.

Budget Report by David Zion (Treasurer) and Anna Hathaway (Business Manager). They reviewed the April 30, 2020 financials. Last year was a strong year for the Congregation, but we are entering a trying time. With the Center for Early Education (CEE) closed or reopening on a reduced basis, the Congregation will experience a large loss of income. They discussed fiscal year 2020 revenue source and operating expenses in detail. They then reviewed the fiscal year 2021 budget, discussing revenue sources and operating expenses and showing assets

and liabilities, especially in light of the impact of COVID-19. They stressed that it is going to be important for the Congregation to do more by way of membership, donations, grant applications and fundraising in the coming year.

Leadership Development Committee Presentation and Vote by Renée Sidman. Renée Sidman, member of the Leadership Development Committee (LDC), presented the following slate of nominees to the Board of Directors. Nominees new to the Board of Directors are asterisked (*).

Board of Directors Slate 2020-2022

Executive Committee:

President	Mark Messenger
Vice President	Joe Simons
Vice President	Bethani Hipsh
Vice President	Amy Powell
Treasurer	David Zion
Clerk	Jason Mahler
Financial Clerk	Stephanie Greenberg

Continuing Term May 2019-May 2021

Ruth Estrich
Gitte Kushner
Corey Lewis
Amy Powell
Janna Schwartz
Joe Simons
Steve Solomon
Adam Wallen

New Term June 2020-May 2022

Stephanie Greenberg
Bethani Hipsh
Lori Kreevoy
Jason Mahler
Mark Messenger
Jeffrey Oringer*
Eric Osattin*
Joan Rosenthal*
Barbara Sidman*
Michael Smerka*
David Zion

The LDC and the Board of Directors recommended a “yes” vote on this slate. There were no objections to the slate as presented.

Board Installation: Rabbi Michael Ragozin offered a prayer for the new Board of Directors and thanked outgoing board members for their leadership and service.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SLATE FOR 2021-2023

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

May 2021 – May 2022

PRESIDENT	Ruth Estrich
VICE PRESIDENT	Joe Simons
VICE PRESIDENT	Lori Kreevoy
MEMBER AT LARGE	Barbara Sidman
TREASURER	David Zion
CLERK	Jay Mahler
FINANCIAL CLERK	Stephanie Greenberg

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

<u>New Term May 2021 - May 2023</u>	<u>Continuing Term May 2021 - May 2022</u>
Brian Cohen*	Stephanie Greenberg
Ruth Estrich	Lori Kreevoy
Gitte Kushner	Jay Mahler
Corey Lewis	Jeffrey Oringer
Maria Samiljan*	Eric Osattin
Margery Shapiro*	Joan Rosenthal
Joe Simons	Barbara Sidman
Steve Solomon	Michael Smerka
	J.R. Young**
	David Zion
	Keiko Zoll**

* ***New member***

** ***New Member for one year term until May 2022***

The Leadership Development Committee and the Board of Directors wish to thank the following individuals for their commitment and time served on our board:

Mark Messenger, Bethani Hipsh, Amy Powell, Janna Schwartz, Adam Wallen



Incoming President of the Board of Directors Annual Report 2021

It is such a privilege to be the incoming President of Congregation Shirat Hayam. My family has been a part of this congregation and this community for generations - thinking about how proud my mother and father would be brings tears to my eyes.

I want to first thank Mark Messenger for his heartfelt and passionate leadership over the past two years. How lucky were we to have a local physician help us to navigate the unprecedented waters of a pandemic over the past fourteen months? I don't know how he managed to juggle the needs of our congregation with the needs of his patients, many of whom were dying from COVID, literally, on a day-to-day basis. He had to address once-in-a-lifetime challenges for our community and our synagogue, and I know you all join me in thanking him for his time and dedication.

As we look forward to the next two years, I also know that you join me in a newfound appreciation for everything that we have missed and for the promise of what lies ahead. On Yom Kippur, I spoke to you all about how we tend to take what we have for granted until it is lost. Or as Joni Mitchell said, "you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone". The pandemic took so many things from us. As we start to get many of them back, I hope we all remember to appreciate what we had to learn to live without. I hope we all remember the days when we couldn't hug, when we couldn't travel, when we had to wonder if an outing to Market Basket would end a life. I hope we remember to appreciate the return of so many daily pleasures.

But more importantly, I challenge everyone to look at what we have each realized that we can't live without. I personally could not have gotten through the last year without my friends, without my connection to my God and to my congregation. There were many times over the past year when I was lonely, yet I never felt alone. As a member of the leadership team at CSH, there were many times when the challenges in front of us looked insurmountable and we not only survived, we thrived. We couldn't sit next to each other on the High Holy Days, yet we crafted new and exciting opportunities for connection with family and friends wherever they were. We not only conducted an effective search for a new cantor during a quarantine, we had unprecedented congregational participation in our committee and in our "virtual visits", and found a new member of our team who promises to inject new excitement into our community and congregation.

As we move beyond the limits of our recent "narrow places", I invite you all to join me in building upon what we've learned and in creating a new level of connection and community for our families, for our friends and neighbors, and for the generations to come.

Ruth Estrich

Leadership@ShiratHayam.org



New Board Members for 2021/2023 Term

Brian Cohen

I was born and bred in Swampscott, MA and now reside in Marblehead, MA where I've raised my 3 children with my wife Michele. My connection to the Shirat community runs deep. As a life-long (3rd generation) member of Temple Israel in Swampscott, we joined Congregation Shirat Hayam at its inception when Temples Israel and Beth El merged. All 3 of my children attended preschool and became B'nei Mitzvah at Shirat Hayam. I chaired the Brotherhood for 5+ years and has previously served 3 terms on the board from 2013 to 2018. More recently I've been an active participant of both the morning and evening minyans for the past few years and have enjoyed supporting the "virtual minyanniare" community during the past year. I am excited to rejoin the board and help the congregation navigate the post-Covid return to normalcy.

Maria Samiljan

We have been members of CHS since its inception. Before that, we were members of Temple Israel where I grew up and my parents joined in the 1950's. Whether in-person or on Zoom, I always feel part of a community where people are happy to see me. At Shirat, I feel comfortable participating at my own pace and in whatever type of service or experience I choose in the moment. It's a wonderful caring community. I was honored to be asked to serve on the board. I believe that there is an abundance of opportunity waiting for us to embrace at Shirat Hayam and in the conservative movement in general. It is an exciting time to be able to give back through board service, share my experience, and be part of Shirat's journey.

Margery Shapiro

I am a lifelong member - Temple Israel and now CSH. I went through a very difficult time when my husband died suddenly in 2013. Joining the community of the renewal service helped me heal and reconnect with my own spirituality. I appreciate the genuine connections that I've made through being a minyan captain and serving on Shir Chesed. I was quite active in Temple Israel - former Board member and Sisterhood president - and I've been anxious to get more involved in CSH. I'm looking forward to sharing the perspective of my generation, while meeting and getting to know some of the newer/younger members.

Looking forward to when things start to resume in person and we can say hello in person.

J.R. Young

We have been members of Shirat for approximately 5 years now. I was raised Catholic and converted to Judaism in 2006. We lived in Newton until 2012 and were not part of any congregation, spending all of the Jewish Holidays with Audrey's family at their synagogue in Connecticut. When the children got a little older, we decided it was time to join a synagogue and began "Shul Shopping." The word "shopping" is used loosely as Shirat Hayam was our only visit. We had been residents of Swampscott for a few years and it seemed like we knew everyone at Shirat. It was such a warm and inviting congregation, and we immediately felt at home. Having never belonged to a synagogue before, I could only compare it to the one that I had attended in Connecticut. That shul had been in decline for many years, attendance was very low, there were no young families, and it actually closed a couple years ago. To come into Shirat and see how alive and vibrant the community was really inspired us. The live music, the participation by the congregants and the best Kiddush Lunches we'd ever seen, hooked us. Also, the way the children were taken care of by Shirat's knowledgeable, kind and patient Hebrew School teachers really made a huge impression. Shirat is a wonderful community, and we really look forward to getting back to having the wonderful conversations (and whitefish!!!) at the Kiddush lunches again!!

I chose to serve on the board because helping out is kind of in my blood. I've served on the Planning Board in Swampscott, the town soccer board for 7 years, the Swampscott club for 6 years and counting, and I coach my children's sports teams just about every season. I've also helped Shirat during the pandemic by managing the Zoom ceremonies for B'nei Mitzvah. I just enjoy being involved and helping out when I am able. I may not have been a Jew for very long, but after seeing the once vibrant synagogue in Connecticut close, I know how important it is to maintain an active and engaged congregation by having a broad appeal and providing what the people want and need. I hope to bring fresh ideas and perhaps a view from different eyes to the board to keep Shirat Hayam strong and vibrant.

Keiko Zoll

I am Director of Communications for Boston Schools Fund, and Co-Founder and Chief Marketing Officer of TourGuide Games, a tabletop role-playing game industry startup launched in 2020. For more than a decade, I have worked as a communications and marketing professional, writer, and editor across sectors, from higher education institutions and non-profits to social impact and consumer startups, and for global consumer brands and digital publications. She holds a B.A. in Communication Studies from The College of New Jersey.

I served on the Board of Directors for and volunteered extensively with RESOLVE New England, a regional non-profit supporting the infertility patient community. At CSH, I am a member of Tzedek LaKol: Justice for All, a lay-led committee focused on centering the work of racial justice in Jewish values. In June 2020, I helped organize March Like a Mother for Black Lives Boston, an event centered on the experiences of Black motherhood. I am also a founding member of the Swampscott Antiracism Caucus, volunteers on the PTO Board at Stanley Elementary School, and has proudly represented Swampscott's 6th Precinct at Town Meeting since 2019. An alumnae of New Leaders Council Boston, EMERGE Massachusetts, and the Commonwealth Seminar, my work is anchored at the intersection of constituent engagement, technology, and storytelling for social good, racial justice, human rights, and public service. I live in Swampscott with my son Judah and husband Larry.