



April 18, 2018

Dear Temple Shalom Families,

I am so excited to be joining the Temple Shalom community. I'm sending this letter as a way to introduce myself to you. I began my teaching career in the public schools, as part of the Boston University/Chelsea Partnership. In the early 1990s, Boston University partnered with the Chelsea Public Schools as an experiment to see what would happen when an exceptional educational institution partnered with a failing school system. My work in that setting allowed me the opportunity to experiment and consider alternatives that would meet the needs of diverse learners. We were encouraged to create content-rich, meaningful curriculum and to bring families into the education process. We were supported by educational experts who worked with us in the classroom. As a new educator, this model of support made all the difference. The years I spent as part of this program laid the foundation for my belief about education and the components for success. All these years later, I find myself returning again and again to these best principles and utilizing them in my work in the Jewish community.

For the last nine years, I have proudly served as the Director of Congregational Learning at Temple Chayai Shalom in Easton, Mass. This small community south of Boston was a pioneer in transforming long held beliefs about Jewish education. Not only did we rebrand the name of our education program, but how we think about, plan and execute excellent education for 21st century learners. I appreciated the opportunity and the spirit of innovation the community allowed. I learned much about working with lay leaders, about discerning the needs of the community and strategizing how to reach shared goals. I developed a professional development strategy to work with educators who were not formally trained in Jewish education, but who had a passion for the work. I am excited to bring my experiences to Temple Shalom and to forge new relationships with families, lay leaders and the professional staff.

I grew up at a reform congregation in Brockton, Mass. I loved my Hebrew School experience. My classmates and I were close, and I appreciated the learning I gained from attending classes. Upon reflection, my positive Jewish experience wasn't only about the time spent in the temple building. The experiences my parents made for me and my sisters helped to contextualize what I was learning in class, making everything more meaningful. I've tried to approach Jewish life for my own family in much the same way. My husband, Brian, and I are active members of a Reconstructionist congregation and have been for the past 20 years. Our three daughters (Rachel, Chelsea and Elaine) all celebrated the milestone of Bat Mitzvah and remain engaged in the community by continuing to chant Torah during the High Holy Days and serving as Madrichim in the religious school. I truly believe that engaging in congregational life can be a powerful and enriching experience.

I am looking forward to learning more about you and your family in the coming months. I begin full time at Temple Shalom on July 1st. If you have some time over the summer, I hope you'll stop by to say hello. I have heard what a warm and welcoming community Temple Shalom is, and I am excited to be a part of it.

Kol tuv (All the best)

Kim