



Rabbi Chaya Bender

Rabbi Chaya Bender guides lifelong-learners of all ages as they chart their spiritual journeys. Through innovative programming, classes, services and one-on-one conversations she emphasizes a positive Jewish identity formation for all.

It is her sacred calling as a Rabbi to help others find the place of the sacred in their life, if they are searching, and to cherish what is sacred to those who have already found it. Rabbi Bender has more than ten years of teaching experience in various Jewish settings and is passionate about helping individuals connect to their unique Jewish identities. She served Temple Sholom in Greenwich, CT as Assistant Rabbi and Youth Director from 2016-2020. There she taught in the Hebrew School, served as a Chapter Advisor for Judah BBYO, developed youth, teen, and family programming, as well as engaged the adult population through programming, classes, and religious services.

Rabbi Chaya Bender is committed to fostering inclusivity and equity. As part of her dedication to inclusion work, she founded the Temple Sholom Inclusivity Committee which focused on making all members of Temple Sholom feel more welcomed. In the greater community, she was a member of the multiple Jewish and interfaith round tables, and engaged with the greater community by bringing Jewish programming to local nursing homes, leading study sessions, and preaching at local town events and houses of worship. Rabbi Chaya Bender was born and raised in Southern New Jersey. She earned a BA in Anthropology with two minors in Near Eastern, Judaic Studies and Gender Studies from Brandeis University. After Brandeis, she spent two years studying Rabbinic Literature at Drisha as a Music Fellow in the Artist Beit Midrash program. She received Rabbinic Ordination and an MA in Jewish Education from the Jewish Theological Seminary.

She, along with her wife, Emily Jaeger, and dog, Isaiah, are excited to be a part of the Bnai Israel Congregation Family.