

Rabbinic Search Committee Bios

- **Gil Benghiat**, his wife Ilene, and their sons Abe, Isaac, and Elias live in Lexington and have been active members of Temple Isaiah beginning with Rabbi Jaffe officiating his first Temple Isaiah bris for their youngest son. Gil is currently the steward for First Friday Torah study, a steering committee member and an active participant for the Brotherhood Family Camping Trip, and he helped start the biking group for TI Together. In the Lexington community, Gil has been town coordinator of the Destination Imagination program, coached youth soccer, and is the coordinator for the ACROSS Lexington Challenge. Gil's career has been in software and he is most recently a co-founder of DataKitchen, Inc.
- **Gary Fallick** and his wife Bebe have been members of Temple Isaiah for 50 years, joining not long after settling in Lexington. Their son and daughter both attended Temple Isaiah religious school through high school graduation, and now live out of state and are married, with college age children of their own. A chemical engineer, Gary spent his career in R&D, consulting, technology marketing, and business development.

He served as Temple President from 1984-1986, helping to plan 25th anniversary events and establishing the original Temple endowment fund. Subsequently he twice served full terms as a trustee. Gary completed the two year Me'ah program, has participated in planning some Yom Shabbat events and was president of SAGE (Senior Adult Group Extraordinaire) for a number of years. Currently he is co-chair of the Second Thursday Coffee program. Both SAGE and his current role reflect his interest in maintaining a mix of activities to build and support the sense of community among the senior members of Temple Isaiah. He applies similar focus to the larger community through past or present service on boards and leadership roles for English At Large, Minuteman Senior Services and Lexington At Home.

- **Ruth Fleischmann** and her husband Jonathan joined Temple Isaiah as kids in the early '60s. They met in LEFTY and were the first two congregants to marry each other. Their daughters, Sarah & Sydney, attended Temple Isaiah's religious school through 12th grade, and their grandson is a 4th generation member! Ruth has served as Sisterhood President, Co-Chair of the Youth Ed Team, Special Arrangements Chair, Nominating Committee Chair, on the Boomer Engagement Team and on the search committee that selected Rabbi Jaffe. A retired banker and consultant, Ruth is a calligrapher and artist. A politics major in college, she is active in grassroots political and civil rights campaigns.
- **Sharon Grossman** and her husband, Irwin, have been active members of Temple Isaiah for over 30 years and live in Arlington. Their two grown children, Ben and Mia, attended Temple Isaiah's religious school through high school and live in the Boston area. Among other leadership roles in Arlington, Sharon recently completed a stint as Co-Chair of the Arlington Human Rights Commission and continues as an appointed member. Throughout the years, Sharon has held leadership roles at Temple Isaiah, including when she was Vice President for Leadership and Community, as a trustee, and a Co-Chair of the Youth Education Team. She recently retired as a school psychologist and will bring her skills and interests in community engagement and issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as an historical perspective to the rabbinic search team.
- **Jane Heifetz**, is Temple Isaiah's First VP. She and her husband, Larry Fuhrman, have been members for 28 years. Their grown son, Isaac, became a bar mitzvah here, the same year Jane became a bat mitzvah. She is also a dedicated Mussar student and choir member.

Jane spent much of her professional life as an executive editor and leader of new product development at Harvard Business Review. She also founded a consulting business to coach people through career challenges. In 2020, she brought her experience in organizational and individual transformation to the

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temple's VP of Leadership & Community Development position. She brings to the search committee a deep spiritual connection to our community and decades of experience recruiting leaders and determining the right fit between candidates and hiring organizations.

- **Meryl Junik (Co-Chair)**, her husband Kyle, and their sons Evan and Aaron, live in Belmont and have been active members of Temple Isaiah since 2014. Aaron attends Temple Isaiah's religious school, and Evan participates in Tichon Isaiah and LEFTY. Currently the VP of Leadership & Community Development, Meryl has previously served as Trustee, Lead Trustee, and Nominating Chair. She has been a Mitzvah Day project captain and an active member of Sisterhood and the Yud for several years. After a career in technology consulting and project management, Meryl transitioned into the classroom and currently teaches at Belmont Cooperative Nursery School.
- **Wendy Liebow** and her husband, Scott Burson, have been members of Isaiah and Lexington residents since 1993. Their now-adult daughters, Allison and Esther, became Bat Mitzvah at Isaiah and attended religious school and Tichon Isaiah.

Wendy practiced law before focusing on volunteer work. She has just finished four years of serving as VP of Jewish Living and will continue that involvement by serving as co-chair of Adult Learning. Previously, Wendy served as Board Secretary; VP of Programming; co-chair of Family Education, Yom Shabbat, College & Alumni committees; and a member of other committees. She has participated in previous searches for senior and assistant/associate rabbis. Wendy will bring to the search knowledge of Isaiah history, a passion for broadening and deepening congregational engagement, and familiarity with current trends and challenges in the Reform movement (and beyond).

- **Dan Ostrower** is Temple Isaiah's President. He, his wife Coreen, and his three sons have been members for about 10 years, beginning shortly after they moved to Lexington from Brookline. They have deeply valued Temple Isaiah as a community that welcomes interfaith families. In February, Dan and Coreen saw their third son Bar Mitzvahed at Temple Isaiah. Dan has spent his career in innovation, design and strategy as both an entrepreneur and a consultant. He is currently utilizing these skills to co-lead Temple Isaiah's Shaping Our Future project and will serve as a key liaison between that Visioning effort and this committee, helping to bring a perspective of innovation and modernization to the search.
- **Jason Schneider** has been part of the Temple Isaiah community since 2009. He was born and raised in New Jersey (Exit 140), but moved to the Boston area in the 1990s to attend Brandeis University, where he majored in philosophy and met his future wife, Rachel Oliveri. Currently, Jason heads up product development for Gamewright, a Newton-based publisher of family tabletop games. He lives in Arlington with Rachel and their two teens, Miriam and Micah. A recent Trustee, Jason consistently brought a curious mindset and fresh perspective to Board conversations and also served on the search committee for our new Associate Rabbi.
- **Sam Zales (Co-Chair)**, his wife Leslie, and their three daughters, Gracie, Jessie and Betsy, live in Lexington and have been proud members of Temple Isaiah since 2004. They have greatly valued our community and the exceptional Temple Isaiah religious school, Tichon and LEFTY high school programs as powerful paths to a Jewish future for our next generation. Sam has served as New Member Representative to our Temple Board, chairs the Lexington MLK Day Commemoration Committee, and is a New England regional board member of the American Technion Society. As Leslie has held numerous committee leadership positions, they both value the appreciation of interfaith families at Temple Isaiah.