Rabbi Cecelia Beyer

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PROFILE

A dedicated spiritual cheerleader with a dynamic approach to liturgy, education, and community building, known for joyfully integrating tradition with innovation. Extensive background in social activism, Jewish camping, Jewish education, and youth and teen programming.

Proudly involved with Conservative Movement projects, including the new Clergy Manual editorial board, the Rabbinical Assembly Pastoral Outreach Team, the Tzedek Center, and adjunct faculty at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Classically trained soprano, enthusiastic guitar-wielding song leader, and accomplished Irish and Israeli dancer. Purveyor of Joyful Judaism.

RABBINIC EXPERIENCE

Congregation Knesset Israel, Pittsfield, MA

Visting Cantor/Educator, Summer 2026- Present

Serve as visiting cantor and educator at a vibrant Conservative congregation, strengthening and revitalizing the communal tefillah experience through musical leadership, prayer education, and individualized coaching of congregants of all ages and backgrounds.

- Lead Shabbat services and community parlor concerts, providing congregational education in prayer, liturgy, and modern Jewish music.
- Teach and mentor individual congregants and small groups of singers and instrumentalists in prayer leadership, musical skills, and the development of engaging and participatory worship.
- Collaborate with rabbi and staff to develop and implement projects that renew & enliven worship.

Temple Sholom, Bridgewater, NJ

Rabbi-Cantor, 2019 – 2026

Served as rabbi, cantor, and educator at a 350-family Conservative synagogue, leading services, chanting Torah and Haftarah, and serving a primary educational role in the religious school and teen program.

- Served as prayer leader for high holidays, festivals, & Shabbat. Chanted Torah, Haftarah, and festival liturgical readings.
- Created and implemented Neshamah: A Shabbat Experience for the Soul, an innovative, interactive, and intergenerational prayer service that allowed participants of all ages to learn, pray, and explore prayer and text together, in a more intimate and spiritual way.
- Delivered sermons and taught Torah regularly during Shabbat and holiday services.
- Performed all life cycle events, provided pastoral care, and rabbinic counseling.
- Taught prayer and music to preschool and religious school.
- Taught Israel, Jewish College Preparedness and creative electives in Hebrew High program.
- Instruct all b'nei mitzvah learners in Torah, Haftarah, and prayer leading.
- Direct "Shul of Rock" youth band and adult choir.

Temple Beth Ahm Yisrael, Springfield, NJ

Associate Rabbi, Cantor, and Education Director, 2012 – 2018

Served as second rabbi in a 300-family Conservative synagogue, led services, directed religious school & teen program, directed Friday night band & high holiday choir, and performed ritual & life cycle services.

Education:

- Created and implemented curricula for five-hour per week supplemental religious school program for grades K-7 and supervised a staff of 12 teachers and 15 teen aides.
- Designed and implemented a weekly two-hour teen learning program for grades 8-12. Crafted a unique new experiential and text-based program each year based on students' interests.
- Fulfilled administrative responsibilities such as payroll, expenses, budget creation and management, and performed fundraising activities for the school and teen program.

- Taught music to K-7 students, using music, dance, and song as tools to teach Jewish values.
- Designed and implemented preschool holiday and Shabbat programming.
- Served as educational liaison to Kadima youth group advisors.
- Prepared 10-12 bar and bat mitzvah students each year in Torah, Haftarah, and service leading.
- Led monthly Tot Shabbat Friday night services and weekly preschool Shabbat program.

Programming and Lifelong Learning:
- Instructed a wide variety of adult education sessions, including a women's Torah study, Kabbalah, Prayer Leading, Mishnah, Midrash, and Adult Bat Mitzvah classes.
- Wrote, directed, and produced musical Purim shows involving adults, teens, and children.

Spiritual Life:
- Served as prayer leader for high holidays, festivals, and Shabbat. Chanted Torah, Haftarah, and festival liturgical readings.
- Created innovative, interactive, and intergenerational prayer services for Shabbat mornings and high holidays, allowing for families and members of all ages to learn, pray, and explore prayer and text together, with leadership by religious school students and teens.
- Delivered sermons and taught Torah regularly during Shabbat and holiday services.
- Performed all life cycle events, provided pastoral care and rabbinic counseling.
- Directed Friday night Shabbat band and high holiday choir

Temple Beth Sholom, Roslyn Heights, NY

Assistant Rabbi, 2010 - 2012

Performed all ritual and life cycle services for a 750-family egalitarian synagogue with a uniquely diverse Ashkenazic and Sephardic congregation. Primary focus was on education and programming for all age groups from early childhood through adult.

Lifelong Learning:
- Collaborated with Early Childhood Center faculty to design and implement family-oriented programs centered on ritual life and holiday themes. Led each class weekly in song and prayer.
- Developed curriculum and lesson plans for Religious School Shabbat Family Study Program that draws 250 students and their families.
- Met with 30 Bar and Bat Mitzvah students each year to discuss Torah portions and edit speeches.
- Developed and taught multiple courses in the Hebrew High School, including Israel through Music, Make Your Own Midrash, Judaism in Motion, and Building a Jewish Vocabulary.
- Created and instructed a wide variety of adult education courses, including Psalms, Judaism 101, Adult Bat Mitzvah, Torah Reading, Prayer Leading, and Practical Jewish Law.

Programming:
- Coordinated participatory holiday events including Shavuot Evening of Learning & Purim shpiels.
- Organized annual Sukkah Hop, visiting numerous congregants' homes for a progressive meal.
- In cooperation with neighboring Reform synagogue, coordinated community-wide Mitzvah Day.

Spiritual Life:
- Led new intimate, spiritual, Shabbat morning alternative service focusing on song and learning.
- Planned and conducted warm and engaging auxiliary high holiday services for 700 people.
- Led bi-monthly family minyan and bi-monthly tot Shabbat services.

Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, New York, NY

Social Justice Rabbinical Intern, 2009 - 2010

Cooperberg-Rittmaster Rabbinical Intern, 2008 - 2009
- Planned conference on issues of LGBTQ inclusion, pastoral care, and theology.
- Prepared resources connecting holidays and life cycle events with social justice and LGBTQ issues.
- Maintained full pastoral care caseload including counseling, hospital visits, and shiva minyans.
- Led youth, family, and tot services, and organized related programming.
- Conducted adult education sessions in both formal and informal settings.
- Prepared and sponsored a candidate for conversion and served on the beit din.

JTS High Holiday Kehillah Community Service, New York, NY
Co-leader, 2007

- Planned and conducted welcoming and participatory High Holiday services for NYC community.
- Served as cantor, delivered sermons, and led learning sessions during the services.

Women's League Seminary Synagogue, New York, NY
Head Gabbai, Staff member, 2005 - 2008

- Facilitated weekday, Shabbat, and holiday services for the JTS community, & supervised 8-person staff.

CAMP EXPERIENCE

Camp Zeke Lakewood, PA
Founding Camp Rabbi & Jewish Life Director, 2014 - present

- Worked from conception of camp with directors on creating Jewish values curriculum for unique fitness and culinary arts camp program based on Jewish values of wellness, kindness, and joy.
- Crafted pluralistic observance and values program for 400 campers and staff.
- Designed Friday night siddur with readings and insights that captures the spirit of the camp.
- Developed pluralistic Shabbat policies, programs, and prayer, including "Shabboptions" – a multi-valent approach to Shabbat morning prayer involving traditional prayer, musical prayer, sports, yoga, nature, music, water, & more.
- Create and implement full-day all-camp Israel Day and Tisha B'Av program and activities.
- Consult on content in teen leadership program and lead sessions with teens.
- Serve as staff consultant year-long and as rabbinic presence during the summer, assisting with both camper care and programming staffs.
- Lead rousing, spirited song sessions.

Camp Ramah Tefillah Project, New York, NY
Contributor, 2005 - 2007

- Created resources, background materials, and activities to aid staff members implementing prayer programming at Ramah camps.

Camp Ramah in the Berkshires, Wingdale, NY
Camp Ramah Darom, Clayton, GA
Unit Head, Rosh Tefillah, **Judaics Staff,** 2005 - 2009; 2013

- Supervised and evaluated the performance and progress of 21 staff members.
- Coordinated educational activities and ran staff meetings and training.
- Created and implemented educational and recreational programming.
- Served as administrative liaison between camp director and staff members.
- Advised and counseled staff members on camper care and proper solutions to camper issues.
- Created and implemented prayer curricula and supervised ritual life of camp.

Camp Laurelwood, Madison, CT
Drama Specialist, 2004

- Directed and produced a full-length musical and talent show with campers aged 8-15.
- Organized camp-wide Judaic programming, including Tisha B'Av and Israel Day.

Camp JCA Shalom, Malibu, CA
Unit Head, 2001

- Coordinated programming for 200 5th and 6th grade campers
- Supervised and evaluated performance and progress of 30 staff members.
- Corresponded with parents regarding camper issues and concerns.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Ezra Academy Jewish Day School, Woodbridge, CT
Long-Term Judaics Substitute Teacher, 2004
- Instructed second grade in Hebrew, Bible, Jewish Holidays, and Israel.

Congregation Or Shalom, Orange, CT
Religious School Teacher and Youth High Holiday Service Leader, 2002 - 2006
- Created and implemented original integrated fifth grade curriculum of Israel, Bible, Siddur and modern Hebrew, using music, drama, multimedia, games, activities, and textbook tools.
- Led high holiday services and activities for third through sixth grade students.
- Led high holiday services for post bar-mitzvah aged teens.

Congregation Mishkan Israel, Hamden, CT
Religious School Teacher, 2001 - 2003
- Taught 7th grade students preparing for Bar and Bat Mitzvah.
- Instructed 5th and 6th grade classes in Bible, History, and Hebrew Language.

Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, DC
Religious School Teacher, 1997 - 2001
- Instructed and tutored seventh graders in Hebrew Language, Bible, and Jewish History.
- Instructed third graders in Judaic studies, Bible, Jewish holidays, music, and culture.
- Tutored individual Religious School students in Hebrew and Bar Mitzvah preparation.

EDUCATION

The Jewish Theological Seminary
Rabbinic Ordination, concentration in Sacred Music, 2010
Philip Goldstein Award of the National Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, 2009
Rabbi Isaac Bonder Memorial Prize, 2006
Co-coordinator, Isha El Ahota Women's Center
Member of JTS Israel Committee & Keshet JTS Board

The George Washington University Law School, Washington, DC
J.D., 2000

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
B.A. History, *cum laude*, with departmental honors, 1997

Young Judaea Year Course in Israel
1992-1993