

PRESS RELEASE

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Reb Lisa Levine Joins Seaside Jewish Community as new Religious Leader

Seaside Jewish Community is pleased to announce that Cantor/Rabbinic Pastor Lisa Levine has become its new Religious Leader.

Reb Lisa, using the title 'Reb' signifying the pastoral focus of her rabbinic studies, succeeds Rabbi Beth Cohen, Seaside's first religious leader, who retired this year and who will remain Rabbi Emeritus.

"Reb Lisa Levine is a welcome addition to the Seaside community," says Buddy Feldman, co-president of Seaside Jewish Community, which is located in Rehoboth Beach, DE.

"She brings a special talent in music and a passion for new ideas and expanded programming. We look forward to seeing how her creativity will bring new energy to all of our spiritual and educational activities. I look forward to working with her for many years to come."

Reb Lisa said she is honored to step into Rabbi Beth's shoes. "I am in awe to take these reins," she says. "Rabbi Beth has built a strong congregation. I see

Seaside as a wheel with all of us connected to the spiritual center. I want to be of service and I am here to help guide this wheel. It is all about relationships.”

Buddy Feldman adds, ““Rabbi Beth Cohen, Seaside Jewish Community’s first spiritual leader, has been instrumental in the success and growth of Seaside, in terms its inclusive approach, increasing membership, and participation in interfaith activities in the larger Sussex County community. She has also been extremely helpful in making this transition to our new Religious Leader go smoothly.”

Reb Lisa, who lives in Brookeville, MD, with her husband, Andy Levine, has been serving as a Cantor for nearly 30 years. Over the past 10 years, she served as the cantor at Temple Shalom in Chevy Chase, MD. She also has been active with the Jewish Social Services Agency in Montgomery County, MD.

She is a nationally recognized songwriter and product of the Jewish Camping Movement of the Union for Reform Judaism. She was trained by Debbie Friedman, an American singer-songwriter of Jewish religious melodies. Reb Lisa was ordained as a cantor in 1989 from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music, in New York. She has served congregations in several states, only taking time off to stay home while raising her two children, Emily and Louis.

Combining her music and spirituality, Reb Lisa for 25 years has composed liturgical music, which is published by Transcontinental Music Publications and

performed in synagogues throughout the country. She has released multiple albums and a Book/DVD/CD titled, *Yoga Shalom*, which melds the practice of yoga with spiritual Jewish chant and embodiment of prayer. She served for 10 years on the Board of the American Conference of Cantors. Reb Lisa has led and organized five humanitarian missions to Cuba where she performed concerts and created relationships with Jewish families in need. She serves on the Advisory Board of Ezra Uganda Assistance, a nonprofit organization, which brings food, water and solar power, health care and education to the Abuyadaya Jewish Community of Namatumba, Uganda.

In recent years, Reb Lisa decided to deepen her learning path through study with the Alliance for Jewish Renewal, which has a deep ecumenical, neo-Hassidic and spiritual approach to the practice of Judaism. It uses meditation, chant, music, and the study of personal soul traits to help one connect with one's self and faith in God. She was ordained as a Rabbinic Pastor in January 2018.

"I feel truly blessed to be joining the Seaside Jewish Community family at this time in its history," she says. "My intention is to meet and listen to as many people's stories as possible, be supportive of the leadership's goals for the congregation, and provide pastoral care and excellent worship experiences where people of all ages and faiths feel comfortable gathering together in prayer and

song. I'm most excited about working with the leadership and children of the religious school and becoming part of their Jewish journey.”

Co-president Alyssa Simon, whose children have graduated from Seaside's religious school, says, "The Religious School is very excited to start a new journey with Reb Lisa. She comes to Seaside with extensive experience with young children and families. Her energy is contagious and creates a positive atmosphere. We look forward to many years with her as our school continues to grow.”

Reb Lisa will divide her time between her home in Rehoboth Beach and her home in Maryland.

Seaside Jewish Community is an independent, unaffiliated, inclusive and egalitarian congregation in Sussex County, Delaware. Its mission is to support and foster Jewish identity by sponsoring religious, cultural, social, and educational activities for its members.

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