



CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

Cantor Cahana's announcement that she will retire at the end of June 2025 brings a sense of both sadness and gratitude. Sadness that we are at the beginning of the end of her 18-year service to our congregation, and gratitude that we have benefitted—and will continue to do so—from her artistry, wisdom, empathy, spirit, strength, and guidance. Of course, her announcement also brings the anxiety that often comes when facing a big change. To help alleviate this anxiety, the Board wishes to explain its plan for the future of Congregation Beth Israel's clergy leadership.

First, given that CBI has the unusual situation of a married couple serving as Senior Cantor and Senior Rabbi, I expect that many of you are wondering about Rabbi Cahana's plans in the wake of Cantor Cahana's announcement. About a year ago, Rabbi Cahana informed the Board that he plans to retire in 2027.

For the last several years, the Board has been anticipating these changes and discussing how to navigate them. Last fall, the Board unanimously decided that the best way for CBI to move forward is with **Rabbi Rachel Joseph and Cantor Rayna Green** as our new clergy leaders. Not only are both of them among the best and most respected clergy in the Reform movement, they have also been an integral part of our community, intimately familiar with our strengths and challenges, and deeply committed to our congregation and its future.

To that end, the Board has committed to negotiate with both Cantor Green and Rabbi Joseph to fill Cantor Cahana's and Rabbi Cahana's roles when they retire and has already begun that process. The Board anticipates finalizing contracts with Rabbi Joseph by the end of June and with Cantor Green before year-end.

To learn more about the Board's process in arriving at this decision, I invite you to attend an informational meeting on **Wednesday, May 8, 2024** at 7:00 PM. This meeting will be both in-person and online. To register, please go to <https://bethisraelpdx.shulcloud.com/form/transition>.

CBI's bylaws also require a congregational vote at a special meeting for the initial term of a Senior Rabbi. Because the Board is announcing Rabbi Joseph's eventual succession to that role today, and in June plans to enter a contract with her that will encompass her first term as Senior Rabbi, the Board will hold that vote at a special meeting on **May 23, 2024**, at 5:15 PM, immediately before CBI's 166th Annual Meeting. The meeting will be in person and online. Immediately after the Annual Meeting, there will be a champagne celebration to honor all our clergy.

In the coming months there will be many opportunities to celebrate, honor, and thank Cantor Cahana and Rabbi Cahana, and to learn more about Rabbi Joseph's and Cantor Green's visions for their spiritual and congregational leadership. We are embarking on a period of great change,

but also continuing a great tradition: a sacred partnership with devoted clergy who will nurture and sustain our congregational future.

May we continue to go from strength to strength.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Libby Schwartz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "L" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Libby Schwartz
PRESIDENT, CBI BOARD OF TRUSTEES