

2025-2026 Board of Trustees Nominating Committee Report

Temple Isaiah's Bylaws define the charge of the Nominating Committee and its process. Please refer to Bylaws' Sections 4G and 6E for the complete text. The 2025-2026 Nominating Committee was co-chaired by Suzanne Solig, the Immediate Past President, and Ken Friedman, a current member of the Board of Trustees. Other committee members included:

- Debra Silverman (President). ad hoc
- Deborah Moses (Executive Director), ad hoc
- Terry Pullan
- Richard Isakow
- Martha Sklar
- Wendy Plottel
- Brandon Weil
- Shireen Oberman
- Michele Shepherd
- Orli Belman

Note: at certain points in the committee's deliberations, Ken Friedman recused himself from any discussions or deliberations that involved his nomination for VP of Membership.

The 2025-26 Committee had to fill two (2) Officer positions (VP of Membership and VP of Social Justice, the latter a renewal for a second two-year term), six (6) Board seats that will become vacant on June 30, 2026, and consider for renomination two (2) sitting Board members who were eligible for a second three-year term.

Following are the nominee slates for each individual category:

Officer Nominations:

- VP of Social Justice – David Chiu (2nd two-year term)
- VP of Membership – Ken Friedman (1st two-year term)

Board of Trustees Slate of Renewing Members:

- Jana Neil
- Wendy Turk

Board of Trustees Slate of New Nominees:

- Rachel Gutkin
- Heather Lazarus
- Aaron May
- Sam Surloff
- Jennifer Tamir
- Judy Werner

BIOS

Officers

David Chiu

David Chiu has been a member of Temple Isaiah since 2014. He is also part of the Green Team, Torah Study, and an avid "Shabbat Regular." David's broader social justice work at Isaiah has included activism in partnership with HIAS, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, Reclaim Our Vote, and other interfaith and civic organizations focused on issues including refugees, environmental justice, voting rights, and housing affordability. In 2019, he received Temple Isaiah's Emerging Leader Award.

Professionally, David is the Marketing & Communications Manager for The Braid, a Jewish storytelling theatre company. He has written for and worked on numerous Braid productions and storytelling events, including The Braid's Candlelight Storytelling series for young professionals and What Do I Do with All This Heritage?, the groundbreaking 2024 theatre production about Asian Jewish identity created in partnership with The LUNAR Collective, a national organization by and for Asian American Jews. The show became a major success, touring across the country and receiving coverage from outlets including *The Washington Post*, *The Forward*, the *South China Morning Post*, and *U.S. News & World Report*. He also wrote for the Amazon Prime Video television series LORE. Proud of his Litvak and Cantonese heritage, David is also a Los Angeles Co-Director for The LUNAR Collective. He serves on the Board of Directors of California Interfaith Power & Light, a faith-based environmental nonprofit organization. He and his longtime life partner Chanel enjoy time with their rambunctious cat, various anime and sci-fi shows, and regular *Dungeons & Dragons* games.

Ken Friedman

Ken and his wife, Caryn, joined Temple Isaiah in 2008, shortly before their son Brayden was born. Brayden and his sister Ella each graduated from Temple Isaiah Preschool and continued through the religious school and their bar and bat mitzvahs. They remain active as religious school rishonim.

Ken joined the Board of Trustees in 2022 and currently serves on multiple temple committees, including the budget committee, education policy council, finance committee, membership committee, and nominating committee.

He is an attorney by training, having worked at a large, international law firm prior to shifting to working with entrepreneurial technology companies. His primary focus has been in the justice tech space working to increase affordable access to the law.

Renewing Nominees

Jana Neil

Jana joined Temple Isaiah in 2019 with her husband, Paul, and their kids, Hudson (now 8) and Ellie (now 6). Both kids attended Temple Isaiah for preschool and now attend Westwood Charter. She is an active board member serving on the Membership Committee, Capital Campaign Fundraising Committee, and Neighborhood K-12 Committee. On the Neighborhood Committee she co-chairs K-12 room parents. As an active member of the Capital Campaign Committee she partners with clergy on face to face solicitations. Jana was very involved in the Temple Isaiah Preschool community and served as the Vice President of the Preschool Parent Association and on the Parent Advisory Committee.

Jana earned her BA in 2004 from the University of Southern California. She spent over 15 years in Jewish Communal development fundraising roles, beginning at UJA-Federation of New York, followed by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and ended her career in Jewish communal work as Director of the Birthright Israel Foundation Los Angeles office. Jana currently serves as Chief of Staff and Partner at 25th Hour Group, a business advisory firm working with companies and individuals to perform at their highest level.

Jana and her family truly found their home at Temple Isaiah, and she is proud to be an active Board Member and to continue to serve the community that has given them so much.

Wendy Turk

Wendy and her husband Jeff have been members of Temple Isaiah for over 25 years since their son, Chandler, was in the Temple's preschool. Chandler was bar mitzvahed and confirmed at Isaiah, and Wendy participated in the adult b'nai mitzvah program. The Temple has been a source of engagement, community, and friendship for all of the Turks.

A native of Los Angeles, Wendy obtained her BA from UCLA and her JD from the University of Pennsylvania. For the last almost 20 years, Wendy has been running a family business managing real property.

Wendy has been a member of the Temple's Board of Trustees for the last three years and has served as chair of the Voter Engagement Committee for the last two years. She has been a member of the Social Justice Committee and took an active role in the Temple's Gun Legislation Advocacy Committee. She is a former Board member of Isaiah Women and has been a member of IW since its founding.

Outside of the Temple, Wendy is a volunteer advocate for various organizations and causes and currently serves in leadership with the California Alliance for Adoptee Rights. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, frequenting flea markets and estate sales, and engaging in all kinds of crafting.

New Board Nominees

Rachel Silverman Gutkin

Rachel grew up as a member of Temple Isaiah. Her family joined the synagogue in 1985. Her parents, Loretta Siciliano and Scott Silverman, have been active members since that time, participating in many areas of temple life. Rachel completed religious school through confirmation class. She celebrated her bat mitzvah at Isaiah with Rabbi Gan and Cantor Kent. When she returned to Los Angeles after medical school, Rachel and her husband, Gary, joined Isaiah and were married under a chuppah in the Sanctuary by Rabbi Gan. Her three children, Lucy, Liev, and Mila, have attended Temple Isaiah preschool and religious school. Lucy and Liev celebrated their bnei mitzvahs in the sanctuary, and Mila will join them on September 11, 2027.

Rachel holds a BA in Human Biology from Brown University, an MD from the University of California, Irvine, and a master's in public health in Epidemiology from the University of California, Los Angeles. She completed residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology and fellowship training in Maternal Fetal Medicine (high risk Obstetrics) at UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. She now works in private practice as a Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist serving Torrance and the South bay area.

Rachel served as a member of the Temple Isaiah membership committee for several years. She has volunteered as class parent in the preschool and religious schools. She is currently a member of the membership and belonging taskforce.

On the weekends, Rachel spends her time with Gary and her children, usually shuttling between her kids' sports games. She loves reading, eating good food, and watching TV with the family.

Heather Lazarus

Heather and her husband Brian have been temple members since 2021, joining during COVID after their oldest daughter Rebecca spent 10 days in Israel with peers from Isaiah. Rebecca immediately became active with Confirmation, Rishon and ITY, and Haley, their younger daughter, celebrated her Bat Mitzvah in the sanctuary and now enjoys weekly classes on Tuesdays and Sundays as a Rishon, and is a newly elected VP of Finance with ITY. Heather spent the last year as co-chair of the Neighborhood and Brian enjoys being an active member of the Temple Bourbon small group.

A native of South Bend, Indiana, Heather holds a BA in Psychology from Northwestern University. She is an experienced brand management and marketing executive, beginning her career in advertising and spending 15 years as a senior executive at Mattel Inc. in Global Brand Management and Marketing strategy for Barbie, Mattel's other girls' brands and the Mattel Children's Foundation and Corporate Philanthropy. In 2018, Heather left Mattel to work as an

executive director for an environmental non-profit and in 2021 became a board member with the Jewish Center for Justice, a social justice, education, and leadership development platform working to empower current and future leaders to build a more compassionate and just society.

Last year, Heather picked up running and in March 2026, ran her first marathon in Los Angeles.

Aaron May

Aaron and his wife Sara joined Temple Isaiah in 2021 when their daughter Zoe enrolled in the Teddy Bears preschool program. What began as a preschool connection has grown into something much deeper: a cornerstone of their family's life in Los Angeles. With Zoe entering Kindergarten, Elia heading into her third year at the Isaiah preschool, and a third child on the way this summer, the Mays are growing their family right alongside their commitment to this community.

Aaron is VP of Product at NBCUniversal, leading the company's enterprise data product group. Sara is a litigation attorney at Withers Bergman, specializing in family law and trust and estate disputes. Aaron holds a BA from NYU and an MBA from USC Marshall; Sara earned both her undergraduate and law degrees from UCLA.

Within Isaiah, Aaron has been an active presence in the PPA, leading the Social Action Committee and overseeing its annual Thanksgiving Market and CARE Mishloach Manot assembly. He is also a member of the Young(ish) Family Task Force and helped launch the monthly Sunday School Torah Study group. Outside of Isaiah, you'll find Aaron hiking, cycling, traveling, and spending time with his family.

Aaron is eager to give back to the community that has given his family so much and to help ensure that what makes Temple Isaiah special keeps getting stronger for the families who will find their way here next.

Sam Surloff

Sam and his wife Joanne have been members of Temple Isaiah for approximately 25 years, dating back to when their daughter Emily started preschool at the Temple; they were able to celebrate her bat mitzvah at Isaiah years later. Sam was born in Pittsburgh PA (remaining an avid Pittsburgh sports fan) and earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan in 1974 and his J.D. from Harvard in 1978 where he met his wife.

By way of background, he was a corporate attorney for 17 years in a private law firm and then left private practice to join his boss at Packard Bell Computers in 1995 and has worked for him for the last 30 years in various businesses. Sam is now semi-retired while serving as Vice Chairman at Alagem Capital Group, the principal owner of the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills and

a partner of the Beverly Hilton and adjacent One Beverly Hills development. Joanne is fully retired, and Emily is happily fully employed as a financial analyst at the Gensler architectural firm in New York City and will earn her MBA at Stern (NYU) business school in May. Sam, Joanne and Emily are avid Laker fans (only Emily has basketball talent) and Sam enjoys live music shows and his too rapidly expanding vinyl collection.

Sam is honored and excited to be invited to rejoin the Board of Trustees of the Temple. He had the privilege to serve on the Board for many years and as VP of Personnel for several years, including the most difficult years when the pandemic impacted the Temple and the preschool. As VP of Personnel, Sam served on the Executive Committee and a special committee that dealt with the impact of the pandemic; Sam believes he was a really positive member of the team in helping the Temple survive. During his tenure as chair of the Personnel Committee, he helped lead the effort to recruit Deb Moses and Cantor Schloss and is forever in gratitude to the then President Mike Diamond in that regard and with his and others' support, ensuring by contract Rabbi Dara's and Rabbi Zoe's ongoing commitment to the Temple and Rabbi Jaclyn's elevation to her current position as a Rabbi at the Temple.

Sam passed on a prior offer to rejoin the Board to ensure that the younger generation had appropriate opportunities to step up. After being offered the opportunity to join the Board again, he is really excited, hoping to be approved by the congregation and confident that he will be a positive contributor again to the Temple.

Jennifer Tamir

Jennifer has been a member of Temple Isaiah for ten years, since her oldest child, Hazel, entered the preschool. She and her husband, Rahm, who became a bar mitzvah at Isaiah, later welcomed a son, Micah, who also attended the preschool. The Tamir family has spent many joyful hours with the Isaiah community, celebrating Friday Night Family Shabbats, attending family camp, and now in preparation for Hazel's bat mitzvah in the fall of 2027.

Jennifer is originally from the Tampa Bay area. She holds her BA in Psychology from Vassar College, her MA in Psychology from the University of Michigan, a graduate certificate in Nonprofit Management from the University of Tampa, and her MSN in Nursing from UCLA. Jennifer has worked in the nonprofit sector for both Hernando-Pasco Hospice and Planned Parenthood, Los Angeles. Most recently, she worked as a school nurse for the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Jennifer has enjoyed her time at the Temple cooking in the kitchen for Shabbat, singing with Hasharim, and, over the past year, co-chairing The Neighborhood. She is an active member of the Los Angeles Rowing Club, and you can often find her in the Marina long before dawn. Jennifer loves exploring LA with her family, traveling, reading, and cheering for the Tampa Bay Rays.

Judy Werner

Judy and her husband, Daniel, are relatively recent members of Temple Isaiah, having joined in 2021. They quickly immersed themselves in the community through participation in a Small Group — the Cookbook Group — where they experienced their first meaningful connection to Temple Isaiah community life. Since then, Judy and Daniel have traveled with fellow Isaiahs on two trips to Israel and New York City and are always eager to join a Temple adventure.

Judy is an active member of Isaiah Women. She also serves as Chair of the Small Groups Committee, as well as Co-Chair of Temple Isaiah's 80th Anniversary Celebration.

A native Angeleno, Judy graduated from UCLA with a B.A. in Sociology. She began her career at a real estate investment company before transitioning into political organizing. Judy worked for U.S. Congresswoman Jane Harman for more than five years, serving in multiple leadership roles, including Finance Director for the Congresswoman's first three campaigns and as District Director when not working on the campaign.

In 1996, Judy shifted her focus to nonprofit fundraising and event production, eventually founding her own company, The New Philanthropy Group, in 1999, a company she ran for over 20 years.

Seven years ago, Judy returned to her family's real estate investment business, which she now runs alongside her cousin, Josh Abarbanel. The business holds deep personal significance for her. Founded by her grandfather — an immigrant who arrived in California in 1948 with little formal education — it grew into a successful family enterprise that continues across generations. Judy is proud to help carry that legacy forward.

When she is not volunteering, Judy enjoys playing pickleball and mahjong. Her passion for mahjong inspired her to co-found a Mahjong Social Club with close friends. She also serves as a board member of the MOCA Projects Council.

Judy and Daniel share a love of travel and can often be found somewhere in the world, checking places off their bucket list.

Above all, Judy treasures family and community. The Temple Isaiah community has become an extension of that family, and she remains deeply grateful for the relationships and sense of belonging she has found there.

