

Mara Nathan was born in 1971 in Kew Gardens, Queens. As a child, Mara fondly remembers her favorite pastime—spending time with friends. She remembers running around the neighborhood, playing in unlikely places like the new cement sewers in town, and talking with friends in the bathroom at Temple. Her earliest memories of temple are associated with temple as a place where people gathered together as a community—a place where she felt at home.

Early in life, Mara discovered her love for music. She was a member of the temple's junior choir and fondly remembers flute lessons with Mr. Pagano. During high school, Mara attended Julliard on Saturdays, with the hopes of pursuing a career as a professional musician. Although this was not meant to be, Mara did continue to play flute in ensembles throughout her college years at Northwestern University. After graduation, Mara spent a year in Israel—six months in Arad, a small city in the Negev and then several months in Jerusalem. She returned to New York for a year to apply to Hebrew Union College and enjoyed her first teaching job at Larchmont Temple. She returned to Jerusalem to start rabbinical school in June of 1995. At LT, Mara served as rabbinic intern from 1997-2000, religious schoolteacher and LARFTY advisor. Mara speaks passionately about her work with LT youth and her memories of working with LT teens to plan special events and programs. "Like the March Madness event...everything had to have alliteration."

After ordination, she served as LT's Assistant Rabbi (2000-2005), Associate Rabbi (2005-2012) and then added the title of Director of Congregational Learning (2012-2014). The LT community celebrates Rabbi Nathan's extensive role in our congregation's spiritual worship, ritual, and

pursuit of lifelong learning—and for the many ways she infused her musical training and passion into prayer, programs, and celebrations.

In July of 2001, Mara married Larry Nathan. They have three beautiful children—Isaac, Solomon, and Miriam. The Nathan family resides in San Antonio, Texas where Mara is the Senior Rabbi at Temple Beth-El in San Antonio.

Reflecting on life lessons learned throughout her Jewish journey, Rabbi Nathan shares her belief in the importance of “letting kids fail, with support and love, of course. We need to give our children the opportunity to go for things with the knowledge that they might not necessarily get it.”