



KEHILLAT קהלת מערב
THE WESTSIDE CONGREGATION **MA'ARAV**



Feels like home.



When you've found your synagogue home, you just know it. It's a feeling Kehillat Ma'arav members know well.

From founding members who yearned for a congregation that fit their needs and lovingly created one more than 40 years ago...

...to young families who first discovered it for themselves and are now rediscovering it through the eyes and hearts of their children.

"I want my daughter to be able to ask all the questions she wants about the world and Jewish faith and for those to be received as great questions to explore. I feel like KM does that."

—Marlyna Wagreich

"I think there's a warmth and inclusivity you feel from the get-go. The nice thing about KM is you can get involved and be known pretty quickly compared to a larger synagogue."

—Jacolyn Bron



From Jews by choice who never felt pressured or judged as they explored their faith, but welcomed and embraced at every turn...

...to families of mixed backgrounds and faiths who feel equally at home, and so many others who make up our small, inclusive community.

They all agree: It's a feeling of warmth, welcome, comfort, family, fun and openness; a place to come as you are to learn, worship and experience community together.

"This synagogue reawakened the Jew in me, from somebody who was a part-time, now and then Jew to a fully committed, active Jew...when I think of KM I kvell."

—Sandy Rosenblatt



A photograph of a man with a beard and a peace sign necklace playing an acoustic guitar. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman with long blonde hair and a man wearing a kippah. The setting appears to be a synagogue, with Hebrew text visible on the wall behind them. The entire image has an orange tint.

Our Mission

Kehillat Ma'arav is a Conservative congregation serving Santa Monica, the Westside and beyond. Our mission is to foster a welcoming, participatory Jewish community rooted in God, Torah and Israel that strengthens our tradition and identity through educational, religious and spiritual growth. KM is an inclusive and welcoming congregation.

We Are...

“L’Dor Va Dor” —Kedusha, Prayer Book

We’re a congregation of 200+ families. Ranging from babies to seniors, we truly embody the meaning of *l’dor va dor* (from generation to generation).

***“Do not separate yourself from the community”
—Rabbi Hillel, Pirkei Avot 2:5***

We are the only Conservative synagogue in Santa Monica, yet the 39 zip codes in which our members live span far beyond the city’s borders.

***“Build Me a community that I may dwell among you”
—Exodus 25:8***

We’re a welcoming community where you don’t get lost; your face is known to many and you know many faces.

“When we met the rabbi and the KM family, we felt like it fit perfectly in our lives. It was special and not too rigid—a nice mix and a nice family.” —Eric Wagreich



Our Rabbi...


Rabbi Michael Gotlieb has been our spiritual leader at KM since 1995. He was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1990 where he also earned his Masters Degree in Jewish Studies. He completed his rabbinic internship at Columbia University. Before coming to KM, he served a congregation in North County San Diego for 5 years.

In addition to his congregational activities, Rabbi Gotlieb has served as president of the Rabbinical Assembly Southwest Region and is a member of the Southern California Board of Rabbis. He also volunteers at Santa Monica College Hillel and St. John’s Hospital and is on the board of Israel’s Schechter Institute.



***Your Home to
Learn, Worship
and Connect!***

Learn

ur learning opportunities are for every generation of our community:

Early Childhood: Our little ones ignite their joy for Judaism and build a positive connection to Jewish community and identity through programs that create an environment of educational play.

Religious School: Our K–9th grade students gain a deep understanding of their Jewish identity by studying culture, music, Torah, history and Hebrew in our fully accredited Builders of Jewish Education (BJE) Religious School.

See special insert for details on our Religious School and what sets it apart for students and their families!

Bar and Bat Mitzvah: Our 5th–7th grade students and families meet three times a year for an interactive B’nai Mitzvah Workshop facilitated by our Rabbi and Cantor, with dinner and a themed art activity.

Adult Studies: Our adults form ties through learning that will sustain them throughout their lives. Opportunities include the Rabbi’s weekly classes, Eber Lecture series, Holiday Workshops and Havurah.



“I’ve taught at four different synagogues and KM is one place that definitely feels like home. It’s just warm and sincere. At the end of services, no one wants to say goodbye.” —Masha Savitz Keys





Worship

"I have participated as much as I am able, and I find that as much as I give, I get back." —Shirley Strom

Our worship services are the perfect combination of traditional and progressive:

Friday Night / Kabbalat Shabbat: Join us to welcome with joy and new energy the beginning of Shabbat. Sing Kabbalat Shabbat with piano accompaniment (before the Barchu). Pray with traditional and new readings. And share a little nosh (so you can have dinner before or after). First Friday of each month at 6pm.

Saturday Morning / Shabbat: Enjoy a full traditional, but egalitarian, service. Participate in a lively Torah discussion and maybe even lead portions of the service, chant a Haftarah or provide a scholarly discourse. Also, we honor our B'nai Mitzvah of all ages with the opportunity to lead services. Every Saturday at 10am.

Take part in opportunities to extend the Shabbat experience beyond the synagogue. A Kiddush is a wonderful opportunity to get to know the members of the congregation and our Rabbi and Cantor on a more intimate level. Other gatherings have included potluck Seudah Shlishit (third meal), Study Sessions and Shabbat Study Groups.

And there's more! Visit www.km-synagogue.org for other Shabbat programs like our annual Shabbaton celebration and Shabbat in 3-D—Daven, Dine and D'rash (Worship, Food and Learning).



"I've never been to a place where you see both young and elderly people co-mingling so beautifully. Age doesn't mean a thing here and that's wonderful." —Stan Zeigler



Connect

"I always get the feeling people want to include you. People always reach out and extend a hand letting you know, 'We're doing this; are you interested?'"

—Teri Lewis

Groups within our larger Kehillat Ma'arav community build deeper connections:

Choir: Sing and have a good time with people who love making music. We have both adult and student choirs.

Havurah: Join a circle of friends who come together with another for monthly gatherings and celebrations.

Jewish Arts Workshop Series: Bring out your inner artist through our monthly challah bake, artist-in-residence program and papercutting workshop.

Men's and Women's Club: Meet new friends and become involved in our community through these

social, cultural and recreational clubs featuring guest speakers, movie screenings, and current affairs meetings.

NextGen: Grab your friends to take part in fun, social events designed for our next generation of community leaders.

Social Action: Support various projects that help those in need throughout the global, national, and local community.



"Community and service. We worked side by side to build this wonderful community and look at us now."

—Ann Harris





Ready to discover what a synagogue
“home” truly feels like?
Visit www.km-synagogue.org.

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RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Inspiring Our Future

KEHILLAT קהלת מערב THE WESTSIDE CONGREGATION MA'ARAV RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Step into our religious school and you'll not only know what "home" feels like. You'll see it in the smiles, hugs, fun and laughter. It's here where the youth of the Kehillat Ma'arav synagogue community, from K-9th grade, come together to engage in active and experiential learning that sets a powerful foundation for their future—well beyond their Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is to get the students up and out of their seats because through creative, interactive experiences, positive Jewish memories are cemented. Each student will grow to understand and appreciate their religion, culture and place within our larger Jewish community.

There are no books—instead, students immerse themselves in technology, computers, learning stations, games, singing, film, art and other interactive learning modalities.

They learn the prayers and why we pray, not just rote memorization. They go on adventures to learn history, create art to connect with Torah, and dissect and discuss just about everything. They're active, engaged participants in their learning journey that goes at their own pace.



"We can really be a family because we're smaller. That connection between the teachers, kids, myself and the parents is special—the love exudes and you can feel it." —Sharone Weizman

Our Staff

Our Upper School (2nd–9th) program is headed by Director of Education Sharone Weizman, who worked for synagogues on the East Coast before returning to California where she had graduated from American Jewish University with a Master's in Jewish Education and Bachelor's in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Literature.

Masha Savitz Keys, Head of Early Childhood & Arts, leads our Lower School (K–1) program. Years ago, she thought she wanted to become a Rabbi, but when she went to rabbinical school, she decided she was more of an artist. At Kehillat Ma'arav, she's been able to seamlessly blend these two passions.

Our staff also includes incredible teaching professionals who have huge hearts and the ability to connect with students and their families. These teachers are experts in their fields—Hebrew, Judaic Studies, Music, Art, Cooking and Drama—which brings a higher level of depth and enthusiasm to their lessons.

Our Families

Our families are a huge part of our Religious School community and what sets it apart. They're passionate about the program and their student's learning journey, and have helped us build it into what it is today. They truly become a family within our larger synagogue community during the time they spend with us—supporting one another, celebrating holidays, engaging in social action and building friendships that last long after their students have graduated.



"I love that KM holds the intention of being traditional but also being open-minded. Everyone is equally welcome and part of this community."

—Masha Savitz Keys

**Learn more about the Kehillat Ma'arav Religious School program to see if it's the right match for you and your family!
Visit us at www.km-synagogue.org**

"The relationships my kids have with the teachers are so nice and that's a great feeling. Also, the fact that the teachers are there in the community and the kids get to see them on Shabbat and on holidays is amazing."

—Shaina Shapiro

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