

# What's nu?

## Riverway revelry

By Carol Marlin

[Enlarge Map](#)



[Send your comments and suggestions to Carol Marlin at WhatsNu@TheJewishAdvocate.com.](mailto:WhatsNu@TheJewishAdvocate.com)

BOSTON – **Temple Israel** here held its annual “Stepping Out” gala on the first Saturday night in April. The event began with a havdalah service in the sanctuary of the synagogue on the city’s Riverway.

Transition was a major theme of the evening, with a toast on the retirement of **Rabbi Ronne Friedman** and his wife, **Irene**, and a celebration of the promotion of **Rabbi Elaine Zecher** to the senior clergy post. Zecher, who has been with the congregation for 26 years, will officially take the helm on July 1 and will be formally installed in mid- September.

“It’s been a big year for the temple,” said **Chris Noe**, president of the congregation, who is a professor at MIT’s Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. “We conducted a national search over two years, left no stone unturned, and found the perfect person under our nose.”



[Rabbi Elaine Zecher, center, takes to the dance floor for the Hora.](#)

Zecher recalled she was the temple’s first pregnant rabbi and, now that her three children are mostly grown, is “very excited” to be assuming responsibilities as the temple’s 12th senior rabbi and first woman in that role.

“We look to secure the future, with our programs of inclusion, education, spiritual life,” she told the gathering of 300 people. “We look to the landscape of the Jewish world at large... to be responsive, and build on our strong foundation, and do some new and exciting things.”

The crowd migrated first to the foyer for cocktails, where live music was provided by the group Soul of **Boston**. The party moved into full swing in the boldly decorated Levi Auditorium, where dinner was

served. Among those enjoying the festivities were **Kathy Weinman** and **Cameron Kerry**, younger brother of Secretary of State John Kerry; **Susan** and **Robert Michaels**; **Donald** and **Sandra Perrin**; **Frank Friedman** and **Sarah Kianovsky**; **Don** and **Fran Putnoi**; and gala co-chairs **Jodi** and **Rob Sokoloff**.