



Merri Lovinger Arian serves as Professor of Practice in Liturgical Arts and Music Education at the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music (DFSSM) and the Rabbinical School of The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in New York. Throughout her tenure there she has offered courses in Music Education, Conducting, Congregational Singing, Worship, and Contemporary Congregational Repertoire. In addition, she has served as co-supervisor of the *Tefillah* program.

From 2000-2010, Merri served as Program Director, and then Director of Music for Synagogue 2000 (S2K), a multi-denominational initiative to transform synagogue life for the 21st century. She served as Synagogue 3000's consultant on liturgical arts at HUC-JIR in New York where she supervised rabbinic and cantorial students in creating worship collaboratively at the College-Institute.

A long-standing faculty member for Hava Nashira, the pre-eminent training institute for temple musicians, cantors, rabbis, educators and songleaders, Merri served as its faculty coordinator from 2005 – 2011. She continued to serve as the faculty coordinator for Shabbat Shira, an offshoot of Hava Nashira, under the auspices of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ.) Merri frequently serves on the faculty of the North American Jewish Choral Festival. She had the honor to conduct the 100 voice Biennial Choir for the URJ Biennials in 2013 and 2015.

Merri has frequently been invited as an artist-in-residence in congregations across the country. She has also served as a music consultant to a number of congregations, exploring with the clergy team ways to enhance the worship in their congregation. She had the honor of singing with Debbie Friedman z"l, in Carnegie Hall and has performed and led music programs for HUC-JIR, the URJ, the Wexner Foundation, JFNA Lions of Judah, the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, and Jewish Women's Archives, among others.

She has written about the use of music in creating sacred community. In her newest book, [*Leveling the Praying Field*](#) (2018) Merri shares methods and melodies to elevate congregational worship. She has also written on the educational value of youth choirs, and along with her husband, Rabbi Ramie Arian, published a book and accompanying album of original choral arrangements entitled *NFTY in Harmony*.

Merri edited the anthology [*R'fuah Sh'leimah; Songs of Healing*](#) (2002). She contributed a chapter entitled "[Stark and Inescapable,](#)" to Lawrence Hoffman's *Who by Fire, Who by Water: Un'taneh Tokef*. Her article, "[A Time to Embrace and a Time to Refrain from Embracing: Challenges and Silver Linings from the Pandemic](#)" appeared in *Scriptions: Jewish Thought and Responses to Covid 19*. She contributed an article entitled "[Music, Prayer and Sacred Community](#)" in *Teaching Tefillah* (2005).

Her album, [*Nefesh: Songs for the Soul*](#), was produced by Synagogue 2000. Merri holds a Master of Arts in Teaching, a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music Education, and a Certificate in Music Therapy.