



Center for Holocaust and  
Genocide Studies

# HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Monday, April 13, 2026  
7–8:30 pm

Higgins Middle School  
85 Perkins St  
Peabody, MA 01960





**KAREN KIRSTEN** grew up among refugees who didn't talk about the past. Determined to understand the generational trauma that cloaked her family in silence, and to help heal her mother's pain, Karen meticulously reconstructed an extraordinary saga. After several research trips to Poland, Karen reunited her mother with the heroes who had hidden her as a child and then facilitated awarding them Righteous Among the Nations medals. She also uncovered love and betrayal, countless brushes with death and her grandmother's astounding negotiation with an SS officer who saved her mother's life.

## ORDER OF CEREMONY

### WELCOME AND REMARKS, VETERAN'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chris Mauriello, *CHGS Director*

### TESTIMONY READERS

- Mary Kiley
- Angel Katzen
- Alan Lehman

### CANDLE LIGHTING AND ANI MA'AMIN

Rabbi Benjamin Flax and Rabbi Alison Adler

### REMARKS

President John Keenan, *Salem State University*

Joan Lovely, *MA State Senator, 2nd Essex District*

### CONVERSATION WITH KAREN KIRSTEN

- Karen Kirsten
- Regina Kazyulina

### THE SONIA SCHREIBER WEITZ STUDENT UPSTANDER AWARD

### MEMORIAL PRAYERS

Rabbi Richard Perlman

### HOLOCAUST KADDISH

North Shore Rabbis and Cantors Association

*\*All songs are performed by the Salem State Community Chorus*

Where is your grave?  
Where did you die?  
Why did you go away?  
Why did you leave  
Your little girl  
That rainy autumn day?

I still can hear  
The words you spoke:  
"You tell the world,  
my child."  
Your eyes as green  
As emeralds  
Were quiet and so mild.

You held my hand  
Your face was white  
And silent like a stone,  
You pressed something  
Into my palm...  
And then...then you  
were gone.

—Sonia Schreiber Weitz  
"In Memory of My Mother"

The CHGS would like to thank Preston Productions for their tireless work on this event. Special thanks to Karen Kirsten for sharing her story with us. Thanks also goes to the staff at Higgins Middle School. We are deeply grateful to Lynn Susan Shane and the Salem State Community Chorus, to Rabbi Alex Matthews, Rabbi Michael Ragozin, Rabbi Michael Schwartz, and the North Shore Rabbis and Cantors Association and to you, the audience.

This ceremony was supported by Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, the North Shore Rabbis and Cantors Association, JCC of the North Shore and community members.

Special thanks to Vincent Raponi and his students at the Higgins Middle School for their participation.