



**RECONSTRUCTIONIST
RABBINICAL COLLEGE**

המדרשה ליהדות מתחדשת

Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Graduation Ceremony

May 19, 2024 • 11 Iyar 5784

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Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Graduation Ceremony

May 19, 2024 | 11 Iyar 5784

Order of Ceremony

ACADEMIC PROCESSION

Music performed by the Ken Ulansey Ensemble

OPENING PRAYER

Tamar Kamionkowski, Ph.D.

WELCOME

Seth Rosen

Chair, Board of Governors

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., '99

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Amanda Mbuvi, Ph.D.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Rabbi Linda Holtzman, '79

Director of Student Life

Anna Coufal

RSA Board Officer

HONORARY AWARDS AND DEGREES

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

Seth Rosen

TEKES HATARAT HORA'AH

CONFERRING THE TITLE OF RABBI AND THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HEBREW LETTERS

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

Amanda Mbuvi, Ph.D.

Members of the Regular Faculty

KABBALAT HATARAT HORA'AH

RABBIS' RESPONSE

and MISHEBERAKH, A BLESSING

Rabbinical Class of 2024/5784

and Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

CLOSING PRAYER

Rabbi Mira Beth Wasserman, Ph.D.

RECESSIONAL

Music performed by the Ken Ulansey Ensemble

Please stand during the processional and recessional if you are able to do so comfortably. Following the ceremony, please join us for the president's reception.

Prizes and Awards

We bestow these prizes on the following students, faculty, staff and members of our community. We thank them for their service to the ideals of studentship and scholarship, social justice, the building of community and the growth of the Reconstructionist movement.

THE RABBI DEVORA BARTNOFF MEMORIAL PRIZE FOR SPIRITUALLY MOTIVATED SOCIAL ACTION

Through the generosity of the members of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, the Rabbi Devora Bartnoff Memorial Prize for Spiritually Motivated Social Action is awarded annually to a third-, fourth- or fifth-year student whose rabbinic work best demonstrates how *ru'akh hakodesh* (sacred spirit) inspires *tikkun olam* (social action).

The 2024 recipient is Koach Baruch Frazier.

THE RABBI KENNETH BERGER AND AVIVA BERGER MEMORIAL PRIZE IN PRACTICAL RABBINICS

Through the generosity of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, the Rabbi Kenneth Berger and Aviva Berger Memorial Prize in Practical

Rabbinics is awarded annually at graduation exercises to a fourth- or fifth-year student who exemplifies those qualities of rabbinic service that enhance the quality of congregational life.

The 2024 recipient is Aliza Schwartz.

THE DAVID FERN MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RRC COMMUNITY

The David Fern Memorial Award for Outstanding Contributions to the RRC Community is awarded annually at the graduation ceremony to a member of the RRC faculty, administration or staff who has made a positive difference in the life of the RRC community, enabling its scholars and leaders to achieve more effectively their goals of Torah study, creating Jewish community, service to the Jewish people and professional service.

The 2024 recipient is Rabbi Rayna Grossman.

THE LILLIAN FERN MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RRC COMMUNITY

The Lillian Fern Memorial Award for Outstanding Student Contributions to the RRC Community is awarded annually at the graduation ceremony to a matriculated student who has made a positive difference in the life of the RRC community, enabling its scholars and leaders to more effectively achieve their goals of Torah study, creating Jewish community, service to the Jewish people and professional service.

The 2024 recipient is Nora Chernov.

THE YAAKOV GLADSTONE AWARD FOR FINE TEACHING

The Yaakov Gladstone Award for Fine Teaching is presented annually at the graduation ceremony to a member of the faculty, nominated by students and chosen by student ballot, who exemplifies fine teaching. This prize is named in memory of Yaakov Gladstone, z"l, whose life exemplified fine teaching in the fullest sense.

The 2024 Gladstone Award winner is announced at graduation.

THE EVELYN R. MEHLMAN JEWISH MUSIC AWARD

In memory of Evelyn R. Mehlman, z"l, whose dedication to Judaism and to Jewish music was unparalleled, and who brought light to everyone she befriended, a prize is awarded annually to a full-time RRC student who advances the study or performance of cantorial or seriously intentioned music addressed to Jewish themes.

The 2024 recipient is Koach Baruch Frazier.

THE JOSEPH L. AND ANN W. PINKENSON PRIZE IN RABBINICS

Through the beneficence of the Pinkenson family, the Joseph L. and Ann W. Pinkenson Prize in Rabbinics is awarded at graduation to a student who has excelled in the study of rabbinic literature and civilization.

The 2024 recipient is Noah Rubin-Blöse.

THE A. WALTER SOCOLOW WRITING PRIZE

Through the beneficence of the children of A. Walter Socolow, z”l, the annual Socolow Writing Prize is awarded to a student for a paper, essay or monograph. The work must have been written expressly as part of the RRC course of study during the previous 12 months on a theme of interest to the Jewish people, with special attention to American Jewry, Reconstructionism and family life. It must be an articulate work, excellent in its conception, method, content and style.

The 2024 recipient is Chloe Zelkha for “Nothing So Whole.”

THE ALICE STEIN PRIZE IN CONTEMPORARY JEWISH CIVILIZATION

Through the generosity of the Joseph F. Stein Foundation, the Alice Stein Prize is awarded annually at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College’s graduation exercises to a student who creates an innovative project that explores relevant cultural and social issues, including but not limited to issues of gender, race, class and identity. A variety of formats will be considered as long as the project includes a clearly stated application to

the reconstruction of contemporary Jewish life.

The 2024 recipient is Maria Pulzetti for “Singing Hallel During War.”

RU’AKH AKHERET AND TIKKUN OLAM AWARDS

Each year the Reconstructionist Student Association honors students for their contributions to *tikkun olam* at RRC and in the wider community. In addition, the RSA gives the *Ru’akh Akheret* Award for a student contribution to the spiritual well-being of the RRC community.

The 2024 Tikkun Olam Award recipient (college) is Josie Felt.

The 2024 Tikkun Olam Award recipient (community) is Noah Rubin-Blöse.

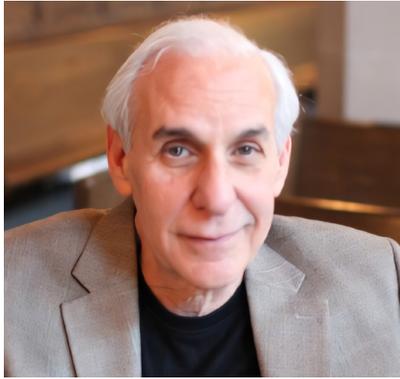
The 2024 Ru’akh Akheret Award recipient is Nora Chernov.



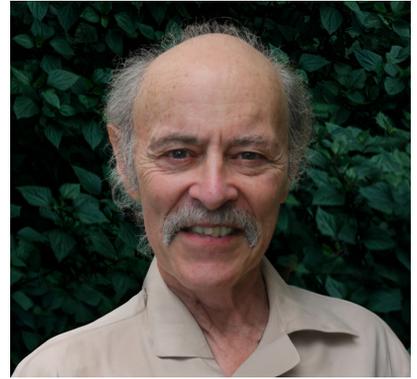
Torat Yovel

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Mazel Tov to RRC's class of 1974
on their 50 years in the rabbinate.



Rabbi David Brusin



Rabbi Saul Perlmutter



Rabbi Dennis Sasso



Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso



Rabbi Steve Stroiman



Handwritten text in a non-Latin script, possibly Arabic or Persian, visible on a small piece of paper inside the scroll.



KETER SHEM TOV, THE CROWN OF A GOOD NAME

The *Keter Shem Tov* Award recognizes distinction in scholarship or community service in the pursuit of Reconstructionist ideals and is offered to individuals of the highest regard. The honor takes its name from *Pirkei Avot* 4:17: “Rabbi Shimon says there are three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingship, but the crown of a good name [*keter shem tov*] rises above them all.”

The 2024 Keter Shem Tov Award is presented to Hon. Sander M. Levin and Hon. Andy Levin.

Honorary Awards and Degrees

Each year at graduation, we bestow awards upon individuals whose work nurtures and engages Jewish communities, and we honor our graduates from 25 years ago or more, whose rabbinical work and commitment to Reconstructionist Jewish values have been exemplary and inspirational.



The Hon. Sander M. Levin has served in leadership roles in the Jewish and broader American communities since at least 1948-1949, when he was president of the senior class of Central High School, which was attended by the vast majority of Detroit Jews.

He was later national president of Students for Democratic Action, the youth wing of Americans

for Democratic Action, which was founded by anti-Communist liberals like Eleanor Roosevelt and Reinhold Niebuhr. Levin quickly rose in the ranks of Michigan Democrats when he returned to the Detroit area after law school, serving as a county party chair, state senator and state party chair, all within several years.

He was the Democratic nominee for governor in 1970 and 1974, losing narrowly to incumbent Bill Milliken, in part because he refused to support public funding for Catholic schools. Levin served as assistant administrator of USAID in the Carter administration and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1982. He rose to serve as chair and ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee. Levin was a leader on many issues, including trade, unemployment insurance and preserving Social Security. He served 36 years in the House — 32 of them overlapping with his younger brother, U.S. Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.). These two Jewish grandsons of immigrants from Detroit are by far the longest-serving siblings in the 235-year history of the U.S. Congress. When Levin retired in 2018, he

was the senior Jewish member of Congress.

Sandy Levin grew up attending Congregation Shaarey Zedek, a Conservative synagogue within walking distance of his Detroit home. He earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Chicago, a master's degree in international relations at Columbia University and a juris doctorate with honors at Harvard University. He and his late wife, Vicki, who died in 2008, raised four children: Jenny, Andy, Madeleine and Matt. Today, he has 10 grandchildren. Levin married Pamela Cole, a Penn State psychology professor, in 2012. They split their time between State College, Pa., and Detroit.

The Hon. Andy Levin is a distinguished senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and a consultant on various projects involving issues like the overheating of the planet and workers' rights. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2019 to 2023, succeeding his father in representing Michigan's 9th District.

Before Congress, Levin created and ran Lean & Green Michigan, a statewide market to help Michigan businesses and nonprofits finance renewable energy and energy-efficiency improvements to their buildings. From 2007 to 2011, Levin served as deputy director and acting director of Michigan's Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth, and as Michigan's first chief workforce officer.

In the Clinton administration, Levin worked in Secretary of Labor Robert Reich's office to fend off House Speaker, Rep. Newt Gingrich's (R-Ga.) efforts to weaken worker protections. Levin served as staff attorney for the president's Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations. Around his stints in government, Levin spent many years helping workers organize and bargain for a better life — first for five years with the Service Employees International Union, then in the United Auto Workers Health and Safety department, and finally for 11 years as assistant director of organizing for the national AFL-CIO, where he created and ran programs such as Union Summer and the Voice@Work Campaign,

which launched the Employee Free Choice Act in the 2000s. Levin is an honors graduate of Williams College and Harvard Law School, and he earned a master's degree in Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan, where he was a Mellon Fellow in the humanities.

Andy has a long and deep connection with the Reconstructionist movement. Raised in a not-terribly-observant but culturally Jewish family, he went in a different direction when he had children of his own. Andy and his wife, Mary Freeman, joined Adat Shalom in Bethesda, Md., where they were very active and Andy served on the board as social action chair.

Their first child, Koby, had a *bar mitzvah* at Adat Shalom. Upon moving home to Michigan, they joined Congregation T'chayah, where their three other children had *b'nai mitzvah*. First Mary and then Andy served on the board. Andy became president and led a transformation of the shul, creating Detroit Jews for Justice, hiring Rabbi Alana Alpert and ending “dues” in favor of a system of *t'rumah*, or “gifts of the heart.” The congregation,

while still small, has grown fourfold since Andy started serving as president — a role he had to give up when he went to Congress. Today, Andy and Mary's 30-year-old son, Koby, serves as president, leading a board made up mostly of young people who weren't members when Andy and Mary joined. Andy and Mary live in Bloomfield Township, Mich., and are new empty-nesters after having at least one child at home for 30 years.

THE PRESIDENTIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

The Presidential Recognition Award is presented to an individual who has devoted their life to advancing Reconstructionist Judaism in both institution and practice, a person who has sown the seeds that nurture rabbinical training and movement leadership. This award honors an individual whose life's work has been to advance Reconstructionist Judaism profoundly, making an inclusive, vibrant, open and thoughtful Jewish practice available to countless individuals, and thereby transforming the landscape of Judaism in our day.

The 2024 Presidential Recognition Award is presented to Susan Beckerman.



Susan Beckerman was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., and grew up on the Rockaway Peninsula, attending New York City public schools in the golden age of public education. Her parents, of modest backgrounds and limited formal education, worked not only to provide material comforts but also to model Jewish and democratic values for their three children.

The values most highly prized in this household were *tzedakah* and *gemilut hasadim*, closely followed by gratitude. Somewhat ahead of their time, Sylvia and Saul Gottlieb shared household and parenting duties, incorporated volunteer work, balanced work with play and maintained lifelong friendships, creating a road map for a life well-lived.

Susan describes her family as “not religious, but heavily engaged with Jewish life,” including a rigorous afternoon and Sunday-morning Hebrew school for Susan and her siblings, frequent attendance at services and home observance. The family belonged to Temple Beth El, a Conservative synagogue in Rockaway Park, whose rabbi, Robert Gordis, she later learned, had studied with Mordecai Kaplan.

Susan earned a B.A. in English literature from Skidmore College in 1967 and, somewhat to her surprise, an MBA in public accounting at Baruch College, CUNY, attending classes at night while working full-time. She met her first husband, Howard Ballenzweig, z”l, at Price Waterhouse & Co. (now PWC) and together they had two daughters.

It was in seeking a suitable Jewish education for Rachel, z”l, and Ruth that Susan found West End Synagogue, which seemed a good match. She says, “I did not notice the small print: A Reconstructionist Congregation.” This is where she and Howard learned about the Reconstructionist approach to Judaism. There was so much that resonated for Susan, addressing concerns she had from her own Jewish education, including the centrality of a supernatural being and the concept of chosenness.

Throughout her working life, marriage and parenthood, Susan volunteered, inspired by her parents’ example. After a business career spanning 25 years in diverse roles — auditor, business analyst, customer-relations manager, and consultant to banks and securities firms — Susan retired to devote herself to volunteer work. These pursuits ranged from organizing bake sales and planning programs, galas and fundraising auctions to leadership roles, including board positions at Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) of her daughters’ schools and at West End Synagogue.

The tenets of Reconstructionist Judaism and the

support of her synagogue community became profoundly important to Susan when, in 1996, Howard and Rachel died in a tragic automobile accident. In the immediate aftermath, being a single parent to Ruth and, with considerable help, taking over the business that Howard ran, were paramount. After a few years, Susan married Mark Beckerman, a high school classmate; Ruth went away to college; and the business was closed. At that point, Susan was ready to take on significant new volunteer roles.

With the encouragement of Don Shapiro and Rabbi Avi Winokur, Susan joined the Board of Governors of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College where she focused on fundraising and the College Committee. A big project of those early years was the gathering of filmed oral histories from leaders of the movement and the creation of a database from that material. Susan served on the committee that oversaw the merger of RRC and the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation to create Reconstructing Judaism.

At present, Susan continues to serve on Reconstructing Judaism's Board as a vice chair,

with committee positions including the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee, the College Committee and the Audit Committee. She also serves on the boards of two other distinctive educational institutions: Skidmore College, her alma mater; and Bard College at Simon's Rock.

Although her marriage to Mark Beckerman did not prove to be lasting, Susan is grateful for the best parts of that partnership, not to mention her growing family. Most of all, she delights in the marriage of Ruth to Karim Tabbaa and her two granddaughters, Penny and Luma.

Susan lives in New York City. The Ballenzweig-Tabbaa family live in the Hudson Valley near the town of Rosendale, N.Y. In the summer of 2023, they enjoyed a few special days of Family Camp at Camp Havaya, where Susan was the oldest camper and Luma was the youngest!

DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS

RRC awards the Doctor of Humane Letters to a communal leader or scholar who is distinguished in the pursuit of Reconstructionist ideals, and has made an outstanding contribution to the Jewish community and/or to Jewish life in North America or Israel.

The 2024 honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters is awarded to Marcia Lee Falk, Ph.D.



Marcia Falk is a poet, translator, Judaic scholar and painter widely known for her poetic re-creations of Hebrew and English liturgy from a nonpatriarchal perspective.

The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival, Falk's groundbreaking Hebrew-English prayer book, was published in 1996 and later released

in a 20th-anniversary edition by the CCAR Press. It has been praised by many scholars and rabbis, including Rabbi David Teutsch, former president of RRC, who wrote: “Marcia Falk’s magnum opus brilliantly demonstrates personal integrity, a poet’s sensitivity and a scholar’s depth of knowledge.” Accompanying the prayers in *The Book of Blessings* is Falk’s scholarly commentary, which explains the connections between her blessings and the traditional prayers, and illuminates the creative process of composition. *The Book of Blessings* is used today by congregations in North America, Europe, Australia and Israel. Excerpts appear in the prayer books of all the major non-Orthodox denominations.

The Days Between: Blessings, Poems, and Directions of the Heart for the Jewish High Holiday Season, published in 2014, continued Falk’s liturgical project. Her most recent liturgical book, published in 2022, was *Night of Beginnings: A Passover Haggadah*, about which Rabbi David Ellenson, z”l, chancellor emeritus of Hebrew Union College, wrote: “[It] once more reveals the liturgical genius of Marcia Falk. Her blessings

honor classical Jewish tradition while celebrating a modern ethos that is feminist and inclusive.”

In addition to her books of prayer, Falk has published several volumes of original poems and translations from Hebrew and Yiddish. Her translation of the Song of Songs, which first appeared in 1977, is considered a modern classic. Nobel Laureate I. B. Singer said of it: “I thought until now that the Song of Songs could not be translated better than in the King James Version. Marcia Falk has done an exceptional poetic job.” Among the 20th-century poets Falk has translated are the Yiddish modernist Malka Heifetz Tussman and the Hebrew mystic Zelda. Poet Adrienne Rich wrote: “It’s always a thrill when (as rarely happens) the scholar’s mind and the poet’s soul come together.” In 2018, Falk published *Inner East: Illuminated Poems and Blessings*, which contains her original artwork en face with her writing.

Falk received a bachelor’s in philosophy *magna cum laude* from Brandeis University, and a doctorate in English and comparative literature from Stanford. She was a Fulbright Scholar, and later, a

postdoctoral fellow in Bible and Hebrew literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She held posts as a professor of literature, creative writing and Jewish studies at Binghamton University, the Claremont Colleges and Stanford University. A painter and life member of the Art Students League, she has exhibited her artwork internationally.

Today, Falk lectures widely on topics such as feminist Judaism; Hebrew and Yiddish poetry with an emphasis on women poets; and the process of creating new prayers. She lives in Berkeley, Calif., with her spouse, poet Steven Rood. Their son, Abraham Gilead Falk-Rood, teaches English to undocumented immigrant teenagers in a public high school. He loves his work and is greatly beloved by his students.

LEVAV HOKHMAH

RRC awards the posthumous award *Levav Hokhmah* to rabbis who during their lives acted to better the Reconstructionist movement in keeping with its ideals. The honor takes its name from Psalm 90:12: “Teach us to number our days so that we may attain a wise heart.”



**Rabbi Judith Targan
Abrahamson, z”l**

RRC '04



Rabbi Mimi Polin Ferraro, z”l

RRC '17



2024 DOCTOR OF DIVINITY DEGREES

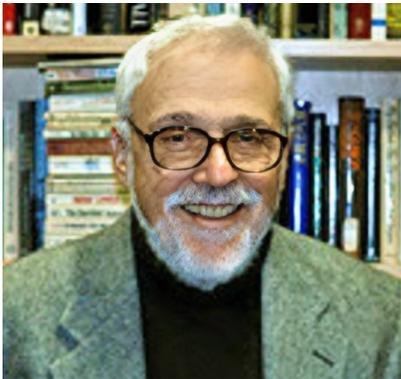
RRC awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity to rabbis who have completed at least 25 years of commendable service as Reconstructionist rabbis. The following rabbis have devoted their lives to rabbinical service in keeping with Reconstructionist ideals and core values.



Rabbi Benjamin ("Jamie") Arnold
RRC '99 | Evergreen, CO



Rabbi Daniel Aronson
RRC '99 | Keene, NH



Rabbi George B. Driesen
RRC '99 | Washington, DC



Rabbi Jonathan B. Freirich
RRC '99 | Buffalo, NY



Rabbi Gary S. Gerson
RRC '99 | River Forest, IL



Rabbi Brian E. Glusman
AJR '97 | Atlanta, GA



Rabbi Elisa Sara Goldberg
RRC '99 | Philadelphia, PA



Rabbi Myriam Devorah Klotz
RRC '99 | Bala Cynwyd, PA



Rabbi Joshua Lesser
RRC '99 | Atlanta, GA



Rabbi David Osachy
RRC '99 | Jacksonville, FL



Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.
RRC '99 | Wyncote, PA

Tekes Hatarat Hora'ah

טקס התרת הוראה

CONFERRING THE TITLE OF RABBI AND THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HEBREW LETTERS

With this ceremony, we proclaim that these individuals are *mukhanim* – prepared and ready – to fulfill the sacred functions of a rabbi. May their work multiply and amplify Torah, *kedushah* (holiness) and *tzedek* (justice) in the world.

Kabbalat

Hatarat Hora'ah

קבלת התרת הוראה

RABBIS' RESPONSE

For our closing ritual, we offer the Priestly Blessing, one of the oldest blessings in our tradition (Numbers 6:24–26, *Parashat Naso*).

May God bless and keep you.

Let it be God's will **Kein y'hi ratzon**

יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ

כֵּן יְהִי רְצוֹן

May God's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

Let it be God's will **Kein y'hi ratzon**

יָאֵר ה' פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ

כֵּן יְהִי רְצוֹן

May God's face lift up to you and give you peace.

Let it be God's will **Kein y'hi ratzon**

יִשְׂאֵהוּ ה' פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשְׂמֵם לְךָ שְׁלוֹמִים

כֵּן יְהִי רְצוֹן

Life Stories and Wisdom Statements of the 2024 Graduating Class

Our students arrive with many gifts and life experiences. During their time at the College, they build on those gifts through study, reflection and practice. We gain strength and guidance from their life stories and the wisdom they offer.





Aya Elizabeth Baron

Aya's call to the rabbinate is ignited by the intimate relationship she has cultivated throughout her life with the wild and with her own ability to kindle a flame within it. Becoming a rabbi is her path to tending, care-taking and transforming the most ancient, ancestral fire she knows: the *ner tamid*, the ever-burning flame, of Jewish tradition. As a rabbi, she will strive to kindle this flame and help all discover that the vibrant coals infused with the power to take each of us straight back to *ner tamid* are within our reach. They are warm and ready. She believes that, if today's Jews learn to engage with the forest's Living Torah, we can encounter and preserve the ancient and the timeless as we meet this moment and awaken our own unique flames. Together, we can build fires abundant enough to share radiant warmth with all

the world's people. She approaches ordination with *yireh*, awe, aware that no matter how many fires one has built or tended, the learning journey knows no end. The fire burns brightest for those who approach it humbly, forever its student.

Aya's years as a rabbinical student have been a homecoming. Literally speaking, they brought her back to Philadelphia, where she grew up, after almost 15 years away, most of which was spent living in Northern California. Her spiritual home prior to school was Wilderness Torah, where she worked for six years, nurturing her passion for creating Jewish wilderness-based ritual, rites of passage and community experiences. Her most meaningful training opportunities throughout school have been serving as a rabbinic intern at Reconstructionist affiliate Beth Israel under the incredible mentorship of Rabbis Linda Potemken (RRC '17) and Nathan Martin (RRC '06); co-authoring Jewish earth-based ritual guides with Shamir Collective; supporting Beth Am (Penn Valley) to create *Shorashim*, a nature-based Hebrew school; participating in the Wexner Graduate Fellowship; and completing a unit of CPE. She plans to remain

local to Philadelphia and to continue to kindle her love of wild Torah through transformative, educational, ritual and immersive-learning opportunities with her own offering, *Revayah*.

Aya is overflowing with gratitude for her teachers and mentors, her cohort and *hevrutot*; her incredible family and community; and the Lenni-Lenape and Susquehannok lands of Eastern Pennsylvania her family has called home for five generations. She could not have done this without the profound love and support of her incredible parents and siblings, and most of all, the unwavering dedication of her beloved partner, Doug, and the infectious joy of their delicious 1.5-year-old, Mazal Yonah.

“How was the Torah written? It was written with letters of black fire on a surface of white fire.”

וְהַתּוֹרָה בְּמַה הֵיטָה כְּתוּבָה? עַל גְּבִי
אֵשׁ לְבָנָה בְּאֵשׁ שְׁחוֹרָה

— Midrash Tanchuma



Stephanie Ann Breitsman

Steph was raised in a close-knit, secular home with Christian roots by her beloved parents, John and Kristy Breitsman, in Harrisburg, Pa. In her first week at Ursinus College, the Hillel president befriended her in the campus garden and invited her to Shabbat. She was drawn in completely. Jewish community taught Steph that home can extend beyond the walls that we grow up in.

Judaism is Steph's *mishkan*, a spiritual home that she can take with her through the wilderness of life, equipped with a full library and well-honed spiritual tools. Steph received this gift from her own rabbis and hopes to return it in kind to all whom she serves.

Steph has been fortunate to work closely with two communities while in

rabbinical school: Bryn Mawr College Hillel and Reconstructionist affiliate Kehilat HaNahar in New Hope, Pa. Steph is deeply grateful for her two supportive mentors, Rabbi Jeremy Winaker and Rabbi Diana Miller (RRC '11), and for the relationships she has built with her students and her congregants.

Steph is also a *soferet* (Hebrew scribe), an artist and a facilitator of the Jewish Studio Project. She inherited her creative practice from her mother, who draws the sweetest and scruffiest monsters around, and who taught her that our imaginations can be a powerful tool for empathy and understanding. Carrying this practice into her rabbinic work has been the most unexpected and precious blessing of her training.

Prior to rabbinical school, Steph worked for Americans for Peace Now, a Jewish nonprofit advocating for the end of the Israeli occupation and for a two-state solution. She received her master's degree in Middle East Studies from the George Washington University in 2015.

Steph is profoundly grateful for the love and support she has received in this winding path to

ordination; for her parents, friends and mentors; for everyone who helps her to live life on life's terms one day at a time; and for the great mystery of it all.

פקח עיני לראות בטוב יצרך והפוך דעתי לדעתך ורצוני
לרצונך. יהיו כל מעשי בקרבן רצוי לפניך ותסלך
לכל פשעי. תן לי לראות אורך בכל פגישותי ורפא נא
מכאבות לבי. כי אתה שומע תפלת כל פה.
ברוך אתה יי שומע תפלה.

“Open my eye, that it may look upon the goodness of your plan, and turn my knowledge into knowledge of your ways, my will into your will. May all that I do be like an offering received into your presence, and may you forgive me all I have done wrong. Enable me to see your light in all whom I encounter, and please heal the pain within my heart. For you are one who listens to the prayer of all who speak. Blessed are you, Hashem, who hears all prayer.”

— Amidah Ketzurah,
Kol Haneshamah, Pages 106-107



Eli Carson DeWitt

Eli was born and raised in Durham, N.C., by their parents, Rosalyn and Toby, and their grandparents, Ada Lou and Herbert, z"l. Growing up, Eli felt the care of their family shaping them: listening to books and stories constantly; learning to cook and care for their younger siblings and cousins; going to anti-war protests and organizing meetings with their older sister; and visiting the mall food court for snacks before Hebrew school with their grandparents. This caring foundation helped them find their way to rabbinical school, where they have deepened their commitment to living a life of *Torah, Avodah* and *Gemilut Hasadim*.

As they complete their learning at RRC, Eli wants to offer deep *kavod* (honor) to their many teachers. During their seven years of rabbinical school, they were changed

by the teachings of Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz, z”l; Mariame Kaba; Aurora Levins Morales; and adrienne maree brown. These teachers gift and challenge Eli with ideas that allow them to cultivate Jewish culture that embraces radical diasporism, and is unapologetically anti-Zionist and abolitionist in practice.

Eli grew as a rabbinic educator with the support of Rabbi Michelle Greenfield (RRC '12), and in collaboration with the kids and families of Reconstructionist affiliate Kol Tzedek’s Camp Shabbat Shalom. They deepened their work as a pastoral caregiver with guidance from Rabbi Elisa Goldberg (RRC '99). Eli learned to ask for all kinds of help from their patient friend-tors Rabbis Ariana Katz (RRC '18), Jessica Rosenberg (RRC '18) and Mónica Gomery. They made it through the academic side of rabbinical school with the support of their faculty advisors: Sarra, Linda and Tamar.

Becoming a parent during the middle of the pandemic led Eli to return home to Durham sooner than planned. They gave birth to their absolutely beloved Misha in the spring of 2021 and completed

their final three years at RRC remotely.

Eli is thrilled to be back home in Durham for the long haul, where they get to spend their days parenting their now almost 3-year-old and playing their part in their big, multigenerational family. Eli is growing into their role as a community rabbi in Durham through fierce comradeship with fellow Southern clergy/organizers with members of Makom Jewish community, and in collaboration with their dream Jewish educator *chevruta*, Caitlyn Case-Cohen and the kids of Jewish Farm Camp.

Eli hopes that their work in this grief-stricken world is a *tikkun*, an act of repair infused with reverence for The Source of All Life.

כיון שעושה אדם את עצמו כמדבר
תורה ניתנה לו במתנה

“Once a person makes themselves a wilderness
...Torah is given to them as a gift.”

— Masechet Nedarim 55a



Koach Baruch Frazier, Au.D.

“Up above my head
I hear music in the air
there must be
a G-d somewhere.”

— Black Spiritual

Koach Baruch (KB) Frazier, Au.D., grew up knowing The Eternal was in music because it was momma’s singing that woke them up in the morning. He knew that The Eternal was also in the songs of freedom that his people have sung throughout the ages. And it is through the music of worship and praise that they find themselves immersed in the Divine Presence, which grounds and supports their life and work. It is only with The Eternal’s help that he has become a transformer, heartbeat of movements, healer, innovator and musician.

During Koach’s time at RRC, he learned the sacred notes of *Mussar* and *Gemara*, *Zohar*

and *Chassidut*, creating that jazz-like dissonance that underscores the beauty in the complexity of our perfectly imperfect lives. They also engaged in the holy work of mourning the death of their father and two siblings. The heartache, pain and the enduring nature of memory that now lives with them has empowered them to continue inviting folks into the healing practice of lament. On the last eight-digit palindrome in our lifetime, chords of love and commitment harmonized under the *chuppah*. LaJuana and Koach jumped the broom into a partnership centering joy, community and wonder.

“To get along with G-d,

Consider the consequences of your behavior.”

— Earthseed, Octavia Butler

Koach’s journey included learning the rhythm of compassionate accountability. With the help of Rambam’s steps of *teshuvah* and Resmaa’s abolitionist-embodied practice, they created a toolbox of spiritual tools to support the Divine task of returning again and again to the best of ourselves, all the while remaining in our dignity. This led to collaborations with friends new and old, creating spaces like Black Folks *Beit Midrash* (with

Kendra Saperstein) and Black Trans Torah Club, where folks could learn, commune, and be inspired and witnessed in their brilliance and wholeness. Returning to their ancestors’ reverent care of and work with the land, Koach planted and harvested okra, sweet potatoes, peppers, cucumbers and turnip greens that fed family and neighbors alike.

“We can,

Each of us,

Do the impossible

As long as we can convince ourselves

That it has been done before.”

— Earthseed, Octavia Butler

Without the African and Black Jews, Hebrew and Israelite elders and ancestors that paved the *derech*, Koach would not have made it to this day, and for all of them, they are forever grateful. They also deeply appreciate their wife, daughter, parents, friends and teachers who have supported, believed in and cheered them on these last six years. May the Eternal abundantly bless each and every one of you.



Rachel November Kipnes

Rachel Kipnes weaves together the varied threads of her communities, drawing particularly from the boundless imagination of her young students and the deep wisdom of her elders. Her spirit is enlivened by hard questions about ego and ethics, about un-learning chosenness and Zionism, about determining the appropriately sized role of the rabbi. A teacher, organizer, movement chaplain and ritualist, Rachel honors her inheritance by expanding elastic boundaries of all kinds to embrace all who seek belonging. You will likely find her *davening* from the back of the shul, where there is ample space for full body shuckling, often with a child on her lap, oscillating between loud expressions of euphoric glee and weeping grief.

“Solidarity is the political version of love.”

— Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz

Rachel believes that we access G/d through the practice of imagination. In her study, she returns often to the wisdom of process theology, which teaches that all lives play an active role in G/d's always-unfolding works of creation. Relationships are at the heart of her practice. Her rabbinic approach is influenced by a Judaism of Solidarity, organizing with leftist movements to dismantle white supremacy through spiritual grounding, political organizing and care networks.

“To love Jews is to cherish complexity, to relish contradictions, to study history without flinching from its horrors or romances.”

— Aurora Levins Morales

Rachel came to rabbinical school to serve her fellow skeptics — the ones who speak the truth even as their voices shake, the ones who dare to dream of a world that is full of possibility and abundance for everyone. Rachel accompanies organizers and activists committed to an anti-/non-Zionist and Diaspora Jewish future to fortify and increase political bravery. She teaches about confronting colonization, antisemitism and assimilation, to think about land and Jewish time. In these roles, Rachel

brings critical attention to the delicate balance between study and action.

Rachel is shaped by her collaborations with a multitude of Jewish formations, some of which include the Jewish Voices for Peace rabbinical council, *havurah* network and New Orleans chapter; Linke Fligl; Faith Matters Network; the Movement Chaplaincy project; Kol Tzedek; and Hinenu: the Baltimore Justice Shtiebl.

“Ben Bag Bag would say: Turn it [the Torah] and turn it, for everything is in it. Reflect on it and grow old and gray with it. Don't turn from it, for nothing is better than it.”

— Pirkei Avot 5:21

Rachel's family taught her that joy and obligation are two sides of the same coin. She is eternally grateful to her classmates, teachers, and bio and chosen family for their overflowing wells of compassion throughout school. May all people encounter this overflow of love, gratitude and devotion in their lifetime.



Aviva Nola Marchione

Aviva envisions her rabbinate embracing the concept that Judaism is an evolving civilization. We are collectively responsible for co-creating a Judaism that is meaningful, just, compelling and playful. We have the power to shape where we want our Judaism to head, with Jewish texts as our map and our values as our compass. Nothing feels more exciting to her than fostering a participatory, collaborative Judaism together with her community.

Aviva has always felt a strong connection to Judaism, ever since she was a kid when her voice grew hoarse from belting out Shabbat songs at Friday night song sessions on the lake at her summer camp. She brings that spirited energy to all aspects of her work: when teaching a local *havurah*; building community



with bright and perceptive undergrads; tutoring curious *b-mitzvah* students; and leading services from the *bimah* or the Zoom screen.

Her sense of divinity is ever growing and changing over time. These days, prayer through singing is the key that unlocks her soul, especially when the voices are so harmonious and interwoven that she can't pull hers apart from anyone else's. Holiness can be found anywhere, as long as we are open to receive it.

Aviva learned what it meant to be human in rabbinical school; she has lived a lot of life in these past six years. Joy was abundant when she married the love of her life in a pandemic wedding in the presence of only their closest family. Soon after, she cracked wide open when her father died and used Jewish wisdom to piece herself back together. She could feel her sense of self growing to new depths, and her heart expanding in more ways than she thought possible. She has come to understand that the veil between this realm and the next is very thin, and as a mourner, she has unique access to the Divine. She has integrated

zichrono livracha; she carries the legacy, joy and wisdom of her dad with her always. Their love for each other knows no bounds. He is in her bones, in her speech and lives on through her actions; it is his voice you hear when she sings.

The people who surround Aviva are the buoyancy that keeps her afloat through stormy and calm waters. She owes her successes and her insights in part to them. To her cohort, her classmates, her *hevrutot*, her friends, her teachers, her family, her mom and sisters, to her dad, *z"l*, and to her most profound love of all, Ben — she is grateful for and thanks you. The light they each emanate enables *her* to fill with light, over and over again, which she now proudly shines outward.

בִּי־כֶבֶד מְמֹד הַדָּבָר לֹא־תוּכַל עֲשׂוֹהוּ לְבַדְּךָ

“For the matter is too heavy for you;
you cannot do it alone.”

— Exodus 18:18, Yitro to Moshe

“If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love somebody else? ... Now let the music play!”

— RuPaul



Joshua A. Nelson

Josh Nelson grew up in a quietly devout home, nestled in a small town surrounded by the cornfields of Central Illinois. It was there that they developed a profound ethic of pragmatism and kindness, as well as the deep and abiding love for the study of ancient and sacred texts, which together undergird their rabbinate. A lifelong academic and a Jew by choice, they delight in the rabbinic work of sharing their learning and passions with others, seeking to equip and inspire others to engage with Jewish texts and traditions more deeply and to embody their Jewish values more fully.

While at RRC, Josh served as rabbinic intern at Beth David Reform Congregation; at Reconstructionist affiliate Nafshenu; at Reconstructionist affiliate Kehilat HaNahar, where they also served as coordinator of

the Shul School; and at CJE SeniorLife in Chicago. They also enjoyed supporting their peers as a Hebrew tutor and teaching assistant. They are honored to have served the student body and the movement as the Student Representative to the Reconstructing Judaism Board of Governors.

Prior to rabbinical school, Josh earned a Master of Arts in biblical languages from the Graduate Theological Union; their final project examined the rhetoric of II Chronicles in its account of the reign of Hezekiah. They graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Josh is deeply grateful for all those who have had a hand in helping them reach this moment — family and friends, teachers and students, mentors and peers. They are indebted to their beloved communities at Or Hadash: A Reconstructionist Congregation and at the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation. They are thankful to Rabbi Ruth Adar, who helped bring them under the wings of the *Shekhinah* and bestowed upon them a rich collection of rabbinic literature. They are especially

thankful to their sisters, Hannah and Tabi, and their parents, Chris and Kim, whose encouragement and support has sustained them throughout this journey. They are most grateful for the unfailing love and support they have received each and every day from their wife, Suzanne Caster.

“When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them. The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I H’ am your God.”

— Leviticus 19:33-34

“A gentile came to Shammai: ‘I will convert if you can teach me the entire Torah while I stand on one foot,’ but Shammai pushed him aside. He came to Hillel, who converted him: ‘What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor — that is the entire Torah. The rest is commentary; go and study!’”

— BT Shabbat 31a



Noah Rubin-Blöse

Noah harvests salt from the ocean, a ritual practice that echoes a covenant made between the Holy One and the primeval waters of creation. The waters of the oceans longed for the waters in the heavens and were promised reconnection in the form of salt. His work is the work of enacting this promise of reconnection and honoring the interdependence of all of creation.

He believes in the transformative power of Jewish time, ritual and world-building in the face of empire. He supports our communities to grow, and tend our roots and our belonging. He is a storyteller and ritualist, a crafter of shared decision-making for collective power and a practitioner of nonviolent direct action.

He envisions a rabbinate lived shoulder to shoulder with the people with whom

he works. He believes that we need each other, and that together we can make collective magic to bring *olam haba* – a liberated world to come – into formation particle by particle from the bits of stardust in our bones that come from the depths of the universe.

Noah is rooted in Durham, N.C. – the homelands of the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation – and has been shaped by the traditions of his Ashkenazi Jewish and Italian Catholic family, anarchism, multiracial feminism and Black-led Southern freedom movements. He worked for 15 years as a community organizer and caterer, and was a co-founder of Bread Uprising Bakery cooperative, an organizer of the Demilitarize! Durham2Palestine campaign, and the author of the cookbook *Making the Table: Vegetarian Recipes to Nourish Community*.

While at RRC, he has learned how to be a spiritual leader through his work at Reconstructionist affiliate SAJ: Judaism that Stands for All, UNC Hospital, Reconstructionist affiliate Mishkan Shalom and Germantown Jewish Centre; and as a

teaching fellow at SVARA and board member of the Reconstructionist Student Association. He serves the Makom community in Durham as founding (student) rabbi, supporting this leaderful community to birth a Southern, queer- and trans-led, anti-racist, anti-Zionist Jewish communal practice.

He gives thanks to his teachers, mentors and elders; his beloved family by birth and choice; and his *hevrutot* and community for all of their support and for teaching the Torah of relationships. He is infinitely grateful to the land for teaching us and holding us, and to our wise ancestors and trancers for making our lives possible.

שְׂבַעְנוּ מִטּוֹבָךְ וְשִׂמְחָנוּ בְּיִשׁוּעֶיךָ
“May we be satisfied from your goodness
and find delight in your liberation.” – Shabbat Amidah

ל' הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ
“The land and all of its fullness are Hashem’s.”
– Psalms 24:1

“What if joy, instead of refuge or relief from heartbreak, is what effloresces from us as we help each other carry our heartbreaks?”
– Ross Gay, *Inciting Joy*



Aliza Jane Schwartz

Aliza believes that the work of creating connection and belonging is sacred. She strives to be a connector — a leader who brings people towards one another and towards larger containers of “home.” She feels certain that when we are embraced for our whole selves, we are able to bring our whole selves to everything we do, and communities and worlds deeply benefit. In the particular moment in which she is becoming a rabbi, Aliza fights for a deeply-rooted Judaism that stands loudly against racism, loudly against Islamophobia, loudly against antisemitism, and loudly against the systems that allow for dehumanization and pit humans against one another. She fights for a Judaism that embodies at its root the knowing that all of humanity is sacred, is Divine, is made *b'tselem elohim*, in the image of G-d.

As Aurora Levins Morales writes
in her poem “Red Sea.”

“We cannot cross until we carry each other,
all of us refugees, all of us prophets.
No more taking turns on history’s wheel,
trying to collect old debts no-one can pay.
The sea will not open that way.
...
This time it’s all of us or none.”

Aliza has been blessed to work with and learn from
so many different communities that have formed
her into the rabbi she is becoming today. Before
rabbinical school, Aliza was deeply involved in
Kavod in Boston (as board member and president);
the New Israel Fund (as Assistant Regional Director
for New England); IfNotNow (as a trainer and
strategy coach, especially in its early years); and
JOIN for Justice (as a Jewish Organizing Fellow).

During her time at RRC, Aliza has served as a
student member on T’ruah’s board of directors,
and she has been transformed into a rabbi, truly,
from her work at Lions Gate Continuing Care
Retirement Community; Lankenau Medical

Center; and her current congregational home,
CBST (Congregation Beit Simchat Torah) in
Manhattan, where she still serves now.

Aliza is endlessly grateful to her personal and
professional mentors, her teachers, her *hevrutot*
and to her entire cohort. She is unbelievably
blessed to have beloveds, friends and home-
builders of all types who have been with her
through thick and thin, and she cannot thank each
one of them enough. Her mom, Randi; her dad,
Bill; her brother, Jonathan; and her entire family
are a foundation of support and love for which
she feels unbelievably grateful every single day.

“Never forget that justice is what
love looks like in public.”

— Cornel West

כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת כָּל פֶּה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה.
“Because You hear the prayers of all. Blessed
are You, HaShem, who hears prayer.”

— from *Tefilat HaDerech*, “The Traveler’s Prayer”



Adam Strater, Ph.D.

Adam developed a passion for learning at an early age, and Jewish texts were fundamental for his identity formation as a young adult. As an academic and a rabbi, he strives to integrate his scholarship within a communal and inclusive Jewish context.

Originally from Des Moines, Iowa, Adam completed a bachelor's degree in religion at Buena Vista University and then a master's degree in Jewish studies at the Graduate Theological Union. Adam received the Haas/Koshland Memorial Award while at GTU. The grant offered an opportunity to research and write his thesis while in residence at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he stayed to complete a second master's in Hebrew Bible. Adam then pursued a Ph.D. from Emory University, where he received a Wexner Graduate



Fellowship. His research integrates Hebrew Bible scholarship with the subfields of Jewish Liberation Theology, Jewish Ethics, and Peace and Conflict Studies. Adam reads Jewish texts and traditions with a decolonial lens that is endowed with respect and solidarity; the intention is to promote a relationship with perceived “others.”

Adam recognized early in his doctoral work that he did not want to follow the traditional academic job path and began to pursue rabbinic ordination while writing his dissertation. RRC gave him the resources and experiences to hone his academic background and teaching into an authentic rabbinic presence. Adam was the rabbinic intern at Hillel at Drexel University. He then became the full-time senior Jewish educator for the Hillels of Georgia and has balanced that work with rabbinical school for the last two years. Adam is also an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve, where he serves as a battalion chaplain.

Adam is thankful for family, friends and teachers who have supported him throughout his educational journey. He is especially thankful

for the love and support of his parents, Don and Nancy, who instilled a love for learning early. He is also thankful for the support of his sisters, Andrea and Whitney; his mother and father-in-law, Roberto and Evelyn; and also his many nieces and nephews. Most of all, he is thankful for the limitless love that his spouse, Sharon, and son, Milo, have shown him throughout his time at RRC.

“... the foundation of truth is reason. For the Torah was not given to a creature incapable of thought, and the intermediary between God and man is his mind.”

— Abraham ibn Ezra

“God does not have to mean to us an absolute being. ... It is sufficient that God should mean to us the sum of the animating, organizing forces and relationships which are forever making a cosmos out of chaos.”

— Mordecai M. Kaplan

“I’m just what you made, God.”

— Kid Cudi



Beryl Lee Trauth-Jurman

Beryl was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pa. (the nicest city anywhere). Beryl is part of a small, loving and proudly interfaith family that made the life-changing decision to join a synagogue when Beryl was 10.

Beryl fell in love with Judaism in high school and continued that journey into college. He attended George Mason University, where he obtained first his bachelor's degree and then his master's degree in conflict analysis and resolution.

Beryl also met his future spouse, Mary Grace Coalter, at George Mason during their freshman year. Despite his first words about her, "I don't know who she is, does she live on our floor?" their relationship has lasted for 16 years.

Along his winding path to rabbinical

school, Beryl worked as a summer-camp professional for URJ Camp Harlam; a Jewish educator and teacher at Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church, Va.; and as an ombudsman for the city of Washington, D.C. (where he finally got to use his two degrees in conflict resolution).

Graduating was the work of many people: Beryl's parents, who forced him to attend Hebrew school (he would not have even become *bar mitzvah* without their help), and who lovingly and (very) patiently supported him every step of the way. Beryl's sister, Danielle Trauth-Jurman, who was always ready to protect him from bullies, and who taught him about work ethic and drive. Beryl's large, interfaith extended family, who have always shown up and taken an interest in his studies and work, even when they weren't sure what it was that he was doing. And finally, Mary Grace Coalter. Beryl entered rabbinical school at her insistence, when she said, "You've been talking about it for a decade, maybe it's finally time that you applied." She has been with him throughout the journey, and Beryl's early graduation is a testament to her steadfast support.

Judaism is a tool that helps us on our life's journey. It is not a destination, nor is it a goal to be mastered and checked off. Beryl is excited to continue his studies for many years to come, so that one day, he can fully embody the title that he is receiving today. From this moment forward, Beryl hopes to share the many gifts and blessings that he has received in life with everyone whom he is fortunate enough to work or serve.

"Rabbi Ben Bag Bag said, 'Study it again and again, as everything is within it. In it you shall see ... grow old and worn with it. Do not deviate from it, for you have no better way of living than it.'"



Welcoming New Rabbis



Into the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association

On behalf of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and your new colleagues, we congratulate this year's exceptional class of graduates! The new rabbis who stand before us today represent the best and brightest of our aspirations and dreams for the Jewish future.

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, in building relationships among colleagues and supporting each other in our rabbinic work, seeks to be a source of strength, nurturance, leadership, and collegiality for all its members. We are proud to welcome Rabbi Aya Baron, Rabbi Stephanie Breitsman, Rabbi Eli DeWitt, Rabbi Joshua Nelson, Rabbi Koach Baruch Frazier, Rabbi Rachel Kipnes, Rabbi Aviva Marchione, Rabbi Noah Rubin-Blöse, Rabbi Aliza Schwartz, Rabbi Adam Strater and Rabbi Beryl Truth-Jurman.

We look forward to working together to strengthen our rabbimates, the Reconstructionist movement, and the communities we serve. As these graduates have eloquently and passionately demonstrated, Jewish teaching is a source of inspiration to help all of us work towards manifesting our collective vision of a world redeemed. We are delighted to join hands with you and continue the journey.

As we read in *Pirkei Avot*: "Make for yourself a teacher, acquire for yourself a friend." At the RRA, we look forward to you joining us as teachers and becoming our friends.

Hazak hazak v'nitkhazek! May we go from strength to strength!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Renee Bauer".

Rabbi Renee Bauer, '05

President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elyse Wechterman".

Rabbi Elyse Wechterman, '00

Chief Executive Officer

In Memoriam

Adina Abramowitz	Willis John Breitsman	Sam Jurman	Nolan Marchione	Leon Schwartz
Susann Barker	Melissa Ann Dowd	Sylvia Jurman	Victor Marchione	Becky Strater
Thomas Barker	Elinore Ochfeld Eisner	Leah Kamionkowski	Kenneth Nelson	Fredrick K. Strater
Virginia Barker	William Stanley Eisner	Ken Kipnes	Lorna Nelson	Fredrick W. Strater
Elaine Baron	Raymond Eurquhart	Linda Kipnes	Teri November	Laurian Strater
Irving Baron	Nadine Frazier	David Kirsh	Andella Peterson	Thomas Strater
Ralph Bessmer	Vincent Frazier	Ethelda Kirsh	Rev. Jessie Lee Peterson	Martha Trauth
Matthew Dunie Blickenstaff	Walter Alonzo Frazier	Rabbi David Klatzker	Grace Rensing	Rita Trauth
Concetta Blose	Walter Anthony Frazier	Rabbi Peter Knobel	Frida Rubin	Roger Trauth
James O. Blose	William Gladstone	Donya Libman	Louis Rubin	Vicki Tuckman
Ann Elizabeth Breitsman	Charlene Harvey	Lizzie McCray	Eleanor Jean Schubel	Miriam Thompson
Elizabeth Sue Breitsman	Ron Harvey	Frank Marchione	William Baumgartner Schubel	Vera Veasley
Joann Beers Breitsman		June Marchione	Helene Schwartz	Arlene Weinberger
		Kala Marchione		Ken Weinberger







2024/5784

Class Gift

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College is located on the unceded land of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory. During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed west and north, but some also remain among the continuing historical tribal communities of the region: The Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation; the Ramapough Lenape Nation; and the Powhatan Renape Nation, The Nanticoke of Millsboro Delaware, and the Lenape of Cheswold Delaware. We recognize their historic desire for harmony among the indigenous people of this land, descendants of immigrants and descendants of the enslaved brought here forcibly, “as long as the rivers and creeks flow, and the sun, moon and stars shine.” We acknowledge that we work, teach and learn here, and bear responsibility to engage meaningfully in relationship with the tribal community of the Lenni-Lenape people on their homeland.

The **Reconstructionist Student Association** has been in a process of discernment about the school’s responsibility to engage meaningfully in relationship with the tribal community, including paying a land tax. In alignment with this *kavannah*, the senior class will tithe a portion of the money that has been raised for their graduation party to the Lenni-Lenape Land Tax fund.

