



**RECONSTRUCTIONIST
RABBINICAL COLLEGE**

המדרשה ליהדות מתחדשת

Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Graduation Ceremony

May 17, 2026 • 1 Sivan 5786

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Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Graduation Ceremony

May 17, 2026 | 1 Sivan 5786

Order of Ceremony

ACADEMIC PROCESSION

Music performed by the Ken Ulansey Ensemble

OPENING PRAYER

Elsie Stern, Ph.D.

WELCOME

Edwin Baum

Chair, Board of Governors

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., '99

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Rabbi Mira Wasserman, Ph.D.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Rabbi Alex Weissman, '17

Director of Community Life and *Mekhinah*

Holly Smith, '29

Reconstructionist Student Association

Board Officer

HONORARY AWARDS AND DEGREES

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

Edwin Baum

HAKHANAT HATARAT HORA'AH

Rabbinical Class of 2026/5786

TEKES HATARAT HORA'AH

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

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.

Rabbi Mira Wasserman, Ph.D.

Members of the Faculty

CLOSING PRAYER

Rabbi Alex Weissman

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 2026 recipient is Josie Boskoff.

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 2026 recipient is Maria Pulzetti.

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 2026 recipient is Melissa Ufberg.

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 2026 recipient is Rebecca Feldman.

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 2026 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 2026 recipient is Noah Dor Lind.

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 2026 recipient is Josie Boskoff.

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 2026 recipient is Molly Schulman for “When Does Murder Count?: An Exploration of Violence in I and II Samuel.”

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 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 2026 recipient is Mat Wilson for “The Disability Torah Project: Embodied Wisdom, Sacred Text and the Future of Jewish Learning.”

TIKKUN OLAM AND RU’AKH AKHERET AWARDS

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

The 2026 Tikkun Olam Award recipients are Rebecca Feldman and Annie Prusky.

The 2026 Ru’akh Akheret Award recipient is Noah Dor Lind.



Torat Yovel

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Mazel tov to members of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association who marked their 50th year in the rabbinate through the RRA's *Torah Yovel* celebration.



Rabbi Rebecca Alpert | RRC '76



Rabbi Jeff Eisenstat | RRC '76



Rabbi Steven Carr Reuben |
Hebrew Union College-Jewish
Institute of Religion '76



Honorary Awards and Degrees

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

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 2026 Keter Shem Tov Award
is presented to Seth L. Rosen.***

Seth L. Rosen has devoted his heart and labor to strengthening the Reconstructionist movement and helping it fulfill its potential. He has brought wisdom, integrity, empathy and persistence to his diverse volunteer roles and is deeply appreciated as a leader and collaborator.

Seth served as chair of Reconstructing Judaism's board of governors from 2017 to 2025 and currently serves as a member of the board and its Executive Committee and as chair of the Development Committee, among other roles. During his years as board chair, Seth served on the board of the Jewish Reconstructionist Camping Corporation (Camp Havaya), on the RRC Admissions Committee and on the Advisory Committee of *Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations*, Reconstructing Judaism's digital forum for Reconstructionist thought.

Prior to the merger of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF) with RRC in 2012, Seth served on the JRF board and Executive Committee and actively participated in the negotiations that led to the merger.



Seth is a past president of Reconstructionist affiliate Bet Am Shalom Synagogue in White Plains, NY, where he is currently a member of the Board of Trustees and co-chair of the congregation's Israel Working Group. Seth is active on Bet Am Shalom's *Tikkun Olam* Committee, working with others on affordable housing and other racial justice

issues, and has led the study of the “Stolen Beam” curriculum on reparations at Bet Am Shalom. Seth and his wife Joan (who is also a former Bet Am Shalom president) served as the co-chairs of a capital campaign that raised over \$5 million toward rebuilding and expanding Bet Am Shalom’s building after it was largely destroyed by fire in 2003.

Seth and Joan are especially interested in raising scholarship funding to support RRC students. They fund the Sylvia Ledewitz Rosen Scholarship, named in memory of Seth’s mother, and have worked to encourage others to share in the *mitzvah* of helping to educate our next generation of rabbis.

Seth is a retired partner of the law firm Debevoise & Plimpton, where he worked as a tax lawyer for 35 years prior to his retirement in 2015. Seth served in several leadership positions at the firm, including leading the Tax-Exempt Organizations practice group, and served as a member of its Pro Bono Committee. He also assumed tax-related leadership positions in the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, the New York State Bar and the Insurance Tax Conference. Seth received

the Legal Aid Society’s Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service in 2003 and 2012 for his work teaching young lawyers how to counsel not-for-profit founders and boards. Prior to working at Debevoise & Plimpton, Seth served as law clerk to the Hon. William H. Timbers of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Since retiring from the practice of law, Seth has devoted his time to nonprofit board service. In addition to his service to Reconstructing Judaism, Seth serves as vice chair of the board of Westhab, a New York nonprofit devoted to providing quality affordable and supportive housing and to delivering services that enable homeless households to transition to permanent housing and help communities to thrive. He previously served on the boards of the Newark Museum of Art and VisionSpring.

Seth received his B.A. in English *magna cum laude* from the University of Pennsylvania in 1977 and his J.D. *cum laude* from the New York University School of Law in 1980, where he was an editor of the *Law Review* and a member of the Order of the Coif.



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 2026 Presidential Recognition Award is presented to Jonathan A. Markowitz.

Jonathan A. Markowitz is passionate about education and organizational development, and these passions have fueled his generous contributions to the Reconstructionist movement over many years. He has championed a Reconstructionist approach to Jewish life and community building and has



challenged Reconstructionist organizations to greater effectiveness through his incisive questions and outside-the-box thinking.

Jonathan began his career with a B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis, then attended Tulane University Law School. After a short time as an attorney, Jonathan joined his family's firm as a commodity trader and became a partner in 1984. To gain business knowledge, Jonathan

joined Vistage, a peer advisory organization where business owners meet regularly for coaching, strategic advice and leadership development. He remained an active member for 20 years.

Jonathan and his family are members of Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation (JRC) in Evanston, Illinois. Jonathan has served on the board as a member-at-large and treasurer, helping to organize JRC's finances and guide the congregation through changing times.

Jonathan joined the board of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation several years before its merger with RRC in 2012. After the merger, he continued his service to ensure that congregations were well represented on the board. Since 2023, Jonathan has also served on the Reconstructing Judaism Executive Committee.

Jonathan and his wife, Ruth Wenger, are most proud of having created and underwritten a movement-wide education initiative. The Wenger-Markowitz Family Education Initiative provides resources for congregational educators,

rabbis and parents, building their capacity to deliver high-quality, Reconstructionist Jewish education. It manifests the couple's commitment to helping children and adolescents develop the tools and inspiration to live meaningful Jewish lives.

In addition, Jonathan has been a board member of the Friends of the IDF, helping launch the Impact Scholarship Program, which enables Israeli veterans to attend college while completing acts of *tikkun olam*.

Throughout his career, Jonathan has combined strategic thinking with a passion for organizational development. Now, as artificial intelligence (AI) transforms the business landscape, he focuses on helping organizations leverage AI to enhance efficiency, empower teams and maximize impact with existing resources. At Reconstructing Judaism's recent convention, he shared practical insights on how leaders can thoughtfully integrate AI tools to stay agile, informed and effective — and maintain Reconstructionist values — in a rapidly evolving technological era.

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 2026 honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters is awarded to Hasia Rena Diner, Ph.D.

Hasia Rena Diner, Ph.D., has made outstanding contributions to the field of American Jewish history through her rigorous, creative scholarship and her teaching and mentorship of generations of students. Her focus on the everyday lives and experiences of Jewish people echoes and bolsters Reconstructionism's emphasis on the centrality of Jewish peoplehood. She also serves on the Advisory Committee of Reconstructing Judaism's *Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations*.



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Hasia is Professor Emerita at New York University, where she formerly served as the Paul and Sylvia Steinberg Professor of American Jewish History and founded the Goldstein-Goren Center for American Jewish History.

Her teaching and writing have spanned American Jewish history, United States immigration history and women's history,

with particular attention to American Jews and other immigrants, especially the Irish.

Her book, *We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust, 1945–1962* (New York University Press, 2009) received the National Jewish Book Award in American Jewish studies in 2010 as well as the Saul Veiner Prize for outstanding book in American Jewish history. Her many other works include *In the Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915–1935* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977, reissued, 1995); *Erin’s Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820–1880*, the second volume in the Johns Hopkins University Press series, “The Jewish People in America” (1992); and *Lower East Side Memories: The Jewish Place in America* (Princeton University Press, 2000). *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (2002), published by Harvard University Press, was a nominee for the James Beard Award in the category of Writing About Food. With Beryl Leif Benderly, she co-

authored *Her Works Praise Her* (Basic Books, 2002) and she authored *The Jews of the United States: 1654–2000* (The University of California Press, 2005). More recently, Yale University Press published *Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migration and the Peddlers Who Led the Way*, which was supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship; *Julius Rosenwald: Repairing the World*, a volume in the Yale University Press “Jewish Lives” Series; and *Immigration: An American History* with Carl Bon Tempo. Hasia also edited the *Oxford Handbook of the Jewish Diaspora* and wrote *Opening Doors: The Unexpected Alliance Between the Irish and the Jews* (St. Martin’s Press), a project that grew out of her service as the Acting Director of Glucksman Ireland House at NYU.

An elected member of the Society of American Historians and the American Academy of Jewish Research, she has served as president of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society and chaired the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society.

2026 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 in the Reconstructionist movement. The following honorees have devoted their lives to their calling in keeping with Reconstructionist ideals and core values.



Rabbi Michael Fessler
RRC '01 | Poughkeepsie, NY



Rabbi Eric Yaakov Traiger
RRC '95 | West Orange, NJ



Rabbi Michael Michlin, z"l
RRC '01

LEVAV HOKHMAH

RRC awards the posthumous award *Levav Hokhmah* to rabbis who during their lives worked 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 (*levav hokhmah*).”



Hakhanat

Hatarat Hora'ah

הכנת התרת הוראה

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN
SONG AND PRAYER TO SANCTIFY
THIS MOMENT, TOGETHER.

עֲזִי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה לִי לִישׁוּעָה

Ozi vezimrat Yah vay'ehi li lishu'ah

For Yah is my strength and my song,
the source of my deliverance.

חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזַּק

Hazak, hazak, v'nitkhazeik.

Be strong, be strong, and may we be strengthened.

עַץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחְזִיקִים בָּהּ וְתוֹמְכֶיהָ מֵאֲשֶׁר
דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי נְעָם וְכָל נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם
הַשִּׁיבָנוּ הִי אֵלֵינוּ וְנִשׁוּבָה חֲדָשׁ יִמְיָנוּ כְּקֶדֶם

*Etz hayim hi lamakhazikim bah,
vetomkheha me'ushar.*

*Derakheha darkhei no'am vekhol
netivoteha shalom.*

*Hashivenu adonai eilekha venashuva, hadeish
yameinu kekedem.*

It is a Tree of Life to those that hold fast to it,
all who uphold it may be counted fortunate.

Its ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all its paths are peace.

Return us, PRECIOUS ONE, let us return!
Renew our days, as you have done of old.

— Etz Hayim translation from Kol Haneshamah

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.

Life Stories and Wisdom Statements of the 2026 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.





Josie Boskoff

פֶּתַח לְבִי בְּתוֹרַתְךָ וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדֵּי נַפְשִׁי

Open my heart to Your Torah, may
my soul seek Your instruction

— *Berakhot* 17b

רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ

Great is Your faith in me.

— *Modeh Ani* blessing

From a young age, Josie found connection to the divine through song, dance and storytelling. She first learned biblical stories and Jewish history working on theatre productions like *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Her work in theater taught her about the power of communal creation, the beauty of many people coming together to build something



greater than their individual parts.

Josie's path to the rabbinate was shaped over her three years living in Jerusalem, where she split her time between Torah study and co-resistance with Palestinian communities in Masafer Yatta. Through her work with All That's Left: Anti-Occupation Collective and the Center for Jewish Nonviolence, Josie learned about building sustainable movements for collective liberation grounded in acts of community care. In Jerusalem, she co-founded *Boneh Yerushalayim*, an egalitarian anti-Zionist minyan which centers liberatory prayer practice as an essential tool for changing the world.

Josie studied in Yashrut's Classic Talmud Program and spent a summer studying in Edinburgh at Azara, the United Kingdom's first cross-communal *yeshivah*. Before training for the rabbinate, Josie graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in theater, and worked as a stage manager in San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Josie believes in the power of ritual and liturgy to carry us through celebration, struggle and uncertainty. Through text study, Josie discovered a

love of bringing her contemporary perspective into ancient conversations that span across time and space. In her rabbinate, Josie seeks to expand who is given access to be part of these conversations. Josie strives to lead communities where people understand their obligation to one another as a way to honor the holiness present in everyday life.

Josie is endlessly grateful to *HaKodesh Barukh Hu*, the Holy Blessed One, for bringing her to this moment. She offers abundant thanks to her teachers, *hevrutot*, family, friends and loved ones who supported her in reaching this day.

קְרוֹב אֵלַי הַדָּבָר מֵאֵד בְּפִי וּבְלִבְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ

The instruction I give is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it.

— *Devarim* 30:14

Move at the speed of trust.

— adrienne maree brown



Alana Krivo-Kaufman

Alana Krivo-Kaufman believes with all of her heart that cultivating joy is a sacred task, immersing in the Divine Presence is an open invitation in each moment, calling out from our depths matters and Jewish tradition is ours to receive and make anew. Alana's rabbinate is rooted in partnering with communities and the Holy One to build worlds upon worlds of compassion and justice — for ourselves, our neighbors and the generations yet to come.

Born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, Alana has called New York City home for two decades. She graduated from Barnard College with a B.A. in Urban Studies and was recognized for her student leadership and coalition-building. She found Reconstructing Judaism after falling in love with the art, poetry and aliveness of

the *Kol Haneshamah* prayer book and entered rabbinical school after a decade of community organizing for equality and human rights in Israel/Palestine and LGBTQ, racial and economic justice in New York City.

While in rabbinical training, Alana served as education director at Reconstructionist affiliate Congregation Kehillat Shalom in Belle Mead, NJ, Rabbinic intern at Reconstructionist affiliate Mishkan Shalom in Philadelphia, Cooperberg-Rittmaster Rabbinical intern at Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, and completed a spiritual care residency at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. She is thankful to the many congregants, rabbis, patients, chaplains, educators and staff she had the blessing to learn from in these settings who have shaped her rabbinate.

Alana is eternally grateful to her wife, CB, for believing this moment into being alongside her; to her daughter, Mira, for being a curious and *chutzpadik* wonder; to Leslie, the best-ever sister; to her parents, Bob and Laurie, who taught her to study brokenness for the sake of transformation;

and to all of her friends, family, colleagues and teachers who sustained, enlivened and enabled her to arrive at this moment.

מִן הַמֵּצַר קָרָאתִי יְיָ עָנְנִי בְּמִרְחָב יְיָ

From the Narrow place I called out to God who answered me from the Divine Expanse.

— Psalm 118:5 (Translation: Rabbi Shefa Gold, adapted)

שְׁמְרוּנִי שְׁמְרוּנִי, עֲזֹרוּנִי עֲזֹרוּנִי, סִמְכוּנִי סִמְכוּנִי
הַמְתִּיבוּ לִי הַמְתִּיבוּ לִי עַד שְׁאֲכַבֵּס
וְאֲצֵא, שִׁכְוֹן דִּרְכֹן שֶׁל בְּנֵי אָדָם

Guard me, guard me, help me, help me,
support me, support me, wait for me, wait for me
while I go in alone, and come back out
again, as is the way of human beings.

— *Berakhot* 60b

Participation in public worship breaks through the prison of the ego and lets in the light and air of the world. Instead of living one small and petty life, we now share the multitudinous life of our people.

— Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan



Noah Dor Lind

During their time serving as a hospital chaplain, Noah Dor sat with a patient who miraculously survived a devastating car crash. The patient said that G-d must have saved him for a reason. He kept repeating, “Whatever it is, I’m all in.” This is Noah’s ideal spiritual posture, a willingness to meet the unknown with acceptance and compassion.

Noah’s grandmother, Susanna, taught them as a child that if anyone tried to pronounce the unpronounceable name of G-d, it would sound like breathing. This is a teaching they encountered again, praying alongside Arthur Waskow, z”l. Reb Arthur called G-d “Breath of Life,” conceptualizing divinity not as abstraction, but as aliveness.

הלא חי אני ומי הוא החיות שלי הלא הבורא יתברך

“Am I not alive?! And who is this aliveness that I am? Isn’t it the Blessed Creator?”

— Me’or Einayim, Yitro

As a transgender person, Noah chose their name with intention. נח means rest, a blessing and a protective balm against a culture that measures human worth by profit and productivity. Through cultivating their creative Shabbat practice, Noah understands rest as sacred, opening a path toward collective healing. Noah also continues to claim their birth name, אנה דור, understanding their transition as a journey from one perfection to another.

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יֵעָקֵב יֹאמֵר עוֹד שְׁמֶךָ כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־שְׂרִית
עַם־אֱלֹהִים וְעַם־אֲנָשִׁים וְתוֹכֵל

The messenger blessed him, “Your name shall no longer be Yaakov, but Yisrael, G-d Wrestler, for you have wrestled holiness and humanity, and you keep holding on.”

— *Bereshit* 32:29

Noah has a deep love of science fiction, narratives that stretch the imagination toward hope and possibility. *Olam HaBa*, the world to come, lives in that same imaginative space, not as fantasy, but as a future we are bringing into being. Living in a

time of livestreamed death, including the ongoing devastation in Palestine, Noah is committed to witnessing and refusing numbness. For Noah, envisioning a future of freedom and safety for all is a core spiritual practice and a rabbinic responsibility.

“And now after some thinking, I’d say I’d rather be A functioning cog in some great machinery serving something beyond me.”

— *Helplessness Blues*, Fleet Foxes

Noah carries deep gratitude for Reconstructionist affiliates Mishkan Shalom and Havurah Shalom, the communities where they were first called rabbi. They give thanks to their family whose unconditional love has sustained them to reach this moment; to their friends who hold them in their full humanity; to their teachers who have given them the invaluable gift of intimacy with *leshon kodesh*, or sacred tongue; and to their ancestors whose struggles made the abundant blessing of their life possible.

Whatever comes next, Noah is all in.



Léah Cohen Miller

Crafting, mending and making are all ways that Léah Anita Rachelle Miller partners with the divine in the continuous work of *maaseh bereshit*. As a lifelong textile artist and crafty mender, they understand the practice of mending as both materially necessary and metaphorically essential to the work of transformation. Mending is about making amends, *teshuvah*, repair. We see what was and what can be in the same moment, stitching our way into the future we've imagined. We can only get where we're going by accepting our imperfections, staying in the mess, and leaning into curiosity.

As a Reconstructionist, Léah builds their life and Judaism around our motto of "deeply rooted, boldly relevant." Their rabbinate aims to center dignity and agency – empowering people to take tradition into their own hands while

honoring ancient and communal wisdom.

During rabbinical school, Léah has brought their warm, curious, and musical presence to a variety of Jewish communities. This year, they have been the rabbinic intern at Reconstructionist affiliate Kol Tzedek in West Philadelphia. Previously, they have served at the PA Poor People's Campaign, Reconstructionist affiliates SAJ in New York City, Or Haneshamah in Ottawa and Temple B'nai Abraham in Bordentown, NJ. Before rabbinical school, Léah graduated from NYU Gallatin School of Individualized Study with a concentration in queerness and language, which explores our relationship with identity labels. They were often found climbing into dusty lighting booths or swinging around a folk dance floor.

These five years have served to teach Léah the torah of obligation and commitment to relationship as they deepened ties with beloveds, old and new. Léah is so grateful for their tangly family tree, weaving together so many different models of how to be a human (and so many different places to visit – LA, Chicago, Paris, NY, Bruxelles, AZ, Philly, SF, NJ, OH, Berlin!). *Barukh hashem* that this

beautiful chrysalis of rabbinical school has also blossomed alongside finding a person to walk with in this life. Rachmiel was born to be a *rebbeztin*, and Léah can't wait to learn how to be one back.

Grounding wisdom: וַיְהִי מוֹרָא שָׁמַיִם עֲלֵיכֶם

Let the awe of heaven be upon you.

– Pirkei Avot 1:3

בְּמָקוֹם רִנָּה, שָׁם תְּהֵא תַפְלָה

Where there is song, there is prayer.

– Berakhot 6a

Instructions for living a life: Pay attention.

Be astonished. Tell about it.

– Mary Oliver

Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing, and let us say amen.

– Debbie Friedman

קָרוֹב יְיָ לְכָל-קוֹרְאָיו לְכָל-אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאָהוּ בְּאַמֶּת:

Hashem is close for all who are vulnerable, for all who honestly cry out.

– Psalm 145:18



Maria Pulzetti

Maria grew up in Massachusetts, blessed by the love and care of her parents and sister. Her family taught her the value of gathering for shared meals, showing up for each other, and greeting people with hugs. She has never lost her childhood delight in chipmunks, salamanders and wild blueberries; the created world continues to be one of her greatest sources of wonder.

Learning has always lit up Maria's eyes and opened up new paths. She received her B.A. from the University of Virginia and her J.D. from Yale Law School. During Maria's legal career, she worked at Community Legal Services of Philadelphia and as a public defender representing death-sentenced prisoners. Before that, she was the executive director of the Moscow-based Russian Justice Initiative, a human rights litigation project. From her clients, Maria learned to center dignity in the face of

injustice, locate shared humanity and hold people's stories with care.

Building a Jewish home with her wife and children made Maria fall in love once more: this time with Torah. Jewish tradition is the most compelling framework she knows for understanding the world and our obligations in it. As a rabbi, she is thrilled to share the transformative power of Torah to make meaning in our lives.

During her time at RRC, Maria also studied at BINA in Tel Aviv, became a *mikveh* guide through Mayyim Hayyim, completed a two-year clergy certificate in congregational and family systems at the Council for Relationships, and received a master's concentration in Israel Education from the iCenter. For five years, Maria has had the privilege of serving as student rabbi at Germantown Jewish Centre, where she has found great joy in connecting with people of all generations.

Maria is overcome with awe to hold both the beauty of the words of our sacred texts and the expansive possibilities of the spaces between the letters.

Maria is grateful to the Source of All for sustaining her and for making this day possible, and to her teachers and classmates for their wisdom, support and humor!

Maria's family and her extended families are the greatest of the many blessings in her life.

מה יקר חסדך אֱלֹקִים וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצֶל כְּנָפֶיךָ יִחְסִיּוּן

How precious is Your love, Gd! Human beings
shelter in the shadow of Your wings.

— Psalm 36:8

רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם אֲנִי שֶׁלְךָ וְחִלּוּמוֹתַי שֶׁלְךָ

Great One of the universe, I am Yours,
and my dreams are Yours!

— *Berakhot* 55b



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 so proud to welcome Rabbi Josie Boskoff, Rabbi Alana Gail Krivo-Kaufman, Rabbi Noah Dor Lind, Rabbi Léah Cohen Miller and Rabbi Maria Pulzetti into our association.

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 toward 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 that reads "Megan Doherty".

Rabbi Megan Doherty, '07
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Fuchs Kreimer".

Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer, '82
President

In Memoriam

Jeffrey Barrett

Andy Gordon

Yaffit Zohar Kaufman

Linda Pinsky

Claude Chiche

Alan Gratch

Albert A Krivo

Etta Sheldrick

Sue Driesen

Marie Harris

Kevin McLaughlin

Michael Sheldrick

Basil Felt

Awdah Hathaleen

Joseph Metelski

Randy Tiffany

Theba “Topsy” Felt

Rich Katz

Patricia Metelski

Rabbi Arthur Waskow

Linda Franchell

Eileen Dorothy
Smith Kaufman

Judy Miller

Marcia Helen Goldberg
Krivo Weinberg

David Gold

Sydney Kaufman

Oliver Thomas Miller

Aaron Ziegelman

Peter Miller



Remember

Class Gift

בְּכֹל הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶזְכֵּיר אֶת שְׁמִי
אָבוֹא אֵלֶיךָ וּבְרַכְתִּיךָ

In every place where I cause
My Name to be mentioned,
I will come to you and bless you. — Exodus 20:21

Our class gift is a Torah mantle (cloth cover) designed collaboratively, rendered by Rabbi Noah Dor Lind and crafted by Rabbi Léah Miller. The Torah scroll, made by hand and handled with reverence, connects each of us to the transmission of Jewish tradition through the generations.

The Verse

The Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai on the first of Sivan, the date of our graduation, and received the Torah on the sixth of Sivan: Shavuot. To connect our gift to this time of year, we chose words spoken by God at Sinai: “I will come to you and bless you.” On the Torah mantle, those words form the shape of the mountain, with a crescent moon glowing behind it.

For each of us as students, Torah study has been a rich source of blessing. We pray that as rabbis, we will create spaces for others to connect to Divine Presence and blessing through Torah.

Artistic rendering by Rabbi Noah Dor Lind

The Initial Aleph

The words “I will come to you and bless you” begin with the Hebrew letter aleph. The mystical tradition teaches that the first letter of the first word of the Ten Commandments, an aleph, contains the whole of Torah, including all interpretations that followed. We chose a passage beginning with an aleph as a reference to the tremendous generative power of just one letter.

The Singular “You”

“I will come to you [singular] and bless you [singular].” The ancient rabbis teach that at Sinai, God spoke to each person as an individual, and each person understood according to their own capacity. The unvocalized Torah text opens up possible readings of “you” as any gender. From this “you,” we learn that every person has the capacity to understand and receive blessing from the Divine.

May this gift bring RRC students, faculty, staff and visitors closer to Torah, as the ancient rabbis teach: “Be like students of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving all people and drawing them near to Torah.” — Pirkei Avot 1:12

With love,
Josie, Alana, Noah, Léah and Maria

