

## At Atlanta Convention, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association to Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Install New President

Rabbi Renee Bauer of Madison, Wis., will be installed as president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association at the organization's biennial convention, which begins March 3 in Atlanta. More than 130 rabbis from across North America and abroad are expected to attend the convention, marking 50 years since the founding of the RRA. Participants will look back at the past half-century of the rabbinate, take stock of this challenging moment, and lay the groundwork for the future.

Bauer will be the first rabbi whose primary work is as a chaplain to serve as president of any of the three largest non-Orthodox rabbinical associations in North America. This represents an ongoing shift in the rabbinic profession, as more significant numbers of rabbis serve in roles outside traditional pulpits. The RRA reports that 65 percent of its 380 members serve in roles other than as congregational rabbis.

Currently, Bauer is the Director of Spiritual Care and Outreach at Jewish Social Services of Madison. Previously, Bauer was the executive director of the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice of South-Central Wisconsin from 2008 to 2016. Previously, she served as the rabbi for Congregation Mayim Rabim in Minneapolis. She has also served as the rabbinic co-chair of the Reconstructionist movement's Tikkun Olam Committee. She is succeeding Rabbi James Greene, CEO of Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts, who is completing his 2-year term as RRA president.

It's no secret that the period since October 7 has been a trying one for Jewish communities everywhere and the rabbis who serve them. Over three days in Atlanta, RRA rabbis will offer one another support while engaging in learning and challenging yet respectful conversations. Many rabbis will also take part in a post-convention excursion to Montgomery, Ala., exploring the history of Jim Crow and the Civil Rights movement.

The RRA is the professional association of Reconstructionist rabbis. It represents the rabbinic voice within the Reconstructionist movement, bringing Judaism's teachings, stories, and traditions to bear on contemporary issues and challenges.

Reconstructionist Judaism emphasizes the evolving nature of Jewish civilization, promotes democratic participation in decision-making, and, from its inception a century ago, has lowered barriers to inclusion in Jewish life.