

2018-19

# Reconstructionist Learning Networks

Building a more just and joyous world



RECONSTRUCTING  
JUDAISM

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“I appreciate the warm welcome to the network and the culture of generosity and curiosity.”

—NETWORK PARTICIPANT

Reconstructionist Learning Networks connect us across geography and perspectives so we can build a more just and joyous world. In these changing times, when we are called to invent, to act and to heal, we need each other.

We draw on one another’s curiosity for inspiration and for strength, pursuing questions that lead to brave insights and innovative solutions. We depend on collective generosity and understanding, so we can learn from each other’s successes and failures.

The wisdom to build the world we seek is in the Zoom Room, our online meeting platform. Come on in. Join a Reconstructionist Learning Network today.

The **Reconstructionist Learning Networks** enable you to:

1. **Connect** with people across geography and perspectives
2. **Learn and teach** with colleagues and experts
3. **Act** to build a more just and joyous world

*Connect, learn and act  
to build  
a more just and joyous world*



## How To

Networks meet two to six times a year online through videoconferencing for approximately one hour for each session. To connect to our videoconferencing platform, Zoom, you need a computer, laptop or handheld device with a working camera, speakers and microphone. Technical support is available.

Register online at [ReconstructingJudaism.org/Networks](https://ReconstructingJudaism.org/Networks)

## What Type of Network Experience is Right for You?

**Reconstructionist Learning Networks** are free to members and staff of the affiliates of Reconstructing Judaism and members of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA). For non-members, the suggested donation is \$54 per network. To see if your synagogue or *havurah* is affiliated, please visit [www.ReconstructingJudaism.org/directory](https://www.ReconstructingJudaism.org/directory).

**Network Immersions** are in-depth, fee-based courses. Network Immersions require some coursework (reading and/or writing) and a willingness to bring your creative energy and commitment. Reconstructionist members, staff of Reconstructionist affiliates and Network subscribers receive a 10% discount.

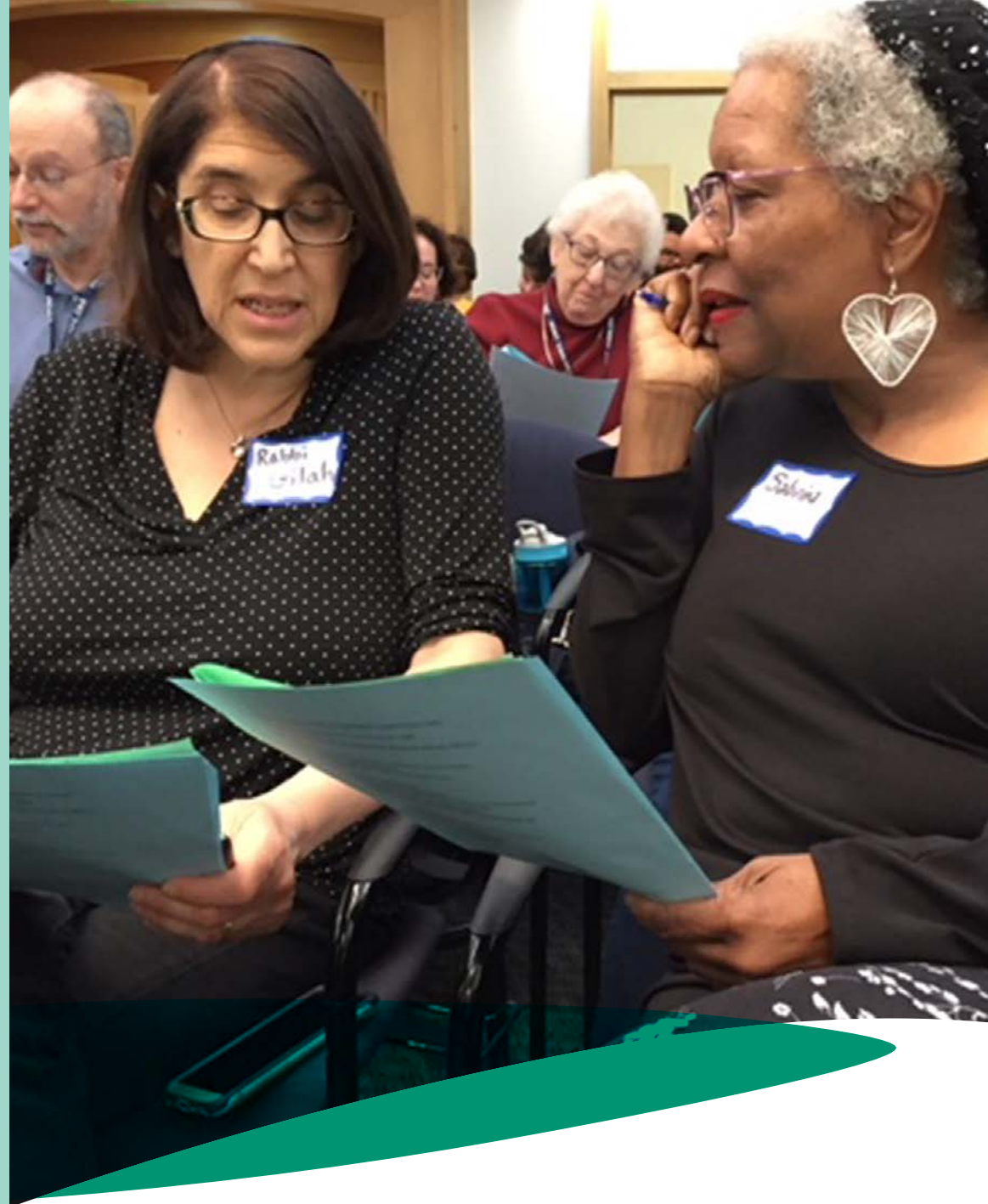
To access all Learning Networks and Network Immersions at the member rate, non-members may purchase an annual subscription for \$118. Subscribers may participate in unlimited networks and will receive a 10% discount on Network Immersions.

## Questions?

Contact [LearningNetworks@ReconstructingJudaism.org](mailto:LearningNetworks@ReconstructingJudaism.org)

“ Networks are amazing! Informative, interesting and easy to do. ”

-LAY LEADER



# Reconstructionist Learning Networks

# Innovation and Growth

## For Network Leaders: Knitting Our Networks

**Cyd Weissman**

*Assistant Vice President for Innovation and Impact, Reconstructing Judaism*

What are best practices for weaving people together in common purpose? Let's uncover the answers. By "living what we lead," we'll create a culture of generosity and share our questions, insights and resources. We'll strengthen the networks we lead and build lasting connections.

**Thursdays, 2 p.m.–3:15 p.m. EST | Oct. 18, Dec. 13, Feb. 7, April 4, May 16**

## The ABCs of Effective Grant Seeking

**Susan Berman**

*Director of Foundation Relations & Assessment, Reconstructing Judaism*

Interested in finding grant support for a project, but don't know where to start? How do you locate a grant opportunity? How do you determine if it's a likely match? What are the key elements of a letter of inquiry and a grant proposal? In two sessions, we'll provide an overview of the grant-seeking and grant-writing process, along with resources for future learning.

**Thursdays, 3 p.m.–4:15 p.m. EST | Oct. 25 and Nov. 8**

## Growth and Development for Small and Mid-Sized Congregations/*Havurot*

**Dr. Josh Peskin**

*Vice President, Strategic Advancement, Reconstructing Judaism*

Are you interested in learning best practices for sustaining and growing a small- or medium-sized congregation (up to 250 families) through more focused and structured fundraising? Our three sessions will connect you with your peers and help guide you down the road to more successful fundraising, regardless of where you are on that road now. We will cover the annual fund, planned-giving and fund-raising campaigns.

**Thursdays, 1 p.m.–2 p.m. EST | Feb. 7, Feb. 21, March 7**

## Podcasting 101

**Rachael Burgess and Bryan Schwartzman**

*Creators and hosts of #TrendingJewish, a Reconstructing Judaism podcast*

Have a story to tell or a topic to explore? Love podcasts and want to start one for yourself or your community? Together, we'll explore everything from technical requirements to how you conceive a show, approach interviews and publicize your work. While the network is aimed at novices, we welcome veteran podcasters to share experiences and learn from one another.

**Mondays, 2 p.m.–3:15 p.m. EST | Jan. 14, Jan. 28, Feb. 11, Feb. 25**



## Tech Tools for Marketing Success

**Rosa Cohen**

*Communications Associate, Reconstructing Judaism*

How can you use online marketing tools to promote your community's events and programs? Learn and share tips on using email blasts, Facebook ads, graphic design and photo editing to craft a successful marketing campaign. We'll learn from each other's experiments as we dive into cutting-edge online marketing strategies. Together, we will cultivate new tech skills.

**Tuesdays, 2 p.m.–3 p.m. EST | March 12, March 26, April 9**

# Education and Administration

## Education Directors Newly in the Lead

**Cyd Weissman**

*Assistant Vice President for Innovation and Impact, Reconstructing Judaism*

How can you effectively enact your new role as a director of education? For directors who have been in their roles three years or less, we'll focus on practical answers to your most compelling questions. We'll support one another in creating vibrant Jewish learning and living for all ages.

**Tuesdays, 1 p.m.–2 p.m. EST | Oct. 16, Nov. 27, Jan 8, March 5**

## Executive Directors Leading in a Changing World

**Dr. Tresa Grauer**

*Assistant Vice President for Affiliate Support, Reconstructing Judaism*

What is the nature of the work of Reconstructionist executive directors and administrators in our changing times? Drawing from the wisdom of the group, we will explore challenges facing executive directors and administrators to arrive at practical solutions and to deepen connections between our congregations and *havurot*. A member of the network will facilitate and set the agenda for each session. Together, we'll support each other in managing, strengthening and leading our communities.

**Thursdays, 12 p.m.–1 p.m. EST: Oct. 18, Jan. 17, March 14, May 16**  
**Additional in-person session at the Reconstructionist Convention, Nov. 15–18, Phila**

## Bringing Camp Home: Camp-Inspired Jewish Education

**Rabbi Isaac Saposnik**

*Executive Director of Camp Havaya and Havaya Arts*

What can we learn from camp to help us build our religious-school communities? Our sessions will explore the building blocks of Jewish learning and community in a camp setting, focusing on prayer, curriculum development and experiential education. We'll think critically and communally about how camp can inform our religious-school education and communities as we bridge the gap between camp and congregation.

**Tuesdays, 1 p.m.–2p.m. EST | April 2, 16, 30**

## PJ Goes to School

**Lisa Litman and Cyd Weissman**

*Director of PJ Goes to School | Assistant Vice President of Innovation and Impact, Reconstructing Judaism*

How can Jewish stories help build a strong, values-based community? Through the generous support of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, we'll explore Jewish books, resources and curricula to help your families move their values into action. Books provided include: *The Best Sukkot Pumpkin Ever*, by Laya Steinberg; *One Good Deed*, by Terri Fields; *Rosie Saves the World*, by Debbie Herman; and *Welcome*, by Stephane Barroux.

**Tuesdays, 12:30–1:30 p.m. EST | August 28, Oct. 23, Jan. 15, March 12**





# Spirituality and Justice

## Jewish Mindfulness Practice: A Day at a Time

**Taryn Wyron**

*Tikkun Olam Specialist and Project Director for Reset: Jewish Spiritual Practice for Activists*

As overscheduled, device-addicted individuals navigating a changing world, how can we use timeless technologies of Jewish prayer and practice to help us be more whole? We'll offer a model structure for how to establish a personal daily Jewish practice, inspirational resources and guided instructional videos and audio. Whether in service of your engagement with politics and justice, finding a work-life balance or discovering the power of online community in the digital age, we will work together to find spiritual practices that can guide and support us.

**Wednesday, 1 p.m.–2 p.m. EST | Oct. 10, Oct. 24, Nov. 7**

## Reconstructing Pluralism

**Rabbi Deborah Waxman**

*President of Reconstructing Judaism*

At a time of disruption and fragmentation, how can the Jewish community create the next iteration of pluralism to help us find connection and care across difference? We must go beyond civil discourse and model covenantal conversation and sacred listening. We will draw on Jewish texts and values to generate new practices and relationships that will enable us to connect with people who are challenging to us and to create the caring, abiding, vital Jewish community we aspire to be.

**Wednesdays, 12 p.m.–1 p.m. EST | Nov. 28, Dec. 5, Dec. 12**



## Racial Justice in Our Communities

**Rabbi Sandra Lawson**

*Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life and Jewish Educator at Hillel at Elon University*

How can we effect change in our communities to recognize the ethnic and racial diversity of American Jews? How can we deal effectively with the racism that permeates many Jewish spaces? As the American Jewish population changes, becoming more diverse and reflecting the makeup of larger American society, there is still an unspoken assumption that most American Jews are white/Ashkenazi. We call on rabbis and community leaders to join us in a series of conversations about how to recognize and combat racism within the Jewish community in order to create a more inclusive community for all.

**(Dates to be Announced)**

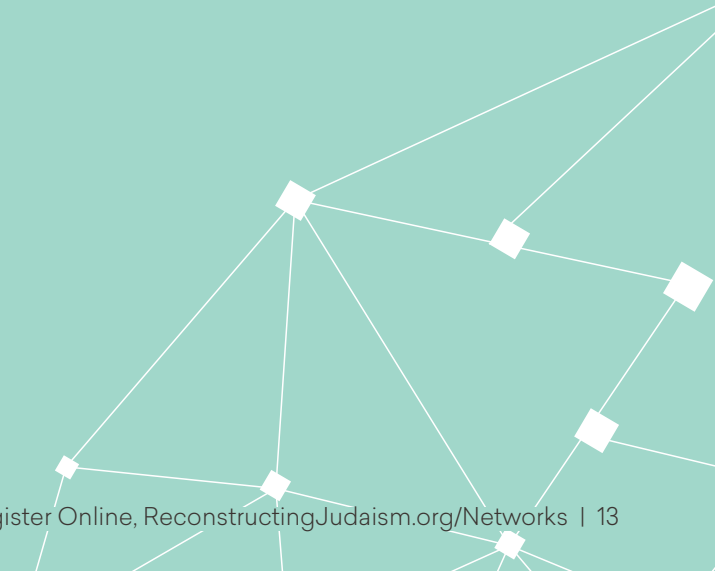




# Network Immersions

Immerse yourself in deep explorations of critical issues guided by leading experts.

WE SURVEYED PAST NETWORK PARTICIPANTS  
93% agreed they learned something of value  
from their participation





# Network Immersions

## Seasons of Our Earth

*In collaboration with Ritualwell*

**Rabbi Arthur Waskow**

Almost 40 years ago, Waskow published *Seasons of Our Joy*, a lively history/handbook that showed with great power how all the Jewish festivals were rooted in the dance of sun, moon and Earth. Now he writes to show how the different festivals (Sukkot, Hanukkah, Tu B'Shvat, Pesakh) call out for new actions to heal the wounded Earth that bore them. The nurturing Mother Earth is wounded sharply enough that she needs the life-saving help of activism from her daughters, the Seasons. How can we, in many ways the children of the festivals, draw on the festivals to heal their mother, Earth? The course will weave together ancient past and urgent life – Torah that has outlasted 30 centuries, science that has grown resplendent in the last three centuries, ecology born almost yesterday and the activist plan for tomorrow.

**Rabbi Arthur Waskow** founded and directs *The Shalom Center*, which speaks powerfully and takes action rooted deeply in Jewish and other prophetic wisdom – on behalf of peace, eco-social justice, beloved community and healing the Earth.

Thursdays 7 p.m.–8:30 p.m., EST | Oct. 4, 18, 25, Nov. 1, 8 | \$180 for five sessions



## Food Justice

*In collaboration with T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights*

**Rabbi Mordechai Liebling and Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster**

How do we become part of the solution instead of the problem for issues surrounding food justice and ethical consumption? Learn about tackling food injustice through a Jewish lens. We will examine the conditions of farmworkers past and present, organizing history and the worker-driven social-responsibility model; “voting with your fork”; the efficacy of labeling and the politics of the fair trade movement; and much more. Drawing on the partnership between T'ruah and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a worker-based human-rights organization, we will engage in critical and collaborative conversation about how Jews can be allies to food justice movements.

**Rabbi Mordechai Liebling** is the founder and director of the Social Justice Organizing Program at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), former Executive Vice-President of Jewish Funds for Justice, and Executive Director of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation. He is a founding board member of T'ruah and began his organizing career in the 1970s by organizing for a multiracial food coop.

**Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster** is Deputy Director of T'ruah, where she oversees strategic engagement and campaigns. Ordained in 2008 from the Jewish Theological Seminary, she is a noted speaker and writer on Judaism and human rights. She serves on the boards of the Alliance for Fair Food and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility.

Wednesdays, 12 p.m.–1:30 p.m. EST | Oct. 10, Oct. 24, Oct. 31, Nov. 7  
\$144 for four sessions





## Ingredients of Prayer: Writing Contemporary Liturgy

*In collaboration with Ritualwell*

**Alden Solovy**

Join acclaimed liturgist Alden Solovy on a spiritual journey to deepen your core understanding of prayer and to hone your writing skills for creating new Jewish liturgy. This workshop – blending source study, discussion and in-class writing exercises – will be mystical, playful and practical. The course is accessible for individuals of all levels of knowledge about Jewish prayer and the *siddur*. This workshop will encourage experimentation, challenging participants to find their own authentic voice(s) of prayer.

*Alden Solovy has written more than 700 pieces of new liturgy, often challenging the boundaries between poetry, meditation, personal growth and prayer. Alden's third book, This Grateful Heart: Psalms and Prayers for a New Day, was released in March 2017 by CCAR Press. His other books are: Jewish Prayers of Hope and Healing and Haggadah Companion: Meditations and Readings.*

**Tuesdays, 12 p.m.–1 p.m. EST | Oct. 16, Oct. 23, Oct. 30, Nov. 6, Nov. 13**  
**\$180 for five sessions**



## Death and Mourning: Jewish Roots and Contemporary Ritual

*In collaboration with Ritualwell*

**Rabbi Linda Holtzman**

What do we want done with our bodies after we die? Burial or cremation? In a casket or a green cemetery plot? What kind of ritual do we imagine taking place? In what variety of ways can we celebrate someone's life once they have died? Or can we do something while they are still alive? What if the goodbye is for a family member who isn't Jewish? How does traditional *shivah* work? Are there alternatives to *shivah*? We will explore a range of approaches to creating rituals that help us mark the final journey from this world. We will examine traditional Jewish approaches to death and mourning and the values that underlie them. Through study, discussion and the option of designing our own rituals, we'll delve into the many ways we can create meaning around this sacred transition.

*Rabbi Linda Holtzman is a Reconstructionist rabbi on the faculty of RRC, focusing on Rabbinic Formation. She is the rabbi of the Tikkun Olam Chavurah and the founder and organizer of the Reconstructionist Chevra Kaddisha of Philadelphia.*

**Wednesdays, 1 p.m.–2 p.m. EST | Jan 9, 16, 23 | \$108 for three sessions**



## Celebrating and Creating Jewish Queer Ritual

*In collaboration with Ritualwell*

**Rabbi David Dunn Bauer**

Question: What makes a Jewish ritual queer — the *keva* (structure) or the *kavannah* (intention)?

Answer: Yes.

We will examine traditional Jewish texts and rituals to find the queerness within them, then take a look at the contemporary queer rituals housed on Ritualwell, such as prayers for coming out, wedding ceremonies, name-change ceremonies, blessings for gender transition, mourning rituals and more. Drawing inspiration from these classic and modern sources, we will work independently and collaboratively to create queer rituals to be shared with one another and submitted to Ritualwell if we so choose.

**Rabbi David Dunn Bauer** is acting director of the Office of Recruitment, Admissions and Student Life at RRC. In addition to a decade of congregational work, he served for four years as social justice programming director for Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in NYC. In 2011 he became the first Jew to earn the Certificate in Sexuality and Religion from Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley. He is a sought-after teacher on a range of topics, including “Queer Theology, Sex and Gender in the Hebrew Bible” and the “Torah of HIV.”

**Wednesdays, 7 p.m.–8 p.m. EST | Feb. 6, Feb. 13, Feb. 20 | \$108 for three sessions**



## Embodied Ritual for Trauma, Resilience and Healing

*In collaboration with Ritualwell*

**Rabbi Jessica Rosenberg**

Our bodies, minds and spirits have been shaped by what’s happened to us and the stories we tell about ourselves. We will explore how trauma theory and the tools of Jewish ritual can help us to grieve and process hurts we’ve experienced; build resilience and power for surviving and thriving in oppressive conditions; and experience joy, growth and celebration. We will explore how to acknowledge trauma in public ritual spaces safely, responsibly and accessibly. You will have the opportunity to design your own ritual(s) in a supportive and inclusive space. You will come away with the knowledge and practical tools to build healing rituals for yourself and your communities.

**Rabbi Jessica Rosenberg** is a Reconstructionist rabbi born, raised and based in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs. She became a rabbi in order to learn our people’s diverse and nuanced histories, and create spaces, ritual and organizing that help transform our relationship to past, present and future.

**Wednesdays, 7 p.m.–8 p.m. EST | March 27, April 3, April 10, April 17, April 24  
\$180 for five sessions**





## Training Jewish Spiritual Directors

Rabbi Jacob Staub and Dr. Barbara Breitman

Join a new two-year program, *Bekhol Derakhekha Da'ehu* (Know God in All Your Ways), open to anyone interested in becoming a spiritual director. Program components will include four courses, weekly calls with partners, meeting with an individual spiritual director and supervised spiritual direction with one's own directee. All parts of the program are available as distance learning, except for two year-long classes that will meet monthly on Wednesday evenings at RRC in Wyncote, PA.

**Rabbi Jacob Staub** is professor of Jewish Philosophy and Spirituality at RRC. He co-founded and co-directed *Bekhol Levavkha: A Program for Training Jewish Spiritual Directors* at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. He is the founding director of the Spiritual Direction Program RRC. He is a spiritual director and supervises spiritual directors. He co-authored *Exploring Judaism: A Reconstructionist Approach*.

**Barbara E. Breitman**, DMin, LCSW, co-founder of the Spiritual Direction program at RRC, has served as the director of training since the program's inception. A founding teacher of *Lev Shomea*, the first institute to train spiritual directors in the Jewish tradition, she has helped to establish Spiritual Direction programs at Hebrew College, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, and been a master teacher at *Bekhol Levavkha*. She is co-editor of *Jewish Spiritual Direction: An Innovative Guide from Traditional and Contemporary Sources*.

**\$2,500/year for two years**

Please contact [MBuhring@rrc.edu](mailto:MBuhring@rrc.edu) for more information and an application.



## Forgiveness and Spirituality for Therapists

Rabbi Elisa Goldberg

This interactive workshop will help the clinician to understand and support clients grappling with the process of seeking forgiveness and those working to forgive. Concrete spiritual and religious resources will be offered as another set of tools for therapeutic intervention. We will explore issues of forgiveness, forgetting and letting go. We will identify the issues unique to the person asking for forgiveness and the one being asked. You will gain effective therapeutic interventions to support making amends and letting go. In addition, you will learn to help clients access their own spiritual and religious resources to facilitate forgiveness.

Although the program will use Jewish teachings and traditions to frame the discussion, all religious practices will be open to exploration. This interactive course is designed for mental-health professionals and all living out the human condition.

After completing all sections of the course, participants will receive (upon request) a certificate for 3 hours of Continuing Education approved by the PA State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors. If you live outside of Pennsylvania, you will need to consult your state licensing organization to determine if these will be accepted. Most states will accept CEUs approved by other states.

**Rabbi Elisa Goldberg** has honed the art of pastoral presence through almost two decades of chaplaincy and spiritual direction and hundreds of holy moments at the side of another. She authored a guidebook on spirituality and recovery with Drexel University and consults with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities on the integration of spiritually informed care.

**Thursdays, 1 p.m.–2 p.m. EST | Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13 | \$108 for three sessions**

# Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations

Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations is a new web platform that promotes the ongoing evolution of the Jewish community through conversation about pressing issues facing the Jewish people today. Learn more at [Evolve.ReconstructingJudaism.org](http://Evolve.ReconstructingJudaism.org).

The following conversations are co-sponsored by the RRA and limited to members of the RRA and RRC students.



## Judaism and Gender Identity

What is gender? What can we learn about gender identity from traditional Jewish texts and practices? How do our communities become ever more affirming of transgender and non-binary people?

**Dates TBA**



## Contemporary Approaches to Spiritual Practice

How do we articulate spiritual experiences in a contemporary idiom? How do we define prayer? Explorations of different modes of Jewish spiritual practice.

**Dates TBA**

## ReconstructingJudaism.org/Networks

Inspired to lead a Reconstructionist Learning Network? Energized to gather folks across geography and perspectives around a critical issue?

**LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN.**

Contact Cyd Weissman,  
Assistant Vice President of Innovation and Impact,  
Reconstructing Judaism,

[CWeissman@ReconstructingJudaism.org](mailto:CWeissman@ReconstructingJudaism.org)

See you at Convention

# Philadelphia

November 15–18, 2018

Learn more and register at  
[reconvention2018.org](http://reconvention2018.org)







# RECONSTRUCTING JUDAISM

Reconstructionist Learning Network  
1299 Church Road, Wyncote, PA 19095

