OUR PRESIDENT

Q&A Rabbi Deborah Waxman: Reconstructionism has expansive view of Judaism
Canadian Jewish News
April 29
Rabbi Deborah Waxman, who was appointed head of the Reconstructionist movement and president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), the movement’s seminary, last year, is both the first woman and the first lesbian to lead a Jewish seminary and a major Jewish movement.

Trail-blazing leader visits the Northwest to inspire, learn
The Jewish Sound
February 27
In 1935, Lithuania-born Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan wrote “Judaism as a Civilization,” a book that reimagined the religion as a way of living and became the foundation for the Reconstructionist Movement.

Four Rabbis, Five Opinions on Israel Elections and Bibi
Jewish Exponent
March 25
Amid all the voices providing post-game analysis of the Israeli elections, there have been some predictable — and not so predictable — responses from various religious segments of the American Jewish community.

Rabbi Deborah Waxman to lead dialogue at University of Connecticut
Norwich Bulletin
April 22
Rabbi Deborah Waxman, of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, will lead a public dialogue called “What is Zionism's Role in North American Jewish Life Today?” at 7 p.m. April 23 in the Konover Auditorium at the Dodd Center of the University of Connecticut, Whitney Road, Storrs.

OUR FACULTY

Rabbis, ministers, imams denounce SEPTA ad
The Philadelphia Tribune
April 10
In many ways Masjidullah in West Oak Lane is the bridge between the three Abrahamic faiths present in Philadelphia. The edifice at the corner of Washington Lane and Limekiln Pike was once a synagogue before it was home to the West Oak Lane Church of God —who sold it to the mosque.

Netanyahu in Congress: Confronting a Train Wreck
Huffington Post
February 19
Having made an annual gift to Israel (usually through my local Jewish
federation) without a break for 41 years, I have always supported the Zionist vision of a democratic, pluralistic state that -- while majority Jewish -- would always treat every citizen equally.

**Standing With American Muslims, Upholding American Values**
*Jewish Exponent*
March 10
With news from Paris, Copenhagen, North Carolina and Iraq filling the morning papers these days, many of us are wondering: What is going on in the Muslim world? How are Muslims in America responding and, most importantly, how can Jews and Christians ally with Muslims to help uphold the values of religious pluralism on which America is based?

**Interfaith group speaks out against ads on SEPTA buses in West Oak Lane**
*Montgomery News*
April 16
Some members of Northwest Philadelphia’s faith community and political circles want advertisements singling out Muslims on SEPTA buses to come down.

**A Guide to Jewish Practice Author’s Event with Rabbi David Teutsch**
*Jewish Exponent*
March 10
Please join editor Rabbi David Teutsch and two contributors, Rabbi Jacob Staub and Rabbi Deborah Waxman, for a stimulating discussion on *A Guide to Jewish Practice Volume 3 - The Life Cycle*.

**Who Gets to Say What Is 'Islamic'?**
*Huffington Post*
February 25
"It is Islamic. Very Islamic!" That was Graham Wood's description of ISIS in his recent cover story for *The Atlantic Monthly* "What Isis Really Wants and How to Stop it."

**Politicians and religious clerics denounce anti-Islam bus ads**
*Philadelphia Daily News*
April 6
In a show of solidarity, interdenominational clergy and elected officials gathered yesterday at the Masjidullah Mosque in East Mount Airy to denounce the anti-Muslim advertisements that have stirred controversy since a federal judge last month ordered SEPTA to run them on buses.

**A Time for Free Speech... And More of It**
*Huffington Post*
April 9
When Justice Louis Brandeis affirmed the freedom of speech in a Supreme Court decision in 1927, he was well aware that such liberty made possible the "dissemination of noxious doctrine." As Jews and Christians in Philadelphia prepared for the weekend in which we celebrate Passover and Easter, just such sickening sentiments began
appearing on 84 buses in our public transit system.

The Recent Attacks on NIF: Who, What and Why
Huffington Post
March 18
Those of us committed to democracy vigorously defend freedom of speech as an essential tool for effective democracy and a substantial benefit guaranteed by it. The enemies of democracy on both the extreme right and the extreme left use freedom of speech as a weapon.

The Work of Selma Marches On
Jewish Exponent
March 17
The 1965 march in Selma, Ala., changed America. President Lyndon Johnson wrote on March 15, 1965: “At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom.

Interfaith group holds conference on climate morality
The Philadelphia Tribune
February 27
The timing of Philadelphia Interfaith’s Power & Light to have their annual conference seemed providential. The group that has previously organized rallies against crude oil bomber trains coming through the Philadelphia area gathered on the heels of an oil train’s derailment in West Virginia on Tuesday, Feb. 17, and the eve of another in New Jersey on Feb. 23.

A Quid Pro Quo for Officiating at Interfaith Weddings?
The Jewish Exponent
April 28
Not long ago, I received a call from a young bride-to-be who was nearly in tears. “I just got off the phone with a rabbi,” she said, “who said that she officiates at interfaith weddings.

Does New York Jewish Federation Bear Some Blame for String of Charity Scandals?
The Jewish Daily Forward
February 11
Does the New York Jewish federation’s network of charities have a corruption problem? New York’s Jewish not-for-profits are falling like dominoes.

Too Much Insularity May Be Problem at Scandal-Ridden Jewish Social Service Agencies
Nonprofit Quarterly
February 12
In New York, four large, high-profile Jewish social service agencies have been rocked by major scandal in recent years. These agencies are linked (along with around 95 others) by one network: the UJA-Federation of New York.
As they walked together toward the bridal canopy, the chuppah in Hebrew, their steps were slow and measured. But it was not only the solemnity of the moment that created the pace. There was something more.

Forsaking one promise about dead bodies to honor another

Newsworks
January 7
Rabbi Linda Holtzman made a promise to her partner years ago that, despite her fascination with death, she would never touch a dead human body. When a member of her synagogue confesses to her that he is dying from AIDS — and requests that she prepare his body for burial in the traditional Jewish way — she promises to honor his wishes.

Revisiting the Holy and the Ordinary (Parshat Shemini, Leviticus 9:1-11:47)
The Huffington Post
April 15
This week's Torah portion includes, in the words of anthropologist Mary Douglas, a "hoary old puzzle from biblical scholarship." As Douglas put it, "Why should some locusts, but not all, be unclean? Why should the frog be clean and the mouse and the hippopotamus unclean? What have chameleons, moles and crocodiles got in common that they should be listed together?"

Opening the Door to Jewish Spirituality
The Jewish Journal of Massachusetts
February 26
For over half a century Rabbi Arthur Green has taught Jewish mysticism, Hasidism and theology. He recently noticed a new trend. "Young people are asking a question that was never asked in my generation.

OUR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

Responding to Suffering by Counting the Omer
The New York Times
May 1
One morning last week, Lance Laver went to visit a dying friend. Mr. Laver is Jewish and his friend is a retired Episcopal priest, and they had formed a bond over nearly a decade of working together here on an annual interfaith walk for peace.

After disillusionment, finding his way back to Judaism
Philadelphia Inquirer
April 6
As a boy growing up in Cherry Hill, Michael Perice was in awe of his rabbi, Fred Neulander. "I remember him standing up there in front of hundreds of people," says Perice, now a rabbinical student. "He was a
master orator. He was magnetic."

**Islamic radicalism poses dilemma for Jews in interfaith dialogue**
*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*
February 3
After the deadly terrorist attacks in Paris last month, Kari Alterman heard from every one of her Detroit-area Muslim dialogue partners, all of them calling to express their sadness and concern. They just didn’t do so publicly.

**Unconventional congregation engages first rabbi**
*Virginia Beach Beacon*
February 26
When Ellen Jaffe-Gill arrived in Hampton Roads, she didn't intend on taking on the leadership of a temple as a rabbi. God had other plans.

**Calling All Jewish Millennials: Here's How To Host Your Own Passover Seder**
*Huffington Post*
April 2
Ella Fainaru was a college student at Columbia University, separated from her family in Tel Aviv, Israel, when she realized how much she missed celebrating the Jewish holidays. She missed the traditions, the songs, the food and all that went along with the occasions.

**Local Rabbis on the Israeli Election**
*Chicago Tonight*
March 24
Last week’s election in Israel has brought strong reactions from many quarters and especially from American Jews -- with opinions ranging from strong support for the outcome to blistering criticism. While political debate within Israel is famously raucous, the American Jewish community has, in general, stood steadfastly behind Israel’s governments and actions.

**Netanyahu's speech viewed by some as serious, but overly political**
*WDEL 101.7 FM*
March 3
Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's controversial speech in front of Congress was viewed by most of Delaware's Congressional delegation, with those present finding the address to be serious but intertwined with political undertones.

**Blacks and Jews: oppression not the same**
*New Jersey Jewish News*
January 28
Juxtaposing ancient biblical texts with the recent police shootings of unarmed black men in Ferguson, Mo., and Staten Island, Rabbi Amy Small told a gathering of about a dozen people just two days after Martin Luther King Day that despite the similarities characterizing the persecution and subjugation of Jews and blacks throughout history, “our oppression was not the same.”
Rabbi speaks at NUDivest event on Israel-Palestine conflict
The Daily Northwestern
January 29
Rabbi Brant Rosen, co-chairman of the Jewish Voice for Peace rabbinical council, spoke Thursday night to a crowd of about 60 students, faculty and Evanston community members about the importance of demonstration and conversation regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Earth-based Judaism takes root in Sonoma
Jweekly
January 29
People are drawn to West Sonoma County for a variety of reasons: wine, romantic getaways, country roads, gorgeous coastline, food. But nobody goes there to plug into the Jewish environmental movement. Until now.

Rev. John Steinbruck And The Power Of One
The Jewish Week
March 31
If a picture is worth a thousand words, a life counts for a million or more. I recently attended a memorial service for Rev. John Steinbruck, who died March 1 in Delaware at the age of 84.

US interfaith leaders leave Holy Land with deeper sense of possibilities
Episcopal News Service
February 4
A tapestry of words such as “vulnerability” and “fragility,” “courage” and “dignity” were woven into a common thread as Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders from the United States concurred that they’d been transformed by a weeklong pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Religion Update Spring 2015: In Profile
Publishers Weekly
February 27
“Contemporary culture greets aging with fear and loathing,” Dayle A. Friedman says. “We dread dying, and anything that hints of it.” Rabbi Friedman—founder of Hiddur: The Center for Aging and Judaism at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote, Pa.—is the author of Jewish Wisdom for Growing Older: Finding Your Grit & Grace Beyond Midlife (Jewish Lights, Mar.).

Advisors hope to broaden religious, spiritual life
The Swarthmore Phoenix
March 5
Last month, the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Managers deliberated the state of on-campus religious and spiritual life, and the importance of enhancing it.

Wellesley hires interim rabbi to serve as Hillel director
The Wellesley News
February 4
Two months after the abrupt dismissal of Jewish chaplain David Bernat and Hillel Director Patti Sheinman, the College has hired Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz to serve as interim rabbi and Hillel director.

There’s a new rabbi in town
The Swellesley Report
March 31
Wellesley College has appointed Audrey Marcus Berkman as the new Rabbi and Director of Wellesley College Hillel, beginning in the 2015-2016 academic year.

Rabbi Audrey Berkman chosen to head Wellesley Hillel staff
The Wellesley News
April 8
Following a semester-long search and input from students, faculty, staff and alumnae, Wellesley College announced the appointment of Rabbi Audrey Berkman as the new Rabbi and Director of Wellesley College Hillel. Rabbi Berkman will begin her role in the 2015-2016 academic year.

Who Gets to Criticize Your Religion?
Interfaith Family
March 19
I remember the day I introduced our kids to The Prince of Egypt. I loved this movie, and I was excited to be sharing it with them. Then my partner entered the living room: “How can we teach our kids these stories?!” The slavery, the plagues, and worse, God as a killer of babies.

Temple Emanuel hires assistant rabbi
Jewish News
March 25
Temple Emanuel of Tempe has announced that it has hired Jason Bonder to fill the role of assistant rabbi and educator.

OUR COLLEGE

Where Are All The Non-Orthodox Rabbis?
The Jewish Daily Forward
February 18
Lev Meirowitz Nelson grew up at a Conservative Jewish day school and a Conservative synagogue. When he decided to apply for rabbinical school, however, he didn’t even consider a Conservative seminary.

Is American Judaism Ready for Interfaith Rabbis?
The New Republic
January 26
By his sophomore year at Brown University, Lex Rofes knew he wanted to pursue a career in Judaism. Whether as a rabbi or a teacher, he was committed to working in the service of American Jewry. So when a recruiter from a rabbinical college came to speak in his junior year, Rofes made sure he was in attendance. “I was
certainly thinking of it as a real option,” he said.

Rabbinical College considers ordaining interfaith rabbis as Jewish intermarriages rise
World Religion News
February 2
It’s a firm policy among most rabbinical colleges in the US that those who are in interfaith relationships may not be admitted or ordained. While the number of interfaith couples across a number of denominations is growing steadily, Jews in interfaith relationships are basically excluded from pursuing a faith-related career such as rabbi or teacher.

Pursuing Peace in a World at War
Jewish Exponent
January 14
While the world’s attention was captivated by violence in Paris last week, a different, quieter, drama unfolded in suburban Philadelphia. Over four days, eight rabbinical students and five rabbis at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote immersed themselves in the study of “The Rabbi as Rodef Shalom/Pursuer of Peace.”

OUR CONGREGATIONS

Why Some Synagogues Are Using Mission Trips To ‘Heal The World’
Huffington Post
January 19
Christian missionary work spans the globe. But Jewish mission trips? Your average American synagogue is not planning a congregational visit to a poor corner of the world. But a few are starting to, and some rabbis are lobbying for more to follow.

In Haiti, Finding Our Mission By Helping Others
The Jewish Week
January 20
When I accepted an invitation from the Israeli organization, Tevel B’Tzedek, to travel to Haiti a few months after the devastating earthquake in 2010, little did I know that it would lead to one of the most fulfilling projects of my rabbinic career.

Roxborough's Mishkan Shalom celebrates Rabbi Yael Levy's 20 years of service
Montgomery News
May 2
Mishkan will host a special program and dinner honoring Rabbi Yael Levy’s 20 years of service. “I was really excited and grateful,” said Levy, upon learning of the program, titled “Celebrating Rabbi Yael Levy: Counting Our Blessings.”

Beth El in Hammonton celebrates ordination of its spiritual leader
Jewish Community Voice
January 7
Disconnected from religion after her bat mitzvah, Abby Michaleski was seeking a more meaningful and joyous connection to Judaism when she discovered Temple Beth El in Hammonton.

Mission trips aren't just for Christians anymore as Jews aim to ‘heal the world’
Religion News Service
January 15
Your average American synagogue is not planning a congregational visit to a poor corner of the world. But a few are starting to, and some rabbis are lobbying for more to follow.

Is the Jewish culture slipping away?
Canada.com
January 31
It used to be you were Jewish or you weren’t. The former spoke bits of Yiddish: “mazel tov, you schmuck,” ate rye, kimmel and black bread, and every Friday, there was chicken soup on the stove. The latter ate Wonder Bread and Campbell’s chicken noodle — cuisine we envied.

Believers seek common ground as Passover, Easter converge this weekend
Baltimore Sun
April 3
When Ilise Marrazzo was growing up, Easter was one of her favorite holidays. But the celebration often left her feeling perplexed. Her father was Catholic, and she loved candy and Easter egg hunts as much as the next kid. But as a Conservative Jew, she knew few others who observed even the cultural aspects of the Christian holiday.

"Sounds of Peace and Justice" brings out talent, fun and praise
Montgomery Media
March 3
It was night of diversity, commonality and music at Mishkan Shalom on Feb. 28. The event, “Sounds of Peace and Justice” brought together an ecumenical crowd of Jews, Muslims and Christians, creating a new musical community with songs and inspiring stories.

Fairfield County’s only Reconstructionist congregation closes
Connecticut Jewish Ledger
March 18
In February 2013, on the occasion of its 40th anniversary, the Fellowship for Jewish Learning reinvented itself as Selah: Fairfield County’s Reconstructionist Congregation. Last month, after a two-year run, Selah closed its doors. The decision was announced by the Selah board to congregants and friends in a brief email on Friday, Feb. 13.

Congregation Beth Hatikvah in Summit celebrates spring with family picnic
Independent Press
April 27
Congregation Beth Hatikvah in Summit has announced plans for what it’s billing as the "best Lag B’omer picnic ever," a free event on May 16 for all families who want to celebrate the coming of spring.

OUR CAMP
Program connects discount-seeking families with camps eager to broaden their recruitment base
Jewish Telegraphic Agency
January 16
Andrea Lass’ son and daughter had their hearts set last year on going to Camp JRF, a Jewish overnight camp recommended by their friends. But with her husband recently laid off, the New Jersey mom didn’t see how the family could manage the expense, even with a scholarship.

OUR MOVEMENT LEADERS
Education ‘visionary’ Linda Jum dies at 61
New Jersey Jewish News
March 11
Linda C. Jum, Jewish educator, Reconstructionist movement leader, and advocate for Jews from multiracial backgrounds, died March 9. She was 61.

**Growing Rabbis**
*eJewish Philanthropy*
April 19
What goes into the making of a 21st Century rabbinical leader? In this latest series of essays to be published on eJP, we share thoughts from Rabbi David Teutsch, Ph.D., Rabbi Ellen Lewis, Rabbi Daniel Cotzin Burg and Rabbi Hayim Herring, Ph.D.

**Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association names new president**
*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*
May 5
Rabbi Nina Mandel of Pennsylvania has been appointed the new president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association.

**Leading In Faith**
*The Broad Experience*
April 5
In the wake of Easter and Passover, we have a show on women in religious life. It's far more common than it used to be to see women in roles such as rabbi or priest. But these hard-won jobs aren't without their frustrations as well as their triumphs.

**300+ Rabbis Sign Rabbinic Letter on the Climate Crisis**
*The Huffington Post*
May 15
More than 300 rabbis have signed a Rabbinic Letter on the Climate Crisis, calling for vigorous action to prevent worsening climate disruption, to seek eco-social justice, and to shape a world of shared sustainable abundance.

**Rabbis call for eco-social justice in letter on climate crisis**
*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*
May 18
More than 250 rabbis signed on to a letter on the climate crisis that calls for greater involvement in fighting for eco-justice.

**A Rabbinic Response to the Exhibit in Garland, TX**
*The Huffington Post*
May 13
The news from Garland, Texas, last week was appalling. Two depraved young men, possibly motivated by ISIS propaganda, opened fire on people at an exhibit of cartoons and caricatures of the prophet Muhammad.

**Mt. Airy author ‘a megaphone’ for women around the world**
*Chestnut Hill Local*
March 20
Longtime Mt. Airy resident Betsy Teutsch is embarking on a book tour with the recent release of “100 Under $100; One Hundred Tools for Empowering Global Women.” Three years in the making and published by She Writes Press, the author outlines over 100 initiatives that cost under $100 each, empower women around the world and encourage readers to get involved and become educated on global issues.
Not all of us get to plan our own funeral. Organize our own taharah. Write our own obituary. But Linda C. Jum willed herself from a coma into consciousness in the days before she died on March 9, and rehearsed her exit.

More than 300 rabbis have signed a Rabbinic Letter on the Climate Crisis, calling for vigorous action to prevent worsening climate disruption, to seek eco-social justice, and to shape a world of shared sustainable abundance.

As the Reconstructionist movement is considering ordaining intermarried students for the first time at its rabbinical school, its rabbinical association has a new leader. Rabbi Nina Mandel, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth El in Sunbury, Pa., was announced last week as the new president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association.

Rabbi Nina H. Mandel, ordained at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote in 2003, has been named president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association.

More than 300 rabbis have signed a Rabbinic Letter on the Climate Crisis, calling for vigorous action to prevent worsening climate disruption, to seek eco-social justice, and to shape a world of shared sustainable abundance.

More than 250 rabbis signed on to a letter on the climate crisis that calls for greater involvement in fighting for eco-justice.