Nicholas Renner

Nick grew up in Chapel Hill, NC, and in the Jewish community of Beth El in Durham, NC. He graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Arts in international comparative studies. He has played in musical groups everywhere he has lived, from Chapel Hill and Durham to Netanya, Israel, and, most recently, Philadelphia.

During rabbinical school, Nick worked in the admissions office at RRC; on the No’ar Hadash Israel Experience; at the University of the Arts Hillel in Philadelphia; at the Mekom Torah high school program in Media, PA; at Hillel’s Schusterman International Center in Washington, DC; at Congregation Shirat Ha Yam in Nantucket, MA; and at the University of Delaware Hillel in Newark, DE. At RRC, Nick served on the College’s Kesher and Limmud committees. He is sincerely grateful to have received the Ziegelman Scholarship at RRC.

Nick is deeply appreciative of the years and years of support and love from parents, grandparents and family. He also is appreciative of all of the Torah he learned at RRC and hopes to embody the best of what he learned. The faculty, rabbis and students of RRC have provided a profound vision for a Jewish future that is both deeply rooted and boldly innovative. Nick is thankful to have learned with them and from them. While he has had many rabbanim during his journey and is extremely appreciative of all they have imparted, he feels particularly blessed for the Torah he has learned from Rabbis Jacob Staub, ’77, and Steven Sager, ’78.

Nick thanks those friends, band-mates and fellow travelers who have also been part of the journey. They never failed to provide great wisdom and humor along the way.

Last, words are inadequate to thank Kimmy for her constant guidance, humor, support, wisdom and love. Here’s to the journey ahead …

The bat kol said, “These and those are the words of the living God …”
—Tractate Eruvin 13b, Babylonian Talmud

In Eruvin, a divine voice calls out that contradictory ideas are sacred. As a rabbi I aspire to uplift what is holy in the complexities and contradictions of life. These complexities include living in Jewish tradition and the West, and remaining connected to our history while looking to our future. They mean taking part in the rich conversation between sages and voices that may not have lived in the same era, yet share a profound Torah. I aspire to travel these spaces and to dwell in the sacred, holy richness of these many complexities with all of my fellow travelers.