Rabbis’ Biographies and Vision Statements

Doris Jane Dyen

Doris grew up in Connecticut, in a culturally Jewish family. The experience of preparing for an adult bat mitzvah deepened her desire to explore her Jewish identity. Twenty years later—after careers in ethnomusicology and cultural conservation—this journey led her to rabbinical school. The process of learning and growing in midlife crystallized at Reconstructionist Congregation Dor Hadash of Pittsburgh, where she served as president and co-founded the religious school. During her six years at RRC, she held positions in the Philadelphia area as a chaplaincy intern and as a student rabbi at three synagogues. She also served as a cantor and service leader at congregations in the Pittsburgh area. She completed the Davvenen’ Leaders Training Institute as well as two units of Clinical Pastoral Education. She is working toward certification as a mashpiyah (Jewish spiritual director).

Her Hebrew name at birth, Dina Yakova, honored her paternal grandparents, Rabbi Jacob Dyen and Dina Dyen. Her parents, Isidore and Edith, gave her an appreciation for people of all backgrounds. Her maternal grandmother, Jennie, told her stories and sang folk songs about Jewish life in the old country. Her “second mom,” Aunt Esther Freed, taught her to live each moment to the fullest, and her Uncle Max kept her laughing. Their loving spirits live in her heart. Doris is grateful to those whose wisdom has accompanied her through her rabbinical training. Lewis Gumerman, Bilha Witt, Rabbi Shawn Zevit and Chaya Feig started her on this road. She treasures her teachers and fellow students and the staff at RRC and the Conservative Yeshiva; her mentors Rabbi Marcia Prager and Reb Sarah Cohen; the P’nai Or community; and the dear ones who cheered her on during this encore adventure—her husband, Deane, her family from coast to coast and Australia, and her many friends in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Thank you all!

Yourrownatelachadomelkof

ביהי תזרי הלפש המאמץ בו Авיוו מעש טוב... זכמי קי בזרחי לחשש שוץ...
עוף למשה בנטצמו עוז איוו דבר טוב... זכמי יחשיש ולכפי זוד
הנקודות טובות, עלידיד-דה מעשי גוונים

You must search to find some bit of goodness in him. … Similarly you must search to find the good in yourself. … It is by gathering these bits of goodness that (divine) melodies are made.
—Likkutei Moharan I 282

These words from the Mishnah and Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav speak to the soul-purpose that animates my life and my rabbinate: to nurture the best in every person and inspire people to treat each other with compassion and respect.