Leslie Ann Hilgeman

Leslie's journey into the rabbinate follows a 15-year career as a journalist, bureau chief and editor—mostly working in Latin America and the Caribbean. In each position she held, Leslie sought to serve a constituency, bridge gaps between groups, and help guide and build community by sharing timely and useful information.

While at RRC, Leslie has been privileged to serve many Jewish communities. These include Reconstructionist congregations Temple B’nai Abraham in Bordentown, NJ; Congregation Am Haskalah in Allentown, PA; and Congregation Beth Israel in Media, PA. She also has served Temple B’nai Israel in Burlington, NJ; Bristol Jewish Center in Bristol, PA; Goucher College Hillel in Baltimore; the Abramson Center for Jewish Life in Horsham, PA; and Brightview Senior Living in East Norriton, PA.

Interfaith and justice work also are great passions, and she has pursued them through coursework, off-campus seminars, fellowships and internship work. She served for a year organizing programs at the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia and spent a second year organizing interfaith engagement programs through RRC.

Leslie is grateful to her many rabbis, teachers, colleagues and students—in Miami, Jerusalem, Wyncote and elsewhere—who saw her rabbinical potential and encouraged her ever forward. She is grateful to her parents, close family and friends—especially her dear Ilan Glazer—for helping her to realize this new life. She also is particularly grateful to have received the Ira and Judith Eisenstein Scholarship at RRC.

The desire to serve, educate, bridge gaps and build community is still an essential part of Leslie’s calling. She looks forward to many great adventures ahead!

כִּי עֶקֶר הַחַיִּים הָאֵא מזָּמֵן

… for the life of the heart flows from seeing the spring.
—“Tale of the Seven Beggars” by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov
(interpretive translation by Arthur Green)

This quote from Rebbe Nachman’s deep, meaningful tale speaks to values that are dear to my identity and vision as a rabbi. I have come to lead using hokhmah halev—the wisdom of the heart—to instruct my work with individuals and communities alike. How essential and timely is the call to face conflict, despair, isolation and pain with love and care—to offer bridges and community when divisions reign.

For me, the spring in Rebbe Nachman’s story is God, the Source of All. The spring is an image that is refreshing, dynamic, nourishing and timeless. So, too, are the options for Jewish connection today and always.

And the importance of the heart seeing the spring speaks to me about cultivating faith. May we always recognize, in those moments when we don’t see the wellspring of our faith, that the spring is, indeed, still and ever there.

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