



Hannah Michelle Spiro

Hannah grew up in Bethesda, Md., and graduated from the University of Maryland *summa cum laude*. The university recognized her contributions to the LGBT student community by presenting her with the Lorde-O’Leary Award. At RRC, Hannah received the Evelyn R. Mehlman Jewish Music Award twice and the A. Walter Socolow Writing Prize. Hannah has written three collections of original Jewish music: “Aliyah,” “It Is Upon Us” and “New Jewish Love Songs.”

While at RRC, Hannah interned at Reconstructionist, Reform, and Conservative congregations from Boston to Florida, and at the University of Delaware Hillel. She completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Hebrew SeniorLife and studied in Israel for a year that was richly academic. Hannah is now the spiritual leader and education director of Hill Havurah, an independent congregation on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Hannah thanks her fiercely supportive husband, David Pfeferman; her nurturing parents, Kathleen and Daniel; her inspiring sister Rebecca; her passionate grandmother Evelyn; and her beloved fellow graduates.

Insofar as our mind knows itself and the body from the perspective of eternity, it necessarily has knowledge of God, and knows that it is in God and is conceived through God.
(Baruch Spinoza, Ethics Part V, Proposition 30)

R. Akiva said: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’ (Leviticus 19:18) is a great principle, so that you must not say, Since I have been put to shame, let my neighbor be put to shame, since I have been cursed, let my neighbor be cursed. R. Tanhuma said: If you do so, know whom you put to shame, for ‘In the image of God did God make him’ (Genesis 1:27).
(*Genesis Rabbah* 24:7)

I believe with perfect faith that – truly, literally, necessarily –
We are made in the image of God
We are the image of God (together!)
And we are in God.

Implications:
Love and wrestle with each other
Love and wrestle with the world
Love the Torah that helps us remember
And wrestle with the Torah that tempts us to forget.