

February 2018

AVIS DIMOND MILLER

5502 Western Avenue
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815
Tel. (301) 657-8827 - home

Married (Ralph E. Miller)
5 children, ages 44-51,
15 grandchildren
Tel. 240-395-0454 - work
www.opendor.org
rabbi@opendor.org

Rabbi Miller is President of the Open Dor Foundation. The purpose of the Open Dor Foundation is to open the door to Jewish involvement through educational programs designed to reach out to unaffiliated and marginally active Jews, as well as to non-Jews who are part of the Jewish family through marriage to a Jew or through Jewish ancestry. She is also Rabbi Emerita at Adas Israel Congregation, Washington, D.C., where she served from her graduation from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in June 1986 until June 2008, which was then the longest pulpit tenure of a woman rabbi in the Conservative movement. Rabbi Miller conducts High Holyday services at 6th & I Historic Synagogue in Washington, DC, and teaches classes at synagogues in the area.

The first woman in the United States to assume pulpit responsibilities in a major Conservative congregation, Rabbi Miller has served as President of the Washington-Baltimore Region of the Rabbinical Assembly. As chair of the Rabbinical Assembly's Committee on Outreach and Conversion (1992-5, 2004-6), Rabbi Miller was also the first woman to be appointed to head a national committee of the RA, as well as the first woman to serve on the Rabbinical Assembly's Executive Council.

As a representative of the Rabbinical Assembly and the American Association for Ethiopian Jews, Rabbi Miller was sent to Ethiopia in 1989 to meet with the Ethiopian Jewish Community and Ethiopian leaders to press for the immigration of Ethiopian Jewry. Rabbi Miller designed and led the first Jewish healing service in the Washington area, as well as the area's first Learners=Minyan, and the first local Jewish workshops for engaged and expectant couples. Other programming initiatives at the congregation include Hebrew and Jewish Literacy Courses, programs for singles, couples, and young families, Adult Bat Mitzvah, and Bikkur Holim committee, and outreach to young adults with mixed Jewish/non-Jewish ancestry. Under the auspices of the National Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, she has trained laymen around the country to practice effective keruv (outreach).

Rabbi Miller was one of only two women to address the National Dinner- Celebrate 350, the official celebration of the American Jewish community, held every 50 years, at which the President of the U.S. speaks. She has spoken widely around the country at gatherings including the General Assembly, Women's League for Conservative Judaism, B'nai B'rith Women/Jewish Women International, the American Jewish Committee, the Rabbinical Assembly, and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, as well as at Bar Ilan in Israel, and she has served as a scholar-in-residence in congregations around the country. Her topics have included Jewish martyrdom (the subject of her master's thesis at Georgetown), aspects of outreach and conversion, liturgy, and women's life cycle events and midrashim. A book of her collected sermons was published as On Wings Of Hope, and her writing has frequently appeared in publications such as Moment, the Forward, and Lilith.

In July 2010, the Forward named Rabbi Miller as one of the Sisterhood 50, its first and thus far only list of the most influential women rabbis in the United States. The Jewish Women's archive

list Rabbi Miller among 50 women who have transformed the rabbinate and Jewish community.

EDUCATION

Wellesley College, A.B., 1966

Durant scholar

Phi Beta Kappa prize for ranking first in class, 1964

Elected to Phi Beta Kappa, 1965

Washington Hospital Center, Residency in Cancer Education for Clergy, 1983

Georgetown University, M.A., 1984

Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Rabbi and M.H.L., 1986

Socolow Prize for writing, 1983 and 1984

Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa), 20016

EMPLOYMENT

2008 - President, Open Dor Foundation, Inc.

2008 - High Holyday Rabbi, 6th & I Historic Synagogue, Washington, DC

1998 - 2008 Rabbi, Adas Israel Congregation, Washington, D.C.

1990 – 1998 Associate Rabbi, Adas Israel Congregation

1986 - 1990 Assistant Rabbi, Adas Israel Congregation

1984-1986 Rabbinic Intern, Adas Israel Congregation

1983 - 1984 Student Rabbi, B'nai Yisroel Reconstructionist Congregation, South Bend, Indiana

1978 - 1984 Adas Israel Congregation, Washington, D.C.

High Holyday pulpit, 1983

Adult bat mitzvah program teacher and coordinator, 1978 - 2008

Librarian, 1978 - 1980

1975 - 1980 Cost accountant, J.W. Wilson & Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C.

1966 – 1969 Special Program Director, Contra Costa (Calif.) YWCA program for teenage mothers

MAJOR PRESENTATIONS

Scholar-in-Residence, Knesset Israel, Pittsfield, MA, October 11-12, 2013, *Sound and Sense: Music as Midrash*

Scholar-in-Residence, Har Tzeon Agudas Achim, Wheaton, MD, December 13-14, 2008, *Jacob's Daughter Revealed; Maccabees and Masada: Heroes, Martyrs, or Extremists?*

Scholar-in-Residence, B'nai Torah, Boca Raton, FL, February 23-24, 2007, *Women's Voices: Prayer, Practice, and Poetry*

Scholar-in-Residence, Adath Jeshurun, Elkins Park, PA, January 26-27, 2007, *Living and Dying for G-d*

Scholar-in-Residence, Rodef Shalom, Denver, CO, April 25-26, 2003, *Kiddush HaShem*

DCJCC/The Red Stone, Moderator, *Pathways to Parenthood*, May 18, 2016

LimmudPhilly, *Miriam in Midrash*, March 5, 2011

Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County, Saul Bendit/Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute

Jewish Women Talk to G-d: From Tanakh to Today, Spring 2011

Dying for G-d: Maccabees, Masada, and Martyrdom, Fall 2011

How is This Night Different, Spring 2012

When Bad Things Happen to Good Matriarchs, Fall 2012

Issues in Jewish America: Changes and Challenges, Spring 2013

Liturgy and Prayer: Challenges to the Roles of Jewish Women, Fall 2013

Contemporary Ethical Issues from a Jewish Perspective, Fall 2014

Jewish Passages in 21st Century America:

Contemporary Trends in Jewish Life Cycle Events, Spring 2015

Holiday Observances: Interaction of Jewish and Surrounding Cultures, Fall 2016

Talking to G-d on Shabbat: Themes in Familiar Prayers, Spring 2017

From Egypt to Mount Sinai: Revisiting the Spring Pilgrimage Festivals, Spring 2018

Celia and Audrey Resnik Memorial Lecture, Sisterhood Shabbat, Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County, Bethesda, MD, January 9, 2010, *For Crying Out Loud*

Wellesley College Hillel, February 26, 2007, *Conversations on Intermarriage and Jewish Identity*

Haverford/Bryn Mawr Hillel, November 8, 2006, *Women in the Clergy*

Bar Ilan University, Neve Ilan, Israel, June 21-23, 2005, Seminar on Contemporary Responses to Intermarriage, *Developing a Discourse of Difference*

The National Dinner – Celebrate 350, September 14, 2005 (official celebration marking 350 years of American Jewish History) - Benediction

The American Jewish Committee, Third Annual Israel National Defense College Seminar in the U.S., May 5, 2004, *The Conservative Movement: Ideology, Achievements, and Challenges*

DCJCC Jewish Women's Project, Jewish Women and Health: Mind, Body, and Spirit, April 29, 2004, *The Jewish Perspective on Spirituality and Health*

2003 National NOW Conference, *Roundtable on Women's Roles in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam*

Rabbinical Assembly Convention:

March 2005: Breakout Sessions: Facing Contemporary Boundary Issues:
Tension Between Keruv and Outreach

May 1994: Chair, Plenary Session
The Rabbi and Jewish Continuity: The Next 100 Years, with presenters JTS Chancellor Ismar Schorsch and Dr. Jonathan Sarna

May 1994: Workshop *Keruv: Priorities and Pitfalls*

March 1993: Workshop *How to Succeed in Keruv Programming*

May 1992: Workshop *Letting a Fresh Wind Blow through Your Synagogue*

May 1990: Workshop *Update on Ethiopian Jews*

Rabbinical Assembly/Jewish Theological Assembly/JTS Rabbinical School Conference Mimeo
v=Esrim, Celebrating over 120 Women in The Rabbinical Assembly, *Advancing Women Rabbis in the Jewish Community*, respondent to the keynote address, January 2001

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism:

Biennial Convention:

February 2002: *Sacred Space for All Jews; Keruv: Outreach to All*

November 1999: *Outreach to Young Couples*

November 1995: *Jewish Living Now. Mitzvah Missionaries*

November 1991: *Guidance for Parents, Family and Friends of Intermarried and Interdating Couples*

November 1987: *Outreach. The Open Synagogue*

Seaboard Region Convention, December 1994:

Congregational Membership, Acquisition, Integration and Retention

United Jewish Communities/Council of Jewish Federations/United Jewish Appeal:

National Young Leadership Washington 12 Conference, March 2000:

How to: Find Meaning in Jewish Women's Rituals

Satellite Telecast on Inter marriage and Outreach, Fall 1994

62nd General Assembly, Montreal, November, 1993:

Inter marriage: Let's Talk Tachlis

National Business and Professional Women's Council, March 1989:

The Woman of Valor: Stereotype or Model?

Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 1987:

Role Models for Jewish Women in Recent Jewish History

Jacksonville, Florida, 1987:

The Declining Jewish Population and the Jewish Family

Quarterly Meeting, Washington, D.C., 1987:

Panel discussant on deepening the involvement of Federation members in Jewish communal activities

UJAF of Greater Washington, Young Leadership brunch, 1987: *Jewish Unity*

Quarterly Meeting, Washington, D.C., 1986:
Speaker for National Women's Division, on Jewish family

General Assembly, Washington, D.C., 1985:
Shabbat D'var Torah for National Women's Division

B'nai B'rith Women:

Metropolitan (Washington, D.C.) Council, Women of Valor Brunch, award recipient and speaker (along with Senator Barbara Mikulski and Tipper Gore), March 1989

Biennial Convention, Miami, Florida, May 1988:
Women in Judaism: Law, Leadership, Life Cycle, and Liturgy

Women's League for Conservative Judaism:

Convention 2010, Baltimore, December 2010
Plenary Moderator, *Kehillah Kedoshah*
Breakout Session: *Diff'rent Strokes for Diff'rent Folks: Forging Links in our
Congregations through Shared Interests and Life Cycle Stages*

Convention 2002, Philadelphia, November 2002
Music as Midrash

Convention 2000, Washington, DC, December 2000
Bikkur Holim: Visiting the Sick
The Conservative Movement: Who Are We?

Eastern Pennsylvania Regional Conference, LeHigh, PA, May 2000:
Maintaining Jewish Tradition While Embracing New Roles

Seaboard Regional Conference, Silver Spring, MD, May 2000:
Rituals: What's New in Celebration of Lifecycle Events and Holidays

National Convention, Philadelphia, PA, November 1998:
Building Community When Living Hurts

Seaboard Branch, Spring Conference, Silver Spring, MD, May 1988:
The Ethics of What We Say

Spring Institute, Seaboard Region, 5 sessions, Chevy Chase, MD, 2009
Be the Wise Daughter at Your Seder!

Fall Institute, Seaboard Region, 5 sessions, Chevy Chase, MD, 2008
Kiddush HaShem: Living for G-d, Dying for G-d

Fall Institute, Seaboard Region, Richmond, Virginia, 1987:
Jewish Divorce; Women and the Mitzvot

Har Shalom Sisterhood, Potomac, MD, Mind, Body, Spirit, February 22, 2009
Mitzvot for Women

Olam Tikvah Sisterhood, Fairfax, VA, November 8, 2009
G-d of our Mothers, G-d of Our Daughters

Federation of Jewish Men=s Clubs

Keruv Training Sessions
Baltimore, MD, March 2004
Ft. Lauderdale, FL, October 2004
Los Angeles, CA, December 2003

Hadassah, Greater Washington Area Chapter, Education SymposiumXAssuring Jewish Continuity, March 1995:
Making Jewish ConnectionsXJewish Dating, Jewish Marriages and Reaching Out to the Intermarrieds

Refaeinu Conference, February 1994XBikkur Cholim

University of Virginia Health Services, Departments of Internal Medicine, Health Evaluation Sciences, and Biomedical Ethics, symposium on The Cancer Family: At the Intersection of Science and Society, *AThe Impact of Genetic Testing for Cancer Risk on the Ashkenazi Jewish Population in the U.S.*≡, March 2001

National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, Genetic Epidemiology Branch Conference on Genetic Testing at HoodCollege, June 1997:
Familial Cancer and the BRCA1 Gene in the Jewish Community of Greater Washington

Bob Levey Show XWMAL Radio, October 1994

AJC, National Conference on Jewish Population Growth, New York, 1983: Plenary speaker

Women Cantors Network, June 1992:
Birkat Kohanim: The Medium and the Message

National Conference on Programs for the Intermarried, Los Angeles, 1986:
Leader of workshop on integration of Jews by choice into synagogue life

Na'amat, Washington Council, Education Day, March 1990:
What Is Really Happening to the Jews of Ethiopia?

TempleBeth Shalom, Roslyn Heights, New York, Symposium on Intermarriage, February 1988:
Outreach

Jewish Theological Seminary of America, United Synagogue Conference on Outreach to the Intermarried, 1987: Leader of morning and afternoon workshops

Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE), College Park, Maryland, 1986:
Master Teacher, Beit Midrash Text Study
ShowcaseXAdult Bat Mitzvah
ShowcaseXLearners' Minyan

Foundation for Jewish StudiesXLunch and Learn Series, January-February 2000:
When Bad Things Happen to Good Matriarchs

Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, March 2000:
Renewal and Ritual

Routes: Exploring Jewish Together, March 15, 2009
Life, Love, and Wisdom: Images of Women in the Song of Songs (with art/text by Debra Band)

PUBLICATIONS

On Wings of Hope, Adas Israel Congregation, 2002

"Women Talking Torah," review in Lilith, Spring 2008

"Therefore Choose Life," The Hadassah Jewish Family Book of Health and Wellness, Jossey-Bass, 2006

"KERUV...Children of Intermarried Parents," Torchlight, Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, Fall 2004 (Vol. 24, No. 1)

A Ten Jewish Things To Do Before You Die,≡Living Words, 2003

"Deconstructing Dena," Lilith, Spring 2002

A The Fourth Commandment: Remember the Sabbath Day,≡ review in Lilith, Fall 2002

A Jewish Women Search for Soul,≡ review in Lilith, Fall 2001

A Therefore, Choose Life,≡ Health Memo, Hadassah, Spring 2001

A Children of Inter marriage Come Home,"Forward, March 31, 2000.

A Building Community When Living Hurts,≡ Women=s League for Conservative Judaism, Outlook, Summer Issue, 1999.

A Letter from Merano," Forward, October 9, 1998.

A Showing Up," Moment Magazine, October, 1997.

"First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage, Then Come Jews with a Baby Carriage,"The Washington Jewish WeekXGuide to Jewish Living, 1997-98.

Biography information on Bertha (Floersheim) Rauh and Florence Bierman Perlman, Jewish Women in America, an Historical Encyclopedia, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore, November, 1995.

"Outreach to the Intermarried: Parameters and Outline," Readings on Conversion to Judaism edited by Lawrence J. Epstein, 1995.

"Bikkur Holim and the Synagogue," Sh'ma, 24/475, May 27, 1994.

"20-Somethings Come to Shul," Synagogue Review, Vol 47 No. 1, Fall, 1994.

"Keruv That WorksXJewish Literacy," Women's League Outlook, Vol. 64 No. 2, Winter 1993.

"Approaching Inter marriageXAreas of Consensus," American Jewish Committee, May, 1993.

"Support and Guidance for the Parents, Family, and Friends of Inter married and Inter dating Couples," Inter marriage: What Can We Do? What Should We Do?, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, 1992.

"A Chanukah Message for the '90's," Moment, December 1992.

"Books to Comfort and Instruct the Bereaved," Moment, December 1991.

"An Ethiopian Journal," Washington Jewish Week, March 15, 1990.

"Reaching Out: Dealing with Inter married Families," United Synagogue Review, Fall 1989.

"More is Better," The Joys of Parenting, American Jewish Committee, National Jewish Family Center, 1985.

"Talking Torah: Text, Context, and Pretext," The Reconstructionist, January-February 1985.

Review of Rachel Biale, Women and Jewish Law: An Exploration of Women's Issues in Halachic Sources, Washington Jewish Week, October 25, 1984.

Review of Susannah Heschel, ed., On Being a Jewish Feminist, ibid., January 26, 1984.

Confirmation cantatas written by Rabbi Miller (unpublished):

"Sim Shalom," a cantata based on the confirmation class study of mitzvot, 1986.

"What is Torah?" a cantata based on Judith Eisenstein's classic, interspersed with student contributions based on class assignments, 1985.

Adult Bat Mitzvah cantatas written and directed by Rabbi Miller, with music selected and arranged by Rabbi Miller (unpublished):

"Koleinu," 2006

A Y=did Nefesh," 2004

A Ora v=Simcha," 2001

A The Gifts of Women," 1999.

"Etz Hayim," 1996.

"Shirat Nashim," 1994.

"Tikvah L'shalom," 1992.

"Al HaNissim," 1989.

"Min HaMeitzar," 1988.

"Zachor," 1986.

"A Time for Harvest," 1984.

"Kol Ishah," 1983.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Rabbinical Assembly

- Chair, Committee on Outreach and Conversion, 1992-95, 2004-6
- Task Force on Keruv, 2007-8
- Task Force on Conversion, 2006-7
- Member, Executive Council, 1993-96
- Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Outreach and Conversion for the Conservative Movement, 1992-95
- Convention Committee, 1990

Rabbinical Assembly, Washington/Baltimore Region

- President, 2003-5
- Vice President, 2000-3

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

- Chair, Committee on Young Adult Affiliation, 1994-96

USCJ and RAX Joint Commission on the Prevention of Inter-marriage 1996-9

Council of Jewish Federations

- Task Force on Inter-marriage and Affiliation

American Association for Ethiopian Jews

- Chair, Rabbinic Cabinet, 1992-93
- Co-Chair, Rabbinic Cabinet, 1991-92
- Board of Directors, 1990-93

American Rabbinic Network for Ethiopian Jews

- Coordinator, 1990-91

American Friends of Tebeka (Advocacy for Ethiopian Jews)

- Board, 2008-

American Jewish Committee

- Ad Hoc Committee on Inter-marriage, 2001
- Washington Chapter Board, 1995-2013
- Honorary Advisory Committee, Washington Region, 2013-

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington

- Board, 2008-2013
- Liaison to Washington Board of Rabbis, 2008-12

Montgomery County Faith Advisory Group, 2009-2010

United Jewish Appeal Federation of Greater Washington

- Long-range Planning Committee, 1993-4
- Women's Division, Board of Directors, 1985 - 7
- Task Force on Inter-marriage, member

Greater Washington Board of Jewish Education, Executive Council, 1990-91

Anne Frank House, transition shelter for homeless women

Board of Directors, 1987-89
Advisory Council, 1989-

Washington Jewish Folk Arts Society
Advisory Board, 1988-92

National Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, Seaboard Region
Associate Spiritual Adviser, 1985-87

B'nai B'rith Women, Task Force on Intermarriage, 1990

Jewish National Fund: Tu B'shvat Seder, February 2018

Hadassah, life member

Zemer Chai, Washington's Jewish Community Chorus, 1976-93