

# This Is My Prayer—*Va'ani Tefillati*:

ואני תפילתי

## Jewish Women in Prayer

Sunday, March 1, 2009

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# This Is My Prayer—*Va'ani Tefillati*: Jewish Women in Prayer

Sunday, March 1, 2009

Abraham Joshua Heschel High School  
20 West End Avenue, New York City

## PROGRAM

### 9:15 A.M. REGISTRATION

### 9:45 A.M. WELCOME

**Dr. Anne Lapidus Lerner**, Founding Director, Program in Jewish Women's Studies, The Jewish Theological Seminary

**Plenary Keynote Address—JTS Jack and Lewis Rudin Lecture  
"Jewish Women's Prayers Are Coming Home!"**

**Dr. Aliza Lavie**, Department of Political Studies, Bar-Ilan University, and Research Associate, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute

### 11:00–11:50 A.M. SIMULTANEOUS LEARNING SESSIONS

#### I History of Women's Prayer

**Dr. Chava Weissler**, Philip and Muriel Berman Professor of Jewish Civilization, Lehigh University, with **Dr. Aliza Lavie**, Department of Political Studies, Bar-Ilan University, and Research Associate, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute

#### II Creating Prayer

**Merle Feld**, Founding Director, Rabbinic Writing Institute  
**Cantor Benjie-Ellen Schiller**, Professor of Cantorial Arts, Hebrew Union College School of Sacred Music  
**Rabbi Susan Schnur**, Senior Editor, *Lilith Magazine*

#### III Creating Ritual

**Dr. Vanessa Ochs**, Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, University of Virginia

#### IV Traditional and Nontraditional Mikveh Rituals

**Anita Diamant**, Author and Founder/President, Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters Community Mikveh and Paula J. Brody and Family Education Center

#### V Prayer Quilting

**Heather Stoltz**, Fiber Artist, [www.sewingstories.com](http://www.sewingstories.com)

#### VI Theology of Personal Prayer

**Rivka Haut**, Faculty, Academy for Jewish Religion  
**Rabbi Joy Levitt**, Executive Director, JCC in Manhattan  
**Rabbi Abby Sosland**, Tefillah Coordinator and Judaic Studies Faculty, Solomon Schechter School of Westchester

#### VII Halakhic Considerations in Innovating Prayer

**Rabbi Judith Hauptman**, Author of *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice*  
**Lisa Schlaff**, Curriculum Coordinator of Judaic Studies, SAR High School  
**Devorah Zlochower**, JOFA (Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance)

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### NOON–12:45 P.M. LUNCH AND NETWORKING

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### 1:00–1:50 P.M. SIMULTANEOUS LEARNING SESSIONS

#### I History of Women's Prayer

**Dr. Chava Weissler**, Philip and Muriel Berman Professor of Jewish Civilization, Lehigh University, with **Dr. Aliza Lavie**, Department of Political Studies, Bar-Ilan University, and Research Associate, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute

#### II Prayer as Healing

**Hazzan Danielle Ben Simhon**, Midway Jewish Center, Syosset, NY  
**Rabbi Rachel Cowan**, Executive Director, Institute for Jewish Spirituality

#### III Creating Ritual

**Dr. Vanessa Ochs**, Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, University of Virginia

#### IV Traditional and Nontraditional Mikveh Rituals

**Anita Diamant**, Author and Founder/President, Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters Community Mikveh and Paula J. Brody and Family Education Center

#### V Prayer Quilting

**Heather Stoltz**, Fiber Artist, [www.sewingstories.com](http://www.sewingstories.com)

#### VI Theology of Personal Prayer

**Arlene Agus**, Jewish Educator, Jewish Child Care Association and the Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning  
**Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin**, Author and Editor of *Tears of Sorrow, Seeds of Hope* and *Out of the Depths I Call to You*  
**Dr. Lori Lefkowitz**, Gottesman Professor of Gender and Judaism, and Director, Kolot: The Center for Women's and Gender Studies at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

#### VII Halakhic Considerations in Innovating Prayer

**Dr. Adena Berkowitz**, Founder, Kol HaNeshamah: the Center for Jewish Life and Enrichment  
**Rabbi Judith Hauptman**, Author of *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice*  
**Rosh Kehila Dina Najman**, Mara D'atra, Kehilat Orach Eliezer, New York, NY

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### 2:00–2:30 P.M. INTRAGROUP MEETINGS

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### 2:40–3:30 P.M. PLENARY: PRAYER AND COMMUNITY

**An Interdenominational Conversation**  
**Moderator: Blu Greenberg**, Founding President of JOFA (Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance)  
**Panelists: Rabbi Debra Cantor**, Congregation Bnai Sholom, Newington, CT  
**Madrichah Ruhanit (Religious Mentor) Sara Hurwitz**, Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, NY  
**Rabbi Shira Milgrom**, Congregation Kol Ami, White Plains, NY  
**Rabbi Yael Ridberg**, West End Synagogue, New York, NY

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### 3:30 P.M. CLOSING CELEBRATION

**Hazzan Debbie Friedman**, Composer, Singer, and Teacher

#### Closing Words

**Dr. Anne Lapidus Lerner**, Founding Director, Program in Jewish Women's Studies, The Jewish Theological Seminary