

**INTERNATIONAL RABBINIC FELLOWSHIP, ORTHODOX JUDAISM'S NEWEST RABBINIC
GROUP CONVENES CONFERENCE**

Orthodoxy's broadest resolution yet outlining the role of and opportunities available for women working in Orthodox synagogues in Rabbinic capacities was also adopted at the conference.

The following is the text of the resolution as adopted by the International Rabbinic Fellowship:

IRF Resolution on Women in Communal Leadership Roles

The International Rabbinic Fellowship is thankful and grateful to the Almighty and to a cadre of visionary educators, rabbis and communal leaders of the Modern Orthodox community for the amazing growth of Torah learning for women, in all its forms, which has transformed the face of the Orthodox community for the better in the last fifty years.

We strongly support the work and efforts of the myriad of Torah learning programs and institutions for women, both long-established and new, both in the Diaspora and in Israel. We hope that these institutions continue to grow and that even more opportunities for talented women who would like to continue on to the next level of Torah scholarship, involving multi-year opportunities for serious Torah learning, will emerge in the years to come.

INTERNATIONAL RABBINIC FELLOWSHIP, ORTHODOX JUDAISM'S NEWEST RABBINIC

GROUP CONVENES CONFERENCE

We express our support for the sincere desire of the graduates of these learning programs to contribute their spiritual talents to the Jewish people as teachers, spiritual guides and mentors. We also affirm the dedication and sacrifice of so many women in our community, and their desire to serve their congregations and their people in formal leadership capacities, while affirming the specific areas that Halakha delimits.

We strongly encourage communities and their rabbinic leaders to create opportunities to discuss this important phenomenon in an open and reflective manner, in order to enable continuing progress in a spirit of *shalom* and communal harmony.

In an effort to outline some practical guidelines that we believe our communities should consider - recognizing that each community and its rabbinic leadership retain the authority to determine what is appropriate for their communal context - we affirm that:

Observant and committed Orthodox women who are learned, trained and competent should have every opportunity to fully serve the Jewish community:

1. As teachers of Torah, in all its breadth and depth - Shebikhtav, Shebe'al Peh and Practical Halakha - to both men and women.

~ MORE ~

INTERNATIONAL RABBINIC FELLOWSHIP, ORTHODOX JUDAISM'S NEWEST RABBINIC

GROUP CONVENES CONFERENCE

2. As persons who can answer questions and provide guidance to both men and women in all areas of Jewish law in which they are well-versed.

3. As clergy who function as pastoral counselors - visiting the sick, helping couples work through relationship difficulties, taking care of the arrangements for burial, speaking at life-cycle events and giving counsel to individuals and families in distress.

4. As spiritual preachers and guides who teach classes and deliver *divrei Torah* and *derashot*, in the synagogue and out, both during the week and on *Shabbatot* and holidays.

5. As spiritual guides and mentors, helping arrange and managing life-cycle events such as weddings, bar- and bat-mitzvah celebrations and funerals, while refraining from engaging in those aspects of these events that Halakha does not allow for women to take part in.

6. As presidents and full members of the boards of synagogues and other Torah institutions.

~ MORE ~