

RRA RESOLUTION ON
DOCUMENTING THE HISTORY OF
WOMEN IN THE RABBINATE
Adopted March 25, 2008

WHEREAS, the Reconstructionist movement from its inception advocated for the equality of women in Judaism, when Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan initiated the Bat Mitzvah ceremony in 1922 and was an early advocate of the full equality of women in Jewish religious life; and

WHEREAS, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) welcomed women as students for rabbinic ordination beginning with its second entering class;

WHEREAS, Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, a pioneer in leading the significant changes made by female rabbis in the religious and cultural life of the Jewish people, entered the RRC in 1969 and became the first woman ordained by RRC in 1974; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of women have entered the rabbinate and transformed the ritual, liturgical and religious experiences of Jewish life around the world; and

WHEREAS, the Reconstructionist movement continues to be an advocate for the full inclusion of women in Jewish life, and has produced liturgical and ceremonial materials that have transformed the way in which Jews worship, understand Torah and mark the life cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College have consistently worked to promote the personal and professional growth of the more than 150 women who have been ordained at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College since 1974; and

WHEREAS, the Reconstructionist movement has actively participated in advocacy for the rights of women and other marginalized groups, both within and outside the Jewish community; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a centralized archive will enhance the preservation and teaching of the history of Jewish women in the rabbinate,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that in honor of Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association hereby joins with the CCAR and RA in designating the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) as an official repository for historic official and organizational records concerning women rabbis; and that (subject to availability) the RRA welcomes requests from the Jewish Women's Archives (JWA) for copies of relevant materials about female rabbis for the purposes of creating educational and historical programming; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage our female rabbinic colleagues of all Jewish movements to consider submitting (copies of) their (personal and) professional papers to the AJA and the JWA, for the documenting of the history of women in the rabbinate. RRA colleagues are also encouraged to submit documents to the Kaplan Archives at the RRC.