

JSLI Ordained Clergy Gather in New York for Alumni Retreat Focused on Community, Conversation, and Camaraderie

Ordained Leaders Reunite for Reflection, Friendship, and the Road Ahead at an Inspiring weekend of Alumni Voices Rooted in Joy and Connection

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, January 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute \(JSLI\)](#) concluded its third annual in person alumni retreat this weekend, bringing together ordained clergy and their families from across the country for a richly textured gathering centered on learning, memory, music, and shared purpose.



Designed to deepen relationships beyond ordination, the retreat combined New York's cultural landscape with the simple, powerful act of spending time together. Over the course of the weekend, participants walked nearly eight miles through Manhattan—moving as a group through history, conversation, and community.

The retreat began with a gathering at Zabar's before participants made their way to the New-York Historical Society, where they engaged with the Voices of the Shoah exhibit. Shared meals along the way—including blintzes, borscht, and pierogi—offered space for informal conversation and connection, as did a visit to [Kehillat Kedosha Janina](#), the historic Romaniote synagogue on the Lower East Side.

The day concluded with an evening gathering at the home of Rabbi Steve and Carole Blane, where alumni came together for food, music, song, and an open conversation about the present and future of JSLI. The presence of families and children added a multigenerational dimension to the retreat, reinforcing the institute's emphasis on lived Jewish leadership and community continuity.

“The companionship and community vibe were really special,” [Rabbi Steve Blane](#) reflected. “This wasn’t just a reunion—it was a reminder that JSLI is a living network of relationships, not just a training program.”

Music emerged organically as part of the evening, underscoring the role of creativity and shared expression in sustaining spiritual leadership. Throughout the retreat, participants described a sense of ease and belonging—strengthened by walking, talking, learning, and being together without agenda or performance.

The retreat concluded with a group visit to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, highlighting JSLI’s commitment to culture, curiosity, and lifelong learning.

As JSLI looks ahead, plans are already underway to expand future alumni retreats and welcome even more graduates and their families. This year’s gathering affirmed a core truth of the institute’s mission: spiritual leadership is sustained not only through study and ordination, but through community built over time—step by step, conversation by conversation.

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