

חמלה
חסד
חיבור

COMPASSION
CARE
CONNECTION



THE JEWISH CONNECTION
FOR SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Mishkan Miami



A PROGRAM OF THE
GREATER MIAMI JEWISH FEDERATION



*Give of yourself...
you can always give
something, even if it is
only kindness...no one
has ever become
poor from giving.*
- Anne Frank

*If one is able
to save another
and does not, one
transgresses the
commandment,
“Neither shall
you stand idly by
the blood of your
neighbor.”*
(Leviticus 19:16)

**דרש ר' שמלאי: תורה -
תחלתה גמילות חסדים
וסופה גמילות חסדים**

**Rabbi Simlai taught:
The Torah begins and
ends with kindness.**
(Babylonian Talmud 14a)

*I don't speak because I
have the power to speak;
I speak because
I don't have the power
to remain silent.*
- Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook

*Our task must be to free
ourselves by widening our circle
of compassion to embrace all
living creatures and the whole of
nature and its beauty.*
- Albert Einstein

*Praise be to the Lord,
for God showed me
the wonders of His
love when I was in a
city under siege.*
(Psalm 31:21)

**Rabbi
Chama son of Rabbi
Chanina also said: What is the
meaning of the text: “You shall walk
after the Lord your God?”** (Deuteronomy 13:4)
*Is it possible for a human being to walk after the
Divine presence? Has it not been said, “For the Lord your
God is a devouring fire?” Rather, the meaning is to walk after
the attributes of God: As God clothes the naked, for it is written,
“And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin,
and clothed them,” so should you also clothe the naked. As God
visits the sick, for it is written: “And the Lord appeared unto him
by the oaks of Mamre,” so should you also visit the sick. As
God comforts mourners, for it is written: “And it came to
pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed
Isaac, his son,” so should you also comfort mourners.
As God buries the dead, for it is written: “And
God buried him in the valley,” so should
you also bury the dead.*
(Babylonian Talmud Sotah 14a)

*Visiting the sick has
no limits – even the
great must visit the
humble, even one
hundred times a day.*
(Talmud Nedarim 39b)



OUR MISSION

COMPASSION *Chemla* חמלה | CARE *Chesed* חסד | CONNECTION *Chibur* חיבור

Mishkan Miami: *The Jewish Connection for Spiritual Support*, a program of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, helps to build connection to community and our sacred Jewish heritage. A compassionate, caring and connecting presence can help provide the resilience, courage and support needed to face life's challenges. These three concepts are at the foundation of Jewish spiritual care. When an individual experiences loss or transition because of health, age or personal crisis, each of us has a Jewish obligation to one another. Mishkan Miami seeks to be a catalyst of change for local institutions, synagogues and volunteers through teaching and inspiring the values of Jewish spiritual care.

OUR VISION

Mishkan Miami is creating a seamless community of care, in which agencies, synagogues and individuals work together for those who need it most. Mishkan Miami builds upon Federation's mission that the Jewish community can provide support through economic and emotional assistance when needed. At the same time, we can provide spiritual support to all, recognizing that each person has been endowed with a transcendent spirit. Mishkan Miami sees a community that engages each member in both *Refuat HaNefesh* and *Refuat HaGuf* – healing of body and spirit.



OUR CHALLENGE



The Greater Miami Jewish Federation is our communal safety net. Wherever there is a Jew in need locally, in Israel or around the world, it is our personal responsibility to make sure they are safe, to ensure they have the means to support themselves and to provide access to critical services. However, Jewish community is more than institutions, buildings or programs. It is about *each of us* — our goals, sense of meaning, aspirations, dreams, stories, values. It is about sharing our joys and sorrows together.

In difficult times, our sense of being may be challenged. We may ask:

- *Who am I now?*
- *What will happen to me?*
- *How do I speak to loved ones about what I need most now?*
- *How can I connect to my faith to give me support?*

This is when we need community more than ever. **Like a tent or tabernacle — a mishkan — our community should be where we can find a sense of place and, most importantly, HOME.** Like Abraham and Sara's tent, we envision a community that is open to all. When we do this work in a Jewish context and utilize the spiritual resources of our past, we connect people to a larger community that transcends a specific time and place.



We believe our community needs more spiritual care providers, and **spiritual care must be a central part of our community culture. Spiritual care is part of our Jewish responsibility to one another.**

OUR MANDATE

Who is responsible for spiritual care in our communities? Our rabbis? Our synagogues? Our chaplains? Our Federation? The truth is, each of us can be a source of compassion, care and connection. We accomplish this through these three mandates:



SERVICE/AVODAH עבודה

Mishkan Miami provides trained, board-certified chaplains for healthcare institutions and long-term care facilities throughout the community.

EDUCATION/CHINUCH חינוך

Mishkan Miami convenes periodic conferences for healthcare professionals, mental health and social workers and for those dealing with aging populations.

COMMUNITY BUILDING/KEHILLAH קהילה

Mishkan Miami empowers and trains volunteers and synagogues to visit those in need throughout Miami-Dade County.



Jewish tradition affirms that visiting those who are ill, or in need, is not only a nice gesture, but it is a critical obligation for each Jew. Consider the following text:

Rabbi Helbo took ill. Rabbi Kahana proclaimed, "Rabbi Helbo is sick!" but no one came to visit. He rebuked the others as follows: "Did it not happen that one of Rabbi Akiva's students became ill and none of the sages came to visit him?" Rabbi Akiva, however, came himself to visit, and because he swept and cleaned the room, he recovered. The student exclaimed, "Rabbi, you have indeed given me life!" Following this, Rabbi Akiva went to the academy and taught, "Whoever does not visit the sick is like a shedder of blood."

How can we respond to Rabbi Akiva's challenge to us? This informs Mishkan Miami's collective mission.

A SPIRIT OF SUPPORT

I was going through a personal health crisis. The ground felt like it was collapsing below me. I met with a Mishkan Miami chaplain. We prayed together and she provided direction and encouragement to me. The time spent together provided me with the courage to face what I was going through. I do not know what I would have done without her.

- Jewish mother struggling with cancer

I reached out to Mishkan Miami after the death of my father. Many people, even my own children, told me that it was time to move on. I felt alone. I met a Mishkan Miami chaplain in a coffee shop, and he simply listened without judgment. It was the first time I could really express what my father meant to me. A year later, I hold this hour close to my heart.

- Bereaved single daughter

A Mishkan Miami chaplain ran a short Passover Seder service with my father while he was in rehab at a local hospital. I watched my father sing and smile, relishing in the song and joy in the room. I had no idea that this would be his last Jewish experience, as he died the next morning.

- Son of nursing home resident



A chaplain came to visit me during my stay at the hospital when I was suffering. I knew my life was approaching its final act. I asked myself, 'Why me?' However, in the course of our conversation with the chaplain, I was surprised how many other feelings stirred as well. I realized the richness of my own life, and that for many years I was given the gift to wake up around those I loved, to enjoy a beautiful day, smell the flowers, enjoy a good meal, and live with a roof over my head and security. I felt overwhelmed by gratitude for the gifts I had been given. I was not happy with what was

happening to me, but deep down I felt a sense of inner peace. Just like God had been good to me all those years, He will continue to protect and support me even now. I don't know if I would have had that breakthrough about myself until the Mishkan Miami chaplain visited.

- Hospital patient



Mishkan Miami chaplains have trained in clinical settings and many have received board certification through Neshama: The Association for Jewish Chaplains. We strive for excellence in providing care to those who need it most. Every day, our chaplains visit people in hospitals. On Fridays, religious services are performed in more than 15 facilities benefiting hundreds of adults, many of whom suffer from dementia. The program also offers prayer cards, a CD of soothing music, reflection books, cemetery prayers, burial guides and bereavement brochures.

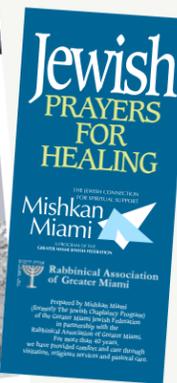
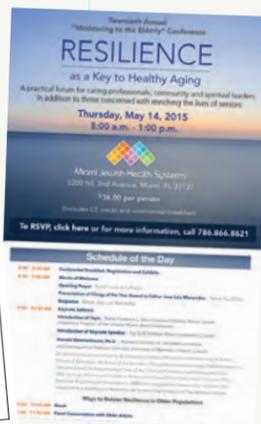
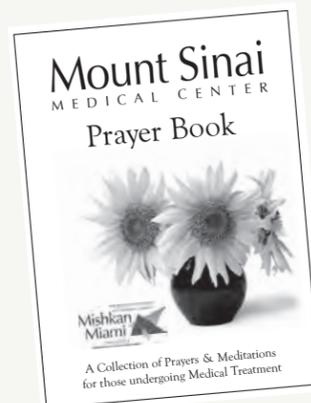
For many older adults, those with dementia, and those unaffiliated who are ill, our chaplains connect them to our sacred texts and traditions when they need it, and also to our community.



SERVICE/AVODAH

EDUCATION/CHINUCH

Mishkan Miami partners with Jewish social-service agencies, Jewish assisted living facilities, hospices, major hospitals and synagogues to create learning opportunities for healthcare professionals, mental health counselors, Jewish and Christian chaplains, congregational clergy and those engaged in elder care. In these conferences, we address our communal obligations and emerging issues relevant to aging populations.



Past professional seminars include:

- Resilience and Aging
- Jewish Views on the Afterlife: A Seminar for Rabbis
- Jewish Ethics at the End of Life
- Aging With Meaning: A Spiritual Journey
- Stories of Living: Shattering Stereotypes of Aging
- Meaningful Moments: Holding On While Letting Go
- Society, Aging & Our Responsibility: Ethical Decision-Making



COMMUNITY/KEHILLAH

For the past several years, Mishkan Miami has trained volunteers from all religious and denominational backgrounds to come together and learn the art of spiritual care. Over the course of six months, our volunteers study and volunteer in hospitals, long-term care facilities, hospices, synagogue caring groups or through one-on-one visits. The program, called the *Refuat HaNefesh Fellows* or Jewish Spiritual Care Volunteer Fellowship, has transformed the lives of many individuals, as they use these skills in their visits and in their own lives.

Mishkan Miami hosts seminars for synagogue professionals and lay leaders and partners with local congregations to help them build their own caring communities.



MISHKAN MIAMI IS ABOUT YOU

Each of us seeks meaning and transcendence, especially during times of crisis. Our rituals, our traditions and our communities can provide hope to each of us. The *Mishkan* (tent or tabernacle) in our Jewish tradition was not only where the people gathered together in the desert, but where they went to encounter the Divine.

We are committed to providing that connection for those who feel they wander in their own personal deserts. Community can truly be sacred if we have that sacred intention.

We hope you will join us in bringing this vision to reality.

If you, a loved or a friend seek spiritual support or are seeking community connections, please call us. We are here to assist.

We welcome your interest in supporting our efforts through a financial gift or a cemetery plot donation. If you are interested in volunteering yourself, please contact us.

Rabbi Frederick L. Klein, *Director, Mishkan Miami: The Jewish Connection for Spiritual Support, a Program of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation*, can be reached at **786.866.8621** or **RabbiKlein@gmjf.org**.

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 **Greater Miami Jewish Federation**

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The Mission of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation is to mobilize human and financial resources to care for those in need, strengthen Jewish life and advance the unity, values and shared purpose of the Jewish people in Miami, in Israel and around the world.

Member of  **The Jewish Federations of North America**