

Yaakov Dermer is a soon-to-be Conservative rabbi, guitarist, budding Yiddish speaker, and lover of the outdoors. A South Florida native, Yaakov came to rabbinical school at JTS after years of religious seeking, a philosophy degree from Brandeis, and a life-transforming year of Torah learning at the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem.

While at JTS, Yaakov's extra-curricular work has focused on supporting Jewish senior citizens in their emotional and spiritual needs. Yaakov spent the summer of 2016 with Selfhelp Community Services as a rabbinic chaplain for Holocaust survivors in Queens. Inspired and challenged by this experience, he received a Myers grant to create a project called Moreshet Meals, which brings Shabbat meals, company, and joy, to isolated senior citizens on the Upper West Side.



Yaakov's rabbinic journey has been shaped by the magic of Jewish camping. He has taught Torah, led campfire song sessions, prayed, laughed, and cried, alongside campers and staff at Ramah Camps in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and the Colorado Rockies.

Now in his final year of rabbinical school, Yaakov continues to share his passion for heartfelt worship, community building, and acts of kindness, with the Jewish world. He prays first and foremost to help others find themselves - their deepest struggles and highest aspirations - in Torah.

When he's taking breaks from writing a master's thesis in Jewish Thought, Yaakov enjoys late night jazz concerts, slam poetry readings, meditating in the park, and attempting new kosher recipes.