

People

News in the [December 2, 2008](#) issue

Twenty-three years after the Conservative Jewish movement began ordaining female rabbis, a woman has been tapped to lead its Rabbinical Assembly. Rabbi **Julie Schonfeld**, 43, will become executive vice president of the 1,600-member global body in July, succeeding Rabbi Joel Meyers, who will retire after 20 years in the position. With the appointment, the Conservative branch, which has 4.3 million members, becomes the first of the three major streams of Judaism to name a woman to lead the day-to-day operations of a rabbinical association.

The Episcopal bishop of Quincy, Illinois, who was poised to lead his small diocese to secede from the Episcopal Church in early November, abruptly announced his retirement, effective November 1, due to ill health. **Keith Ackerman**, 62, has been one of the most conservative bishops in the increasingly liberal U.S. church. His diocese is one of three that does not ordain women clergy, and he spoke out forcefully against the 2003 election of the openly gay bishop of New Hampshire.

United Methodist minister **Andrew Weaver**, 61, who started a petition drive in 2007 against the recently approved George W. Bush library and think tank on the Southern Methodist University campus in Dallas, died October 22 of cardiac arrest. A pastor for years in the California-Nevada region of the UMC, Weaver became a psychologist and editor in New York. His wife, Carolyn Stapleton, serves as an associate pastor in Manhattan.