

# The Columbus Dispatch

HOME PAGE

**News**

Metro & State

Community News

National / World

Insight | Weather

Editorials

Columnists

Stahler cartoons

School closings

Corrections

Lottery | Obituaries

Health | Science

Faith & Values

Special Reports

Great Schools

The Hot Issue

Search the archive

Electronic Edition

Offbeat News

AP PodCasts

Dispatch Español

**Sports**

OSU Football

OSU Basketball (M)

OSU Basketball (W)

Other OSU Sports

BuckeyeXtra.com

High School Sports

Blue Jackets

Crew | Clippers

Destroyers

Bengals | Browns

Reds | Indians

Cavaliers

Auto Racing

Golf | Outdoors

Pro Scoreboards

## Conservative Jewish leaders open door for ordination of gays

Thursday, December 07, 2006

Rachel Zoll  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Conservative Jewish scholars eased their ban yesterday on ordaining gays, upending thousands of years of precedent while stopping short of fully accepting gay clergy members.

The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards, which interprets religious law for the movement, adopted three starkly conflicting policies that nonetheless give gays a wider role. Four committee members who wanted to uphold the ban outright resigned.

One policy maintains the prohibition against gay clergy members. The second maintains a ban on sodomy but permits gay ordination and allows blessing ceremonies for same-sex couples. The third supports the ban on gay sex in Jewish law and notes that some gays have undergone therapy that succeeded in changing their sexual orientation.

That leaves seminaries and synagogues to decide on their own which approach to follow.

Rabbis at the two Conservative Jewish synagogues in Franklin County said they're pleased with the decisions.

Rabbi Jason A. Miller, of Congregation Agudas Achim in Bexley, said he wasn't surprised by the mixed decisions.

"Certainly they're contradictory papers, but to me that underscores what Conservative Judaism is about — not that it's wishy-washy, but that it reflects the middle-of-the-road position of the Conservative movement."

He and Rabbi Harold Berman, of Congregation Tifereth Israel on the East Side, concurred that marriage must remain a heterosexual institution but that gays in a committed relationship deserve recognition in their religious family.