



*Pursuing Global Justice
Through Grassroots Change*

Ruth W. Messinger

Ruth W. Messinger, President of American Jewish World Service (AJWS) from 1998 to July of 2016, is currently the organization's inaugural Global Ambassador. In this role, Ruth is continuing her crucial work of engaging rabbis and interfaith leaders to speak out on behalf of oppressed and persecuted communities worldwide.

Ruth's remarkable 18-year presidency at AJWS began after a 20-year career in public service in New York City as a City Council member and Manhattan Borough President. Under Ruth's leadership, AJWS grew exponentially—granting more than \$270 million to promote human rights in the developing world and launching campaigns to end the Darfur genocide, reform international food aid, stop violence against women and LGBT people, end land grabs and respond to natural disasters around the globe.

A tireless advocate and social change visionary, Ruth mobilizes rabbis and faith-based communities throughout the U.S. to promote human rights. She previously sat on the State Department's Religion and Foreign Policy Working Group and is currently a member of the World Bank's Moral Imperative Working Group on Extreme Poverty.

Ruth is also currently doing international human rights work for AIDS Free World and serving as the inaugural Social Justice Fellow at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Additionally, she is the Social Justice Activist-in-Residence at the JCC of Manhattan.

Ruth has been honored for her leadership with awards from many national Jewish organizations and honorary degrees from five major American rabbinical seminaries. In 2015, she was the recipient of the Julia Vadala Taft Outstanding Leadership Award. Ruth was named one of the 10 most inspiring women religious leaders of 2012 by *The Huffington Post*; the sixth most influential Jew in the world by *The Jerusalem Post*; and was listed annually on *The Forward's* "Forward 50" for nearly a decade.

Ruth is an active member of her congregation, the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, and serves on the boards of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, Hazon, Aegis Trust and Surprise Lake Camp. She holds a B.A. from Radcliffe College and an M.S.W. from the University of Oklahoma. She is married to Andrew Lachman and has three children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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