

Mitchell Chefitz Biography

April 1, 2002, Mitchell Chefitz became the rabbi of Temple Israel of Greater Miami, an 80-year-old center-city Reform congregation serving the entire region with creative Jewish programming for adults and family education.

He is the author of two novels. *The Seventh Telling: The Kabbalah of Moshe Katan*, was published in 2001 by St. Martin's Press and was a Los Angeles Times bestseller. The sequel, *The Thirty-third Hour: The Torah of Moshe Katan*, was published the following year.

For twenty-two years beginning in 1980 he was the rabbi of the Havurah of South Florida, a non-denominational fellowship that creates programming to fill the interstices between synagogues and other established Jewish organizations. The Havurah offers a variety of opportunities for learning of Torah, Talmud, and Jewish spiritual discipline (Kabbalah) in an egalitarian setting.

Mitch has served as chairperson of the National Havurah Committee, editor of a nationally syndicated weekly Torah column, and is a frequent teacher at Havurah institutes, rabbinic conferences, and other gatherings with a focus on Jewish renewal. He teaches on topics related to Jewish spirituality, alternative religious community, and Jewish family education. He is a past-president of the Rabbinical Association of Greater Miami.

His ordination is from Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion (New York, 1975). Before his work with the Havurah, he was associate rabbi at Temple Beth Am in Pinecrest. Prior to his rabbinic studies he was a line officer in the US Navy, with service aboard destroyers in the waters off Vietnam, and later in the Mediterranean during the Six Day War. Rabbi Chefitz did his undergraduate work at MIT and the University of California at Berkeley.