

# The JEWISH Proclaimer

No. 04 – 03

Autumn 2004 – 5765

## NEW YEAR RE-OPENS OUTREACH DOOR

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Note: Our e-mail address has changed to:  
NCEJudaism@verizon.net

## NCEJ LIFTS YOUR GRANT MAXIMUM BY 50%

National Center to Encourage Judaism hikes its grant maximum from \$800 to \$1,000, effective with receipt of this Proclaimer, up to half your secular media advertising cost.

In addition, it will award a 20% bonus on the basic grant to any award winner who won an outreach advertising award the year before. That means that if you would have received \$800 previously you could now get a \$1,200 grant, if you had won a grant the year before.

### YEAR BEGINS AGAIN—OUTREACH, TOO

The New Year isn't just time for a new dues structure. It's time, and opportunity, to evaluate what we are doing—what we can do more of, and better. Lethargy could have died with the summer. Judaism will not grow if we continue doing just what we have. Synagogues will not grow if they continue not doing what they've not been doing.

It's time for a change.

It's time for Jewry to realize that in the religious marketplace we are fortunate to have, it can not just stand still and hope nobody will seduce us. It's not enough to fret noisily about a bloody film of a man claimed god (call it idolatry) or to ask a church please don't missionize or to ask deceptively named missionaries not to stand on street corners hawking falsity.

We need to be positive, and publicly welcoming.

Judaism is the foundation, the base of monotheistic faiths. Without it, there would not be the mutants of Christianity and Islam. There are good reasons, and emotions too, to become and be Jewish.

If our synagogues don't preach Judaism as a religion, rather than as merely a prelude to social action, who will? And if we don't welcome all who might want to learn, now, when?

You can hike dues structure all you want, but if you don't have members to pay the bill, what good can you do tomorrow? The open light you shine on yourself can be reflected in others joining in.

So it is time, again, to hold Taste of Judaism-type programs, and follow-up Introduction to Judaism courses, and to let your general community know it can learn about Judaism, and to let wanderers know they can find a sensible home.

National Center to Encourage Judaism will help you advertise such programs to your community.

NCEJ is completing its tenth year of making grants to synagogues, as the point of delivery, to welcome the stranger to learn about Judaism.

It invites you to hold such programs, to advertise them in the general press, to be in the marketplace, and to survive not as a fossil but as a regenerating understanding of the universe, a romantic his-

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NATIONAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM, a nonprofit foundation, invites synagogues and other Jewish institutions, as a light unto the nations, to reach out to and encourage all to be Jewish. Box 651, Silver Spring, MD 20918. 301-593-2319. Fax 301-593-2249. E-mail: NCEJudaism@verizon.net  
Web: [www.NCEJudaism.org](http://www.NCEJudaism.org). This is the third of three Proclaimers this year. Editor: Ash Gerecht.

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tory of coping with complexities.

Our grants continue to be half your media costs for a program, now up to \$1000, with two programs a year (starting in different quarters) eligible.

See our application form for grants, on page 7.

You can view previous *Jewish Proclaimers* on our website, [NCEJudaism.org](http://NCEJudaism.org).

### NEWS OF OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:

#### BENTON HARBOR SAFE PORT FOR INTRO

Benton Harbor, MI—Temple B'nai Shalom (C) has 27 people, 22 of them not Jewish, attending its Judaism 101: Introduction course, of 5 1½ hour periods. 23 ask to be contacted for future classes. ~~More than a dozen who could not attend asked to be notified of later classes.~~

Rabbi Michael Rascoe, who taught the course, and leads the 100-member-unit congregation, was also the subject of an extensive interview in the local paper, the Herald-Palladium. (See below.)

**Comment:** Go for it! Outreach is so exotic for many places, you too might place an article explaining what you're doing.

#### FLINT STRIKES IT HOT IN MICHIGAN

Flint, MI—Temple Beth El (R) attracts 36 to its Taste of Judaism mini-course, all not Jewish except for 2 "born of a Jewish mother." Five were possibly interested in converting.

Follow-up will be a 12-week Introduction course this new year.

The 150-member temple had 11 conversions in the past year. Some 600 Jewish families live in Flint.

# Clearing up the mysteries

Rabbi Michael Rascoe is teaching a Judaism class that could well appeal to Jews and others curious about the ancient religion

DANA HARRIS  
H-P Staff Writer

Growing up in a Jewish household, Dorothy Goldbaum of St. Joseph learned a lot about the Jewish way of life.

She's hoping to gain even more knowledge about her religion in an Introduction to Judaism class offered at Temple B'nai Shalom in Benton Harbor.

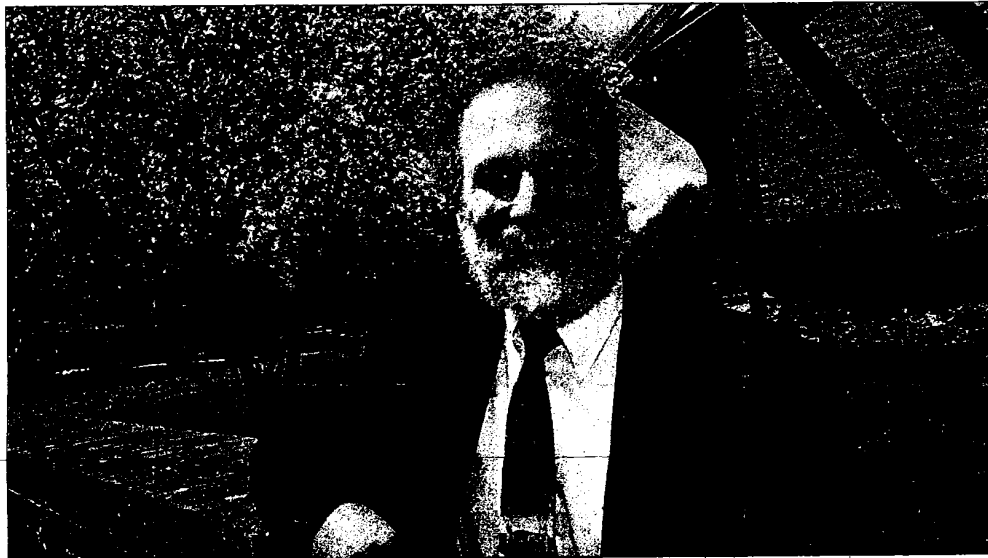
"Even though I'm familiar with Judaism, I wanted to explore my culture more deeply," Goldbaum said. "I have lived the life of a Jewish person and I'm taking the class to find out more about my heritage and my civilization because Judaism is a part of civilization and one of the oldest religions."

Rabbi Michael Rascoe is conducting the five-session introductory course, which began April 22 and will continue through May 20. The cost is \$10, which includes materials and refreshments.

Rascoe said the classes are for anyone interested in learning about Judaism.

"It's for people who want to learn. We are not trying to convert anyone. We have a lot of people wanting to know about Judaism, or people who have children who marry a Jew, or people trying to understand religion more, or some people are interested in learning more about the world around them," he said.

"Some people say they take the course because they're thinking



Don Campbell / H-P staff

**RABBI MICHAEL RASCOE**, from the Temple B'nai Shalom in Benton Harbor, is conducting a five-session Introduction to Judaism class which he says is meant for anyone interested in learning about the faith.

about converting. That's not what this is all about. Some people may want to know more about Judaism or religion. Some people may be Jewish and want to know more about Judaism. If they have a lot of background, they may still find it interesting, but if they don't have a lot of background, they definitely might find it interesting."

Rascoe is covering the following topics:

- ◆ Introduction to Judaism. This session is an overview which will cover the major branches of Judaism found in the United States, the Jewish calendar and holidays and will also cover the origins of Christianity.

- ◆ Life cycle, home life and daily life. Students will learn about the events that take place

from birth to death, including ceremonies for different ages for Jewish people. There are ceremonies surrounding birth, adolescence, marriage, divorce and death.

- ◆ Ethics and business ethics. This session will discuss the various personal and business ethics that guide the Jewish religion. One example that will be covered is the "ethical will." Instead of writing a will leaving property, this would involve passing on values.

- ◆ Prayer and concepts. This topic includes Jewish prayer, including when to pray, how to pray and what to pray. This will also cover some of the elements of Christianity.

- ◆ What is mysticism? This session will answer questions pertaining to mysticism, including

misconceptions that people have. Goldbaum, who has started attending the sessions, said the classes are informative.

"I found that it was very worthwhile," she said. "It was very lively. People were asking questions. We received a syllabus and notes, so that we didn't have to take notes. The notes were already prepared. I think the class was well organized. I think it'll be very enlightening."

"I think that anybody who attends the class is going to enjoy it, and the Rabbi is eager to answer any questions and he certainly has a fount of knowledge about the subject."

Diane Rapaport, co-president of Temple B'nai Shalom also thinks the classes are beneficial. "It's to help to ensure that our

congregational members get a religious and joyful experience," Rapaport said. "It's an educational opportunity for non-Jews to learn more about Judaism so that we can dispel some beliefs that people may have."

"I think it's great and it's an outreach to the community. There's a lot of misunderstandings. I'm hoping that I will get to take some of the classes and I hope that a lot of people will come. They're going to get a lot out of it," she said.

Even though the classes have begun, anyone interested in signing up can still do so by calling 925-8021 or through e-mail at [temple@parrett.net](mailto:temple@parrett.net).

Temple B'nai Shalom is located at 2050 Broadway, on the corner of Broadway and Delaware.

About half the class were "committed Christians of some persuasion who were interested in learning more about the religion on which theirs is based," says Rabbi Karen Campanez.

The temple has an attractive color brochure which states, "We pride ourselves on warmly welcoming the non-Jewish partners of our congregants and our doors are always open to those who are exploring Judaism."



## A Taste of Judaism.

### Are you Curious?

*Come explore Jewish Spirituality, Jewish Values, Jewish People  
Designed for the Beginner, Jewish or not*

*Tuesdays: April 20th & 27th  
and May 4th at 7:00-9:00pm*

### TEMPLE BETH EL

5150 Calkins Rd. Flint, MI 48532 • 720-9494

*A taste of Judaism offers a modern Reform perspective  
on living in today's complicated world.*

ADMISSION FREE...BUT SPACE IS LIMITED, CALL TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT.

27/19

## GRAND RAPIDS HAS SHORTFALL

Grand Rapids, MI—Cong. Ahavas Israel (C) returns for another NCEJ grant, for a 23-week \$55 Introduction class that this time draws only 2 non-Jewish students, 1 interested in converting.

At the same time, a 23-week \$140 Biblical Hebrew course attracts 15, all not Jewish. This, notes Rabbi David Krishef, "is our largest draw. The price, compared to studying at local colleges (the only other program available), is a bargain." (616-949-2840)


The synagogue has an affiliation program for non-Jews, B'nai Noah. These "receive several benefits of membership along with the knowledge that they are actively supporting the congregation. It draws potential converts to feel more attached to the synagogue."

It has produced a CD of Shabbat morning and evening services and the Shabbat home ritual, sold at "reasonable cost. People are excited to use it either to learn how to participate in or lead services or as an aid to learning Hebrew. We are not only selling it locally, but after posting some clips on our web site, we have received internet orders as well." (AhavasIsraelGR.org)


Rabbi Krishef adds, "Our new program of the year, a phenomenal success, was a Passover Seder Experience for non-Jews. We charged \$25/person or \$40/couple, gave each person or couple a Haggadah (to keep), and presented a 2-hour Seder at which we experienced a traditional Seder, with all of the ritual foods. We did not serve dinner, only 'unleavened cookies' and fruit for dessert. 135 people came (and we turned away others who called after the deadline) and we raised about \$1,000."

The congregation, as we've reported before, operates a bookrack "with an eclectic mix of books available for the taking. Each book does have an optional donation card in it for those who wish to help buy more books."

### AN INVITATION TO JUDAISM



**Are you Curious?**  
Learn at Congregation Ahavas Israel  
2727 Michigan St. NE



All classes meet on Monday evenings, October 13 - May 24, except as noted.  
Texts are included in the tuition fee for Hebrew classes only.

- Can we Learn Jewish Theology at the Movies? 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Tuition is \$55. Begins Dec. 1.
- Introduction to Judaism, 8:00-9:15 p.m. Tuition is \$55. Begins Dec. 1.
- The Torah with its Modern and Classical Commentaries, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Begins Dec. 22. Tuition is \$45.
- The Development of the Ethical Self: Israel Salanter and the Musar Movement, 7:00 - 8:15 p.m., through December 15. Tuition is \$40.
- Hebrew Reading and Comprehension - Beginning, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Tuition is \$125.
- Intermediate Contemporary, Conversational and Literary Hebrew, 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. Tuition is \$125.
- Beginning Biblical Hebrew, 8:15 - 9:15 p.m. Tuition is \$140.
- Intermediate Biblical Hebrew, 7:30 - 8:20 p.m. Tuition is \$140.
- Advanced Biblical Readings in Narrative Prophets, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Tuition is \$80.

\$5/course discount for advance registration. Call 949-2840, for more information, to register, or to be notified of future classes.

## LAS VEGAS TRIPLE-SCORES IN TASTE

Las Vegas—Cong. Ner Tamid (R) attracts 60 students, 2/3 of them not Jewish, to its Taste of Judaism class. Six reported interest in converting. The temple had 8 conversions in the past year.

It followed up with basic Hebrew and an Introduction class in the summer, and with basic Hebrew classes this fall and next spring, and a conversion class from Sept. to May for those seeking to convert.

Rabbi Sanford Akselrad taught the class.

The temple thinks a Taste II, which URJ has offered in selected cities, could cover the same topics in more depth, or go on to comparative religion, views of after-life and messiah, to help "people understand Judaism within the context of their own faith." It also likes the taste-on approach, actually tasting Jewish foods or experiencing 3 holidays—High Holydays, Chanukah, and Passover.

## HOBOKEN SEEKS JEWISH REVIVAL

Hoboken, NJ—United Synagogue (C) seeks "revival of Jewish life in the riverfront towns of Hudson County."

It comes back to NCEJ ranks after a 5-year absence, holding a 6-week Introduction to Ju-

daism course (\$45/70) for 15 students, 1/3 of them not Jewish. At least 2 are interested in converting. The synagogue reports 12 conversions in the past year.

The 220-member congregation describes itself as "very transient urban," mostly in their 20s and 30s. It's small enough, with 35-50 attending services, to be aware of newcomers. "At the end of services the rabbi announces that everyone should meet at least 2 people whom they do not know. It works!"

After Friday night services, everyone "stands in a circle and, before Kiddush, we go around the circle and introduce ourselves."

To integrate interfaith and converts, United this summer was beginning a program including informal trips to Jewish events in the New York City area, at least 2 roundtable discussions on conversion yearly with a panel of converts, and at least 4 Shabbat/holiday celebrations yearly in people's homes, especially for prospective converts and their families.

**What is Judaism  
all about?**

**Introduction to Judaism**  
**6 Thursday Nights,**  
**7:45-9:45 pm**

**Beginning May 20** (note new start date!)

For Jews and non-Jews who seek a deeper  
understanding of Jewish tradition,  
values and spirituality.

Instructor: Rabbi Robert Scheinberg

**United Synagogue of Hoboken**  
**115 Park Avenue**

Members: \$45/individual, \$90/ Couple Non-members: \$70/individual, \$130/couple  
Reserve a space: call 201-657-6000 or e-mail office@hobokenunited.org

## JEWISH COOKIES CROSS LAS CRUCES

Las Cruces, NM—When last we heard of Rabbi Gerald M. Kane at Temple Beth El, 4 years ago, he and his wife were baking away for their Taste of Judaism class. They are still at it, to create "a more haimish mood."

This time around, they fed 53 students, 48 of them not Jewish, 3 to 5 interested in converting. Beth El had 5 conversions in the past year.

"I am currently working with three students from the class who are pursuing studies for conversion, and we anticipate the congregation will gain two new member families," says Rabbi Kane.

"This was one of the most satisfying teaching

experiences I have had in my 34 years in the rabbinate. Students were remarkably responsive and enthusiastic about learning. The 'mix' of ages, interests and personal backgrounds was fascinating."

The temple continued getting calls asking if it will offer the course again, as Rabbi Kane plans.

In evaluations, 45 want to take more advanced courses. "I have developed a series of mini-courses for the fall."

Rabbi Kane writes, "Ours is a very small, growing—yet transient—Jewish community. We have 160 member families and we attract an ongoing stream of winter visitors and university guests. I am the sole employee."

Before the end of services, "we encourage new visitors to introduce themselves. In addition, I personally mingle with newcomers and congregants before services. I match newcomers up with a host/mentor for the evening...The host helps guests find books, announcement sheets, sits with them during the service and encourages them to fill out a 'follow-up card.'"

The rabbi adds, "At the oneg, I invite all newcomers to hold the tray with the challot. Members are urged to come over to break off a piece of challah and introduce themselves to newcomers. This has proven to be particularly successful. I also conduct brief 'guest interviews' before the kiddush blessings."

### Among student comments:

"It is time for me to address my spiritual questions & develop a place in home & community" for a spiritual life.

"You have answered some of my questions that many of my nonpractising Jewish friends have been unable to answer!"

"I thought the Jews were much more strict, & they only accepted their own, and that converts were out of the question."

"For years I've believed I was meant to be Jewish. Although adopted & raised by a wonderful Catholic family, I just couldn't buy into it (Catholicism.) I've investigated numerous other Christian denominations but I just couldn't buy into it (Christianity.) The social worker from my adoption agency (a Jew) revealed that my grandmother converted to Catholicism from Judaism during World War II (she was French living in France) & she raised my birth mother Catholic. So you see, I was meant to be Jewish but Hitler got in the way!"

## TASTE HITS THE BIG TOWN, HUNDREDS IN

New York City—Union for Reform Judaism brings the Taste of Judaism minicourse, which it developed, here for the first time.

Before its advertising was over it had registered over 350 participants at 9 synagogues, says URJ Outreach Director Dru Greenwood. Ads ran in such different media as the Wall St. Journal, Village Voice, New York magazine. Because of the response more Introduction courses were added.

The woman whose picture is used in the ads first entered a synagogue to attend a Taste class, and is now a rabbinical student, working in a pulpit with 10 prospective converts.

### Among registrant profiles:

Joseph, 17. Parents divorced. Little contact with Jewish father. Mother raised him as Catholic. Aware of anti-semitic remarks from his friends. Used to wear a cross, now a Jewish star. Apprehensive of his lack of Jewish upbringing.

Joanne, 34, actress, dating a Jew 3 years, she wants to understand this part of his life.

Courtney, 34, father Jewish, mother Presbyterian, not raised Jewish. Has met his family, wants to learn more about her heritage, be closer to her Jewish cousins.

Mark, 44, with daughter Mayumi, 19; married Japanese woman; had bar mitzvah but no religion at home. Wants to expose daughter to Judaism; misses spirituality in his life.

Janice, 50, Polish, Episcopalian like father. Mother Catholic, whose Jewish mother wed non-Jew, came to America. Friend told her she was technically a Jew, triggered interest in Judaism.

Claudette, 38, black, was 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist. Never in a synagogue, searches for religion she can practise.

Carlos, 39, a grandfather's family was Jewish, wants to learn more; with partner Hiroko, Japanese.

Elissa, 45, culturally Jewish, never felt connection. "I find sometimes I go into churches to feel spiritual. I want to see if I can find that in a synagogue."


Debra, 33. Sister converted to Judaism last year. She'd like to know more.

Gloria, 30—"It's an example of what makes NYC great—that a nice Chinese girl like me can walk into a synagogue and be welcome to learn more."

Anis—Has been exploring Judaism on his own. Communist mother's family are Jews. Grandmother

Jewish, alive in Poland.

Leah & Thomas—Their best friends converted, on their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They want to learn what their friends are so excited about.




**...Are you curious?**

Three weekly sessions on the modern Reform Jewish perspective on living in today's world

**For beginners, Jewish or not**

**At 9 Manhattan congregations**  
from January thru March

For information call **212.650.4232** or email [TasteofJudaism@urj.org](mailto:TasteofJudaism@urj.org)  
Seating is limited.  
Register now!  
**Admission is FREE.**

 Sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism

**Jewish SPIRITUALITY | Jewish VALUES | Jewish COMMUNITY**

## TASTE ATTENDEES TOP MEMBERS

Gastonia, NC—Temple Emanuel, here in this famous milltown, is a 65-member mix of Reform and Conservative, without a rabbi. A veterinarian, Dr. Mark Epstein, chairs the adult study and outreach committee, renamed from "membership," and runs quite a program.

The temple had 110 people attending its Taste course, 95 of them not Jewish. It plans to repeat this yearly, now.

The group was "very diverse, ranging from congregants and non-practising Jews to those on a spiritual search, or merely curious, 'Christians' to committed Christians, including several pastors. All enthusiastic and respectful," says Dr. Epstein.

The program will be repeated in February, with follow-up classes such as Adult Hebrew, with a makeup of half congregants and half former Taste students.

The congregation, in Gastonia over 75 years, anticipated 25 in the class, cut off registration at 50, and 2 months later repeated the class for people who continued to sign up.

Some registrants were Jews "who had not been involved in the Jewish community (or with Judaism at all) for many years but who now are active members of the congregation," Dr. Epstein notes. Six families came in.

Of the non-Jews, "3 people have now entered into conversion classes and will be joining the Jewish people (several others are considering it.)" There were 3 conversions in the past year, in collaboration with Temple Beth El in nearby Charlotte.

A flyer is reproduced on page 6.

# SHALOM

**UPCOMING ADULT STUDY - 2004**  
@ TEMPLE EMANUEL, GASTONIA, NC

## Adult Hebrew 1: A Crash Course

Sunday, August 29, 6:00 pm    Designed for the beginner, or anyone needing a little review.  
Monday, August 30, 7:00 pm    No fee for congregants but must pre-register!  
Tues. August 31, 7:00 pm      Contact Mark Epstein, 704-861-9442, petdok@aol.com

## Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class

Never had the experience of Bar or Bat Mitzvah study and ceremony? Class starts 9/04  
Contact Mark Epstein 704-861-9442, petdok@aol.com

## Adult Hebrew 2

Sunday, Sept. 12    7:00pm  
Sunday, Sept. 19    7:00 pm  
Sun. Sept. 26      7:00 pm  
A follow-up to Hebrew/Crash Course for those wishing to expand their skills. Pre-registration required.

## The Jewish Calendar Cycles & Holidays

Session 1 Thursday, Oct. 14 7:00pm  
Session 2 Thursday, Oct. 21 7:00pm

## The Respectful Response to Christian Questions

What church do you go to? Did you see Gibson's Passion? Why don't Jews believe in Jesus? What about all the proofs and prophecies in the Old Testament? Explore these and more...a critical series for all Jews, adult and teenager. Mon. Nov. 8, Mon. Nov. 15, Mond. Nov. 22 7:00 pm

*Dad's corner:* **SUNDAY SCHOLAR**  
East Synagogue Elementary School

## The December Dilemma

Sunday, Dec. 5, 10:00 a.m.

יהוה מורה שבכל הלכות אין אנו ממשילין ואילו אם  
ורת הלכה הנה שתי סגמים שבכל הלכות אין  
ולקדו ביד דשביד ובין מסבד. הלכה הנה כלנו מסב

### GREENSBORO BASICS FLOURISHING

Greensboro, NC—Beth David Synagogue (C) reports 20 conversions in 2003. Its Basic Judaism class this past winter attracts 45 people, 42 of them not members and 39 of them not Jewish. Six re-

## Beth David Synagogue

presents

# BASIC JUDAISM CLASS

Tuesday Evenings  
5 Class Sessions - 1/27-2/24  
7:00 - 9:00 pm

### Topics Include:

- Jewish Holidays & Sabbath
- Bible & Jewish Literature
- God & Spirituality
- Jewish Practices & Values

- No Charge for Beth David Members
- \$25.00 for Non-Members



To Register, Please Contact Rabbi Pont at  
804 Winview Dr.  
Greensboro, NC 27410  
Phone: 336-294-0828  
Fax: 336-294-7011  
Email: mpont@bethdavidsynagogue.org

*This is a wonderful course for potential converts, interfaith couples or anyone who wants to learn more about the joys of Judaism. Rabbi Eliezer Havivi and Rabbi Michael Pont foster an atmosphere in which asking questions and sharing thoughts is encouraged. The rabbis will help you with individualized guided Jewish study and, if you wish, you toward conversion.*



ported interest in converting. Five-week class was free to members, \$25 to others.

Registrants were asked to call Rabbi Michael Pont directly. The synagogue holds other National Jewish Outreach Program events as well, including beginners' Hebrew and Shabbat Across America.

### FIFTY STUDENTS IN RALEIGH INTRO

Raleigh, NC—Fifty people, 2/3 not Jewish, attend the 10-week Introduction to Judaism course held last fall by Cong. Beth Or (R), a 500-family temple. Fee is \$25/50. Eleven were interested in converting. Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox rabbis participated in teaching.

### RECONSTRUCTIONIST UNIT TASTES

Ambridge, PA—Beth Samuel Jewish Center holds a 3-session Taste minicourse attended by 15, 12 not Jewish, and only one attendee a member.

"We attracted a remarkably diverse group, including grandparents of an interfaith couple and an alienated Jew who has joined our synagogue!" says Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky. She was planning to teach the course again for those unable to attend last year's session.

### INTRO PROGRAM HELPS CONVERSIONS

Doylestown, PA—Of 13 attending an 18-week Introduction course at Temple Judea (R) last fall, three were in the process of converting, and one was "on the fence," reports Rabbi Gary Prokras. Of the 9 not members, 5 were not Jewish. Fee was \$300.

## Introduction To Judaism

Are You Curious?

Come explore...

- Jewish Values,
- Jewish Spirituality,
- Jewish People

*Serious Education Designed for the Beginner  
But Open to All - Jewish or not*

### Temple Judea - Doylestown, PA

18 Information Packed Sessions  
Wednesday evenings, starting October 29

**Registration Required**  
Call: 215 563-8183



**Tuition is competitive  
BUT SPACE IS LIMITED**

Sponsored by Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
William and Lotie Daniel Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach

(continue on page 8)

NATIONAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM -- APPLICATION, 2004-2003

Box 651, Silver Spring, MD 20918 - 301-593 - 2319 - Fax 301-593-2249 - E-mail: NCEJudaism@verizon.net

NCEJ grants, for year 2003-2004 programs, are for a maximum of \$1000 up to one-half the cost of the secular (non-Jewish) press or periodical advertising. Programs must be open to all; those limited to interfaith are eligible for one-half the regular awards. Grantees may win a 20% bonus atop their basic grant, if you received an NCEJ ad grant the previous year, for a \$1200 maximum. We help you let people in the broad community know they are welcome to obtain information about Judaism. Eligible courses are of two types: 1) Introduction to Judaism, Taste of Judaism, Basic Judaism, or similar classes. 2) Adult Education classes of interest to prospective converts--these ads must state, "Open to All" or "Open to Jews and non-Jews." Ineligible are such ads as: Institutional, High Holy Day, Shabbat or Shabbaton, membership, Hebrew, Chanukah, Passover or lectures not of interest or help to prospective converts. Aborted programs are ineligible.

Send in your completed applications after your program starts. Include demographic information and class reaction as requested; a copy of the ads (for radio/tv, of the text) and of the specific billing. We welcome your expanded comments. You are eligible for two grants yearly for separate programs in different quarters. Grants are at NCEJ's sole discretion.

(For Outreach Shabbat grants, fill in Sections 1 & 3; for course grants, fill in Sections 1 & 2.)

(1) Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Cong. membership number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
( Reform Conservative Reconstruction Orthodox Mix of: No affiliation)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_
Web? \_\_\_\_\_ Contact person \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_

Ads ran in these venues \_\_\_\_\_
Dates run \_\_\_\_\_ Size of ads \_\_\_\_\_ Total print/air cost of ads \_\_\_\_\_

How many conversions at your synagogue/consortium/institution (specify) last secular\ religious year? \_\_\_\_\_

PROGRAM BONUSES FOR SYNAGOGUES: Award winners are eligible for 2 bonuses of \$100 each for these ongoing out-of-the-ordinary activities, at NCEJ's discretion. Supply detailed documentation; cursory response doesn't qualify.

1) You actively welcome attendees at oneg shabbat/kiddush with more than such routine as bima announcements or blue cups; the rabbi & board take continuing initiative.. You operate programs to further integrate interfaith & converts. More than a Dec. dilemma session. What others can learn from and copy. Details, please.

2) You supply free pamphlets/booklets on becoming Jewish. Send us the list, and copies of any you yourself have prepared. You must have a rack or table in an open area, with pamphlets for the free taking any time. Details necessary.

(2) Course title \_\_\_\_\_ Fee (Members/non) \_\_\_\_\_

Course length: \_\_\_\_\_ # Students: \_\_\_\_\_ (Numbers or %:) Members \_\_\_\_\_ Nonmembers \_\_\_\_\_ Jews \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Jews \_\_\_\_\_

In interfaith relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Interested in converting \_\_\_\_\_ Your comments on class makeup?

Student comments on class (welcomed; use separate sheet):

What follow-up programs & contacts do you have in place?

Your thoughts/suggestions about classes, alternatives, follow-ups (separate sheet):

(3) OUTREACH SHABBAT (Mainly prospective member events ineligible.) Add details on a separate sheet.

Title of your event? \_\_\_\_\_ When held? \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance: Your estimate of number of members \_\_\_\_\_ Of nonmembers \_\_\_\_\_ Usual attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you include: Explanations \_\_\_\_\_ Information on classes, or conversion? \_\_\_\_\_ Have pamphlets available? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how you made this different from your usual service \_\_\_\_\_

Would you hold this service again? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ How would you change it? \_\_\_\_\_

What advice would you give other synagogues planning such an event? \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION OUTFRONS EXPECTATION**

Spring House, PA—"Originally, we anticipated between 25-30 participants" for the Taste mini-course, writes Executive Director Liz Hirsch of Cong. Beth Or (R). "We had over 75 inquiries and 63 actual enrollments.

"We believe these numbers reflect a curiosity and desire to learn more about Judaism, its religion, its history and culture."

Two points emerged from evaluations—the course should be held more than once yearly, and should be longer. The one change Beth Or is inclined toward is to limit class size, to allow more interaction and discussion.

But, Ms Hirsch adds, "It is of greater value to accept all individuals expressing an interest in Judaism."

Of the 63, 61 were not members and 47 were not Jewish, including one Buddhist. Three-fourths were female; about half were aged 50-65. Five were interested in converting. Beth Or had 15 conversions in the previous year.

Beth Or would like 2 follow-up classes, one on the Jewish calendar and holidays, the other on life-cycle events.

Many of the Jews in the class felt disconnected from the religion, not understanding why they were Jewish, how to act as Jews, and where to begin studying Judaism.

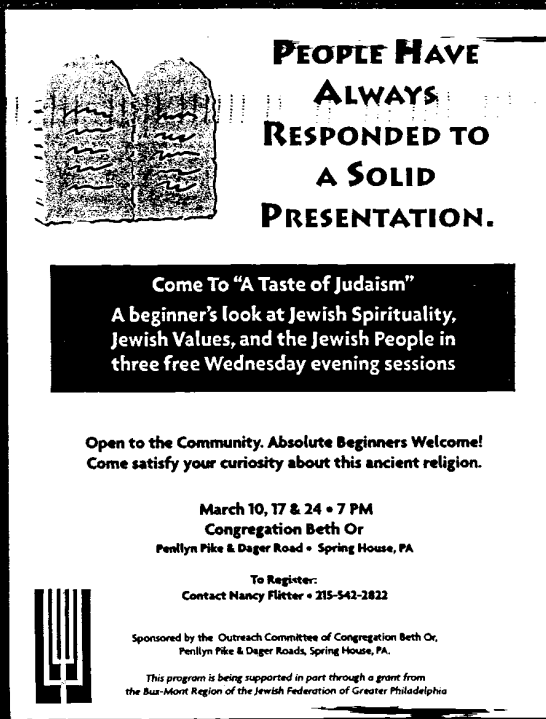
"We feel that it would be important to offer a class for adult Jews to learn about the service and its sequence, then about the prayers and their meanings," notes Ms Hirsch.

"We would also," she adds, "like to begin of-

fering tours of our synagogue." These "can explain the pride for who we are, show others a way that they can connect with us and feel comfortable in our home, and by opening our doors, we can create the path for the unaffiliated to feel welcome." (Emphasis added & merited.)

What brought students to the class? Temple V-P Maureen Schreiber found the most common response was, "the ad," particularly one headlined, "Judaism is more than bagels."

She adds, "There were many people there who want to expand their understanding of the Jewish faith, saying, 'Israel is in the news so much and I really don't understand much about Judaism.'"



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