

The JEWISH Proclaimer

WINTER 5771-2010/11

NO. 10-02

THE OPEN MARKETPLACE ASKS US— DARES US—TO BE BOLD, AND WELCOMING

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<i>This issue is sent to nearly 4000, mainly synagogues In the U.S., some in Canada, grantees, etc</i>	

CONSERVATIVE RABBI CALLS FOR MORE CONVERSION EFFORT

The rabbi of a small Conservative synagogue in Michigan advocates more conversion outreach.

Rabbi David J.B. Krishef of Cong. Ahavas Israel, Grand Rapids—it's been active in outreach for years—notes the recent experience of his 135-member shul.

"It has become more common for us to begin (Shabbat service) with a minyan or get a minyan within 5-10 minutes of the start of the service. On one particular week, at the point when we reached the magical number of 10 people, 6 of them were Jews by choice.

"The Jews by choice hit 10 when the Jews by birth were only at 6...By the end of the service, the score was about 30 Jews by birth and 20 Jews by choice.

"The Jews by choice come early. That particular week they set up the Kiddush, one was an usher, and they really get into the idea that Judaism is meaningful and important. The Jews by choice are serious Jews. They don't come to shul to socialize and talk during the Torah reading. They come to pray and learn. Many of them have converted in just the past 15 years."

Programs like Jews for Jesus, teaching Christians how to evangelize among Jews, stressing Torah, mitzvot and Hebrew, led some to realize that the Christian and Jewish stories of the Bible are incompatible, the rabbi notes. Some rejected the Christian midrash, in effect, and explored the literal meaning of the prophets, which led them to seek an authentic Jewish tradition.

"This is where we as a Conservative congregation have a huge advantage," Rabbi Krishef says. "Potential converts are generally made to feel unwelcome in an

Orthodox synagogue. They are turned away outright from a Chabad House....They are not going to go to the Reform Temples, which to them feel too much like the church they are leaving. They walk through our doors, and feel like they have come home," the rabbi said in a 5771 Rosh Hashana sermon.

"We are seeing a major shift happening in our Jewish community, from being a community whose Jewish practice is a romanticization of the Judaism of their grandparents to one whose practice is devoted to understanding and living Torah as a literal expression of God's will...

"If our fellow Conservative congregations in North America don't follow our lead, their numbers and the strength of our movement will just keep diminishing."

The rabbi analyzes: "We are moving into an era in which our Jewish culture will be profoundly changed because of an influx of Jews by choice."

He advises: "We should not be threatened by outsiders coming in and sharing our Judaism. In fact, it will be helpful if we keep in mind that we don't own Judaism. We are but one link in a long chain of tradition..."

"We are going to learn from an influx of 'new Jews' whose connection to Torah is emotionally positive. We are going to learn not to romanticize the ugliness of the past, but rather to develop a new appreciation for the compelling nature of Jewish ritual and prayer. We will create a seeker friendly environment for Jews and potential Jews alike.

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 more 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. This is the SECOND of two issues for 2010. Editor: Ash Gerech. (1210)

"The moment anybody walks through our doors, they are greeted and made to feel welcome. ... We attract a steady stream of visitors because we are true to our mission.... We welcome all, we sit next to them, we help them follow the service, we show them how we love Torah...."

"May we continue to follow the spirit of Hillel, who pulled in the potential convert by summing up the essence of Judaism on one foot-'That which is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor.' So may our community be transformed."

(For entire text, see www.ncejudaism.org, and click on the link. Directly: Rabbi@AhavasIsraelGR.org, 616-949-2840)

NCEJ CAN HELP YOU REACH OUT TO ALL

The National Center to Encourage Judaism can help your synagogue, UJF, JCC, JFS or other reach out to the entire community, to let it know of your Taste-Introduction-Basic Judaism or like course.

NCEJ has completed 16 years of making grants to individual institutions for advertising such courses.

You just need to send us, after your course has begun or is over, a completed application (see page 7), with a copy of the pertinent ad, a copy of the specific billing, and any distinctive comments by students.

In addition to this *Proclaimer*, you can see writeups and ads from other groups in our previous issues, on the web, along with a freestanding application, at www.ncejudaism.org.

Outreach reports from around the U.S.:

(with lots of catch-up)

AND ALSO IN RALEIGH, BETH SHALOM

Raleigh, NC—Last issue, we wrote as far as Temple Beth Or, in Raleigh, and wondered at so many NC synagogues doing outreach. Now, we resume, with Raleigh.

First-time NCEJ grantee is Beth Shalom (R), which in 2009 offered an URJ-sponsored Taste of Judaism program attended by 18, all but 3 not Jewish.

The 250-member congregation reports 3 conversions in the preceding year.

One student says, "I am Jewish and married a non-Jewish man—and have not actively practiced Judaism. I wish to learn more about it, and find it philosophically very rewarding."

AND HERE IS BETH OR AGAIN, IN RALEIGH

Raleigh, NC—As we ended last issue with Temple Beth Or, we almost began this one.

Its 10-week Introduction course in Sept.-Nov. 2009 (\$25-50) drew 20 students, half not Jewish. This was followed by Gateways to Judaism in Jan. '10. The 513-member synagogue had 4 conversions the previous year.

Class as before was also held at Judea Reform Cong., in Durham.

ASHEVILLE: NARROW AD, BROAD AUDIENCE

Asheville, NC—Cong. Beth Hatephila/Beth Israel, a Reform-Conservative mix, runs an Introduction course of 21 weeks in 2009, with 20 attending. 14 are not Jewish, 6 interested in converting. It had 3 conversions in the preceding year, a 4th pending when we heard last.

The attendance came despite an ad headed, Do You Want to Learn More About Your Jewish Faith, with copy stating, Basic Judaism classes for Jewish Adults seeking a new spiritual path. (The narrowed focus ruled out an NCEJ grant.)

When students have to be absent, a "full library of DVDs of the classes can be provided to them," says Administrator Dawna Wade. The congregation offers Shabbat and holidays in the rabbis' homes, "free Hebrew classes, and requires those thinking of conversion to attend other public community events (lecture series, holiday celebrations, Jewish film festivals, etc.)"

CHARLOTTE CONTINUES GOOD TASTE RUN

Charlotte, NC—Temple Beth El (R) continues its offering of Taste programs, with a new outreach coordinator, Shari Hackman. 45 attend the 3-session free course, with 9/10 not Jewish, and 1/3 interested in conversion.. The 243-member congregation reports 15 conversions in the preceding year.

Among student comments:

-"This class has allowed me to not only want to convert to marry my Jewish fiancé, but has created a true desire to convert for myself as an individual."

-"Surprised how excited I am to study Judaism, and elated how I feel that Judaism will fulfill a once lost, spiritual path."

GREENSBORO GAINS 2ND 2009 GRANT

Greensboro, NC—Beth David Synagogue (C) wins its second 2009 grant for its Oct.-Nov. 5-week Judaism 101, with 27, almost all not Jewish, registered for the \$30/48 1.5-hour sessions. Then Judaism 201 followed in Feb.-March '10.

A Taste of Judaism: Are you Curious?

Explore Jewish Spirituality,
Ethics, and Community.

"A taste of Judaism" is a free three session workshop Open To ALL Beginners, Jewish, Not Jewish or Non Affiliated. This event will be held on April 22nd, 29th and May 6th.

FREE CLASS - Registration Required

Beth Shalom office (919) 858-7777 email: office@bethshalomnc.com
website: www.bethshalomnc.org

This event is sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism.

**A Taste of Judaism:
Are You Curious?**

"What your appetite"
in a three-session exploration of Jewish.

• Spirituality • Ethics • Community

Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.
October 21, 28, and November 4, 2009
Temple B'nai Sholem
505 Middle Street, New Bern

This FREE Adult Education series
is open to the community.

For more information and to register,
contact the instructor, Marsha Luhrs,
at 252-617-5960 or meluhrs@yahoo.com
Pre-registration is appreciated by October 19.

Sponsored by Temple B'nai Sholem
and Union for Reform Judaism
www.bnai-sholem.org

NEW BERN SHOWS WHAT ONE CAN DO

New Bern, NC—You don't have to be a large congregation to hold an outreach program. Look at B'nai Sholem, here, with 75 households. Its Taste course in 2009 draws 27 people, 24 of them not Jewish. It had one conversion in the preceding year, in "a nice public ceremony," says outreach chair Marsha Luhrs.

Class makeup was "fascinating. Several students have Jewish parents or grandparents but were raised Christian. Others are devoted, knowledgeable churchgoers but wanted to learn about their 'roots.'"

Says Ms Luhrs, "They are so appreciative, attentive and interested in Judaism. The more people learn about Judaism in a positive light, I feel it can only improve community relations, interfaith relations, etc."

Ms Luhrs, who earlier was in outreach in St. Louis, says, "Each year I am more and more amazed by the students' appreciativeness, insights, and questions toward Judaism and the Jewish people. If only more people throughout the world felt that way!"

Of the past year's students, "many have already returned to our synagogue to attend Shabbat Services, a Service of Healing and Wholeness, and have expressed interest in other classes. Two students came to the class because, as editors of neighborhood newspapers where I submit press releases, they saw the announcement for TOJ and signed up! One of them had a Jewish grandfather but she did not know much about Judaism."

WILMINGTON BECOMES NCEJ GRANTEE

Wilmington, NC—Temple of Israel (R) becomes an NCEJ grantee twice in 2009 for its Adult Ed and Taste of Judaism courses.

Adult Ed Chair Naomi Kleid notes that at least four people commented they'd never seen anything about the



**A Taste of Judaism:
Are You Curious?**

Free 3-week class: Reform Jewish
spirituality, values, and people
Sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism
Taught by Rabbi Karz-Wagman
7 to 9 pm Oct 28, Nov 4, & Nov 11

**Open to unaffiliated Jews and non-Jews
Registration Required. Call 910-762-0000**

Temple of Israel
Corner of 4th St. and Market St.
Reform Jewish services, movies, and classes open to
Jews and non-Jews: Hebrew, Kabbalah, Jewish History.

temple in the paper before it started these ads. It's the only Reform congregation within 100 miles.

Adult classes include Torah study, beginning Hebrew, Jewish Basics/Intro (attended by 4 members, 3 retirees, one prospective 30-year-old father of 3), History, Kabbalah and Talmud, Israeli dancing, Yiddish, and films, at the 163-member group. It had 4 conversions in the previous year.

The Taste course, in fall 2009, drew 53, all but one non-members, and about 2/3 Jewish. Because of the class size, it was split into two. 24 of the 53 continued with the Basics class. At least 10 were interested in conversion, says Rabbi Harley Karz-Wagman.

Social studies teachers who attended this class and the Basics class received county continuing education credits, for learning about Judaism. This also tied into a new documentary and book, *Down Home: Jewish Life in N.C.* Largest % of students said they saw the ad in the daily paper.

CANTON FINDS INTEREST IN TASTE

Canton, OH—Temple Israel (R) becomes an NCEJ grantee with an '09 Taste program that draws 24, all but 2 not Jewish. Nine expressed interest in converting.

The 378-member synagogue had 2 conversions in the preceding year. A follow-up Introduction class ran April-Sept. '09.

Temple Administrator Molly Murphy quotes a non-Jewish attendee, "This is a wonderful way to bring different religions together."

HOW HUC STUDENTS RESPOND TO QUESTIONS ON CONVERSION

Cincinnati—Students attending Hebrew Union College's Gerech Conversion Institute here in Dec. '09 filled out a questionnaire in advance. Here are some of the answers:

Q: Characteristics for conversion helpers?

A: Caring, patient, accepting. Enthusiastic, knowledgeable. Compassionate. Approachable, warm, passionate.

Q: What should new Jews find?

A: An accepting community. A sense of belonging. Comfort within Judaism. Warmth of Jewish life.

Q: What might be barriers?

A: Skeptical congregants. Angry family, lack of study time. Cultural pools. Sense of isolation.

Q: Your concern about converts?

A: Lack of enthusiasm from raised-Jews. Lack of knowledge beyond Reform. Jewish partner's pressure to convert. Feeling out of the circle. Converting for the wrong reasons.

WHY DO SOME COMMUNITIES REACH OUT AND OTHERS DO SO LITTLE?

Here's a question: Why do some communities like Cleveland (whose story follows) and Kansas City have community-wide outreach programs, with sizeable budgets and resources, and other localities seem unable either to have a coordinated program or much of an individual-synagogue effort?

CLEVELAND HOLDS CLASSES AREAWIDE

Cleveland—Jewish Education Center and the Board of Rabbis continue holding Taste classes throughout the area, 200 reported attending the three Fall 2008 and two winter sessions. A 6-week class, also without fee, Feast of Judaism, attended by 100, followed the winter programs, with 100 students at three locations—east side at Temple Israel Ner Tamid, west side at Beth Israel, and in Lorain at Agudath B'nai Israel. 4/5 were not Jewish.

Sets of index-sized cards are given students, about the holidays in their season.

Advertising costs in 2008 were over \$10,000.

Final Feast session was indeed a feast, with Middle Eastern food and Israeli music. The shlichot from Israel spoke, and the entire class sang Hatikvah.

The Center has been holding the classes since 1997 in 2 or 3 locations, three times a year. Success of the programs, says coordinator Sherri Kaufman, depends on advertising, including smaller neighborhood or local papers. Many of these will offer discounts for multiple ads. Being flexible in location has helped expand participation.

The programs also rely on flyers produced in-house, and public service radio-tv announcements.

"Word of mouth is also an important component. Participants who have had a meaningful experience tell others and often bring their friends and relatives to class," Ms Kaufman notes. "Outreach is about building relationships as well as building one's knowledge base."

Non-Jewish participation is about 70%, "who have a basic curiosity about Judaism, and some who might be characterized as non-Jewish spiritual seekers who are 'checking us out.'"

For the community..
Jewish or not


**"Feast of
Judaism"**

Explore Lifecycle, Holidays,
Israel, God, the Prayerbook and
the Jewish Calendar Year

Six Evening Classes

East Side March 4, 11, 18, 25 April 1, 15	West Side March 5, 12, 19, 26 April 2	Lorain February 25 March 4, 11, 18, 25 April 1
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FREE CLASS - REGISTRATION REQUIRED
 Contact Sherri Kaufman
 Jewish Education Center of Cleveland
 216-371-0446


Co-Sponsored by The Jewish Education Center of Cleveland and
 The Cleveland Board of Rabbis with funding support from The Jewish Community Center of Cleveland

Among student comments:

—"I have always been interested in Biblical history. Recently my daughter converted to Judaism. ...After taking a Taste of Judaism and A Feast of Judaism classes, I celebrated Rosh Hashanah at a synagogue in New York with my daughter...I, too, am looking forward to converting to Judaism and learning Hebrew."

—"My husband is Jewish, and I would like to begin exploring Judaism in more depth—so I am starting here!"

—"My grandfather was Jewish, but my grandmother was not. Following my father's Bar Mitzvah, he received no further religious training. My mother was a Christian. Although I was raised as a Christian, I have never felt connected to its beliefs. These courses will help me decide whether or not to pursue my Jewish roots."

—"To learn all I can; considering conversion. Before I seek to be even accepted, I want to be certain I can fully commit."

—"I have always been interested in the principles of Judaism and have done some independent studying. I want to learn more. This is a great course to provide a starting point to learn..."

SCRANTON HOLDS CLASS, GAINS MEMBER

Scranton, PA—Temple Hesed holds its first, URJ-sponsored Taste of Judaism class, with 25 participants, 4/5 of them not Jewish, and 16 of these Catholic. Five were interested in conversion. Ages ran from 34 to 76. An area paper published an article on the program.

One attendee, an unaffiliated Jew, "joined our Temple before the class was completed," reports class administrator Marilyn Deutsch. The 190-member congregation had six conversions in the preceding year.

The temple has introduced a free introductory membership plan, which has been "extremely well re-

ceived by young interfaith couples without children." So far, 90% of those given such a break remain as dues-paying members, Ms Deutsch notes.

Among student comments:—"I converted a number of years ago but never felt like I had a solid background."

—"I recently found that I had Jewish ancestry."

—"My Jewish fiancée and I have been studying Judaism together. I am planning to convert."

SAN ANTONIO REMEMBERS ALAMO PLUS

San Antonio—Temple Beth-El (R) continues just about the longest streak of Taste programs we track—steadily from 1996, in our records.

The reported minicourse, in May-June '09, attracted 41 people, 37 of them not Jewish. Six reported interest in conversion. Class included 19 men, 22 women, ages ranging from 23 to 82.

Among comments:

—"Great discussions leading to a thoughtful investigation on my part of why I am considering the conversion process."

—"Helped me to realize and understand why I am not getting anything out of Christianity."

Satisfy the desire for learning and understanding with

A Taste of Judaism

Explore the Reform Jewish perspective on:

• Jewish spirituality • Jewish ethics & values • Jewish community

**For the Beginner ... Jewish or not
Three Part Series**

**Wednesdays: May 20, May 27 & June 3
7:00-9:00 P.M. at Temple Beth-El**



Registration Required
To register, call 733-9135 ext 100
Admission free - but space is limited

Curious About Judaism?

Explore The Bible, Jewish Ethics, Spirituality, Prayer,
And Much More!

Thursday, March 5, 12 & 19

7:30pm-8:30pm

**This free three session course is open to everyone -
Jewish or not!**

Pre-registration is required

Congregation Ahavas Chesed • 705 Regents Way • Mobile, AL 36609
251-343-6010

"Look forward to meeting you!" - Rabbi Steven Silberman

TWO IN MOBILE—AHAVAS CHESED IS ONE

Mobile, AL—Cong. Ahavas Chesed (C) is a new NCEJ grantee. The 140-member synagogue held a 3-session class, Curious About Judaism?, in spring 2009 which drew about 14 people, almost all non-Jewish.

Follow-up classes touched on topics mentioned in evaluations, says Rabbi Steven Silberman.

Among comments:

—"Your friendliness made us all feel very comfortable and welcome."

—"How do you become a member?"

Reading *The Jewish Proclaimer*, Rabbi Silberman says, "inspired me to think outside the typical Conservative box."

SPRINGHILL CONTINUES TASTE CLASS

Mobile, AL—Springhill Avenue Temple/Cong. Sha'arai Shomayim (R) continues its successful Taste classes. The 200-unit congregation had 47, mostly non-Jewish, attending its 2009 series.

Rabbi Donald Kunststadt is convinced that spreading "the word of Judaism...is where the future of Judaism can be found; not only among those who have already chosen Judaism, but in reaching out to the many unchurched."

All the students in the fall classes were invited to a special Taste of Judaism Shabbat.

Student comments:

—"I now have a better understanding of my fiance's religion."

—"I am very much inclined to keep learning about Judaism, and eventually convert."

—"I have found a sense of home, both physically and spiritually."

TUCSON DRAWS INCREASING NUMBER

Tucson, AZ—Temple Emanu-El (R) continues as the gold standard of outreach. Its '09-'10 series draws 182 sign-ups, about 3/5 not Jewish, including 5 who identify as Jewish but were not raised Jewish. The 700-member congregation had 11 conversions in 2009.

Of registrants, 21 expressed an interest in conversion; 10 came because of close Jewish friends, others felt "Jewish by proximity"; 4 had Jewish in-laws or other relatives.

Coordinator Mila Anderson comments, the key to program success is in "lowering barriers to participation. The classes have an open, comfortable atmosphere, where it is easy to ask any questions. Participants frequently comment how welcomed they feel and express deep gratitude there is such a program available..."

Among comments:

—"My wife desires to become Jewish. (I feel) better about my wife converting to Judaism like me."

—"I was born a Jew but had no religious training at all."

—"I had been wanting to get back in touch with my faith and needed help. I converted 36 years ago, but after my children were grown I somehow drifted away..."

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US



TEMPLE ISRAEL
long beach

Brand New Class

A Taste of JUDAISM

THIS BEGINNER'S CLASS IS ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR:

- ✓ Unaffiliated Jews,
- ✓ Intermarried couples,
- ✓ Those seeking an initial orientation into an adult approach to the study of Judaism
- ✓ And all those searching for an entry into Jewish life.

Please share information about this class with anyone who you think might be interested. A Taste of Judaism is OFFERED FREE of charge to everyone. Preregistration is required.

Instructor: Rabbi Steven Moskowitz

Class Dates: **THURSDAYS, NOV. 5, 12, 19 - 7:00 P.M.**

Call the Temple Office For More Information

LONG BEACH'S LATEST DOUBLE PROGRAM

Long Beach, CA—The Jan-May '10 18-week Intro program at Temple Israel (R) attracted 17, all but 3 not Jewish, and all but 3 of these interested in converting, reports Rabbi Steven Moskowitz. There were 9 conversions in 2009.

Its Taste of Judaism program in Fall '09 drew 18, just about ¾ not Jewish.

A comment: -"I think that Judaism is for me. I've researched other religions and this is the one that makes me feel very good, and I am very touched by it."

AMERICAN JEWISH U, WITH NEW LEADERS

Los Angeles—American Jewish U continues its Intro program, with changed leadership from fall 2009.

Rabbi Neal Weinberg, for 23 years head of the Miller Intro classes, now runs a separate Judaism By Choice course. Ziegler rabbinic school Dean Rabbi Bradley Artson broadened the Miller program.

In these 2009 Miller 18-session classes, attended by almost 300, with fees of \$326/515 single/couple, about 2/3 were not Jewish, about 2/3 of these interested in converting.

Among student comments:

-“The separate meetings that we both had were very helpful for me spiritually and gave me a good sense of where to begin this journey.”

-Teacher Michael Knopf's "enthusiasm was infectious from the very start and I appreciated the fact it was important to him that he get to know us (and we, him) and that we get to know each other as well."

"God loves the Ger Tzedek who has come by choice more than all the crowds of Israel who stood before Mount Sinai... The Ger Tzedek ...chooses to enter the covenant with God and to take on the yoke of Heaven without the benefit of miracles..."

"In an age in which people are free to abandon their Judaism at will, at a time when so many Jews are raised without a Jewish education and lack the experience of Judaism in the home, we are all—in a very real sense—potential converts to Judaism. We each face a personal decision, whether or not to make Judaism something central to our identities and our lives, whether we are willing to grow to make the words of the Shema our own personal pledge of allegiance."

--Rabbi Bradley Artson, AJU

Louis & Judith Miller

Introduction to Judaism Program at American Jewish University:



EXPLORE

- History & Culture
- Holy Days & Festivals
- Jewish Ethics
- Synagogue Services
- Life Cycle Rituals
- Kashrut: The Dietary Laws
- Antisemitism & the Holocaust
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We welcome all Jews, Non-Jews, EXTRAORDINARY TEACHERS • EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING and those considering conversion

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING • SHABBAT RETREATS

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For more information, please give us a call at (310) 440-1273 or email us at intro@ajua.edu • www.ajua.edu/intro

- NEW CLASSES BEGIN EVERY MONTH -

The Louis & Judith Miller Introduction to Judaism Program, established in 1965, is endorsed by the Rabbinical Assembly as well as other religious movements, for purposes of conversion, and by the State of Israel for making aliyah.



Basic Judaism:
Fundamentals of Belief and Practice

TUESDAYS, OCT. 28 - MAR. 17
7:00 - 9:00 P.M.

This 18 week course is designed for Jews and non-Jews who want to know more about Judaism.

For more information contact Program Director Bonnie Graff at 858-535-1111 ext. 3800 or bgraff@cbisd.org.

REGISTER AND PAY ONLINE BY FRI. OCT. 24 AT: WWW.CBISD.ORG/RSYP

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL
901 Towne Centre Dr.
San Diego, CA 92122
(619) 535-1111

SAN DIEGO DRAWS 50 TO BASIC JUDAISM

San Diego—Cong. Beth El enters NCEJ ranks with its 18-week Basic Judaism course, fees \$200-275, attended by 50, 4/5 not members, ½ not Jewish. 19 were interested in converting, in this 9/08-3/09 group.

The 1250-member congregation reported 6 conversions in the preceding year.

NATIONAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM -- APPLICATION, 2010-2011

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

We help you inform your broad community all are welcome to learn about Judaism and become Jewish. NCEJ grants, to synagogues, consortia, agencies, regional offices, etc., for 2009-2011 programs, are for a maximum of \$1200 up to one-half the cost of the secular (non-Jewish) media advertising. Individual synagogues may win a 20% bonus atop a yearly basic grant, if you received an NCEJ grant the year before, for a \$1440 maximum. 2009-2011 URJ Taste recipients, since NCEJ is a co-sponsor, may receive half a regular grant. You may apply for each of two grants yearly for separate programs in distinctly different quarters. Grants are at NCEJ's sole discretion.

Eligible courses are two types: 1) Introduction to- Taste of- 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, cooking, dancing, interfaith, or lectures not of help to prospective converts. Aborted programs are ineligible.

Send in your completed applications after your program starts. Must include a) demographic information, b) student reactions, c) a copy of the ads (radio/tv, of text) and d) of the specific billing. Incomplete submissions incur delays.

[For course grants, complete Sections (1) & (2); Outreach Shabbat grants, Secs. (1) & (3).]

(1) Organization _____ Cong. membership numbers _____ Date _____
(___ Reform ___ Conservative ___ Reconstruction ___ Orthodox ___ Mix of: _____ No affiliation _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail: _____

Web? _____ Contact(Rab-Ctr-ExD-Adm-Coord-Pres-Chr) & Title _____

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 a one-time bonus for each new initiative of ongoing out-of-the-ordinary welcoming/convert-encouraging activities, at NCEJ's discretion. Supply details; cursory response doesn't qualify. Examples:

-You welcome attendees at oneg shabbat/kiddush with more than such routines as bima announcements or colored cups; staff & board take part. - Programs integrate interfaith & converts. More than Dec. dilemma-type sessions or monthly interfaith--what others can learn from and copy. -You supply free pamphlets/booklets on becoming Jewish, a rack or table in an open area, pamphlets free to take any time; send us the list, and copies of any you yourself prepared.

(2) COURSE TITLE _____ Date held _____ 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 (report the most interesting on separate sheet; pro forma reply causes delay.)

What follow-up programs & contacts do you have? _____

You have any thoughts/suggestions about classes, alternatives, follow-ups, approaches to increase conversion (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? _____

Any advice to other synagogues planning to do this? _____

TASTE & INTRO BOTH IN JACKSONVILLE

Jacksonville, FL--Cong. Ahavath Chesed (R) holds a Taste 3-session course attracting 48 and a 17-session Intro course drawing 85 in 2009 (with weekly attendance 50-60), it reports.

The Taste class was about half non-Jews; the Intro program, about 7/8.

Among comments:

-“We are Christian. Our 27-year-old son and his wife are Hassidic Jews in NY and we’d like to learn more about Judaism.”

“My interest and my love for my husband’s people. We were married 38 years and 7 months. He was a lot older than myself and he passed away. My mother was mistaken for Jewish often...We lived in a Jewish neighborhood growing up and almost all of my friends were Jewish. I’ve always felt this closeness. My husband and I met on Yom Kippur eve.”

-“As a humanities instructor, it’s important for me to understand as many religions as possible. I am also

my life having Jewish friends, working in a Jewish hospital... dating a Jewish man, etc., so I wanted to learn more.”


-“I was hoping to learn more about Judaism (in comparison to my Christian upbringing)...I’ve been reading on my own as well.”

SPANISH SPOKEN AT THIS OPEN DOOR

Miami—Bet Breira Samu-El Or Olom, a 420-member mixed (R) & (C) congregation, has 18 students at its Spanish-language Taste course, all but one not Jewish and interested in converting. All were invited to Rabbi David Schonblum’s follow-up weekly Torah class (in English and translated into Spanish.)

“It attracts a large number from the large Hispanic community in the Miami area,” says Educator Jeffrey Agron.

One student: “I was so pleased that I was able to learn about Judaism in my native language, Spanish.”



**INTRODUCTION TO
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Congregation
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Whether you are seeking a richer understanding of your own Jewish heritage, a connection to a community, beginning a personal discovery of faith, or if you want to learn more, Intro is for you. This 18-week course will cover many aspects of Reform Judaism, including God concepts, liturgy, holidays, sacred texts, ritual, Israel and much more!

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tracing my family heritage, so I have a personal mission to understand Judaism.”

-“Trying to honor what I just discovered about my family. Apparently I’m half Jewish and my parents never chose to tell us.”

-“I have been on the periphery of Judaism most of

ENTENDIENDO AL JUDAISMO**¿TIENE USTED CURIOSIDAD?**

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