

# The JEWISH Proclaimer

SPRING 5772-2012

NO. 11/12-01

## PROCLAIM JUDAISM THROUGHOUT THE LANDS—THERE'S A JEWISH TASK

Religion's real estate—what's important?	1
Reality check: Judaism's superior content.	1
Too many new Jews—or not enough?	1
Can you ask your rabbi anything? Do it.	2
What was/is going on in outreach.	2
Non-Jews sample Mobile taste.	2
Conservative forefront: Amer. Jewish U classes.	2

San Diego. Hartford's Reform rabbis do consort.	3
Jacksonville Taste, Intro. Tampa catchup.	3
Savannah goes 10-10. KC does consortium.	4
Families show up at Grand Rapids Intro.	5
Las Vegas Taste bar mitzvah, Fair Lawn explores.	5
New Hyde Park, Raleigh, Cleveland.	6
NCEJ application form for Taste/Intro/Ask.	7
Austin. San Antonio, Tacoma havdalah in PJs.	8

## WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT IN JUDAISM? RELIGION, RELIGION...

And what is that religion?

Here's where Jewry isn't doing well—it's not putting out its marker: Why Judaism started as, has been, and is so remarkable a religious framework.

Islam boasts its 5 principles. Christianity stresses a miraculous savior's redemptive power. But Judaism?

Ethical monotheism doesn't make it—too bland.

Non-belief in somebody else's messiah, either.

Tikkun olam comes after, not before; because of ...

**Judaism is great because of:**

1. Its concept of a universal, abstract God who covers everybody, not just believers.
2. Its emphasis on action, rather than faith.
3. Its emphasis on the here and now, rather than after-life.
4. Its emphasis from the start on betterment of the community, rather than personal salvation.

### CAN JUDAISM STRESS SUPERIOR CONTENT?

It's all right to think it. And it is all right to say it.

Judaism's religious framework is superior to other religions here about. Of course we think so.

You're not saying that people who don't believe as you do are going to hell. You are saying the righteous of all nations have a share in the future world.

You're not saying that non-Jews who belong or go to your synagogue are beyond effort. You are not saying another religion is invalid, or that its adherents are infidels. You are saying that Judaism is open, and welcoming.

You are saying you think your Jewish religion is a current, vibrant framework.

You can—and should—invite others to learn about it, to study, and to become Jewish if they'd like.

We've said it before and we'll say it again:

If 10% of the Roman empire could be Jewish or Judeophile 2000 years ago, why could not 10% of the United States—Europe, too; Australia, South America...—be Jewish today. In the U.S., that's 30 million.

Why not?

And why could not you and your synagogue help that come closer to being? Why stay closed, insular, responding perhaps only to mixed-marriage request, why not be open and inviting—why not be truly Torah-Jewish?

Sure, there could be problems of cost or capacity—be that lucky!

### CAN AMERICAN JEWRY REACH OUT?

Here's a generalization:

Synagogues respond to demand.

But they aren't creating much demand.

They could. You could.

A rabbi asked us about NCEJ's advertising subsidy program for outreach.

He runs a consortium Introduction to Judaism program. He had 30 students a year drawn solely from area synagogues, just as it was, without advertising.

With advertising, we suggested, he might get 50.

"That would be too much," he said.

Can Judaism have too many?

**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.  
1109 Ruppert Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20903-1020 301-593-2319 E-mail: [NCEJudaism@verizon.net](mailto:NCEJudaism@verizon.net).  
Web: [www.NCEJudaism.org](http://www.NCEJudaism.org). This first issue for 2012 follows 10-02. No issues in 2011. Editor: Ash Gerecht

National Center to Encourage Judaism can help you reach out to invite others in your broad community to learn about Judaism—if you understand the necessity and value to you and all Jewry of doing that.

No matter how digital and electronic and webby the world becomes, it still is all about people—you. If your congregation is open and welcoming—if live people can welcome live people—Judaism and your synagogue have this great chance, to grow. NCEJ can help underwrite the cost of your advertising outreach programs.

An application form is on page 7 of this Proclaimer, and on our website, NCEJudaism.org. (Back issues, with more ads, are on there, too.)

### CAN YOU ASK YOUR RABBI—ANYTHING?

NCEJ is changing its Open Shabbat program opportunity to Ask the Rabbi—Anything!

Here's what we invite you to try:

Advertise an explanatory Shabbat service, with this headline, in the secular non-Jewish media (2 column by 2 inch is enough), then have a Q&A session either during the service or reconvene after oneg or Kiddush, as long as visitors and members want to Ask the Rabbi Anything (from Why don't Jews believe xyz, to Why do Jews believe abc.)

Ask how many are new to the synagogue, how many responded to the ad, and let us know that.

If enough show, this might be your lead-in to a Taste of Judaism mini or Introduction course.

NCEJ will pay a flat 60% of the cost of your advertising this approach, up to its maximum of \$1200.

See page 7 for the application form.

(Next issue: Details on a new program of support for positive advertising.)

### OUTREACH THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY; IT'S NON-JEWS SAMPLING MOBILE TASTE

Mobile, AL—All 23 of the students at Springhill Ave. Temple's fall 2010 Taste course were not Jewish. It held a Taste of Judaism Shabbat service that Dec. The 213-member synagogue reports 2 conversions in the preceding year.

The next class, in fall 2011, drew 29, all non-Jewish.

Rabbi Donald M. Kunstadt says the NCEJ grants enable the temple "to afford the active Outreach Program we have conducted the last several years." And, "Your good work is the vanguard for the future of Judaism."

Of students, a male, 51: "If more people were aware of and took your class, there would be more people who would convert."

A 58-year-old male, mother Jewish, Protestant wife, is interested in conversion, and more study.


Female, 59: "I shall remember first and foremost that Judaism is a choice of religion not a race! (LoL!)"

### AMER. JEWISH UNIVERSITY CONTINUES INTRODUCTION CLASS FOR LARGE GROUP

Los Angeles—American Jewish University's 18-week Introduction classes in the first half of 2010 total 283 students, 2/3 of them not Jewish.

Fall 2010 classes had 313 attending, 216 not Jewish, and about half of these interested in converting.

The Louis and Judith Miller  
**Introduction to Judaism**  
PROGRAM




The Miller Introduction to Judaism Program is a stimulating and meaningful 18-week course geared towards Jews and non-Jews who want to learn more about Judaism, in addition to those considering conversion.

*Pasadena Classes*  
CLASS BEGINS: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2010 AT 6:30 PM  
Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center:  
1434 N. Altadena Drive, Pasadena  
TAUGHT BY: Rabbi Gilbert Kofin

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Classes also at American Jewish University, Bel Air:  
• Sunday, November 7, 2010, at 9:30 am  
• Tuesday, November 30, 2010, at 6:30 pm  
Classes also at Adas Aris, Valley Village:  
• Wednesday, January 12, 2011, at 6:30 pm

Call for information:  
(310) 440-1273 • www.ajua.edu/intro



In 2011, advertising was concentrated in the LA Times, says assistant Sharon Margolin, because she could obtain remnant ad space. Attendance was 311, 218 not Jewish, but 188-plus interested in converting.

Lay people call students during the program to get reactions. If there are any problems, a staff person follows up.

Classes started almost monthly, run 3.5 hours each. Fees in 2011 were \$515/couple, \$335 single.

Program may expand to offering Taste of Judaism-type classes at participating synagogues.

A student: "...Further knowledge of a religion that isn't at odds with and in fact encourages questioning and intellectualism intrigued me. I was feeling very spiritually unfulfilled by my Christian background (which is strong; my father is a Lutheran pastor), yet uncomfortable with altogether denying God's existence. (After reading God is a Verb by Rabbi David Cooper, I) began attending Shabbat services at Temple Sinai in Glendale... (The Reform rabbi there) recommended AJU... because he felt I would benefit from a more in-depth class from a Conservative institution, and I agree.

Louis & Judith Miller  
**Introduction to Judaism Program**  
 at American Jewish University



**EXPLORE**

- History & Culture
- Holy Days & Festivals
- God & Spirituality
- Jewish Ethics
- Synagogue Services
- Life Cycle Rituals
- Kashrut: The Dietary Laws
- Antisemitism & the Holocaust
- Israel & Zionism

**We welcome all Jews, Non-Jews, and those considering conversion for our 18-week course offered throughout Southern California.**

**LOCATIONS:**  
 Bel Air,  
 Orange County,  
 Pasadena,  
 Santa Monica,  
 West Los Angeles,  
 West & East Valley



For more information, please give us a call at (310) 440-1273 or email us at [intro@ajula.edu](mailto:intro@ajula.edu) • [www.ajula.edu/intro](http://www.ajula.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, and by the State of Israel for making aliyah.

“...Practising Judaism has brought a new level of consciousness to my everyday life...”

**Discovery of roots:** Another: -The classes “have changed my life and brought me closer to my Jewish heritage. One evening in 1979, I was attending a Catholic prayer meeting...when to my surprise I began to doodle a ‘Star of David.’ (She is 2<sup>nd</sup> generation in the U.S., remembers her maternal grandmother’s challah and chicken soup. Once she substituted for a staffer at the JCC, and found her father’s name in a Jewish Family Finder book. She researched, learned of 11 ancestors killed at Auschwitz..) ..”I will be forever grateful to AJU for this enlightening and gifted program that brought me back to my Jewish roots.”

**In Fall 2010:** “I loved this course—especially because it offers a clear path to conversion.”

Another: “This course was perfect for me because I am Jewish by birth but did not have a Jewish upbringing.”

A student with a Japanese name: Rabbi Yolcut’s lecture (on kashrut) “changed the way I think about things. ...My fiancé and I decided to go more strict on keeping kosher!”

Another: “I can’t imagine a more palatable way to delve into the endless bouquet of Judaism!”

Another: “All the Jews by choice gave me a sense of comfort about my decision to convert... I am so happy to finally truly have found God.”

**SAN DIEGO UJF SHOWS OTHERS THE WAY**

San Diego—After a lull in response in 2009, when 3 out of 7 classes had to be cancelled because of small turnout, the UJF here resumes its Taste program in 2010 on a reduced budget, and participation quintupled at classes in 5 locations.

All told, 79 attended, reports community outreach coordinator Nurit Ambrose. A third of the 44 non-Jewish students were interested in conversion. Half the total were 46 and older.

In the first half of 2011, 2 Taste I classes drew 26, and 2 follow-up Taste II courses drew 79. Slightly more than half were not Jewish. A third of students were single, a bit more were married. A seventh were 19-24, about 2/5 24-45.

**TASTE OF JUDAISM!**  
 Designed for the beginner, Jewish or not!  
**FREE 3-SESSION CLASSES - HELD FROM 7-9 P.M.**

**TASTE I - 2010**  
 • Customized, Community Ethics  
 • Thursdays, February 4, 11 & 18 (11:00 AM - 1:00 PM)  
 (CAMP ROAD, SAN JOSE (SANTA TERESA AREA))

**TASTE II - 2010**  
 Customs, Life-Cycles, Holidays and Traditions

- THURSDAYS, JANUARY 21, 28 & FEBRUARY 4  
 CONGREGATION BETH EL (LA JOLLA AREA)
- WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 10, 17 & 24  
 CONGREGATION DOR HADASH (KEARNY MESA AREA)
- THURSDAYS, MARCH 4, 11 & 18  
 TIFRETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE (SAN CARLOS AREA)
- THURSDAYS, APRIL 15, 22 & 29  
 CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL (UTC AREA)

For more information on these and other classes please contact  
 UJF Outreach at 858.737.7152 or 858.571.3444 OR OUTREACH@UJFSD.ORG

Find out how you can be the difference. Visit [jewishinsandiego.org](http://jewishinsandiego.org) or call the United Jewish Federation of San Diego County at 858.571.3444.



**Students noted** “the comfortable atmosphere for asking questions and sharing opinions.”

Said one: “My son is married to a Jewish woman and I have two grandkids that are being brought up Jewish. I came to learn about the religion.”

While distributing information about events in the Jewish community at the first of the 3 Taste I or Taste II sessions, UJF likes the idea of a mailing on upcoming events after the course is over, too. “It’s important to keep in touch with the participants...”

**REFORM RABBIS OF HARTFORD CONTINUE CONSORTIUM INTRODUCTION COURSE**

Hartford, CT—The Introduction class that ended in Spring 2010 drew 33, of whom 19 were not Jewish.

Total congregational membership in the area is 2500. Fee for 18-week class: \$225/couple, \$175 single.

Students in the Oct. ’10-March ’11 course numbered 20, ¾ not Jewish.

**Students:** -“This course was everything I had hoped. I am now heading in the direction of conversion.”

A couple: -“Initially, we just wanted to learn more about Judaism so that we could be involved in raising

The Reform Rabbis of Greater Hartford Present

# INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM

The curriculum promises comprehensive study including basic Hebrew, Jewish history, liturgy, holidays and life cycle events as well as the Jewish perspective on spirituality, values and community. Discover the beauty of prayer, traditions and learn about the Jewish way of life.

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**  
from 7:00 to 9:15 PM  
**OCTOBER 14, 2009 to MARCH 3, 2010**

The eighteen classes will be held at

**CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL**  
701 Farmington Ave.  
West Hartford

FOR INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER:  
Contact Cheryl Goldberg at (860) 233-8215 ext. 224 or e-mail: cgoldberg@cbict.org

**TUITION:** \$175 per individual or \$225 per married/engaged couples. If not now, when?

our children Jewish. But the experience became so much more than that. Steve decided that conversion to Judaism was the path he wanted to take and I feel more connected to my heritage than ever before.”


And: “The format (Hebrew first, other class content second) works well. Also, a definite plus to have multiple rabbis teaching.”

Advertising in secular sources “is one of the best ways to reach out to our surrounding communities,” says Administrator Cheryl Goldberg (860-233-8215).

**TASTE, INTRO BOTH IN JACKSONVILLE**

Jacksonville, FL—Cong. Ahavath Chesed (R) returns, with both a Taste & Introduction program in 2010. At the 757-member synagogue, with 2 conversions in the year, 25 attended the free Taste minicourse in July, 45 the \$54 Intro in Aug.-Dec., with about 2/3 in each not Jewish.

A student: “This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time I have enrolled in Intro. There was just too much information for me to grasp. Now I know how much I missed the first time around.”



**INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM**

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!

Open to the entire community; we welcome our congregants, unaffiliated Jews, non-Jews, people who love Jews and people who are loved by Jews.

**Thursdays, August 5 - December 16, 2010**  
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Congregation Ahavath Chesed - The Temple  
8727 San Jose Boulevard Jacksonville, FL 32217

There is a \$54 fee for this course. Make checks payable to The Temple. To register contact us at (904) 733-7078 or learning@thetemplejacksonville.org

**The Only Requirement Is That You're A Jew or A Non-Jew.**


Discover for yourself the nature of Judaism, God, Torah, worship, Jewish holidays, marriage and other Jewish life cycle observances in this informative course, that Rabbi Birmhot has taught for the past 35 years. Experience what hundreds of adults have learned about our 3500 year old religion.

SCHAARAI ZEDEK'S MINI UNIVERSITY


**An Introduction to Judaism & Jewish Spirituality**

Ideal for Jews, Non-Jews & Interfaith Couples.

9 Week Course  
Begins Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2008 at 7:00 PM  
Registration Info 813-876-2377  
No Tuition, but course books to purchase.



RABBI RICHARD BIRNHOLZ, D.D.



CONGREGATION SCHAARAI ZEDEK

3303 W. Swann Avenue • Tampa  
**813-876-2377**  
visit our website: [www.zedek.org](http://www.zedek.org)

**REGULAR TAMPAGRANTEE RETURNS**

Tampa—Cong. Schaaerei Zedek, with us since at least 1996, returns with its great ads and 7-week program, An Introduction to Judaism and Jewish Spirituality. Fifty attend the '08 course, half of these not Jewish.

The 1000-member congregation had 8 conversions in the preceding year.

**DAY&NIGHT, MICKVE ISRAEL'S THE ONE**

Savannah, GA—Whether it's the intensity of a full-day class (10 to 10), or its reputation (or the meals?), Cong. Mickve Israel (R) draws a large attendance with its now-annual Introduction program.

Registration for the free 12-hour course Jan. 30, 2010, was 65, about 3/4 not members and not Jewish. The 315-member congregation reports 2 conversions in the preceding year.

One attendee was a Christian descendant of a Mickve Israel founder.

Among comments:

–“This was the fourth time for me! Although a basic outline is followed, the experience is ever changing,” says a recent convert and temple member.

–“Today's class was wonderful learning experience for someone who married into the Jewish faith. I look forward to learning more about Judaism.”

## KANSAS CITY'S COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Overland Park, KS—Rabbinical Ass'n of Greater Kansas City enrolls 24 for its community-wide 35-week \$360 course, Judaism for Conversion Candidates, which began in Sept. '09. Enrollees must have a rabbinic sponsor. Teachers on a rotating basis are Reform, Conservative and Orthodox rabbis.

In 2010-11, 23 attended, all not Jewish.

Eighteen enrolled for the 8/11-5/12 series; 11 are women; 6 are married to Jews, 4 are in relationships.

Comments Rabbi Herbert Mandl, 2011 President of the RA, "Many of the students who come to us are on a spiritual journey and inquire about the program as a result of advertising they see in the newspapers, by calling one of our 9 congregations or the Jewish Federation, or by visiting our website."

Since the program began in 2003, 154 adults and 57 children have completed their conversion, reports administrator Annette Fish.

A rabbinic taskforce is meeting in 2012 to review the program.

A student: "Regardless of the intention or eventual conversion of any of the participants, the simple offering of the class is 'tikkun olam' in practice."

"The conversion class has opened many new windows in my life."

"I love going to the different synagogues for classes."

"I realize this is a lifelong process and we need to remember there isn't an End Point."

"I particularly value the fact that this program is community-based."

## FAMILIES ATTEND GRAND RAPIDS INTRO

Grand Rapids, MI—A noteworthy feature of the 16-week Introduction class at Cong. Ahavas Israel (C) is the family attendance—at the course started Feb. 2010 there were two families, totaling 4 adults, 2 teens, and 2 younger children. One family of five, who took the course in 2009, were completing conversion in '10.

For the 7th year, in 2011, the synagogue held a model seder in a church, "to demonstrate a real Seder, as opposed to the Hebrew Christian 'Messianic' Seders that churches have presented in the past," says Rabbi David Krishef.

Ahavas Israel has hosted the choir from a black synagogue in Chicago for a joint concert with a black church in Grand Rapids. "Our position is that the more work we do to create opportunities for an interesting dialogue that attracts the attention of both the Jewish



# JUDAISM



3500 Years of Tradition  
Based on the Hebrew Bible

Introduction to Judaism, 7:00 - 8:15 p.m.  
Monday evenings, beginning February 1  
Congregation Ahavas Israel

2727 Michigan St. N.E. 616-949-2840

Call 616-949-2840 or see [AhavasIsraelGR.org](http://AhavasIsraelGR.org)  
for registration information.

and non-Jewish community, the most likely it is that non-affiliated and potential Jews will be aware of our existence!"

The synagogue for 10 years has held a Torah study group at a local bookstore, as a "point of contact with non-affiliated Jews or interested non-Jews," and started a Zohar group study of mysticism with 7 attending, several of them not Jewish.

"The advertisement in the paper is only the bare beginning of outreach. Those who come to the synagogue and find a supportive environment tell their friends."

### "A Taste of Judaism"



#### Are You Curious?

Offered at Congregation Ner Tamid, get a modern Reform Jewish perspective on Jewish life.

- Basic philosophy of Judaism
- Meanings of Jewish Holidays & customs
- Understanding of Jewish community and organizations

#### 3-Class Series

Thursdays, April 29, May 6 & 13  
7:00 - 9:00 pm

OPEN TO BEGINNERS, JEWISH OR NOT!

FREE but space is limited!  
To register, please call 702.632.2288.

Sponsored by Bradley, Rebecca & Elizabeth Ann Snyder  
Scholarship Fund.

## 2010 WAS LAS VEGAS' TASTE BAR MITZVAH

Henderson, NV—Cong. Ner Tamid (R) held its 13<sup>th</sup> year of Taste classes in spring 2010, attracting 54, about ¾ not Jewish, and its 14<sup>th</sup> in 2011, for 57, 45 of them not Jewish.

The 658-member congregation followed up with a

summer adult learning program, which included basic Hebrew classes, an Introduction course, and such topics as Jewish meditation and how to prepare a d'var Torah.

A student: "Rabbi Zukrow performed our wedding ceremony. My husband is Jewish and I am not and wanted to learn the basics to see if I want to continue with more classes...I learned that the relationship between G-d and the individual is highly reciprocal and find that interesting and a wonderful way of looking at things."

### EXPLORING JUDAISM IN FAIR LAWN

Fair Lawn, NJ—Fair Lawn Jewish Center/Cong. B'nai Israel (C) draws 25 to its 2009 Explore Judaism free 3-week class, 5 of the students not Jewish. The 580-member congregation had 2 conversions in the preceding year, it reports.

A year later, the 2010 class had 25 attending, 85% of them Jewish. There were 4 conversions in the preceding year. Follow-up was a 22-week Intro program run by the North Jersey Rabbinical Assembly.

Among comments: "We liked best the explanation of Jewish perspectives on behavior, and the openness of freedom and discussion...More printouts would be helpful in following and remembering the material."

"Good basic intro and interesting enough to encourage me to continue on with more education."

2011 class had 31 students, 25 of them non-Jews.

Fee is \$25 members/\$50 non. Orthodox, Conservative and Reform rabbis teach the classes.

A student: "Highlight of the class was meeting new people that are learning and going through what I am going through."

Another especially liked "talking to other people in the class and hearing their stories of why they are interested in Judaism."

"I have been Christian all my life with very little exposure to Judaism...I find that I have grown past dogma and am interested in honest spirituality."

"I would really like for the class to go together to the Temple as a group. It would have been great to celebrate the holidays together."

"I would show up tired and leave energized." Class highlight was active discussions, "the dynamism and welcoming attitude of the rabbis."

### CLEVELAND HOLDS CLASSES ALL OVER

Cleveland—Jewish Education Center attracts hundreds to its series of Taste classes in its 2009-10 series.

Fall 2009 classes in 3 locations drew 300 during Sukkot, with the first class in the sukkah. Winter classes in 2 spots registered 100. The spring session, the first at Beachwood JCC, attracted 30.

A six-week class, Feast of Judaism, began after the spring session. Advertising costs were over \$8,000.

Fall 2010 classes were also held during Sukkot, with the first session again in the sukkah, at 3 locations. The 6 fall 2010 sessions drew 160, 120 not Jewish, while the spring 2011 classes had the same registration, but 140 not Jewish. Because of evaluation response, a follow-up Feast of Judaism at both east and west side locations was held, with 65 attending. The last of these sessions was indeed a feast, with Middle Eastern food, and shlichot emissaries from Israel speaking. Altogether, 225 attended fall-spring 2010-11 classes.

Coordinator Sherri Kaufman has broadened the media used, finding smaller papers are willing to discount in exchange for multiple ads. Programs also rely on TV and radio public service announcements. Word of mouth is also important. "Outreach is about building relationships as well as building one's knowledge base," she notes.

A student: "I was raised Catholic but never felt a true dialogue with G-d was possible until I started reading... (continue on page 8)"

Did you miss out on receiving a Jewish education?  
Are you in an interfaith relationship and want to learn about Jewish life?  
Are you thinking of converting to Judaism?

**EXPLORE JUDAISM**

Three Tuesday evenings: Oct. 5, Oct. 12 and Oct. 19  
8:00 to 9:00 pm at the Fair Lawn Jewish Center  
Taught by Rabbi Ronald Roth

Topics include: Chosenness: Aren't all religions the same?  
Heaven and Hell: Judaism and life after death  
Prayer: Is God listening?

**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL**

For more information, call 201.796.5040.  
Preregister by calling the synagogue or register at the first class.

Fair Lawn Jewish Center/Congregation B'nai Israel  
10-10 Norma Avenue • Fair Lawn, NJ • www.fljc.com

### TEMPLE TIKVAH TURNS TABLES ON TASTE

New Hyde Park, NY—Temple Tikvah runs its URJ-sponsored Taste minicourse in 2009 for 15 attendees, only 3 of them not Jewish, a reversal of the usual tally. But all were nonmembers. 33 called in; 8-12 usually attended. Ages ranged 40-80.

### N.C. TRIANGLE RABBIS HOLD INTRO

Raleigh, NC—Triangle Area Rabbis register 37 for their Sept.-Nov. 2010 Introduction 10-week course at Temple Beth Or here. Slightly less than half of the students are not Jews.

# NATIONAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM -- APPLICATION, 2011-2012

1109 Ruppert Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20903-1020 - 301-593-2319 - 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 2011-2012 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. 2010-2011 URJ Taste recipients, since NCEJ was 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); Ask the Rabbi—Anything Shabbat, 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) ASK THE RABBI-ANYTHING! SHABBAT (prospective-member events ineligible.)

Add details on a separate sheet. Grants are for flat 60% of the advertising cost up to \$1200.

Event need have Explanatory Service, Kiddush/Oneg, Q&A session.

Title of your event? \_\_\_\_\_ When held? \_\_\_\_\_  
Attendance : Estimate: Response to ad \_\_\_\_\_ Nonmembers \_\_\_\_\_ Total attending \_\_\_\_\_ Usual attendance: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you include: Explanations \_\_\_\_\_ Information on classes, or conversion? \_\_\_\_\_ Have pamphlets available? \_\_\_\_\_  
Describe how you handled Q&A session—Interesting Qs \_\_\_\_\_

Would you hold this Q&A again? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_ How would you change it? \_\_\_\_\_

Any advice to other synagogues planning to do this? \_\_\_\_\_ (R2/12)

ing about Judaism. I find myself being absolutely inspired by what I learn about the religion and people.”

**Fall comments:** -“A very good program for non-Jews to get to know more about the Jewish people, their traditions, heritage, and Bible.”

-“I just found out my great-grandmother was Jewish. I would like to uncover more of my roots.”

-“At age 62, I learned that my maternal grandfather was Jewish.”

-“I’ve thought about converting my entire life, but afraid to act on it.”

-“My aunt has found through geneology that our grandfather (my great-grandfather) was Jewish. My mom now attends Friday night services at a Temple in St. Petersburg, but remains a Christian.”

#### AUSTIN TEMPLE HAS 15 CONVERSIONS

Austin, TX—NCEJ newcomer, 650-member Cong. Beth Israel (R), reports 15 conversions in the 5770 religious year.

Its Taste minicourse in late summer 2010 attracts 35, only 10 of whom are not Jewish. Its follow-up is a class, Living a Jewish Life.

Students: -“Gave me a rationale for more conscious choice and decision-making regarding being Jewish and reform specifically.”

-“Just what I was looking for—basic overview to make me want to register for the conversion class.”

#### SAN ANTONIO CONTINUES DRAWING

San Antonio, TX—Temple Beth El continues its long-time Taste course, with 26 at its May 2010 sessions, 22 of them not Jewish. The 1100-member synagogue had 10 conversions in the preceding year.

#### JEWISH PROCLAIMER SENT TO NEARLY 4000

This issue of *The Jewish Proclaimer* is mailed to nearly 4,000 synagogues and Jewish institutions in the United States, and a few in Canada.

#### TASTE AND HAVDALAH IN TACOMA

Tacoma, WA—Temple Beth El has 25 attending its Oct. '10 Taste course, all of them not Jewish. 2/3 were female. Course was held with a 2010 URJ grant.

The most interesting statistic (you should see its pie-charts on demographics) was that, “although all students cited the religion of one or both of their parents, 2/3 of the attendees had no religious affiliation. This is typical of Pacific Northwest communities, and is a common factor in the memberships of all religious organizations.”

The 265-member temple had 10 conversions in 5770.

Beth El started holding, one Saturday a month, a “Havdalah in Pajamas” program. This is in conjunction with the PJ Library, and noted in its monthly PJ Library newsletter. Program is open to members and nonmembers, with or without children, Jewish or not. Aim is to encourage the unaffiliated PJ subscribers “to enter our building.”

First such, in Oct. '10, drew 35. (Petra Masellas, resource development coordinator, 203-564-7401.)

**A Taste of Judaism I**

*Are you curious?*  
Covers the topic of God  
(what Jews believe), Torah (what Jews do)  
and Israel (what Jews are)  
Wednesdays: February 6, 20, 27 @ 7-9pm

**A Taste of Judaism II**

An overview of Jewish holidays and rituals  
including dietary observances.  
Thursdays: February 7, 14, 21 @ 7-9pm

**Temple Beth El**  
5975 S. 12th St, Tacoma  
Admission is free but seating is limited  
Pre-registration is required: 253-564-7101  
[www.templebethel.org](http://www.templebethel.org)

**NATIONAL CENTER  
TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM**  
1109 Ruppert Rd.  
Silver Spring, MD 20903

Winter-Spring 5772-2011/12

No. 12-01

**What comes first in Judaism?**  
The religion. In today's marketplace,  
If we shut our doors we shut our eyes.  
If we open our doors—you can help make  
Judaism its most vibrant in 2000 years.  
NCEJ can help you to help all Jewry.