

JLI Presents "Fascinating Facts" Course in Charlotte Debunking the Myths in Judaism

Did Jews believe in Satan? Do Jews believe in angels? And why is pork banned as a food staple in the Jewish diet. The Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) of Charlotte will present Fascinating Facts: Exploring the Myths and Mysteries of Judaism which will address these and many more interesting facts in Jewish faith.

In 1983, Professor E. D. Hirsch created an educational firestorm by introducing the idea of "cultural literacy." People within a culture share certain knowledge and common assumptions that allow them to be understood by one another, to share references, to understand the context of various conversations, jokes, or ideas.

Judaism has a "cultural literacy" as well, and those who do not share these critical bits of knowledge will often find themselves making false assumptions about Jewish values or feeling confused and left out in Jewish social settings or when reading Jewish books.

No single course can possibly plug all the holes in one's knowledge base, and no single fact is critical to Jewish participation. But as more of the gaps in knowledge are filled in, it is easier for Jews to feel knowledgeable and comfortable with their roots and to decide which questions they still need to ask.

In a lighthearted style that allows for both easy conversation and in-depth discussion, this course debunks common miscon-

ceptions and introduces little known but important facts about Judaism that seek to intrigue, surprise, and inform Jews about the richness and scope of their heritage.

Rabbi Yossi Groner of Ohr HaTorah will conduct the six evening sessions at 7:30 PM on Tuesdays and Rabbi Shlomo Cohen will instruct the morning session at 11 on Wednesdays at The Lubavitch Education Center on Sardis Road. This six-session course will begin on Tuesday, November 8, for the evening class and Wednesday November 9, for the morning class.

"As the People of the Book, we strongly believe Jews should know the richness of their Jewish heritage," explains Rabbi Groner, "and that is what we hope to accomplish with this new educational offering."

Spanning a wide range of intriguing subjects, Fascinating Facts includes sessions on Jewish myths and urban legends, biblical stories and events, Jewish foods,

the Hebrew language, life cycle events, and mysteries of the occult. The course will address issues such as the Jewish view on Satan and the evil eye, whether angels have wings, and why pork is considered the quintessential non-kosher food.

"We've designed this course as a fun and insightful overview of Jewish heritage to promote a Jewish cultural literacy within the community," says Rabbi Zalman Abraham, of JLI's New York Headquarters. "We aim to enlighten even the most seasoned trivia buffs with a treasure trove of 'who knew?' Jewish factoids."

Like all JLI programs, Fascinating Facts is designed to appeal to people at all levels of Jewish knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

Interested students may call the

Ohr HaTorah office at 704-366-3984 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and other course-related information.

JLI, the adult education branch of Chabad Lubavitch, offers programs in more than 300 U.S. cities and in numerous foreign locations, including Australia,

Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela. More than 220,000 students have attended JLI classes since the organization was founded in 1998. ☆

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Showing Solidarity Against Domestic Abuse

Purple ribbons to pin on shirts. Purple bands to wear on wrists. Free-standing, life-size silhouettes featuring true stories from our Jewish community. These are all outward signs representing a hidden and secret problem — domestic abuse. They will be prominent around our Jewish community during the month of October which is nationally designated "Domestic Violence Awareness Month."

"Jews don't think domestic abuse happens to Jews, yet it does just as much as in any population," says Marsha Stickler, chair of Shalom Bayit which was formed four years ago to combat domestic abuse in our local Jewish community. "The difference is our Jewish victims stay in the relationship up to three times longer than those of other faiths."

Our community is urged to show understanding and solidarity in the effort to raise awareness and join in the fight by wearing the purple symbols, looking for the silhouettes, and reading accompanying materials. For more information on domestic abuse and our Jewish community as well as how to get involved, see www.shalom-bayit-nc.org. ☆

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C.J.D.S. has children of all developmental levels with strengths in a variety of academic areas. I love that each day I create differentiated lesson plans to fit all my children's needs, allowing each child to be challenged at whatever level they find themselves.

There is an overwhelming feeling of family and community when you walk into the building. I witness acts of kindness every day from students in all grades. We all take care of each other and this warmth permeates the air! I believe that the students here feel that the Jewish Day School is the place for them, and it is definitely the place for me.

— Courtney Buckner

Courtney Buckner
First Grade Teacher

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