

Gastonia's Temple Emanuel Offers "A Taste of Judaism"

Temple Emanuel in Gastonia recently offered "A Taste of Judaism: Are You Curious?," the URI-inspired three-evening class that illuminates the Jewish perspective of God and spirituality,

ethics, and community. The class was advertised through the Temple's newsletters, of course, but also in Gaston's and surrounding communities' secular press. The response was extraordinary.

Originally slated for three successive Thursday evenings in February, registration for those sessions was cut off at 45 people. For those who continued to call, a second offering of "A Taste of Judaism" was scheduled in April, and 60 additional students took the class during this repeat performance.

Participants were enthusiastic and from a wide range of backgrounds and motivations. Some were Jews looking for a "refresher" course, some were looking to reconnect with their Jewish roots and Jewish community. Some individuals were on a spiritual

journey and taking an interest in Judaism. Some were not Jewish but wanted to learn more because a spouse, friend, or other family member was Jewish. Others were committed Christians that wanted to explore the Jewish roots of their own faith.

The class was taught by two lay leaders of the congregation, Mark Epstein and Bill Gross.

The response to the class was exceptional. Evaluations were highly complimentary of the material covered and the quality of presentations. Students were thankful for the opportunity and hoped for more classes in the

future; requests were made for Hebrew studies, relating principles discussed in "Taste of Judaism" to the modern-day geo-religio-politics of the Middle East, interfaith dialogue, and more. Temple Emanuel is happily obliging.

Temple Emanuel has been actively serving the Jewish community of Gaston, Mecklenburg, Lincoln, Cleveland, and York counties for 75 years. Friday night services are held at 7:30 PM till the summer, when Shabbat services are on Saturday mornings 10:30 AM. Questions or inquiries welcome c/o Mark Epstein, Adult Study and Outreach Chair, 704-861-8442, petdok@aol.com. ☆

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Mitzvah Day at Temple Beth El

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Honoring the Elderly – create a craft for local seniors; **Caring for the Community** – assemble toiletry kits for local women's shelters.

2. Maimonides Gift Shop for grades 2-5. Maimonides identifies giving anonymously as one of the highest forms of charity. Participants will create cards, sort and wrap gifts to distribute as birthday presents to local shelters. Please bring a roll of wrapping paper, scissors and tape.

3. Building Bridges for grades 1-4. Assemble care packages for the children in international communities in need.

4. Senior Home Visit for grades 4-6. Visit with local seniors at Sunrise Assisted Living to participate in a craft project and share in conversation.

5. Crafts for Seniors for grades 4-5. Make Jewish crafts for/with our seniors in the Jewish community.

6. Gardening with Seniors for grades 6-7. Visit the Haven (near Carolina Place Mall) and plant a flower and herb gardens with seniors/Alzheimer patients.

7. Cemetery Visit for grades 6-7. Visit the Jewish Cemetery to clean the chapel and/or grounds. Learn about the mitzvah and traditions for burying and honoring the deceased.

B. People to People Projects.

8. Florence Crittenton Services – cook-out with residents.

9. Jewish Family Services – cook a meal at home to be delivered in Mitzvah Day.

10. Mitzvah Day Greeters – welcome and direct the volunteers at Temple Beth El on Mitzvah Day.

11. Mitzvah Day Breakfast – Help set up the bagel breakfast on Mitzvah Day.

12. Hospice – Visit individual homes and do chores as needed.

13. Salvation Army – Plant a garden with residents.

14. Lifespan – Plant a therapy garden with residents.

15. Elon Homes for Children – Sports Tournament (soccer, volleyball, etc.) with youth (must be 12+ to participate)

16. Thompson Children's Home – Provide a "carnival" of games for children (must be 18 to participate)

C. Gardening, Landscaping and Clean-up

17. Hope Haven – General landscaping project.

18. Parks Project – Park clean-up and beautification. Spread mulch and paint parking lot lines at Tuckaseegee Park.

19. Youth Homes – Landscaping.

D. Construction and Painting

20. Grier Heights – General clean-up and repairs.

21. Charlotte Emergency

Housing – Patch holes, replace medicine cabinets, clean fan vents and motors (16+ to participate).

22. International House – Pressure wash, paint stripes in parking lot, steam-clean carpets.

23. Shelter for Battered Women – Painting a mural for the children's center (15+ to participate).

24. Summit House – Inventory and organize tools and tool shed.

25. Charlotte Rescue Mission – Interior painting of dining room.

26. Alexander Children's Home – Hang wallpaper border in bedrooms (16+ to participate).

E. Donations and Deliveries
27. Mitzvah Day Collections – Sort and organize items for various organizations.

28. Circle School – Sew bibs for children with developmental disabilities.

29. Crisis Assistance Ministry – Collect household items from congregants and deliver to Crisis Assistance (truck provided).

Mitzvah Day Donation Wish List

Here is a list of items the Mitzvah Day Committee is collecting to distribute to recipient agencies. Take this list with you when you shop. Clean out your closets, attic, basement, garage, and play rooms. Start bringing items to Temple Beth El today and up to 10 AM on Mitzvah Day.

Bring in your old cell phones. Help keep women that are fleeing domestic violence safe.

We need women's business clothes. Your old skirts, suits, dress shirts, and shoes will help women that are trying to get back on their feet and enter the work force.

We need household supplies (kitchen utensils, pots, pans, dishes, new twin bedding, like-new towels); toiletries (shampoo, lotion, soap, Chapstick, combs, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes); school supplies for children (crayons, markers, pencils, new and gently used books, construction paper, rulers, new and gently used toys, glue, erasers, scissors, new and gently used games); furniture.

Sign up for Mitzvah Day Today

There are four convenient ways to sign up.

By phone: 704-366-1948, extension 133.

Via the web: www.beth-el.com.

Mail in a form (available at Temple Beth El's office) to Jodi Barras, c/o Temple Beth El, 5101 Providence Rd., Charlotte, NC 28226.

Or fax your completed form to Jodi Barras at 704-366-1365. ☆

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Arboretum Location

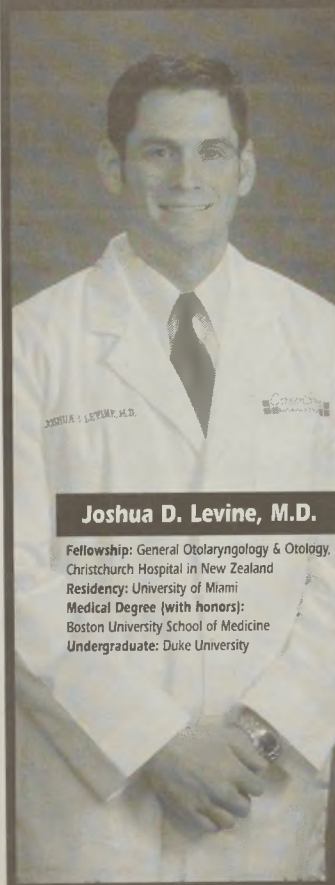
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Monroe Location

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Joshua D. Levine, M.D.

Fellowship: General Otolaryngology & Otolaryngology, Christchurch Hospital in New Zealand
Residency: University of Miami
Medical Degree (with honors): Boston University School of Medicine
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