

Rabbi James M. Bennett to Receive Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, at HUC-JIR Graduation Ceremony in Cincinnati

Rabbi James M. Bennett, Senior Rabbi of **Congregation Shaare Emeth** in St. Louis, Missouri since 2004, will receive a Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, from the **Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR)**. The degree will be granted at HUC-JIR's Cincinnati Graduation ceremony on Sunday, June 7, 2009 at Isaac M. Wise Temple.

Rabbi David Ellenson, Ph.D., announced HUC-JIR alumni recipients who will be awarded honorary Doctorates of Divinity, Music, Jewish Religious Education, and Jewish Communal Service, as well as the Founders' Medallion, in recognition of their 25 years of distinguished professional service.

Born in Boston, Massachusetts, Rabbi Bennett received his undergraduate degree from Indiana University and was ordained in 1984 at HUC-JIR/Cincinnati. Upon ordination, Rabbi Bennett served as Assistant and Associate Rabbi of Congregation Shaare Emeth from 1984 to 1993. He served as Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth El in Charlotte, North Carolina from 1993 to 2003. Rabbi Bennett has served numerous committees and projects in the Jewish community and the community at large and is particularly devoted to efforts that encourage education and development of youth, interfaith outreach, and social justice.

Rabbi Ellenson said, "Rabbi Bennett has devoted his career to building bridges of understanding between Jews and people of all faiths."

For more information on the HUC-JIR Graduation, Investiture, and Ordination ceremonies in New York, Los Angeles, and Cincinnati, please visit <http://www.huc.edu/newspubs/pressroom/article.php?pressroomid=271>.

Founded in 1875, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is the nation's oldest institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism. HUC-JIR educates men and women for service to American and world Jewry as rabbis, cantors, educators, and communal service professionals, and offers graduate and post-graduate programs to scholars of all faiths. With centers of learning in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York, HUC-JIR's scholarly resources comprise renowned library and museum collections, the American Jewish Archives, biblical archaeology excavations, research institutes and centers, and academic publications. HUC-JIR invites the community to an array of cultural and educational programs which illuminate Jewish history, identity, and contemporary creativity and which foster interfaith and multiethnic understanding. Visit us at www.huc.edu.