

## **Rabbi Michael Matuson to Receive Doctor of Divinity at HUC-JIR Graduation Ceremony in Cincinnati**

**Rabbi Michael Matuson**, rabbi at **Beth El, The Beaches Synagogue**, in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, 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.

Rabbi Matuson was ordained at HUC-JIR/Cincinnati in 1984, where he received the Zion Medal for Outstanding Achievement in Hebrew Language and the Gittelsohn Prize in Education. He earned a MA (Phi Beta Kappa) from University of Florida, a Hebrew Education Certificate at Greenberg Teacher's College in Jerusalem, Israel, and a BA (with honors) from Monmouth College in Illinois.

Rabbi Matuson is the recipient of Honorary Degree of Doctor of Human Letters (DHL) at Louisiana State University; Volunteer of the Year Honoree from Volunteers of America; Ralph Waldo Emerson Award, and received the National Council of Christians and Jews, Brotherhood/Sisterhood Humanitarian Award in Shreveport, Louisiana. In 2003, the Rabbi Michael Matuson Professorship for Emerging Scholars was inaugurated at HUC-JIR to support young scholars.

Rabbi Matuson has taught as an Adjunct Professor at Centenary College and Louisiana State University in Shreveport and at University of North Florida in Jacksonville. He has published in the journals *Reform Judaism*, *Jewish Monthly*, and *Journal of Reform Judaism*. He has appeared on "60 Minutes" and hosts an interfaith television program called "Faith to Faith."

Rabbi Ellenson said, "Rabbi Matuson's active involvement in communal, interfaith, and Jewish organizations is evident from the honors he has received in his community. His spiritual leadership has been a reflection of his grandfather's teachings, that each Jew has a verse and that a person's verse is insight into their soul."

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](http://www.huc.edu).*

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