

Rabbi Scott L. Shpeen to Receive Doctor of Divinity at HUC-JIR Graduation Ceremony in New York

Rabbi Scott L. Shpeen, rabbi at **Congregation Beth Emeth**, Albany, NY, 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 New York Graduation ceremony on Thursday, April 30, 2009 at Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York.

Rabbi Shpeen is also an adjunct professor at the **College of St. Rose**, where he teaches on the Holocaust.

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 Ellenson said, "Rabbi Shpeen's congregants have been blessed for more than two decades by his love of Torah and learning. He has revamped the educational department, enhanced and expanded the synagogue campus, and led study missions to Jewish Spain and Eastern Europe, as well as Israel."

Rabbi Shpeen has served Congregation Beth Emeth in Albany since 1985. In July 1992, he assumed the position of Senior Rabbi of the Congregation. He is a native of Cherry Hill, New Jersey and a product of the Reform Movement having spent many summers at the URJ Camps as well as participating in the EIE (Eisendrath International Exchange) Program spending a semester at the Leo Baeck High School in Haifa, Israel. Concurrent with his High School studies, Rabbi Shpeen was awarded a Certificate in Jewish Education from Gratz College, Philadelphia.

Rabbi Shpeen was awarded a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Judaic Studies from the University of Michigan in 1979. Rabbi Shpeen was ordained at HUC-JIR in 1984. In 1988 Rabbi Shpeen completed the St. Peter's Hospital Program, Albany, NY, in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

Rabbi Shpeen presently serves as President of the Capital District Board of Rabbis, on the Board of Park Playhouse as well as on the Advisory Committee of the Capital District Senior Issues Forum's Lifetime Achievement Award. Rabbi Shpeen was appointed in May, 2007 by Albany Mayor Gerald Jennings to serve on the Albany Human Rights Commission. He also serves on the HUC-JIR Rabbinical Alumni Association Leadership Team representing that group on the HUC-JIR Alumni Council. Rabbi Shpeen has been an Adjunct Professor at the College of St. Rose in Albany since 1994, teaching a course on the Holocaust each year. He is also President of the Buckingham Mews Homeowners Association.

Rabbi Shpeen is a Past President of the Capital District Board of Rabbis and of B'nai B'rith Gideon Lodge #140, and has served on the Boards of the United Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York, the Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center, the Martin Luther & Coretta Scott King Lecture at Siena College, the Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless, Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York, The Interfaith Advisory Committee of the Bethlehem Central School District, the Sidney and Beatrice Albert Lecture Board of the College of St. Rose and the Admissions Committee of the CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis) and for many years was Jewish Chaplain at the Parsons School in Albany.

Rabbi Shpeen is married to the former Susan Balan, Executive Director of the Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center. They have two adult children, Hilary and Adam, and are residents of Albany.

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.*

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