

# **TEMPLE JUDEA OF MANHASSET      NEWS RELEASE**

333 Searingtown Road, Manhasset, NY 11030

## **TEMPLE JUDEA PARTICIPATES IN 12th ANNUAL SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA/CANADA PROGRAM**

### **Participants Join Over 70,000 North American Jews in Major Effort To Revitalize Sabbath Observance**

On Friday night, March 7th, 2008 members of Temple Judea of Manhasset gathered in an unparalleled display of Jewish revitalization and Jewish unity. Conceived and organized by the National Jewish Outreach Program (NJOP) in 1997, Shabbat Across America/Canada represents a united effort by the entire Jewish community to renew interest in the fourth of the Ten Commandments – observing a weekly day of rest (Shabbat in Hebrew).

Temple Judea was one of approximately 700 synagogues across the continent that simultaneously opened its doors to practicing and non-practicing Jews alike, so they could join together to experience and rejoice in a traditional Shabbat service and festive meal. Over 600,000 people have participated in Shabbat Across America/Canada in the past. Led by Rabbi Todd Chizner and Cantor Melissa Adleman, attendees experienced an interactive Friday night Explanatory Service and a traditional Shabbat dinner.

“We just can not accept the common perception that North American Jewry is an endangered species,” commented Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, founder and director of NJOP. “While it is true that the vast majority of Jews in this country have never participated in a traditional Sabbath experience and do not feel a connection to the Judaism that their grandparents practiced only half a century ago -- this should not be! Shabbat Across America/Canada is an exciting and modern way of reintroducing friends and family members to a practice that has been with, and unified, our people for over 3,300 years, and which we trust will be with us for at least 3,300 more.”

Prompted by the growing rate of Jewish assimilation in North America, NJOP hopes that a memorable and rewarding experience at Shabbat Across America/Canada will infuse thousands of non-practicing Jews with a sense of a greater commitment to Judaism. Of the 5.2 million North American Jews, 2.4 million no longer identify themselves as Jews, 1 million are unaffiliated with any Jewish organizations, and 1.2 million are marginally affiliated, meaning they rarely attend synagogue and have little to do with Jewish life. In addition, 47% of American Jews intermarry and 54% of Jews below age 18 are being raised as non-Jews or with no religion. Perhaps, the most poignant fact is that more than 2/3 of all North America Jews do not observe the Sabbath in any way (2001 National Jewish Population Survey, Council of Jewish Federations).

Designed to teach a generation of unaffiliated Jews about the beauty and significance of the Jewish Sabbath, Shabbat Across America/Canada is the first nationally orchestrated program to appeal to members of all major Jewish denominations. It is also the first and only program aimed at uniting Jews across the United States and Canada through one single event. Shabbat Across America/Canada will take place in every city where there is a Jewish presence – from major Jewish geographical centers, such as New York, Los Angeles, and Toronto, to cities with smaller Jewish populations such as Lexington, KY, Portsmouth, NH, and Tacoma, WA.

The National Jewish Outreach Program was established in 1987 by Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, and has become one of the world's largest and most successful Jewish outreach organizations. NJOP offers free programs at more than 3,665 locations across North America and in 36 countries worldwide. Through programs such as Shabbat Across America/Canada and Read Hebrew America /Canada, NJOP has successfully reached more than 990,000 North American Jews, and engaged them in Jewish life.

Temple Judea of Manhasset was established in 1955 and has over 500 member families. Temple Judea, affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, is located at 333 Seasingtown Road, Manhasset. Please call (516) 621-8049 for further information and visit its website at **[temple-judea.com](http://temple-judea.com)**.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Helen Weinstein  
516-621-1882  
[salzhauer@aol.com](mailto:salzhauer@aol.com)