



RELIGION BRIEFS

Saturday, Oct 20, 2007 - 12:08 AM

Religious-freedom event set for Thursday

Historic Polegreen Church Foundation, a nonprofit historical organization in Hanover County (www.historicpolegreen.org), will present "Preserving the First Freedom in Virginia: The State of Religious Liberty." The event will take place Oct. 25 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

The panel discussion will be held in the recently restored Old House Chamber at the state Capitol in downtown Richmond. The panel will assess the successes and challenges of maintaining religious freedom in today's society. There will be time for questions and observations from the public.

At 5:45, Mark Greenough, manager of tour guides at the Capitol, will offer a history of the historic Old House Chamber. A reception will follow at the offices of the Council for America's First Freedom where attendees will be able to view the new exhibit "Faces of Religious Freedom." Call (804) 261-3837 or visit www.historicpolegreen.org for information.

Course will focus on Jews' bonds with Israel

The Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) has announced a new six-week course to be offered at 750 locations around the world. The course will focus on the millennia-old spiritual bond between Jews and Israel.

The course will launch at the end of October in more than 250 cities around the world, including Richmond. Unlike previous Israel-focused courses that have traditionally covered the history and politics of the state of Israel, "The Land and the Spirit" will explore the nature of the deep spiritual bond that has existed between the Jewish people and the Israel throughout the ages.

Rabbi Shlomo Pereira, director of JLI in Richmond, said the course will be an important way for the community to join in open and respectful discourse about an issue central to Jewish identity.

The course will be offered locally at The Chabad Center, 212 Gaskins Road from 9:15 to 10:45 a.m. and from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on six Wednesdays starting on Oct. 31 [no classes on the week of Thanksgiving]. The fee is \$100 or \$175 for couples, which includes the textbook, as well as access to online forums and message boards to facilitate communication between students and faculty. To register, visit www.myJLI.com.

Holocaust Museum's series starts tonight

The Virginia Holocaust Museum is presenting the first guest in the annual Marc Cohen Educational Lecture Series tonight at 6.

Based on first-hand experience visiting remote villages in Lithuania, Joyce Ellen Weinstein will present her published article, "The Old Wooden Synagogues of Lithuania: An Artist's Perspective," including photographs, original art, history, documentation and memories as told to her by the villagers who are still living there.

The accompanying photography exhibit will be open for viewing during regular museum hours, Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekends 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., through Dec. 30.

'Faith and Festival' weekend at St. James's

St. James's Episcopal Church, 1205 W. Franklin St. in Richmond, will hold a "Faith and Festival" weekend Nov. 24, featuring Marcus Borg, an internationally-renowned Jesus scholar, lecturer and author of 12 books.

Borg holds the Hundere Chair of Religion and Culture in the Philosophy Department at Oregon State University. He will lecture Nov. 2 at 7:30 p.m. on "Two Visions of Christianity Today." A reception and book signing will follow.

Nov. 3 features three workshops to help participants see the Christian life in a new way, through a series of personal and political transformations. At 3 p.m. Nov. 2, a Hymn Fest will be led by David Flood, organist and master of the choristers at Canterbury Cathedral.

On Nov. 4, Borg will preach at 9 and 11:15 a.m., and will lead the adult forum beginning at 10:15a.m. Events are free. Registration is required, and a \$20 donation (payable at the door) is suggested. For details, call the Rev. Whitney Zimmerman at (804) 355-1779, ext. 17.

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