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## For Immediate Release

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### OurJewishCommunity.org Provides Online Passover Experience Through Website, Facebook, and Twitter

Cincinnati, Ohio, April 3, 2009—

Cincinnati-Ohio based OurJewishCommunity.org, an independent online congregation, is thrilled to announce diverse online Passover offerings on its own website as well as on Facebook and Twitter. The online congregation, a project of Congregation Beth Adam, provides materials related to the Jewish holidays for all ages through a variety of media.

Rabbi Robert Barr has been recording audio podcasts available on iTunes discussing Contemporary Jewish Thoughts for the past two years. Five of his popular Passover podcasts are featured on OurJewishCommunity.org. In addition, Jay Gilbert of “Uncle Jay Explains the News” has created a witty and educational video called “Uncle Jay Explains Passover.” The website also features Passover recipes, activities (from a matzah house project to paper plate plague frogs to skits and word puzzles) as well as background information about the holiday. OurJewishCommunity.org has also created a popular game which is now a Facebook application called “Matzah Ball Person: DIY.” Users can build their own matzah ball character with various features, including Easter Bunny ears (in recognition of the increasing number of interfaith families).

The online congregation also highlights The Seder, a contemporary Haggadah written by Congregation Beth Adam which offers an alternative to traditional Passover celebrations. Barr, founding rabbi of Congregation Beth Adam, states that “our liturgy seeks to give voice to who we are and what we believe: Jewish

identity, intellectual honesty, human responsibility, self expression, and shared participation.”

Rabbi Laura Baum, founding rabbi of OurJewishCommunity.org, has produced a three minute video asking people to be creative at their Passover seders. At a traditional Passover seder, participants ask four standard questions. But, Baum has asked people to consider focusing on answering the main question of Passover: “why is this night different?” People can discuss this at their seders, and Baum is also encouraging people to answer the question on Twitter with the hashtag #4qs and on her blog at [www.OurJewishCommunity.org](http://www.OurJewishCommunity.org).

Baum has a growing presence on Twitter and has been answering Passover questions there all week. Among them: how do I deal with Passover during the recession? And, any suggestions to make the seder meaningful for my child?

Baum says that “Passover is a holiday that is widely celebrated because it is one that is observed at home. Many Jews do not attend synagogue regularly, but they do want to bring Judaism into their homes and communities. Passover is the perfect opportunity for people to share resources and ideas online. We are able to interact with people around the world who are looking for a meaningful Jewish experience.”

Baum and Barr, rabbis of Congregation Beth Adam, have created OurJewishCommunity.org with the help of a group of volunteers. Both rabbis were ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Since its launch seven months ago, the site has attracted over 4,000 unique visitors from 50 countries and 48 states in the US. The site is an intentionally evolving process that will rely on the feedback and participation of visitors as it continues to be built.

OurJewishCommunity.org capitalizes on the history of Congregation Beth Adam, an independent congregation founded in 1980 by Rabbi Robert B. Barr. Over the past 28 years the congregation has developed a unique philosophy, viewing Judaism from a humanistic perspective. The congregation has written and sells its own award-winning liturgy and serves as a progressive voice in the Cincinnati Jewish community and beyond.

Rabbi Barr said “the excitement and interest in our online offerings during the High Holidays and Hanukkah attest to the fact that we are providing a new and meaningful Jewish experience. Judaism has always evolved, and our online community provides yet another move forward on that trajectory.”

### **About OurJewishCommunity.org**

OurJewishCommunity.org launched on September 1, 2008 and is becoming a full-service progressive Jewish congregation on the web. Recognizing the changing needs of the Jewish community (increasing mobility and use of technology and decreasing synagogue affiliation), the online congregation was developed. The

website offers access to rabbis, Jewish education materials, resources about Jewish holidays, lifecycle, and other topics, Rabbi Robert Barr's audio podcasts (Barr's Banter), Rabbi Baum's video podcasts, audio files of sermons and Torah readings, Rabbi Baum's Blog, discussion forums, social networking, and more.

### **About Congregation Beth Adam**

For nearly three decades, Congregation Beth Adam has approached Judaism from a humanistic perspective, dedicated to the celebration of traditional Jewish holidays and life cycle events. Rabbi Robert B. Barr, ordained in 1981 at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, has been with Beth Adam since its inception. Beth Adam provides Jewish experiences through religious services, child and adult education programs, Bar and Bat Mitzvah classes and services, social activities, and community social action programs. More information about Congregation Beth Adam is available at [www.bethadam.org](http://www.bethadam.org) or by calling 513-985-0400.

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