

**The Rev. Charlie Curb Center for Faith Leadership Announces
Judeo-Christian Studies Initiative**

*Belmont University Program to Focus on Providing Opportunities
for Interfaith Dialogue and Understanding*

The Rev. Charlie Curb Center for Faith Leadership at Belmont University is announcing the creation of The Judeo-Christian Studies Initiative, which will sponsor several interfaith activities as a part of the work of the Rev. Charlie Curb Center.

This endowed program is a multi-pronged endeavor that includes lectures, classes and conversations that will help to provide dialogue, perspective and understanding across these two major faith traditions.

"The creation of this program will provide lasting lessons and teaching opportunities for both the Nashville community, as well as for our students," said Belmont President Dr. Bob Fisher.

"Anything that we can do to build opportunities for dialogue and mutual learning with those of other faiths is a wonderful thing for everyone."

A six-member advisory board, comprised equally of both Jewish and Christian members, will collaborate with the executive director of The Rev. Charlie Curb Center to plan topics, lecture guests and annual events. A concerted and intentional effort will be made to offer a balanced and thoughtful approach to this interfaith dialogue.

Jon Roebuck, executive director of the The Rev. Charlie Curb Center, said, "It is increasingly important to create space in our culture for civil, respectful and meaningful dialogue to occur. I am excited about the creation of this initiative and the possibilities it imagines. Though there are many differences in our faith traditions, it is important to find common ground from which we can learn and grow in our understanding and shared faith experiences. I am grateful for the donors and dreamers who have helped to create this program."

Under the umbrella of this initiative, three endowments totaling more than \$150,000 with university matching funds have been established, thanks to donors Dr. Frank and Julie Boehm, Mark and Harriet Schifftan, and Shelly and Trish Krizelman. Each of these funds will focus on unique goals and objectives.

The **Dr. Frank & Julie Boehm Lecture Endowment Fund** will focus on the history of Judaism by providing an annual lecture series that will bring lecturers from both Jewish and Christian communities to campus each spring to discuss a wide variety of topics that would honor and respect both faith traditions. Invited expert speakers will concentrate on the many historical events that helped shape Judaism, other world religions, as well as the birth and history of modern-day Israel.

The **Shelly & Trish Krizelman Social Ethics Endowment Fund** will highlight shared faith traditions and wisdom literature regarding a variety of topics, including the protection of the biblical honored vulnerable populations including the widow, the orphan, the poor and the stranger. This includes a focus on the civil rights and liberties of all persons engrained in our nation's constitution and other sacred documents.

The **Rabbi Mark & Harriet Schiftan Holocaust Endowment Fund** will focus attention on Holocaust studies, awareness and remembrance, and will seek to educate Belmont students, as well as the greater Nashville community, concerning issues related to the Holocaust.

"I'm both excited and elated for my role in the creation and establishment of the Judeo-Christian Initiative at Belmont," said Rabbi Mark Schiftan. "This initiative will include an honest examination of the history, lessons and legacy of the Holocaust and its broader impact and meaning on the culture and character of this current moment in time, as well as its important and lasting lessons for peoples of faith communities - Belmont students included - over their lifetimes."