**Redlands Daily Facts**

**Congregation Emanu El in Redlands to participate in ninth annual Evolution Sabbath**

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Congregation Emanu El in Redlands will be one of more than 540 congregations from across the country and around the world to participate in Evolution Sabbath on Friday evening.

Evolution Sabbath is designed to recognize that religion and science should be seen as complementary rather than confrontational.

Religious people from many diverse faith traditions and locations around the world believe that evolution is sound science, and for them, it does not in any way threaten, demean or diminish their faith in God, according to a press release from Congregation Emanu El. For many, the wonders of science often enhance and deepen their awe and gratitude toward God, according to the press release.

Rabbi Douglas Kohn of Congregation Emanu El, who has just returned from a rabbinic trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands, will present his slides from the site made famous by Charles Darwin’s study of the islands’ unique evolutionary animal development. Shabbat services and the Galapagos presentation will begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Congregation Emanu El, 1495 Ford St., Redlands.

Evolution Weekend is sponsored by The Clergy Letter Project, whose members include more than 13,700 members of the clergy in the United States who have signed letters urging school boards to teach evolution rather than creationism in public school science classrooms and laboratories. More than 1,000 scientists on six continents, representing 32 countries, have signed on as consultants.

Michael Zimmerman, founder and executive director of Evolution Weekend and vice president for academic affairs at The Evergreen State College, said that “with Evolution Weekend becoming institutionalized in so many diverse congregations, there should be no doubt that mainstream religious leaders are fully comfortable promoting all facets of modern science as well as their faith.”

Zimmerman said that “despite seemingly endless legislative initiatives to introduce creationism into the public schools of various states, religious leaders and scientists continue to work together to demonstrate that such activities demean religion while doing irreparable harm to science.”

He said that “promoting creationism in any of its guises, from ‘creation science’ to intelligent design, privileges one religion over all others and is, as federal courts have repeatedly ruled, against the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Members of The Clergy Letter Project show us a way to move forward, to respect the deeply held religious of neighbors while honoring our own traditions and promoting the best knowledge science has to offer.”