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As part of its efforts to encourage and support members of the clergy who acknowledge the scientific importance of evolution, the Clergy Letter Project is now asking rabbis to sign its [open letter](#) [4] concerning religion and science. The letter begins, "As rabbis from various branches of Judaism, we the undersigned, urge public school boards to affirm their commitment to the teaching of the science of evolution," and observes, "It is possible to be inspired by the religious teachings of the Bible while not taking a literalist approach and while accepting the validity of science including the foundational concept of evolution. It is not the role of public schools to indoctrinate students with specific religious beliefs but rather to educate them in the established principles of science and in other subjects of general knowledge." Over one hundred rabbis have endorsed the letter so far.

The brainchild of Michael Zimmerman, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Butler University, the Clergy Letter Project was founded in 2004; its activities include a similar [letter](#) [5] for Christian clergy, currently endorsed by over 11,000 members of the clergy across the country and around the world; a [pool of scientists](#) [6] willing to work with clergy on promoting scientific literacy; a collection of [sermons](#) [7], [articles](#) [8], [readings](#) [9], and [websites](#) [10] relevant to the Clergy Letter Project's goals; and [Evolution Weekend](#) [11] by year (formerly Evolution Sunday), in which religious leaders are encouraged to discuss the compatibility of faith and science in their sermons, Sabbath or Sunday schools, and discussion groups, on or about Darwin's birthday, February 12. Over 300 congregations are already planning to celebrate Evolution Weekend in 2009, the Darwin bicentennial year.

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