



B'nei Mitzvah  
Programme Handbook  
2019 - 2020



WESTMINSTER SYNAGOGUE

020 7584 3953 - [admin@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:admin@westminstersynagogue.org)

*“Bar/ Bat Mitzvah really means someone who is old enough to be responsible for the mitzvot. Mitzvot are the commandments that a Jew does; not only to **live** a Jewish life, but also to **sanctify** life”*

Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin (2005)

# SHALOM & WELCOME

On behalf of the Synagogue and the teaching team, we are delighted to welcome you to Westminster Synagogue's B'nei Mitzvah programme.

This brochure outlines the aims and the content of the course over the two years. It also reflects that although the Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony is important, we feel that becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah is at least as much about the passage as the rite. For this reason you will see that we build the programme up on the foundation of relevant and engaging content that is dynamically taught, participation with the group and the involvement of family.

We also seek to develop a strong sense of the responsibilities that underpin adulthood in the Jewish world - especially towards Tikkun Olam, or social action and working towards a better world. Through these pillars, we hope that the road to Jewish adulthood is a meaningful one for our young people and our families.

We also emphasise however that as becoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah marks the emergence into Jewish adulthood, it is only the beginning, and we offer a range of opportunities for our teenagers to build on their friendships and take their Jewish learning and participation in the community forwards. Look at our separate Teens brochure for more details.

Please do contact us at any time if you have any questions. We wish you and your child B'hatzlacha (success) in the journey ahead. It is a special one for all the family and all those involved with the B'nei Mitzvah programme and we look forward to supporting you throughout this unique, symbolic and meaningful process.

# B'NEI MITZVAH

## Weekends Away

Residential trips are a highlight and essential part of our B'nei Mitzvah programme. This is the time where young people have their most informative and meaningful Jewish experiences that go on to define their Jewish lives as adults. We hold two residential weekends per year, one here at the synagogue and the other abroad, giving our students the chance to explore another city with a rich Jewish history. Last year we had the largest ever participation in both our residential weekends and gained excellent feedback from students and parents on both.

## Westminster Residential

Friday 8th – Sunday 10th November 2019



- Make new friends and strengthen bonds
- Fun, creative activities to enhance learning and explore London Jewry
- Experience Shabbat, Havdalah and Birkat as part of a Jewish community

## Berlin Residential

Friday 6th - Sunday 8th March 2020



- Kabbalat Shabbat with a Progressive Jewish Community in Berlin
- Visit the Jewish Museum and tour the city on bikes
- Explore Jewish history in Berlin through interactive sessions

**For more information, contact the Synagogue Office**

## What is the BM Programme?

The B'nei Mitzvah Programme is part of our Or Shabbat programme at Westminster Synagogue. It is a two-year course with weekly sessions on Friday nights from 5:00-7:00pm (sometimes ending slightly later depending on participation in services) and we aim for each young person to be part of the programme, with their peers, for the full two years; at which point they will graduate as a class. Although each student will have their own individual Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony, great importance is placed on the journey travelled by the class as a group over the two-year period, as they share experiences, insights, encouragement and grow together towards their group B'nei Mitzvah graduation.

## What do Friday nights look like?

Most weeks take the form of the schedule set out below in the table. We have snacks ready for the students when they come in from school, and encourage everybody to be with us by 5pm in order that we can make a prompt start and learning can be maximised. Both classes usually work on their Jewish Studies curriculum for the first part of the evening and are in streamed groups for Hebrew during the second part. The Kiddush, when we join with the community, is an important conclusion to the evening. Further information about the study programmes for BM1 and BM2 classes are on the following pages. The weekly schedule is emailed in advance, and can be found on our weekly emailed update.

	<b>Weekly Schedule</b>
<b>17:00</b>	<b>Snacks and catching up</b>
<b>17:10</b>	<b>Jewish Studies Session</b>
<b>18:15</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>18:20</b>	<b>Hebrew Learning</b> or <b>Attending the Service</b> (This may include a speaker or may mark a particular occasion such as the Czech Scrolls Commemorative Service) Parents are invited to the service
<b>19:00-19:15</b>	<b>Kiddush in the Marble Hall</b> with the community <b>(Parents warmly invited)</b>
<b>After Kiddush</b>	<b>Chavurah communal Shabbat meal for BM students and their families – once a term</b>

# BM1

*The first year of B'nei Mitzvah Studies for 11-12 year olds*



Year one (BM1) incorporates an overview of Jewish traditions and texts and will cover topics such as festivals, lifestyle, history and traditions. Students are supported with their Hebrew learning and are placed into sets for tailored learning according to their level or state of preparation for their BM. The most advanced students support each other as they work on their parasha (Torah reading).

Term One	Term Two	Term Three
Introduction to the B'nei Mitzvah Programme	Streams of Judaism: Orthodox, Reform & Liberal	Birth, Brit & Covenant
Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur and their ethical underpinnings	Halacha: Jewish Law: What's it all about?	Bar & Bat mitzvah: History, Meaning & Tradition
Sukkot & Simchat Torah	Brief History of Israel	"Put a ring on it!"- Jewish Marriage
Why do Jews Pray? Ask the Rabbi!	Questions and Arguments: How do we think about Israel?	Death, Mourning & Shiva
A Brief Jewish History	Foundations of Zionism	Shavuot: Torah & Revelation
The Czech Scrolls: Our connection to the past, present and future	Wrestling with God	Your Family
Tzedakah Project Making a Difference!	Tu B'Shevat	Halacha: Jewish Law
Kashrut: Jewish food & Jewish Home	Jewish life in Berlin - pre and post WW2- Holocaust Education Trust	Bullying
Tzedakah: Maimonides, Tradition & Our Response	Immigrant experience/Jewish perspectives	Class Social Action Project
Chanukah: Story, History & Background	Pesach: Origins Celebration & Seder	Film night

## During the first year of the programme:

- BM1 students enter into the first year of the programme at the beginning of school year 7 or at the age of 11 as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019.
- Having set a BM date Rabbi Benji, Rabbi Thomas or Yael will assess and recommend the next steps regarding learning the parasha.
- Students should start to attend our Shabbat services on a regular basis.
- We ask every child to commit to a social action project (see Countdown Handbook) that they work towards throughout the course of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. There have been some excellent projects over the past year including for Solutions not Sides, World Jewish Relief, and World Bicycle Relief.

# BM2

*The final year of B'nei Mitzvah Studies for 12-13 year olds*



In year two (BM2), students will learn about teenage issues through the lens of Jewish texts. Students will be encouraged to have input into the curriculum and lead some of the classes themselves. By this stage all students would be able to read Hebrew, and so we support them working on their Torah reading, as well as gaining familiarity with the service and providing the opportunity to participate in those prayers in the context of the Friday night service.

Term One	Term Two	Term Three
Jewish Identity	Jewish Ethics: Pikuach Nefesh	Criticizing Israel
Privilege	Film: 66 - Becoming BM	Alcohol/Drugs
Women of the Wall (equality)	Recap of History of Israel	Feeding your Wolves - Launchbox activity featuring Yetzer Tov and Yetzer Rah!
Tzedakah and recap of project	Israel: Where are we today?	How to stay connected! Options after your BM
Torah portion	Types of Zionism	The Environment
Czech Scrolls Museum visit	The Holocaust	CHIPS IN- the competing High priorities game
Czech Scrolls Memorial Service	Jewish life in Berlin - pre and post WW2 - Holocaust Education Trust	Jewish Portrayal in the media
How to be a Jewish leader	Truth & Lies	Graduation and film night

## During the second year of the programme:

- BM2 students are expected to stay in the programme **until the end of the second year** even if they have their own BM ceremony towards the beginning of the second year - we would like every child to experience the entire education that spans two years, to support classmates going through Bar/Bat Mitzvah and to grow and benefit from the journey of the group, as well as benefiting and contributing to the residential trips.
- We encourage our young people to continue to attend services regularly and also to continue the aspects of the programme that are held outside of the synagogue.

## Hebrew Studies Curriculum

The second part of the Friday evening BM programme is generally built around Hebrew learning, although this can vary depending on whether we have a special service, speaker, festival or event which means that the students become involved in the service or with another activity. Given all of the other elements of our programme, the time constraints mean that we are unable to provide sufficient Hebrew support for students without a Hebrew background to prepare for their BM service on a Friday night alone. As a result, many of our students learn Hebrew through private tutors, and we are happy to make recommendations.

The students are placed into groups according to their level, where they are mentored by one of our teachers, a teenage helper or a former BM student. The students are supported in learning the Aleph-Bet, learning prayers of the service or in working on their Torah portion - whatever stage that they are at. Once they are ready, the students will spend most Fridays at the Friday night service where they can experience the prayers in context. The progress of the students is monitored through feedback from tutors/mentors, and via regular meetings with Yael Roberts and, closer to the BM, with the Rabbis. This way we make sure that the students are on track and are receiving the support that they need.

The following are our Hebrew targets at each stage of learning which take students from the very beginnings to leading the service for their BM, and beyond:

	Hebrew Text Used	Aleph Bet	Blessings Known	Prayers known	Songs known
Age 5 (end of Aleph)	Eizeh Kef	First 6 letters	Wine, challah		Mah Tovu Mi Camocha Veshamru Oseh Shalom Sim Shalom Adon Olam  <i>Also:</i> Tree of Life Modeh Ani Hine Mah Tov David Melech Kol Ha'olam Kulo Mitzvah goreret Mitzvah
Age 7 (end of Bet)	Zman Likro Books 1 & 2	Familiar with the majority of the Aleph Bet	Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu	Shema	
Age 9 (end of Gimel)	Zman Likro and Zman l'Tefilah	Able to read full Aleph-Bet, reading prayers	Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu	Shema	
Age 11 (end of Daled)	Zman Likro/Zman l'Tefilah	Reading Prayers from Siddur. Ready to read from the Torah for BM	Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu	Shema, Amidah	
Age 13 (BM)	Siddur, Chumash	Reading Prayers from Siddur with fluency	Wine, challah, candles, Shechehyanu	Pesukei d'zimra, Shema and it's blessings, Amidah	Mah Tovu, Lecha Dodi, Tzadik Katamar, Mi Camocha, Veshamru, Oseh Shalom, Sim Shalom, Aleinu, Adon Olam,
Age 15 (KT)	Siddur, Chumash			Pesukei d'zimra, Shema and it's blessings, Amidah, Aleinu, Kaddish, Friday prayers	

## **BM Countdown Guide**

### **Bridging the gap between the synagogue and the family**

In January 2016 we launched a new BM Countdown Guide. This booklet features pairs of monthly tasks for the BM student to engage in during the 12 month run-up to their BM. One task monthly is always connected to Jewish identity- and could be things like having a conversation with parents or grandparents, watching a Jewish themed movie or working on a social action project. The second of the monthly tasks relates to becoming familiar with the synagogue service and the parts of the service in which they will be involved. The idea of this initiative is that it provides guidance as to how to support the journey to Jewish adulthood at home in your own personal/family space. The booklet comes in hard copy, and but can also be found online here: [bitly.com/BMCountdown](https://bitly.com/BMCountdown)

### **Attendance to Friday Night Classes**

Regular weekly attendance to our sessions is essential for success. It allows for maximal continuity of learning and avoids classroom disruption. When the family does its utmost to encourage regular attendance and engagement with learning, it sends a very positive message to the student about the value of their BM journey. It is also important for your child to feel comfortable and a part of their peer group. If attendance is irregular, it becomes more difficult to gain as fully as possible from the experience either in terms of developing their Jewish identity, or socially in terms of contact with their peers.

#### **FESTIVALS**

B'nei Mitzvah students are expected to attend Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Erev Sukkot and Simchat Torah services. This is an essential part of their education and we hope that parents will accompany them.

#### **NUTS**

Out of consideration for some of our members who are severely allergic to nuts, please do not bring any foods or snacks containing nuts into the building, even for yourself or your own children.

## Synagogue Service Commitment

During the two year period before a Bar or Bat Mitzvah we expect our students to attend at least 10 Shabbat morning services and 10 Friday night services. These can include attending their friends' B'nei Mitzvah ceremonies, and also Friday nights that they attend as part of our weekly classes.

We have a 'Darkhon Ruchani', or "Spiritual Passport" system, whereby at the end of the service, the students pick up their record sheet (passport), which they take either to the wardens on duty, or to their BM teachers who will put a stamp on their passport. The passports will be kept in an alphabetically ordered box near the main entrance to the Sanctuary.

Attending services allows students and their families to:

- Become familiar with the Shabbat service that they will lead; its routines, the roles of those who are involved, and the music.
- Practice the prayers in context, helping them to be prepared and ready for their bar or bat mitzvah
- Get to know the community and vice-versa.
- Support each other at their respective BM services. We know that that it means a great deal to the students to have their classmates and friends with them.
- Celebrate Shabbat at the Synagogue both on Friday evenings and Shabbat mornings. This will be a worthwhile and rewarding experience, especially as each service is distinctive and offers a different ambience, experience of prayer, of learning and of our community.

We also encourage the family of the BM student to attend services with their child in order to become familiar with the service that they will participate in so that they are comfortable and confident with their roles on the day.

Please note that a recommended pattern and guidance for service attendance are set out in the BM Countdown booklet.

Rabbi Benji and Yael Roberts are glad to discuss any questions that you may have about Shabbat and Festival service attendance.

## **Tracking Progress: Regular Meetings**

In addition to this two year cycle there are a set of meetings and progress markers that are important in the run up to the actual Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Students will meet regularly with Yael Roberts, Director of Community and Education, in the 15 months or so leading up to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The student's progress will be assessed, and there will be opportunities to discuss the portion along with support in writing the *D'var Torah* (interpretation of the Torah portion). Up to six months before, Bar/Bat Mitzvah parents and students will meet with the Rabbis.

## **Your weekly information & resource hub : Education E-letter**

Every week during term-time, we send a newsletter via email that contains the following:

- news and notices such as B'nei Mitzvah and festivals
- term dates
- weekly and termly themes
- the schedule for Or Shabbat that week
- links to resources to help parents to support their child's learning or simply to articles, recipes and other items of interest or relevance to the weekly theme.

Please do read the weekly updates to stay informed, and as they invariably hold the answers to most questions that people tend to ask.

## **Or Shira Services and Chavurah Suppers/'Extended' Kiddushim**

Each term there will be two special Friday night events. The classes will have a joint session at 5:00pm, before joining the service at 6:30pm. These special services feature a guest speaker alongside one of our musicians, who leads a service which is full of music and joy for everyone. The services will be followed either by a Chavurah Supper, community meal, or by an Extended Kiddush (i.e. a filling and always delicious buffet that goes beyond the basic wine and challah) for parents and children together, where each family contributes food if possible. We encourage families to bring siblings and family to join with us on these occasions.

## **Czech Scrolls**

In February 1964, Westminster Synagogue received 1564 Torah scrolls that had been rescued from the former Czechoslovakia following WW2. More than 1300 of those Scrolls today serve new synagogues worldwide. The Scrolls bind us tightly both to events in history and to communities throughout the world past and present, and our BM programme seeks to help the BM students to create a connection with those Scrolls. By visiting the museum, the BM students learn about global Jewish history and also of the history of our Synagogue. BM students will also, read from our Czech Scroll on the occasion of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, which helps to further the ties and strengthen the sense of tradition.

## **Online Registration**

Each year parents need to fill out a registration form for each of their children. The registration process includes information we need by law for medical issues, such as allergies, learning disabilities and emergency contact details, whilst young people are in our care. Please note that we are not able to be fully responsible for your child if they are not properly registered for classes. We therefore insist that registration is completed prior to attending, to ensure that we are as prepared as we need to be to keep them safe and secure.

We require other permissions such as sharing your contact details with other parents and for photos to be taken. As you can imagine, photos of our learning programmes in our communications bring what we do to life and enthuse other members to bring their children. We understand that this is a sensitive issue with some parents and we ask that you Opt-Out if you prefer that your children are not included in photos.

## **B'nei Mitzvah Programme Tuition Fees and Donations**

The BM programme described on these pages is substantially subsidised by the Synagogue each year, an essential investment, as the children are the future of the community. Payment of fees can be done via bank transfer or an online payment. If payments are to be made by bank transfer, we appreciate the transfer to be made within 7 days, which saves any awkwardness or administrative time spent sending reminders.

Having said this, we would never want finances to be an obstacle to anybody participating in our programmes at the Synagogue, and if this may be the case, we invite you to speak in strict confidence to Yael Roberts or Rabbi Benji, as we are happy to help those who need.

In addition we are extremely grateful for any donations that we receive towards children's education which helps us to provide for those who cannot pay for themselves, as well as to meet rising costs. Please speak to Yael Roberts if you have any questions about this. Donations can be made by cheque, bank transfer, or through our PayPal account - but please let the Synagogue office know when you do this.

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding the welfare of children in the community is our uppermost priority and everyone's responsibility at Westminster Synagogue. All of our staff working with children have been subject to enhanced DBS checks, and have had Child Protection Training. Our Safeguarding Team (as named below) oversee our child protection provision and are the first port of call in the event that you have concerns regarding the safety of any child. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that concerns are dealt with correctly.

Copies of our Child Protection, Safeguarding and all other policies relevant to our children's education programmes are available on the Westminster Synagogue website and also in our religion school area. Please speak to Gary Sakol or a member staff in order to obtain and view the policies.

In the event of concerns about the wellbeing of a child, please speak to a member of our Safeguarding Team in strictest confidence as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may go directly to the Westminster Access Team.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead for Westminster Synagogue:**

Gary Sakol (Executive Director). Tel 020 7584 3953

Email: [gary@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:gary@westminstersynagogue.org)

**Westminster Access Team** – Tel: 020 7641 4000

(Out of hours – 020 7641 6000)

Email: [AccesstoChildrensServices@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:AccesstoChildrensServices@westminster.gov.uk)

In the event of concerns about the conduct of a member of synagogue staff, please speak to our Safeguarding Team in strictest confidence as soon as possible, or you may go directly to the Westminster Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as set out below:

### **Westminster LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**

Please call 0207 641 7668 and ask to speak to the Duty Child Protection Advisor or email [lado@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:lado@westminster.gov.uk)

## **Behaviour and Anti-Bullying**

We expect and teach our children to treat each other, the staff and the building with respect and care. This is set out in our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

## **Arriving and Leaving Independently**

For security reasons, children will not be allowed to leave the synagogue unaccompanied without written parent/guardian authorisation – please ensure to let us know if your child may leave the premises independently. To assist with travel to and from the Synagogue, we highly recommend sharing lifts with other families in the area. Please contact the Office if you would like assistance with this.

## **Parking**

There is **no parking** inside Rutland Gardens. Parents/guardians are respectfully asked not to drive through the barrier unless there is an emergency. Parking is available on nearby roads and in Hyde Park, all of which are within walking distance.

## **Absences**

Please notify the Education Team by phone or e-mail (see back of brochure) if your child will be absent **or needs to leave a session before the end**. In the event of a reason for long term absence, we will work with the family to help support the student, and help them keep up with the group. Please inform us ahead of time if your child needs to leave early so teachers can minimise disruption.

## **Dress Code for BM classes and services**

We want our young people to be relaxed at the synagogue. However we ask that they dress appropriately and respectfully for services in the sanctuary. Jeans should not be ripped, trainers should be clean. Skirts should not be too short, nor tops too low cut and shoulders are to be covered.

## **Mobile Telephones/Devices**

Mobile telephones are **not permitted** in B'nei Mitzvah Group classes. If your child brings a phone/tablet/MP3 player with them, it must not disrupt lessons. If there is disruption, it may be taken by the teacher and returned at the end of the session.

## **Parents - We need your help!**

We encourage parental involvement in what we do. We have a very active group of parents at Or Shabbat who help us to run our activities, volunteer to provide support when we need it and who help to provide our welcoming atmosphere.

This group has really come together in the last 12 months, and last year we created a similar group for our BM students to help this group of children and families become really cohesive and to further enrich the BM journey for all involved.

If you would like to support this process, particularly as a way to meet new BM Families and cultivate a wonderful sense of community, do contact the Synagogue Office and we'll be thrilled to take the next steps. There are also other ways you can get involved, outlined on pages 16-17.

## What happens next?

### Programmes for Teens at Westminster Synagogue

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be the beginning and not the end of the journey. Please refer to our separate Teens brochure for more information about the opportunities on offer for our teenagers to build on their friendships and take their Jewish learning and participation in the community forwards. They include the following:

- **Kabbalat Torah group.** This is a two year course combining further learning and Jewish skills with community service.
- **GCSE in Religious Studies featuring Judaism.** This is a two year study course with an interfaith emphasis.
- **Help Teaching at Or Shabbat** - we provide teacher/leadership training for our young people to work with the children of our community.
- **Teenage Museum Guides** at our Czech Scroll Museum.
- **European Residential trip** for 14-16 year olds with teens from other Synagogues held every other year, the next one will be in November 2020. We also encourage our teens to become involved with the Progressive Jewish Youth Movements in the UK.
- **Service leading and mitzvot:** The chance to use skills learnt for the BM once again in services.

For more information or to receive our Teens Brochure, please contact the Synagogue Office.

## Getting involved with B'nei Mitzvah & wider community

We understand the pressures of modern life, but hope you will make the time to give some of your time to one of the many opportunities available in the community, which will help you to connect to other members and sets an example for your children. Here are a few suggestions:

### Adult and Family Education

**Modern Hebrew Ulpan** - Want to speak Hebrew like an Israeli? Year-long Ulpan courses for Beginners and Intermediate students will be held on Thursday nights subject to enrolment numbers.

**Hebrew Learning classes** on Wednesday evenings during term time for parents and community members after the Or Chadash classes from **7:45-8:30pm**. We will try to accommodate you whatever your level.

**Torah Breakfasts** and **Torah in the City** are lively discussion groups that focus on the weekly Torah portion. Torah Breakfasts are held termly on Shabbat mornings at the Synagogue, while Torah in the City sessions take place on a Wednesday morning once per month at a location in the city, perfectly situated for a number of our members working in the area.

**Shabbat Lunch & Learn** sessions run throughout the year on Saturdays following the service from **12:45-2:15pm**. These sessions are held as a short series of three, as members explore the weekly Torah portion – we do ask for members to attend at least two of the three sessions.

**Oneg Shabbat Lunches** take place monthly after Shabbat services. They offer the chance to explore prayers, readings, rituals, Torah or some other interesting aspect of Jewish culture. The community shares a potluck Shabbat meal and engage in learning, led by Rabbi Benji, Yael Roberts or guest speakers.

**Or Chadash (Access to Judaism)** is a class which covers all of the essentials of Judaism - a sort of Judaism 101. Topics include festivals, history, customs and Israel. Classes run from **6.30-7:45pm** on Wednesday evenings and are open to all members as well as conversion candidates. Members can attend for a one-off topic or all year round. Contact the Synagogue Office for a copy of this year's syllabus.

**Museum Guide Training** - On the third floor of Kent House you can experience the dramatic story of the Czech Memorial Scrolls. The current exhibition opened in September 2008 and it has now been more than 50 years since the scrolls arrived at Westminster Synagogue. If you would like to train to be a guide for the museum, please let us know.

**Westminster Chai** – Our annual learning day! Held this year on Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> November to mark the start of Interfaith Week, we invite you to join us as we welcome 16 amazing educators into the building for a day you won't forget! For more information, or to volunteer on the day, contact the Synagogue Office.

**Friday Night Services** – Our Kabbalat Shabbat services begin at 6:30pm. In place of a sermon, we do Chavruta (text study) in the service, with members participating together from their seats.

**Shabbat Unplugged** – Held monthly, our Friday Night Unplugged services include a half hour of learning the melodies before the service from 6:00pm with Yoav Oved.

# Committees and Clubs throughout the year

## Kiddush Preparation

Providing the Ritual side of the Kiddush or acting as a partner for Kiddush for a BM family – the complement will be returned when you are the celebrating B'nei Mitzvah family. Alternatively, prepare the Communal Side of Kiddush alongside some BM families, it's a wonderful way to meet other parents and support our community – this can be done on Fridays or Saturdays!

## Meeter and Greeter

Why not come early for Shabbat evening service and be a warm and welcoming face for members and visitors as they enter our building. It can be daunting to come into Kent House, especially if you don't know anyone, so why not offer a smile, a hello and a cup of coffee before heading up to the service. We ask that Meeter and Greeters are present from 6:00-6:30pm

## Education Committee

Join the Education Committee, which meets quarterly to discuss the wider educational strategy for the synagogue.

## Or Shabbat PTA/Coffee Morning Group

This is a new group which meets termly during classes on a Saturday morning. The group serves as an excellent link between our staff and the families and helps us to organise events as well as to fund-raise and to focus on matters pertinent to Or Shabbat and B'nei Mitzvah. Please speak to Yael if interested.

## Westminster Czech Scrolls Committee

The Synagogue is fortunate to possess two Torah Scrolls from the collection of 1564 scrolls received by the Scrolls Trust in 1964. One of them is on loan to Or Shabbat and is from the town of Preštice in what was formerly Czechoslovakia. This year, the Commemorative Service for those who perished from the towns of Preštice and Horažďovice will be held on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November and we invite all members to attend.

## Westminster Young Professionals

This committee has recently formed to provide events and education for the Young Professional market. If you feel you would be able to lend a hand in marketing, logistics, coordination, finance or just as a volunteer, please get in touch.

## Westminster Purim Players

Every year we hold a Purim Spiel; telling the Purim story through different genres (Harry Potter, Beatles, ABBA, Grease, Star Wars, Fiddler on the Roof) and if you are theatrical in any way – be it writing, directing, acting or costumes - please contact the Synagogue Office to lend your talents.



## Calendar of Dates for 2019/20

### **Chanukah Term**

#### Sessions:

13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> September;  
4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> October;  
1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>\*, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> November;  
6<sup>th</sup> December;

#### \*BM Westminster Synagogue Residential:

Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November



#### Half Term:

18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> October

### **Pesach Term**

#### Sessions:

10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> January;  
7<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> February;  
6<sup>th</sup>\*, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> March;

#### \*BM Berlin Residential:

Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> March

#### Half Term:

7<sup>th</sup> February & 14<sup>th</sup> February



### **Shavuot Term**

#### Sessions:

24<sup>th</sup> April  
1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> May  
5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> June



#### BM2 Graduation:

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June

#### Half Term:

22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> May

#### Festival Services:

B'nei Mitzvah students are expected to attend Festival Family services – see our Education Calendar or go onto our website for full dates.



# Chinuch

חינוך

(Adult & Family Education)

Our aim is to become a community of chinuch; engaging, developing and challenging members of all ages with Jewish education.

Some ideas for practical steps include: Hosting Oneg Shabbat; Hosting a series of intergenerational Summer Lunch and Learn sessions; building up our Westminster Voices programme

Contact [yael@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:yael@westminstersynagogue.org)

# Chesed

חסד

(Care in the Community)

Our aim is to become a community of chesed; ensuring that members' needs are met beyond the synagogue environment, particularly those of the lonely.

Some ideas for practical steps include, Visiting Members; Teas and Speakers; Phone Tree

Contact [hilary@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:hilary@westminstersynagogue.org)

Our community has spoken and vowed to dedicate this year to focus on these four areas. Whether you want to be part of a core team or be an attendee, do get involved with the great opportunities these themes bring out.

Whether it's learning to sing with confidence, hosting a Shabbat dinner, connecting with lonely members or engaging in education, we hope this year brings something new and meaningful to you at Westminster Synagogue.

# Avodah

עבודה

(Music in our Services)

Our aim is to become a community of avodah; combining traditional and contemporary music to cultivate an egalitarian space of active service participation and bringing together members of all ages.

Some ideas for practical steps include, Formation of a Westminster Choir; Creating an online library of Service Songs; Creating a CD of WS Music for families to learn from.

Contact [rabbibenjj@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:rabbibenjj@westminstersynagogue.org)

# Chaverim

חברים

(Community Connectivity)

Our aim is to become a community of chaverim; cultivating meaningful relationships in a welcoming and non-judgemental atmosphere, across all generations and backgrounds.

Some ideas for practical steps may include, Community Connectors; A working Usher and Kiddush Rota; Small Shabbat Dinners hosted by members in the Shul.

Contact [jon@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:jon@westminstersynagogue.org)

# Dates for your Diary

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September - B'nei Mitzvah Chavurah Supper

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September - Selichot Supper, Study and Service

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> & Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September - Erev Rosh Hashanah & Rosh Hashanah

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October - Kol Nidre & Yom Kippur

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> & Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October - Erev Sukkot Shira & Sukkot First Day

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> & Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October - Erev Simchat Torah & Simchat Torah

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November - BM Westminster Residential Trip

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November - Westminster Chai

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November - Mitzvah Day

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> November - Peace of Mind

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November - WS Czech Scrolls Commemorative Service

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December - Westminster Chanukah Celebrations

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February - Westminster Questions?

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March - BM European Residential Trip

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March - Purim Spiel and Celebrations

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April - First Night Seder

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April - Erev Yom HaShoah with WLS

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May - Erev Shavuot Service and Supper

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June - B'nei Mitzvah Graduation

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## Useful Contacts

### Our Rabbis

Rabbi Benji Stanley - [rabbi@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:rabbi@westminstersynagogue.org)

Rabbi Dr Thomas Salamon, Rabbi Emeritus - [thomas@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:thomas@westminstersynagogue.org)

### Education Enquiries

Yael Roberts, Director of Community and Education - [yael@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:yael@westminstersynagogue.org)

Nivi Chatterjee Duari, Office Administrator - [admin@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:admin@westminstersynagogue.org)

### Lifecycle Enquiries

Ben Shaw, PA to Rabbinic Team - [ben@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:ben@westminstersynagogue.org)

### Festival and Cultural Event Enquiries

Jon Zecharia, Events and Communications Manager - [jon@westminstersynagouge.org](mailto:jon@westminstersynagouge.org)

Louise Wendel, Events Coordinator - [louise@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:louise@westminstersynagogue.org)

### Membership Enquiries

Hilary Ashleigh, Membership Administrator - [hilary@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:hilary@westminstersynagogue.org)

### Executive Director

Gary Sakol - [gary@westminstersynagogue.org](mailto:gary@westminstersynagogue.org)