

November/December 2022
Cheshvan/Kislev/
Tevet 5783

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

LJS NEWS



Kehillah – Community

The first of the values listed in the LJS's Vision and Values statement is *Kehillah – Community*: 'The LJS seeks to be a warm, welcoming and compassionate community for all who wish to engage with Judaism.'

This sense of community, always at the core of our identity, strengthened as we supported each other during the pandemic; Members, Friends and visitors felt a sense of belonging as they attended and participated in services and Zoom Kiddush online. We must continue to cherish and nurture this spirit, with the LJS building, including our beautiful Sanctuary, now serving again as the physical space for our community.

The re-introduction of 'Meet the Rabbi' is an initiative to foster a community spirit – our Rabbis will meet up with Members, new and old, who live in a particular area; the first of these sessions will be held in November in East London.

Taking part in the many learning opportunities, music-making and social events on offer helps foster our community spirit, as does volunteering. We aim to be open to other communities as we continue the tradition of our annual multi-faith Chanukkah celebration (see page 2). All are welcome.

L-R top row: Havdalah; Rehearsal of the Members' Music Ensemble. L-R bottom row: a 'bring and share' Chavurah supper; Pre-Pride Parade service candle-lighting

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Commemorating Kristallnacht

Wednesday 9 November at 6.45pm

In person at the LJS and online

Guest speaker: Dr Toby Simpson

A short service of remembrance will be held at 6.45pm followed by a talk given by our distinguished guest speaker, Dr Toby Simpson, Director of The Wiener Holocaust Library. In his talk, 'Kristallnacht: The Radicalisation of Antisemitic Policy in the Nazi State', Dr Simpson will explore the reasons behind the extreme brutality of Kristallnacht in Vienna.

Tea and coffee will be served after the talk. All are welcome.



Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker Families

The next LJS Drop-Ins for asylum-seeker families are on Sunday 13 November and Sunday 11 December 2.00 – 4.00pm.

If you are interested in becoming a Drop-In volunteer and would like further information, please email Hannah Tickle at: asylumproject@ljs.org

Mazal tov!

Many congratulations to Rabbi Igor who married Rabbi Deborah Blausten on Sunday 28 August.

We are delighted to share with you this photo taken under the chuppah.



Congratulations too, to Sam Cozens on the birth of her son, Nicolas Sidney. Nicolas was born on 31 July 2022 and is pictured here aged two months. We also celebrate the arrival of Frederick (Freddie) Solomon, the son of Ella Volkmann and Khaled Hassan, and brother to Aida. Freddie was born on 26 August, and is pictured here aged six weeks with his grandfather, Harald Volkman.



Celebrating Chanukkah at the LJS

In accordance with LJS tradition, we will be lighting the candles at the synagogue on the following days, and invite you, your families, friends and neighbours to join us for this lovely celebration followed by tea, latkes and doughnuts:



Photo: Peter Singer

Monday 19 December: Annual Multi-Faith Chanukkah Celebration 4.00 for 4.30pm with guest speaker (see Shalom LJS for details)

Tuesday 20 December at 4.00pm

Wednesday 21 December at 4.00pm

Thursday 22 December at 4.00pm

Friday 23 December at 6.45pm, just before the Erev Shabbat service

Bereavements

We offer our sympathy to those who mourn:

Evelyn (Rose) Glazer, sister of Judy Newton.

We also extend our sympathy to our House Manager, Mick Daly, on the death of his brother **Tony Daly**, and to our former Executive Director, Lysa Schwartz, on the death of her father, **Jack Schwartz**.

הַמָּקוֹם יִנַּחֵם אֶתְכֶם בְּתוֹךְ שָׂאֵר הָאֲבֵלִים
May God comfort you and all who mourn

Services: November and December (in person and online)

Unless otherwise stated, Friday evening services are at 6.45pm and Shabbat morning services are at 11.00am, and led either by either Rabbi Alexandra Wright or Rabbi Igor Zinkov. At the end of each Friday evening or Saturday morning service congregants are invited to Kiddush either in person or via Zoom.

Friday 4 November	
Shabbat 5 November <i>Lech L'cha</i>	Guest preacher Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein The service will be followed by Nosh 'n' Drosh with Irene Kyffin (see page 10)
Wednesday 9 November 6.45pm	Kristallnacht commemoration: service followed by talk by guest speaker, Dr Toby Simpson (see page 2)
Friday 11 November	Service co-led by Student Rabbi Matt Turchin and Electra Levi-French Bat Mitzvah
Shabbat 12 November <i>Va-yera</i>	Electra Levi-French Bat Mitzvah
Friday 18 November	
Shabbat 19 November <i>Chayyey Sarah</i>	Mitzvah Day Shabbat: In advance of Mitzvah Day on 20 November, congregants are asked to contribute toiletries and/or help package them after the Shabbat morning service to donate to Sufra NW London Food Bank. See donation list and further information in Shalom LJS
Friday 25 November	
Shabbat 26 November <i>Tol'dot</i>	Guest preacher Rabbi Dr Lawrence Hoffman, one of the world's leading scholars on Jewish liturgy and author of over 40 books
Friday 2 December	Service to mark World AIDS Day co-led by Rabbi Igor Zinkov and Rabbi Mark Solomon with guest speaker, Laurence Lewis, trustee of Jewish AIDS Trust; service followed by a bring and share Chavurah supper
Shabbat 3 December <i>Vayetze</i>	L'Dor va-Dor service in the Sanctuary led by students from Rimón; Koleinu Service in the Rabbi John Rayner Prayer Room
Friday 9 December	
Shabbat 10 December <i>Vayishlach</i>	Haftarah read by William Falk, who has retired as conductor of the Members' Choir and who is celebrating a special birthday
Friday 16 December	
Shabbat 17 December <i>Vayeshev</i>	
Monday 19 December 4.00 for 4.30pm	Chanukkah Multi-Faith Celebration at the LJS with guest speaker – all welcome (see Shalom LJS for details)
Friday 23 December	6th Night of Chanukkah
Shabbat 24 December <i>Mikkeitz</i>	Shabbat Chanukkah
Friday 30 December	
Shabbat 31 December <i>Vayiggash</i>	
Friday 6 January	
Shabbat 7 January <i>Va-y'chi</i>	

Council Report



Photo: Trevor Haynes

At its very busy October meeting, Council was delighted to record how well the High Holy Day services had gone, with a most welcome return to a well-filled Sanctuary and the ‘buzz’ that this creates.

We are not back to where we were pre-Covid and look forward to seeing more return in the months to come. Our wonderful services were also appreciated by the thousands who watched online, and our thanks go to our Rabbis, Director of Music, Cathy Heller Jones, and the musicians. None of this would have been possible, however, without the enormous contribution by our many volunteers, who provided stewarding, security and technical services, along with our Executive Director and caretaking and office staff.

I wish to pay special tribute to Tim Simon and thank him for all he has done for our High Holy Day Appeal Committee which he has chaired so ably for no fewer than 25 years. Tim has decided it is time to hand on the task to someone else. His efficient, organised, inclusive and open approach to the work of the Committee inspired all who served on it. We are grateful to Sue Head who has agreed to take on the role.

Those attending the LJS will have noticed the much better appearance of the planted areas following the appointment of a gardening contractor. Also much improved are the restored tapestry cushions in the pews and the chairs on the bimah. We have further identified a number of minor changes which will improve the appearance of other parts of the building where this can be done within existing financial resources. The task of levelling and relaying some of the paths at the cemetery has started thanks to the generous donation reported previously, while rebuilding of the columbarium is also progressing. The war memorial has been cleaned. Following a question at the AGM, we are to spend a limited

amount to improve the offer at those kiddushim which are not catered to mark a simchah, provided volunteers can be found to set out the food. Thoughts on the changes will be welcomed. Quotes have been sought for preliminary works in the basement as a start to creating a community hub, but the main works must await the receipt of further donations to our appeal. Meanwhile, grateful thanks are expressed to those who have already contributed so generously.

Rimon is doing well under the combined leadership of Rabbi Elana Dellal and Head Teacher, Susannah Alexander. Our nursery school, which has vacancies for the coming period, continues to provide an excellent service, and has recently undergone an Ofsted inspection; the result was awaited as this report was written. Our Executive Director is convening a working group to progress the EcoSynagogue initiative. We discussed the rise in the number of Covid cases nationally, but decided that no further action was required at this stage beyond inviting congregants to wear masks if they feel happy to do that. Decisions have yet to be taken on the complex issue of managing our property portfolio. Meetings with experts in the field will take place shortly.

I make no apology for drawing attention to the concern felt by the Council when considering the LJS finances. A significant contributor to the shortfall is the non-receipt of 2022 membership fees from some members, and I appeal to all who have yet to pay to do so without delay. Council has agreed a lower than inflation increase in fees for 2023.

Finally on the subject of money, please contribute as generously as you can to our High Holy Day Appeal in favour of Little Village, Raphael – the Jewish Counselling Service, Physicians for Human Rights and UJIA. It would be wonderful to raise a really bumper sum as a final thank you to Tim Simon for his excellent leadership of the Appeal Committee!

Chris Godbold, Chair of Council

A Tribute to Queen Elizabeth II

Rabbi Alexandra Wright looks back at the life of our late Queen.



PRESS ASSOCIATION/Danny Lawson

The loss of Queen Elizabeth II, who died on Thursday 8 September in Balmoral, is a sorrow that touches us all personally, communally and nationally.

Just a few months ago, I interviewed a handful of our members for an article in *LJS News* to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. She was their contemporary; they marked each threshold of her life as they marked their own – childhood, growing up and living through the Second World War, marriage, children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. Like some of them, the young Princess Elizabeth, as she was then, had volunteered for wartime service in the Auxiliary Territorial Service; she witnessed the terrible destruction caused by violence, and knew what it meant to live through those six long years of war.

But in so many other ways, her life departed from other young women of her age. When her father died in 1952, she was just 25 years old. It was then that she declared before the whole country the words that remained with her throughout her long life and from which she never, for one moment, wavered:

'I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.'

During the seventy years of her reign, she devoted herself to public service with integrity, cheerfulness, dignity, restraint and discipline. She exemplified qualities that often seem rare in our own era – the desire to serve others with unselfish motive, without ambition, with modesty.

One of the things I most admired about the Queen was her personal faith. It infused her Christmas speeches and her commitment to regular

worship. Perhaps it was this deep belief in the message of her Christianity that sustained her and gave her a profound sense of the moral values shared by Judaism and Christianity – values that matter in our encounter with all humanity.

She encouraged us all during the lockdown with her Christmas message of 2020 and, in spite of her own more personal trials and losses, she never withdrew from her duties, but carried on with strength, dignity and grace. And we saw her sitting alone, a forlorn figure in black, wearing a black mask at the funeral of her beloved husband, the Duke of Edinburgh. She was no different from her subjects, and yet, she was unique and special, a shining example to leaders and ordinary men and women alike.

United in sorrow for the loss of our Queen, we are also conscious that this Elizabethan era of post-war prosperity and well-being has been fading for some time.

The new King Charles III ascends the throne in deeply troubling times – a war in Europe, the cost of living crisis that is going to hit many of his subjects deeply, plunging them further into poverty, and a climate catastrophe worldwide. He cares deeply for the environment and has spoken on many occasions about things that touch him and for which he feels passionately. He has visited our own synagogue on at least two occasions, and I have heard him speak with sensitivity and compassion on the experience of the Jewish community and other minority groups.

As we express our sorrow and gratitude for the life of Queen Elizabeth, let us pray that our new King will help to bring stability and well-being to our nation and aspire to exemplify the values that were cherished by his mother and the qualities which she exemplified – service, stability, dignity and restraint.

Rabbi Alexandra Wright

(This is an edited version of the tribute which appeared in Thought for the Week on 9 September 2022.)

The Jewish LGBT+ Group and the LJS

As we mark World AIDS Day with an Erev Shabbat service on 2 December, Karen Newman tells us about the Jewish LGBT+ Group and its connection with our synagogue.

In order for a synagogue to be gay-friendly, at least one of its Rabbis has to be gay, right? Wrong! The Jewish LGBT+ Group, formerly the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group (JGLG), has always had an excellent relationship with the LJS. The Group is the longest surviving Jewish LGBT+ group in the world, having been formed at a Jewish gay meeting that attracted more than 200 people in November 1972 as a result of an advert placed in the gay press.

My partner Susan and I joined JGLG in 1998. Rabbi Mark Solomon frequently led the Group's monthly JGLG Erev Shabbat services, and, after our daughter Lily was born, he suggested that we join the LJS, where we would be accepted as a family, despite Susan's not being Jewish.

We quickly felt at home here, and Susan and I had a commitment ceremony in June 2006. At the time, JGLG was hosted by Liberal Judaism, and its monthly Erev Shabbat services were held at the Montagu Centre. Fast forwarding to 2013, when the Group approached the LJS to ask if we could have a pre-Pride Erev Shabbat service in the Sanctuary, the LJS gave the Group a warm welcome, and the London Gay Men's Chorus performed in the Montefiore Hall after the service and chavurah supper. The Group was back at the LJS for a Pre-Pride service in 2015, and since then, the Group

and the LJS have co-hosted several joint services and events with one or more of its Rainbow Rabbis leading celebrations of Chanukkah, World AIDS Day etc., and the Pink Singers have performed twice in the Sanctuary after Pre-Pride services. Speakers have included Rob Rinder and Nick Hytner.

Since 2017, the LJS has been the home of the Group, hosting its regular, smaller Erev Shabbat services and other events. But don't take my word for the strength of the Group's relationship with the LJS. This is what the immediate past Chair of the Group, David Rubin, has to say: 'A huge thank you to Rabbi Alex, Rabbi Igor and all the staff at the LJS for welcoming our group to their shul. We always feel at home at the LJS and Rabbi Alex has often attended or popped in to our services despite her busy schedule.' And this from David's predecessor as Chair, Peggy Sherwood: 'The LJS has been an amazing friend to the Jewish LGBT+ Group. Always generous with letting us use their space, Rabbi Alex has been so accommodating with everything we have ever needed. It's been wonderful over the years being able to join together and collaborate in the beautiful Sanctuary, and we are all eternally grateful for our relationship with them.' Perhaps the last word should go to one of the Pink Singers (*pictured*), who wrote this on their blog after performing at the Pre-Pride service in June this year: 'As with any other performance, the choir first warmed up, got organised and then got ready to be on stage. But this time things felt different. I don't know whether there is a strong connection between the LGBTQ+ and the Jewish communities, but what I did see was that music and love connected us all. The synagogue was filled with emotions from warm hearts. Audience members of all ages clapped, danced and sang with us and, above all, joined our love. It was very touching that after our performance, many people came to us sharing their feelings about our music. I realised that there should be no barriers between humanity. No one was born with prejudice and no one should be judged by their sexuality, gender or faith. I learnt a beautiful lesson on that night.'



Photo: Kees Stern

A brief guide to lighting your chanukkiyah at home

The first candle should be lit on Sunday evening 18 December.

1 On each night of Chanukkah, place the chanukkiyah where it can be seen clearly, and on the first night place one candle in the holder for the shammash ('servant candle') and the candle for the first night in the holder on the far right.

2 Turn to one of the readings in the Siddur between pages 393 and 401 OR follow the simple service outlined here.

3 Light the shammash and recite this prayer followed by these blessings:

i)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו
במצותיו, וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה.

*Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivvanu l'hadlik ner
shel Chanukkah.*

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign
of the Universe, You sanctify us by Your
commandments, and enjoin us to kindle the
Chanukkah lights.

ii)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים
לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

*Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam,
she-asah nissim la'avoteynu ba-yamim ha-hem
u'vaz'man ha-zeh.*

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the
Universe, You performed wonders for our
ancestors in days of old, at this season.

iii) **First night only**

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקימנו
והגיענו לזמן הזה.

*Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam,
shehecheyanu, v'kiyy'manu, v'higgiyanu laz'man
ha-zeh.*

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the
Universe: You have kept us alive, sustained us and
enabled us to reach this season.

4 Light the first candle. On subsequent nights insert a new shammash and an additional candle for each night starting at the right-hand side, but always light from left to right.



5 While lighting the candles the following is sung or read:

*Ha-nerot halalu anachnu madlikin al ha-nissim v'al
ha-t'shuot, v'al ha-nifla-ot she-asita la'avoteynu
v'chol shemonat y'mei Chanukkah ha-nerot halalu
kodesh; v'eyn lanu r'shut l'hishtamesh ba-hem, ella
lirotam bilvad, k'dei l'hodot l'shim'cha al nissecha
v'al nifl'otecha v'al y'shuotecha.*

We kindle these lights in remembrance of the
wonderful deliverance You performed for our
ancestors. During all the eight days of Chanukkah
these lights are sacred; we are enjoined not to
use them but only to gaze upon them, so that
their glow may move us to give thanks for Your
wonderful acts of deliverance.

*Ma'oz tzur yeshuati, l'cha na'eh l'shabbeach,
Tikkon beyt t'fillati, v'sham todah n'zabbeach,
L'et tashbit mat'be'ach v'tzar ha-m'nabbeach,
Az egmor b'shir mizmor, chanukkat ha-miz'be'ach.*

Rock of Ages, let our song
Praise Your wondrous saving power,
You amid the raging foes,
Were our safe and sheltering tower.
Furious, they assailed us,
But your arm availed us,
And Your word
Broke their sword
When our own strength failed us.

6 Eat latkes and doughnuts to recall the vial of oil that miraculously burned for eight days in the Temple; play the dreidel game and bet all your chocolate money away; watch the candles burn down.

7 Give tz'dakah (charitable donations) at this time of year when so many are lonely.

Chanukkah Sameach!

From a Scottish Farm to Martyrdom: the extraordinary life of Jane Haining

LJS member Peter Lantos tells us how a street sign in Budapest prompted him to research the story of a remarkable woman.



© Atlantic Productions

A couple of years ago I was walking on the quay of the eastern shore of the Danube in Budapest when I suddenly noticed a street sign: *Jane Haining Rakpart* ('quay'). Not very far away on the same quay is one of the most unusual Holocaust memorials – a haphazard collection of men's, women's and children's shoes, cast in iron, in different shapes and sizes. In the dreadful winter of 1944 the fascist Arrow Cross Party, who by that time was in power, had hunted down many of the surviving Jews of the capital from their ghetto, lined them up and machine-gunned them into the freezing river. At the time I did not know that there was a connection between the enigmatic street sign and the memorial. Back in London I started to find out about Jane Haining and a most extraordinary story came to life.



Jane Haining was born in 1897, the third daughter of a farming family in Dunscore, Scotland. Her mother died aged thirty-six after giving birth to her fourth daughter. Soon after, Jane started at Dunscore Village School alongside

her two elder sisters, and continued at Dumfries Academy which operated as a grammar school. She was an able girl who excelled in her studies. She won seven prizes during the first year and 41 altogether, becoming the *dux*, the highest-ranking student in the last year. At the age of twenty, she set off to attend the Glasgow and West of Scotland Commercial College, and after qualifying, started to work in the accounting

department of J & P Coats Ltd, the giant thread-making firm based in Paisley. She must have been an outstanding worker for soon she was appointed personal secretary to one of the company directors. Then something unexpected happened which changed the course of her life.

In 1927 Jane went to a lecture given by the Reverend George MacKenzie, the Convener of the Church of Scotland's Jewish Mission Committee. After the talk, she told a friend that she had found her life's work. The same year she resigned from the job which would have given her life-long security, and started to prepare for missionary work by attending different courses, including one for domestic science in Glasgow. In addition to voluntary work, she became residential matron in the Radium Institute in Manchester. In 1932 she saw an advertisement for the post of Matron in the Girls' Home of the Scottish Mission School in Budapest. She applied for the post and was appointed with a salary of £100 a year with board and furnished accommodation at the School. She arrived in Budapest at the end of June 1932.

At that time, Budapest appeared to the newcomer as a beautiful, glamorous city with an effervescent cultural life. Beneath the surface, however, were dangerous undercurrents. Hungary had been on the losing side in the First World War and as a result lost over 70% of its territory and 64% of its population. Under the Head of State, the Regent, Admiral Miklós Horthy, the basis of the country's policy was to regain lost territories. This and its geographical location drove the country into the orbit of Nazi Germany with increasingly right-wing nationalist governments. A natural corollary of this policy was the strengthening of antisemitism. Three anti-Jewish laws were passed between 1938 and 1941, but it is little known that Hungary introduced perhaps the first such legislation in Europe as early as 1920. Under the title *numerus clausus* (closed number), it limited the number of Jewish students who could enter universities.

However, when Jane arrived she was impressed by what she saw. The Scottish Mission in Hungary,

founded in 1841, had a long and distinguished history. The School, part of the Mission, originally co-educational, became a girls' school in 1905 and built up an excellent reputation. Jane was welcomed by the Headmistress, Margit Prém, an outstanding and experienced educationalist who became Jane's best friend. Born a Jew, she had converted to Christianity. The School admitted both Jewish and Christian girls with the aim of educating them together to learn about each other's religion. Being a missionary school, it has been disputed whether originally there was an aim to convert Jewish children, but the Director of the Mission, the Reverend George Knight, clearly stated that conversion was not the intention of the School. The School consisted of Elementary, Higher and Commercial departments and offered evening classes. On average, 400 girls attended with between 30–40 boarders. In the 1930s, 70% of the students were Jewish.

After arrival, Jane was introduced to other members of the staff and to the students. Her 'empire', the Girls' Home, was on the third floor of the large building. She was responsible for the out-of-school lives and general well-being of the boarders. After a few months at the School, she had not only been accepted, but had also become well-liked both by other members of the staff and the girls. She was strict, but also kind, and she looked after her charges with consideration and love. Soon she organised skating parties in winter and excursions to Lake Balaton in the summer. She had changed the life of the Girls' Home for the better. Jane devoted her life to her work; it was her destiny. But this worldly attitude was supported by a much stronger sentiment – her unshakable belief in God. Nothing could divert her. Not even the love of a young man.



Bryce Nisbet arrived at the Scottish Mission as a young novice and fell in love with Jane. When he was called back to Scotland and asked Jane to join him, she decided to stay. After the war started

in 1939, members of the Mission were warned by both the British Legation in Budapest and by their Headquarters in Scotland that, not having diplomatic immunity, they might not be safe for much longer. Yet Jane was still determined to stay. When in December 1941 the UK declared war on Hungary, the Mission's position became even more perilous. The Reverend Knight tried to convince Jane to leave for Scotland, but again she refused. 'The Jews are now entering their most dangerous period – nothing would induce me to desert them.'

On 19 March 1944 Germany invaded Hungary and the last chapter of the Final Solution, the extermination of Hungarian Jewry, began. It was the last chance for Jane to leave, but she felt that if the girls needed her in sunny times, they would need her even more in darkness. The Mission, abandoning their no-conversion policy, began issuing baptismal certificates to Jewish girls to save their lives. Yet it was not this action, but a minor incident which led to Jane's tragedy.

Food had become scarce and difficult to get, and Jane got up at dawn to go to the market to buy what was still available. One day, entering the kitchen she spotted the son-in-law of the cook eating the girls' precious lunch. She confronted him. Unfortunately, she did not know that the man was a member of the fascist Arrow Cross Party. He reported Jane to the Gestapo. She was arrested as a British spy and subjected by two Gestapo officers to a mock trial. There were eight ridiculous charges, one being that she had wept when seeing the girls wearing their yellow Stars of David.

She was found guilty, and after a short stay in a prison in Budapest, was deported. She became prisoner 79467 in Auschwitz. On 17 July she was murdered in a gas chamber in Birkenau – a fate she shared with 440,000 Hungarian Jews in the summer of 1944.

Epilogue

Jane Haining has been declared a martyr of both Hungary and Scotland, and had the final accolade of being recognised as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

Peter Lantos

Footnote: My research on Jane Haining turned into a play, *So Great a Love*, which had a rehearsed reading on 26 April 2022 at the New Diorama Theatre, London, NW1.

Community

Nosh 'n' Drosh

Join us for our occasional series of talks and discussion over a bagel lunch following the Shabbat morning service. All welcome.



**Saturday 5 November
1.15 – 2.15pm**

A History of the Yiddish Theatre with Irene Kyffin

The territory of the Pale of Settlement was an area of land reaching across modern Poland, Ukraine,

Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova and parts of Russia. In 1791, under Catherine the Great, it was given over to the settlement of Jews expelled from Russia. Life in the Pale was bleak. Apart from the rich and educated, Jews had few rights and were restricted to living and making a living amongst themselves. Out of this impoverished background grew the Yiddish Theatre, which achieved great fame throughout Europe and beyond. It gave to the theatre a richness in musical comedy and operetta. From 1881, Yiddish Theatre was established in America with the emigrants that moved there. It gradually spread to film and produced great musicals, such as 'Fiddler on the Roof'.

Our speaker, LJS member Irene Kyffin, currently teaches a three-year course on *The History of the Theatre* at the University of the Third Age.

Date for the diary:

The next Nosh 'n' Drosh is on Saturday 14 January:

Documenting Jewish London with Searle Kochberg

Film-maker and writer on film and other performing arts, LJS member Searle Kochberg will share his working methods of capturing aspects of London Jewish life on film, and how the results compare and contrast with mainstream documentaries on TV.

Planning for our Future and Later Lives

Wednesday 16 November at 7.30 – 9.00pm
In person at the LJS or via Zoom

Planning ahead for our later lives may involve addressing concerns and making difficult decisions. There will be short presentations by each of our experts with legal backgrounds and relevant experience such as social care, followed by discussion.

Come along and learn more about the wide range of options available to you, from whether to move home to where to go for advice and help.

RSVP to let us know you are coming or to receive the Zoom link. Phone 020 7286 5181 or email: communitycare@ljs.org

Join us for an Evening of Magic and Mind Reading!

Saturday 26 November at 7.00pm at the LJS

Prepare to be amazed with Nick Einhorn, member of the Inner Magic Circle and one of the first magicians to fool Penn and Teller on their iconic TV series 'Penn and Teller: Fool Us'.

Our compère is Magic Circle and LJS member, Peter Werth.

Tickets are £35.00 including supper. Please visit <https://www.ljs.org/event/magic2022> or call the office on 020 7286 5181.



THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE PRESENTS

AN EVENING OF MAGIC & MIND READING

– Saturday 26 November at 7.00pm –

Prepare to be amazed with **NICK EINHORN**, member of the Inner Magic Circle and one of the first magicians to fool Penn and Teller on their iconic TV series 'Penn and Teller: Fool Us'

Compère: Magic Circle and LJS member, **PETER WERTH**

Tickets £35.00
including supper

Venue: The LJS, 28 St. John's Wood Road, London NW8 7HA
T: 020 7286 5181

Save the date – Sunday 26 March!

Concert at the LJS in aid of Ukrainian victims of war hosted by Maureen Lipman DBE

Sunday 26 March 2023 at 5.00pm

THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Performers:

Gemma Rosefield with Ensemble 360

Julius Drake, piano

Stephanie Marshall, mezzo-soprano

The Choirs and Organist of the LJS

Programme to include:

Chichester Psalms by Leonard Bernstein

Death and the Maiden string quartet by Franz

Schubert

Rückert-Lieder by Gustav Mahler

New compositions commissioned by the LJS by

Roxanna Panufnik, Toby Young and Julian Marshall

a DVD followed by a delicious tea including ice-cream. The cost is just £2.00 per session.

Our next screening is on **23 November** when we will watch *The Wizard of Oz*.

Please note there is no December screening.

Restaurant Tuesday

Everyone in our community is welcome to attend our informal lunch club at 12.45pm on the third Tuesday of the month for a chance to meet and chat and have a delicious meal, hosted by our delightful team of volunteers. We suggest a donation of £6.00. Our next lunches are on **15 November** and **20 December**. Please call the office on 020 7286 5181 to let us know if you are coming.

Singing for the Mind

Singing for the Mind is open to anyone with memory problems or in the early stages of dementia. Tea and biscuits are served as people arrive to allow participants and their companions the chance to chat before we start singing. The hour-long singing session is led by a trained music leader, supported by volunteers. A dementia specialist is available for help and advice. For advice on joining the group, please email: sfm@ljs.org or phone the LJS on 020 7286 5181.

The LJS Book Group

All LJS Members and Friends are invited to join our friendly and informal book group. The sessions are on Zoom, start at 7.00pm and last between an hour and an hour and a half.

The next session is on Thursday 17 November when we will discuss *Grey Bees* by Andrey Kurkov. (Please note there is no December session.) If you have any questions or would like to be sent a Zoom link for the next Book Club, please email: ljsreaders@hotmail.com

Bridge Club

The Bridge Club meets at 2.00pm every Monday (except Jewish and Bank Holidays) and continues till 5.00pm, with a break for refreshments. This is as much a social afternoon as a competitive one. Cost is £2.00 per members and £3.00 for non-members. We welcome new players. For more details, please contact the LJS on 020 7286 5181.

The LJS Members' Music Ensemble

New singers – and instrumentalists – are welcome to join the LJS Members' Music Ensemble conducted by Cathy Heller Jones

We lead the music in Shabbat morning services once a month, with one monthly Thursday evening rehearsal.

An exciting programme is planned for 2022/2023, including a major concert on 26 March 2023, 'The Human Spirit' (see above). Singers in the LJS Members' Music Ensemble will take part in Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* as well as the premiere of three new compositions commissioned by the LJS. For more details contact Cathy Heller Jones at: c.hellerjones@ljs.org

Community Care

Aviva Shafritz, our Community Care Co-ordinator, is ready to help with difficulties experienced not only by our older members, such as with illness and provision of care, but also across the spectrum of life. You can contact Aviva by email: a.shafritz@ljs.org or on 020 7286 5181.

Video and Tea

You are warmly invited to this event which takes place on the fourth Wednesday of the month 1.30 – 4.30pm. There is no need to book – just come along. You will have soup on arrival, then



The Learning Circle

Adult education classes at the LJS

Our rich adult education programme includes Classical Hebrew classes at all levels, and opportunities for learning and discussion about Judaism and Jewish life.

If you have questions or need advice, including advice on which level of Hebrew is suitable for you, please contact our Education Co-ordinator, Debi Penhey: education@ljs.org

For full details of all classes, including which are on Zoom and/or in person, please refer to The Learning Circle Autumn/Winter 2022/5783 brochure available on the LJS website: www.ljs.org (click on 'Learning'). If you would like to sign up for a course, please click <https://www.ljs.org/form/Adult-Ed-Autumn2022> for the registration form or contact Debi Penhey: education@ljs.org

Courses are free for Members and Friends of the LJS. The Learning Circle brochure outlines payment for Non-Members.

Sukkot term classes

Tuesday classes run until 13 December, and Shabbat morning classes until 10 December.

Tuesday mornings 11.15am – 12.30pm

Tuesday Texts

This friendly group is led by our Rabbis and Dr Dov Softi. We study biblical and rabbinic texts, modern poetry and short stories, as well as Jewish history, and we enjoy sessions on Jewish art and music. The class is based around discussion on a variety of topics, the starting point being a text, painting or piece of music. New students always welcome.

Tuesday evenings 5.45 – 6.45pm

Reading and Understanding the Book of Judges

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

The Book of Judges is the seventh book in the Tanach (canonical collection of Hebrew scriptures). It describes a period of social and political unrest among the Israelite tribes, a period

before the Israelites' monarchy. The stories are interesting and intriguing to read and learn from.

This course is suitable for those who can read Hebrew and have a basic understanding of Biblical Hebrew, grammatical structure and a basic knowledge of Biblical Hebrew words.

Tuesday evenings 7.00 – 8.00pm

Classical Hebrew for Absolute Beginners

Tutor: Susannah Alexander

If you know absolutely nothing about reading Hebrew but want to learn, this class is for you. Using Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders* (available for purchase from the LJS), this class will enable you to unlock the mystery of the Hebrew letters and start reading. Absolutely no previous experience is required, just regular attendance of this friendly and supportive class.

Understanding Biblical Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

Participants in this course will follow the book *Prayerbook Hebrew the Easy Way* (available for purchase from the LJS) which focuses on understanding Biblical and Siddur (prayerbook) Hebrew. Participants will also read key Torah portions to increase their understanding of the Bible as well as their Hebrew vocabulary. Suitable for those who can read basic Hebrew.

Gaining Confidence in Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Sally Gold

If you can read a little Hebrew, this supportive, informal class will help you to improve. We are reading the Abraham narrative in *Bereishit* (Genesis). Your reading is guided and at your own pace, with questions about the language and texts encouraged. Your confidence will grow with your skills and understanding, and you will be on the path towards greater enjoyment and participation in synagogue services, using the Siddur, Bible reading and lifecycle events.

Joseph: From Hebrew Slave to Egyptian Chancellor

Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright

New students are welcome to this class as we follow the upward mobility of Joseph in the Book of Genesis, who successfully interprets Pharaoh's dreams and finds himself elevated to high office in the Egyptian court. The class reads in Hebrew, learns some grammar and vocabulary, and enjoys far-reaching discussion about this consummate literary novella.

Tuesday evenings 8.10 – 9.15pm

Exploring Judaism

Tutor: Rabbi Igor Zinkov

Exploring Judaism is for people, including non-Jewish family members, who wish to know more about Judaism, Jewish history and the Jewish people. It is also an essential programme of instruction for people choosing Judaism by conversion. Class members are encouraged to read materials which will be put online during the year. In addition to offering knowledge of Judaism, the course encourages practical experiences of Liberal Judaism and space for reflection within the group. The full syllabus is in The Learning Circle brochure, available on the LJS website: www.ljs.org

1 November: The Jewish Calendar, Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat

8 November: Exploring Kashrut (Jewish dietary laws)

15 November: Jewish History Overview

22 November: Who is a Jew?

29 November: Different forms of Judaism

6 December: Presentations from students

13 December: Exploring Chanukkah

Continuing Our Jewish Journey

Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright

This class is working towards a jointly led service on 6 May 2023. Some of the students are also preparing for individual Bar or Bat Mitzvahs on separate dates. The course will continue with a journey through the Middle Ages and beyond as we read some of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*,

Joseph Caro's *Shulchan Aruch* and encounter some Jewish mysticism. We also aim to read some Holocaust theology.

Shabbat mornings 9.45 – 10.45am

Women in the Bible

Tutor: Nitza Spiro

In this course we examine key female figures in the Bible, analysing their characters and roles in the context of psychology, sociology, politics and literature, often making comparisons with ancient texts of other peoples in that area and era.

Our discussions are in English, with texts read in Hebrew, enriching participants' vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structure. Members of the group receive weekly guidance of words and topics to think about prior to each lesson, making the learning more effective.

Should be of interest to men, too!

Learning with Texts

Facilitator: Michael Romain

This term the focus of the class is on Judaism in the first century BCE. Classes are led by Rabbis Dr Michael Hilton, Sybil Sheridan, Alexandra Wright and Igor Zinkov.

If you are interested in joining the class, please contact Michael Romain: romain@netgates.co.uk

Understanding Biblical Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

Participants in this course will follow the book *Prayerbook Hebrew the Easy Way* (available for purchase from the LJS) which focuses on understanding Biblical and Siddur (prayerbook) Hebrew. Participants will also read key Torah portions to increase their understanding of the Bible as well as their Hebrew vocabulary. Suitable for those who can read basic Hebrew.

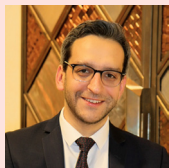
Please note this course commences at 10.00am to allow parents of Rimmon children to attend Tefillah.



Section from the Temple Scroll, Qumran
(licensed by Bridgeman Education)

The LJS Chavruta

Learning with Study Companions



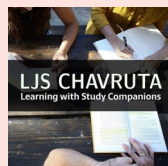
Rabbi Igor Zinkov has adapted a traditional form of study called Chavruta (literally ‘Companionship’) specially for the LJS: groups of two or three people study specific texts together in search of their meaning, then discuss how to apply their findings to their own lives. Chavruta fosters meaningful friendships between study companions.

The programme allows for continuous enrolment, so you can register at any time. You are assigned study partners and texts which are from both traditional and general cultural sources. The traditional sources are in English as well as in Hebrew, so knowledge of Hebrew is not a prerequisite, and the experience is meaningful even if you have no knowledge of Hebrew at all. The general culture sources include poetry, art and book extracts.

Your Chavruta group meets for an hour-long session virtually or in person every month at a time agreed between participants, with the opportunity of staying together or joining other study companions for future sessions. Everyone of all ages is welcome to join in this exciting study opportunity.

To find out more, and/or to register, please contact Rabbi Igor Zinkov:

i.zinkov@ljs.org or visit www.tinyurl.com/ljsch



Preview of new Purim term classes

Purim term dates

Regular weekly Purim Term Tuesday classes begin 10 January, Wednesday evening classes begin 11 January, and Shabbat morning classes begin 14 January 2023.

Special course:

Tuesday evenings 24 & 31 January, 7, 21 & 28 February, 7 March 2023, 8.10 – 9.15pm

Navigating the Sea of Talmud

Tutor: Rabbi Anthony Lazarus Magrill



The Talmud is perhaps the Jewish people's primary cultural storehouse. For two millennia, its study has been one of Judaism's key religious and intellectual experiences;

but numerous barriers have restricted access to its treasures. Over six sessions, open to learners whatever their prior experience, we will grapple with some of the Talmud's iconic passages, working principally with texts in English translation. Expect wild stories, legal controversy, and insight into Judaism's rich cultural diversity.

Tuesday evenings, January – July 2023 Classical Hebrew for Not Quite Beginners

Tutor: Susannah Alexander

Students who have successfully completed the first term of Absolute Beginners in the Sukkot Term (2022) are invited to join this group to continue their learning. New students are welcome to join this class if they already have good knowledge of the *Alef Bet* and would like to learn some grammar and vocabulary.

Wednesday evenings, January – July 2023 Classical Hebrew for Absolute Beginners

Tutor: Susannah Alexander

If you know absolutely nothing about reading Hebrew but want to learn, this class is for you. Using Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders* (available for purchase from the LJS), this class will enable you to unlock the mystery of the Hebrew letters and start reading. Absolutely no previous experience is required, just regular attendance of this friendly and supportive class.



The Library by Dora Holzhandler
(Bridgeman Images)

Rimon Corner

The Sukkot term is in full flow, with Rimon enjoying a new year of learning, community and fun. Our staff team has a wealth of experience and a huge range of skills, and we are excited to share these with our young people and with one another. Our team is a diverse mixture of established staff and new teachers as we work towards growing our team back to pre-pandemic numbers. We now have over 100 students in Rimon and are continuing to build a strong, cohesive team to meet their needs.

On Saturday 3 September we met for a training morning which also provided an opportunity to socialise and get to know one another. We started off by looking at our aims for Rimon pupils, which included exploring Jewish identity through questioning, having respect for our traditions and pride in our identity, feeling welcome in a Jewish environment, making friends, and having fun. We then considered the more mundane but equally important aspects of education such as planning, classroom management, and safeguarding.

We look forward to further developing our skills so that we can play our part in growing a community of learners who truly 'serve the Eternal with joy'.

Susannah Alexander, Rimon Head Teacher



Photo: Russell Harris

Back row L-R: Dr Dov Softi, Max Phillips, Danny Lang, Susannah Alexander, Jonty Bromfield-Ngonyamah.

Middle row L-R: Rabbi Igor Zinkov, Leah Michie, Debi Penhey, Emma Dixter, Eva Bielawski, Rosie Cohen.

Bottom row L-R: Hannah Spearman-Walters, Rabbi Elana Dellal, Caroline Hagard, Rabbi Alexandra Wright, Talia Vardi.

We wish these young members of the LJS a very happy birthday in November and December.

November

Kaila Brooks
Sam Cooper
Harrison Gold
Sidney Gold
Otto Goldsmith
Sidney Gruber
Alessa Lindblad Hill
Max Salasky Buxton
Sammy Segal-Knowles
Kerensa Sheldrake
Leora Sternberg
Stella Sternberg-Wilson
Nina Williams
Abe Wolchover

December

Eva Bielawski
Ari Cohen
Beatrice Cohen
Dean Cumerlato
Lyla Cumerlato
Ambrose Davies-Benjamin
Jonah Dellal
Leo Gavshon
Sophie Gold
Arthur Grant
Sasha Jacobs
Leonie Lachner
Jazzy Lang
Manny Baum Appignanesi
Tara Moran
Noah Mordehachvili
Alice Osband
Elio Parisi-Mills
Oren Penchina Neidle
Max Phillips
Noah Simon
Winter Simon
Joseph Sinclair
Benjamin Tombs
Finlay Tyler
Lauren Warshaw
Elijah Yechiel

The Board of Deputies of British Jews



The Board of Deputies of British Jews is the first port of call for the Government, the media and others

seeking to understand Jewish community interests and concerns. It comprises over 300 deputies directly elected by the synagogues and communal organisations they represent, from congregations to youth movements, and social welfare charities to regional councils. There are also a number of under-35 'observers', appointed by synagogues and organisations to supplement their representation.



The LJS has four representatives – Jonty Bromfield-Ngonyamah, Harriett Goldenberg, Karen Maxwell and Karen Newman, and Daniel Mautner is our young person 'observer'. Jonty Bromfield-Ngonyamah (*pictured*) explains the importance of our voices being heard. He writes, 'As Progressive

Jews, it is tempting to ask: what does the Board of Deputies do for us? Often, the Board espouses views that conflict with our values. This can be disheartening at times, but we must not separate ourselves from the community. It is no exaggeration to say that the Progressive voice at the Board is increasingly influential. LJS representatives have dedicated time to pioneer events for National Refugee Week, campaign for racial equality for Jews of colour, and young Jews who face antisemitism in Higher Education. The Board can and does do good work.'

Over to you!

Tell us about your favourite Jewish object

LJS News has plans for an article on Members' and Friends' favourite or special object of Jewish significance. It might be something that was given to you by family or friends, perhaps marking a significant Jewish occasion; perhaps something which belonged to you or your forbears long ago; or perhaps something you chose yourself as a symbol of your sense of belonging to the Jewish community.

Please say in a few sentences what the object is, why it is special to you and how it has a Jewish connection. If possible, please also send in a photo of the item.

Please send in your contribution to newsletter@ljs.org by Sunday 1 January 2023. We look forward to hearing from you!

Copy and ideas for the newsletter should be emailed to: newsletter@ljs.org

In line with LJS policy, the paper which LJS News is printed on is recycled.

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The LJS is a constituent synagogue of Liberal Judaism

liberal judaism

The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

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Veronica Thatcher

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Organist

Timothy Farrell

Education Co-ordinator

Debi Penhey

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