



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

## Memories mark our 25th birthday

The LJS has celebrated 25 years in its 'new' home with a *Shabbat* service that reunited some of the leading figures in the design and planning of the building.

**Rabbi David Goldberg** recalled the big decision confronting the LJS Council in the late 1980s – to spend £500,000 on propping up a bomb-damaged building (and hefty sums every five or ten years thereafter) or to invest £15 million in a new building.

'Council decided that it would be morally remiss to burden future generations with an ongoing liability, and it was our responsibility to grasp the nettle and re-build,' he said. He singled out for mention the Chair of Council, Sir Peter Lazarus, his second-in-command, Trevor Moross, and Neil Levitt, chair of the Design and



**25 years from completion: Jenny Nathan is joined by LJS architects Les Koski and Michael Schwartz, and Neil Levitt.**

Use Committee, for their key role in overseeing the project.

But an essential aspect of the re-building was that it was a community effort. Everyone had played their part. Many more people deserved to be mentioned for their contributions.

It was a unique privilege to have been involved in building a beautiful

sanctuary for as-yet unborn generations of future LJS members, said Rabbi Goldberg.

**Jenny Nathan** spoke of her memories of the last service held in the old building, before it was rebuilt – and spending most of the time watching the pigeons flying in and out of the gaping hole in the wall. ➔ [to back page](#)

November  
2016

Tishri-  
Cheshvan  
5777



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# Don't miss these star speakers

Don't miss Nosh 'n' Drosh – a chance to enjoy lunch after the *Shabbat* service (starting at around 13.00) in the company of an outstanding speaker.

Future meetings will include:

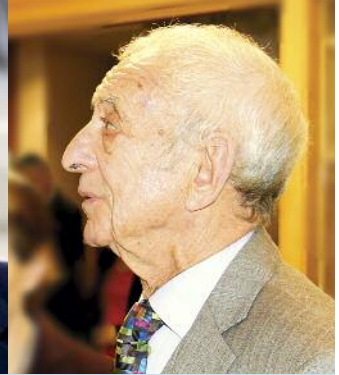
■ **Shabbat 26th November:**  
Vivien Rose

■ **Shabbat 10th December:**  
Rabbi David Goldberg will interview Lord Howard

■ **Shabbat 21st January:**  
Jeremy Lewison

■ **Shabbat 11th February:**  
Rabbi Harry Jacobi  
Rembrandt and the Jews

■ **Shabbat 11th March:**  
Bryan Diamond  
The life and activities of  
Claude Montefiore



**On the agenda for 10th December:**  
Michael Howard (left) interviewed by David Goldberg

■ **Shabbat 13th May:**  
Pam Fox  
The Jews of Golders Green

■ **Shabbat 10th June:**  
Joan Salter  
Vichy's Children

Nosh 'n' Drosh has proved to be one of our most successful innovations of the last two years. If you would you like to sponsor a meeting, please ask Martin Slowe or Rabbi Alexandra Wright for details.

## Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

**John Goldcrown**, father of Jane Brafman and Andrew Goldcrown

**David Kroll**, husband of Pamela and father of Leanda Englander, Judy Rose and Brynna Taylor-Kroll

**Norman Lazarus**, father of Roger, Claire, Ian and Janet

**Oliver Strong**, husband of Agniya, son of Steve and brother of Louis

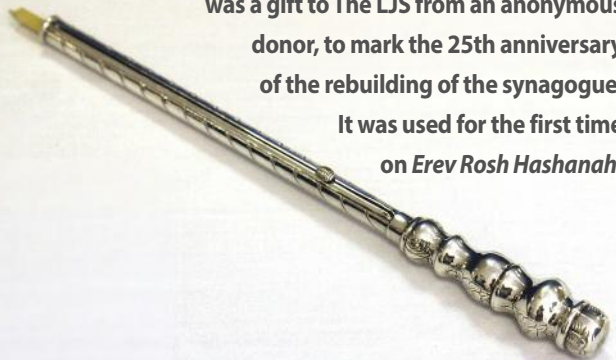
המקום ינחם אתכם  
בתוך שאר האבלים

*May God comfort you  
and all who mourn*

## Anniversary of rebuilding marked with gift of silver

This silver taper holder (in Hebrew, *sharvit*) was a gift to The LJS from an anonymous donor, to mark the 25th anniversary of the rebuilding of the synagogue.

It was used for the first time on Erev Rosh Hashanah.



# Shabbat and festival services: November

Friday evening services start at 18.45 and Shabbat morning services at 11.00.

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER	NOTES
Friday 28th October	René Pfertzel	Commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Venice Ghetto. Service followed by a <i>Chavurah</i> supper and talk by Rabbi Pfertzel on the Venice Ghetto
Shabbat 29th October <i>Bereshit</i>	René Pfertzel	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Alan Parmenter Commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Venice Ghetto
Friday 4th November	Rachel Benjamin	Co-led by Katie Delew <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 5th November <i>Noach</i>	Rachel Benjamin	<i>Bat Mitzvah</i> Katie Delew
Friday 11th November	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Michael Sokel <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Young adults supper
Shabbat 12th November <i>Lech Lcha</i>	Alexandra Wright	Michael Sokel <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Remembrance <i>Shabbat</i>
Friday 18th November	René Pfertzel	Co-led by Lukas Klein-Wassink
Shabbat 19th November <i>Va-yera</i>	René Pfertzel	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Lukas Klein-Wassink
Friday 25th November	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 26th November <i>Chayei Sarah</i>	Alexandra Wright	Blessing and Naming of Benjamin Wilson Service followed by Nosh 'n' Drosh with Vivien Rose: 'Let justice flow down...'
Friday 2nd December	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Seth Williams <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 3rd December <i>Toldot</i>	Alexandra Wright	Seth Williams <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Friday 9th December	René Pfertzel	Young adults dinner
Shabbat 10th December <i>Va-yetze</i>	Rachel Benjamin	Intergenerational Service Nosh 'n' Drosh – Lord Howard interviewed by Rabbi David J. Goldberg

**Shabbat morning services are streamed live via the internet. If you would like to follow a service on your computer or tablet, please phone the LJS office to get your user name and password.**

**The LJS's third Communal Baby Blessing will take place during the Shabbat morning service on 25th February 2017.**

**If you have a baby, toddler, child or teenager (even!) who was not named or blessed in synagogue and you would like to participate in a very special service with other families, please contact Naomi Richland: you can email her at [rabbispa@ljs.org](mailto:rabbispa@ljs.org)**

# The past preserved, but not fossilised



*Being prepared to take an unpopular line means the synagogue has often had to swim against the tide in ethical issues, says LJS Chairman Sue Head*

One of the eight 'Values' which the LJS formulated a few years ago is the following: 'The LJS encourages its members' contribution to the dynamic growth and development of Liberal Judaism in Europe, Israel and beyond'.

This 'value statement' expresses one of the underlying principles of Liberal Judaism, that of universalism. When first formulated by Claude Montefiore and the founders of British Liberal Judaism, the desire to universalise and spiritualise Judaism was seen as controversial.

Throughout our history, we have continued to incorporate progressive values and to change when we have thought it right; this has frequently led to our being controversial: for example, accepting patrilineal descent, gender-neutral language in prayer, the ordination of women, same-sex marriage.

Being prepared to take the unpopular line means we often have to stand against the mainstream in ethical issues.

In this, we go back long before the turn of the 20th century, back to the time of the Prophets, whose commitment to Judaism involved a belief in the universal values that should guide all ethical behaviour.

Today, we need to constantly remind ourselves that we are working to ensure that Judaism not only survives, but is a

vibrant and living force for good in our own lives and in that of the wider world. The key word in the Value statement above is 'dynamic'. Dynamic growth and development isn't about preserving our heritage in an unquestioning way: it is about looking at Judaism for the 21st century and asking what it is which makes a Jewish way of life now.

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**'We have continued to change when we have thought it right; this has frequently led to our being controversial...'**

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Claude Montefiore wrote, 'It is a great responsibility this, to be a Jew; and you can't escape from it. . . Ethically or religiously, we Jews can be and do nothing light heartedly!'

What is the ethical behaviour which is required of us as modern progressive Jews?

This is one of the challenges for the LJS Council in our monthly meetings. We have to deal with a range of practical considerations in our role as trustees: finance, the building, employees, but underlying it all is the future of progressive Judaism and the task that is set for us.

*Sue Head*

■ Because of the High Holy Days, Council's October meeting was postponed until after this newsletter went to print. I will report on the meeting in the next newsletter.

# 60 years of Jewish scholarship

## Alexandra Wright looks back at the history of distinguished rabbinical studies, uprooted from Berlin and successfully transplanted to London

**O**n 6th November, The LJS is hosting the 60th anniversary service to mark the founding of Leo Baeck College in 1956. What were the origins of the college and how did the vision and courage of a few refugee rabbis and scholars create one of the world's foremost rabbinical training colleges?

In February 1938, a young Rabbi, Werner van der Zyl, born in Schwerte, Germany in 1902, gave his last sermon at the Neue Synagogue, Oranienburgerstrasse in Berlin. Under the eyes of the Gestapo, his wife Anneliese recalled:

'Ernst Bloch's "Sacred Service" was given its first performance on this occasion. It was a service in commemoration of those who had died in the First World War. Surrounded by the Jewish veterans who had been awarded the Iron Cross for

bravery in that war, Werner said: "At that time we were celebrated for heroism in the service of this country. Now we are criminals." I stood trembling in the gallery. He could at any moment have been arrested.'

Rabbi van der Zyl was imprisoned shortly afterwards in Hanover, but managed to leave Germany and come to England in 1939 where he and his wife were interned in Kitchener Camp in Kent and then on the Isle of Man.

He had grown up attending the Liberal synagogue of Dortmund and graduated from the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin in 1929 before acquiring his

doctorate at Giessen University in 1931 and then holding positions as Rabbi at the Friedenstempel and Neue Synagogue in Berlin. The Hochschule for the 'Scientific Study of Judaism' opened in Berlin in 1872 and required its faculty to have university qualifications. It was

scarcely 60 years old when Rabbi van der Zyl graduated and was to survive Nazi Germany for a further 13 years before it was closed down by the Nazi government in 1942. It started with a roll of 12 students, including four women, but by 1921 there were 63 full time and 45 part-time students, including Christian clergy who were attracted by the intellectual calibre of the teaching. Its independence from religious bodies ensured its academic integrity, but a continual shortage of funds.



**Leo Baeck College 'a Jewish seminary of distinction for rabbis, teachers and non-Jewish scholars'**

Rabbi Charles Berg, one of the last students to be admitted to the Hochschule in 1934, recalls that the atmosphere was different from that of German universities where lecturers hardly knew their students. At the Hochschule, everyone knew everyone, and the principal, the eminent liturgical scholar, Professor Ismar Elbogen, took an interest in all his students. Within the walls of the college, there was security, but once outside, students were quickly aware of the grim realities around them. Rabbi Berg studied with Leo Baeck, Alexander Altmann, Max Wiener and Martin Buber, who was an occasional guest lecturer – some of the great figures of Jewish scholarship. ➔

One former student, Dr Ellen Littman, who became Bible lecturer at Leo Baeck College, recalls that Franz Kafka was a student at the Hochschule; and there was Regina Jonas, the first ever woman rabbi, whose ordination was unknown until after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

As the situation deteriorated in Nazi Germany, there was an attempt to move the Hochschule's students to the UK in 1939 with Leo Baeck as the principal of a research institute attached to one of the major universities. The plan was met with resistance and before any further developments could take place, war had broken out.

The discussions continued throughout the war and afterwards. It was clear that there needed to be a training college for rabbis in the UK, especially for those who had not been able to finish their studies in Germany. Rabbi Leo Baeck had remained with his people throughout the war and survived Theresienstadt, but it was really through the efforts of Rabbi van der Zyl, that a fund was established, honouring Leo Baeck on the occasion of his 80th birthday in 1953, 'for the purpose of endowing scholarships for the training of Ministers and Teachers.'

## Joint sponsor

Two students had already appeared to study at the new seminary early in September 1956 and there was an inauguration ceremony of the new Jewish Theological College, as it was called, in the Stern Hall of West London Synagogue.

Leo Baeck died shortly after the inauguration and the new college was renamed in his memory. Initially, it was backed by the Association of Synagogues in Great Britain, now the Movement for Reform Judaism, but in 1964 the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues, now Liberal Judaism, became a joint sponsor.

There was not always unanimity about how the college should be financed, nor whether it should become a residential seminary outside London or remain in London – housed, as it

was, at West London Synagogue until its move to the Sternberg Centre in 1982. But there was always agreement that students had to have the academic qualification of a university degree and that it required vision, courage and the willingness to take risks in order to perpetuate the academic legacy not only of the Hochschule, but of the highest form of Jewish scholarship.

## Women accepted

In the closing paragraph of an article to mark Leo Baeck College's 50th anniversary, 'The Origins of a Rabbinical College', Rabbi Magonet writes:

'In its first 50 years the college has grown far beyond the wildest dreams of those who helped found and develop it. Creating such a college at the time was a great risk and it needed people of vision to conceive of it and many more people to encourage and support it. It would be inappropriate to compare its achievements with that of the Hochschule, or its teachers with the remarkable scholars that taught in Berlin, the pioneers of our modern understanding of Judaism. Nevertheless, in a short 50 years a foundation has been laid and despite few resources the progressive Jewish movements of this country have given a new centre of Jewish learning to the world.'

As Leo Baeck College reaches its 60th anniversary, having accepted women for ordination, and providing a Jewish seminary of distinction for rabbis, teachers and non-Jewish scholars, I hope that as a synagogue we can continue our support of this remarkable institution and ensure its survival for the next 60 years and more.

■ Much of this piece is based on an article by Rabbi Jonathan Magonet, for which I am very grateful: 'From Artilleriestrasse to Upper Berkeley Street: The Origins of a Rabbinical College' in *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe*, Vol 39, No 1 (Spring 2006).

**Alexandra Wright**

# History and reminiscence construct a portrait of Jewish Golders Green

*Edward Cross reviews a new book which takes a closer look at the unfamiliar world just four miles down the road from the haunts of his childhood*

**G**olders Green? I knew it well! Lived there for my first 24 years. But in my loyal LJS family, religious identity and community lay four miles away down Finchley Road. Most of my classmates at Wessex Gardens Primary School disappeared to kosher dinners and after-school *cheder* at Dunstan Road Synagogue. Later, I went to Scouts at Alyth Gardens. But I entered those synagogues rarely; for friends' *barmitzvahs* or civic scouting events. So I lived among, but was not of, the Golders Green Jewish community.

## Dynamic narrative

As expected, there was much in Pam Fox's book of interest for me about those two synagogues and their developing identities, plus a tantalising glimpse of Liberal Judaism's failure to gain a foothold offered in the mid-30s, the opportunity instead passing to the Reform movement to establish Alyth Gardens. But much greater – and unexpected – interest lay in how the social structure has since evolved as Charedi and Israeli families moved in, widely enriching the social mix

well away from the comfortable-ish middle class I had known.

The book opens with a broad survey of Golders Green's entire Jewish settlement and population in migratory terms worthy of an Attenborough, and unfolds the parallel histories of the three main synagogues, Dunstan Road, Alyth, and the strictly orthodox 'Munks' of which last I knew little. The numerous smaller Haredi *stieblech* are also fully covered and brought to life. Each chapter is built on a solid foundation of well-supported historical fact and reported reminiscence; from this, Pam Fox succeeds in building a dynamic narrative placed convincingly in the wider social, economic and political context.

Later chapters outlining the shopping, educational, business and leisure activities of the inhabitants show (not surprisingly) more difficulty extracting a coherent dynamic thread from a fairly dense factual base, but there is much to learn and enjoy in each.

Personally, I would have valued rather more description of the building developments, open

spaces, and idiosyncratic synagogal and commercial architecture, for these also reflect the nature of a community; but this is expressly a social history and not a Jewish guide book.

## Vivid personalities

Likewise, of the many individuals mentioned, few quite stand out with the vivid personalities their achievements imply; one exception is Rabbi Munk whose name still attaches to the *Beth Hamedrash* he founded and served with obvious warmth and energy for decades.

Ultimately the star is the community itself (or communities, plural – you must choose). As Pam says, the book makes clear its enormous strengths and durability, and this she certainly brings to vivid life. So this book is an enjoyable and interesting read, and will long be dipped into for its wealth of fact and informative notes.

■ *The Jewish Community of Golders Green: a social history* by Pam Fox is published by the History Press, price £16.99.

## Margaret Rigal: a powerful sense of moral responsibility

Margaret Rigal who has died at the age of 83, was a third generation Liberal Jew. Her grandfather, Samuel Lazarus, was one of the early members of the synagogue.

After school at St Paul's, Margaret studied Social Science at Bedford College, then worked for the Jewish Welfare Board in Stepney and Stamford Hill.

She and George were married in 1955. Their marriage was a real partnership of affection and mutual respect. Somewhat frugal, spare in the treats or luxuries they afforded themselves, they shared a powerful sense of moral responsibility, not only in charitable

giving, but in active campaigns and organisations.

The LJS under its first rabbis was an inspiring place for Margaret. The influence of her parents, the correspondence classes she did with Miss Moos – a role she took over at the age of 18, teaching generations of children who were unable to attend religion school for various reasons – gave her a sense of rootedness.

From the mid-seventies onwards, the focus of Margaret's voluntary work was with refuseniks in the Soviet Union. With the founding of the LJS's Soviet Jewry Committee in 1977, Margaret put her heart and soul into the Women's

Campaign for Soviet Jewry – the 35's as it was known. She joined demonstrations and marches, visited and adopted refusenik families, sending messages of support and keeping in touch with them long after they had left for Israel or America. She visited the Soviet Union three times, was refused a visa as many times again, and was arrested only once here in London, when she chained herself to the Foreign Office railings. Margaret never wanted to be the public face of Soviet Jewry, but behind the scenes, she put the organisational structure into place for the 35's and campaigned doggedly until *glasnost* opened the doors for

Soviet Jews to leave.

Margaret was non-judgmental (unless you made a grammatical error or were a badly behaved child), enjoyed the theatre and was an omnivorous reader. She was a constant attendee at adult education classes at the LJS, unfailingly and movingly supportive of many programmes in the synagogue including Jewish-Christian and other dialogue.

Her life was characterised by her devotion, wisdom and understanding, a deep sense of moral responsibility and care for others, generosity and intelligence, a fierce independence and love of learning.

## Zvi Schloss: compassion, strength of purpose and a fine intellect

With the death of Zvi Schloss at the age of 91, a significant chapter of Jewish history and testimony has come to an end – though the obligation to be a witness to our history and our destiny continues with the generations who follow. History and memory were of great importance to Zvi, but what also mattered were our actions and words, the difference we make to others through our conduct.

Zvi was born in Ingolstadt, a small town in Bavaria. After the rise of Nazism, the young Zvi had a difficult time as one of few Jews in his school, and yet his own painful experiences evoked in him a deep

compassion and generosity that remained with him throughout his life. His father was imprisoned in Dachau for three years and released only on condition that the family leave the country within six weeks. The family left for Palestine and settled in Haifa. Zvi learnt Ivrit and attended school for two years before starting to work as an apprentice at the Feuchtwanger Bank. Zvi continued to educate himself, taking a correspondence course in commerce through London University.

After service in the army during Israel's war of independence, Zvi came to London to work for

a stockbroker's firm and to continue his studies. After his marriage to Eva in 1952, Zvi worked at Strauss Turnbull until he was head-hunted for Bank Leumi. He continued to study – the first part-time, external student to receive a first class honours degree from the LSE. It was a mark not only of his strength of purpose, but of his fine intellect.

Zvi had always taken family members and friends under his wing, supporting and befriending; he had the capacity to form special relationships with individuals. There was a great kindness and gentleness in him that drew people to him. He became

involved in Edgware and District Reform Synagogue's befriending programme, visiting individuals, offering to do tax returns, helping people who were on their own, perhaps following a bereavement and who had never had to look after their financial affairs. He was meticulous in all his affairs, his financial acumen and knowledge complemented by his love of languages. When out at a restaurant, he would often ask the waiters where they were from and engage them in conversation in their own language.

He was in general quite shy and found small-talk difficult,

but could become animated about religion, Israel and finance. He had a great sense of humour and a gift for writing limericks and poetry for birthdays and special occasions.

Although he seemed reserved and undemonstrative in expressing his emotions, he was gentle, kind, compassionate and immensely generous. Proud of his Jewish and Israeli identity, he understood that what is of real importance in life, are not our own achievements, but how we are with each other – how we defend the vulnerable and weak and how we care for our planet.

The service to commemorate *Kristallnacht* will take place at The LJS on

**Wednesday  
9th November**

followed by the

**Lily Montagu Lecture,  
by Professor Markus  
Bockmuehl,  
Dean Ireland Professor  
in the Exegesis of  
Holy Scripture  
at Oxford University  
and Professor of  
Biblical and Early  
Christian Studies**

18.30 Refreshments

19.00 *Kristallnacht* Service to commemorate the Pogrom of 9th-10th November 1938

19.45 Lily Montagu Lecture

**LEO BAECK COLLEGE  
60th anniversary service**

**will take place at 15.00  
on Sunday 6th November  
at The LJS.**

**All welcome.**





# at the **LJS**

**Classes in Judaism and Hebrew**  
**Sukkot term 5777/2016**

**Tuesday 11.15-12.30**

**Until 13th December**

## **Tuesday Texts**

This friendly group is led by our Rabbis, Dr Dov Softi and Susannah Alexander as we study biblical texts and commentaries and enjoy sessions on Jewish art. Our discussions are lively and relevant to contemporary issues. New members are most welcome. Biscuits are provided.

**Tuesday 19.00-20.00**

**Until 13th December**

## **Classical Hebrew**

### **Beginners with Susannah Alexander**

This class is designed for beginners who want to learn to read and decipher the prayer book. No previous knowledge of Hebrew required. Three-term course.

### **Next steps in biblical Hebrew with Sally Gold**

This class is for those who feel they are able to cope with guided reading, at their own pace, of simple prayer book and biblical Hebrew, and who now feel ready to gradually build their reading skills and their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar at an unhurried and manageable pace. The class will allow plenty of time to gain, revise and consolidate through the use of texts and some simple exercises which are geared to progressive understanding and confidence. Students will also be introduced to the use of dictionaries and other tools, with a view to being able to try, if they would like to, some independent preparation of simple texts.

### **Difficult texts of the *Torah* with Alexandra Wright**

Now in its third year, this class is looking at some of the more challenging texts of the *Torah*, building on the grammar and vocabulary we have learnt over the past two years.

If you are not sure which level you should pursue, please speak to Susannah, Sally or Alexandra.

**Tuesday 20.00-21.00****Until 13th December****Exploring Judaism****Tutor: Rabbi Rachel Benjamin**

Exploring Judaism is for people who wish they knew more about Judaism or would like to brush up on their Jewish knowledge. It is for family members, who are not Jewish, who would like to understand more about Judaism. It is also an essential programme of instruction for people choosing Judaism, by conversion. Class members are encouraged to read materials which will be made available online during the course of the year. The course is designed to offer knowledge about aspects of Judaism, to encourage practical experiences of Liberal Judaism and space for personal reflection within the group.

**Tuesdays 20.00-21.00****8th, 15th, 22nd November and 6th December****Judaism and Art****Dr Dov Softi and Rabbi René Pfoertzel**

The second commandment prohibits the representation of any living creatures, and yet Jews have a long, loving relationships with art. In this series, we will consider what our tradition says about art, how it has been absorbed into our religious life, and we will consider some Jewish and Israeli artists.

**Shabbat 9.45-10.45****Until 10th December****Learning from Texts with Bernie Bulkin****Half term: 29th October**

This year the class is going to tackle the subject of creation and cosmogony in the Bible and Jewish writings. Our purpose in focusing on this one familiar story is to explore in depth the nature of *Torah* commentary through the centuries. We will look at Talmudic rabbinical comments, Philo, Maimonides, Saadia, and, in most detail, Rashi. Time permitting, we will also look at some more modern writers such as Eliezer Berkovits.

We also do some *parashah* study at the beginning of most classes, usually based on commentary of Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg and Nehama Leibowitz. No prior knowledge required, just an inquiring mind, a willingness to read material handed out in advance, and more or less regular attendance and participation.

**Hebrew and Yiddish lessons from the Spiro Ark**

A variety of daytime and evening Hebrew and Yiddish classes are run at the LJS by the educational organisation Spiro Ark on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Levels range from 'Beginners' and 'Not quite beginners' to 'Intermediate/Advanced'. For full details of lesson times and charges, please visit [www.spiroark.org/classes](http://www.spiroark.org/classes) or phone 020 7289 6321.

Half term: 29th October

**Beginners' Hebrew with Naomi Brightwell**

Naomi Brightwell's class uses Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders* to help complete beginners decode the squiggles and start tackling what they've always been afraid of. With a little bit of grammar, a sprinkling of vocabulary and plenty of off-topic conversations on Jewish food, the structure of the liturgy and anything else that helps us have fun while learning. Absolutely no previous knowledge required. Previous students have even gone on to confidently lead *Shabbat* morning services.

**Improvers' Hebrew with David Strang**

This course follows Naomi Brightwell's class. We will consolidate the knowledge that students have from the beginners' class and will aim to ensure that by the end of the year, they are able to read key prayers from *Siddur Lev Chadash* and passages from the *Torah*. We will also start to look at the structure of biblical Hebrew, so that students can begin to understand the meaning of the texts they are reading. All adults welcome; basic Hebrew reading required.

**Intermediate Hebrew with Nitza Spiro**

This is a group that wishes to increase fluency and participate in the service, not only from the congregation, but from the *bimah* as well. If you know your letters and want to keep up your reading, don't mind having a go at reading Hebrew in the service, then feel free to join this class.

**The LJS Annual Pre-Chanukkah****Interfaith Tea**

will take place at 16.30 on

**Wednesday 14th December**

All welcome

*Please bring friends, neighbours and contact local schools, churches, mosques and temples to encourage them to come to this wonderful celebration of faiths.*

**Sunday 5th February from 10.00-16.30**

**HEBREW-A-THON**

- Learn Hebrew from scratch
- Improve your reading
- Learn a bit of grammar
- Add to your vocabulary
- Study a text in depth
- Speak *Ivrit* (modern Hebrew)

£25 including lunch

LJS COMEDY NIGHT

# BANTER & BAGELS

Sunday 27th November 2016

at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue

Fundraising for the LJS Kitchen project



Headline Act:

## Dominic Holland

One of the country's most respected stand-up comedians.

Compere:

## Philip Simon

Jewish Comedian of the Year 2015

Last Minute Comedy Comedian of the Year 2015

## Bennett Arron

Award-winning writer and stand up comedian

## Sindu Vee

BBC New Comedian of the Year Finalist 2016

Funnywomen Finalist 2013

\*acts subject to change

Supper from 7pm,

Comedy acts on stage from 8pm

Tickets: £25 and £20 for 16 to 21s

(includes bagel supper)

Please note that content of show is not suitable for under 16s

Wine, beer and soft drinks will be available at the Cash Bar.

Raffle £5 for 10 tickets, £10 for 15

Tickets can be purchased either at: <http://banterandbagels.eventbrite.co.uk>

or via the LJS: call the finance office on 0207 432 1290 to make a card payment or send your cheque made payable to:

**The Liberal Jewish Synagogue**

for the attention of Naomi Richland, The LJS Comedy Night 28 St. John's Wood Road NW8 7HA.

Please include number and type of tickets required, email address and contact name so that ticket application can be confirmed.

## VIDEO AND TEA

From 13.30-16.30 on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Just come along – no need to book. Soup on arrival then a DVD (film classics, musicals, etc) followed by a delicious tea including home-made

ice-cream. Donation of £2.

**25th November** *The Court Jester*  
Danny Kaye plays kind-hearted entertainer Hawkins who disguises himself as the legendary king of jesters.

Dates for the start of 2017:

**25th January**

**22nd February**

**22nd March**



## COMMUNITY CARE

Aviva Shafritz, our Community Care Co-ordinator, is ready to help with difficulties experienced, not only by our older members, such as illness and provision of care, but also across the spectrum of life.

Aviva has access to social services, hospital social workers and many caring organisations, both local and Jewish. You can contact her at [a.shafritz@ljs.org](mailto:a.shafritz@ljs.org) or 020 7286 5181.



## RESTAURANT TUESDAY

Restaurant Tuesday meets on the third Tuesday of every month and is an informal lunch club for the more elderly members of the congregation.

Please let the office know if you are coming for the first time or if you are a regular and cannot come (020 7286 5181). Lunch starts at 12.30 and costs £4.



## BRIDGE CLUB



The Bridge Club meets from 14.00 to 17.00 every Monday in the Assembly

Hall upstairs at The LJS.

Anyone with any knowledge of the game is most welcome. This is a social afternoon rather than a competitive one. There is a friendly atmosphere and helpful suggestions. The cost (including tea or coffee) is £2. New members are welcome: for more details leave a message for Neil Levitt or William Falk at 020 7286 5181.



## ASYLUM SEEKERS DROP-IN

The LJS Drop-in for asylum seeker families will be on Sunday 13th November and Sunday 11th December from 14.00-16.00. Volunteers are needed from 12.00. If you are interested in volunteering once a month or a few times a year, please contact Rabbi Alexandra Wright ([a.wright@ljs.org](mailto:a.wright@ljs.org)) for details. We especially need younger members of the community to

help us with some of the heavier work.



## ART GROUP

Informal art group for both beginners and experienced artists. The class meets at 11.00 every Monday, except during Jewish festivals and Bank Holidays. For more details call Paul Podolsky: 020 8346 2270.



## CELEBRATE WITH A KIDDUSH

To arrange a *kiddush* to mark a special occasion, please contact Naomi Richland on 020 7432 1283 or email her at [rabbispa@ljs.org](mailto:rabbispa@ljs.org)



## KEEP IN TOUCH TEA PARTY

The Keep in Touch Group is holding a tea party from 15.15 to 17.00 on Sunday 20th November at The LJS. Come along to catch up with old friends and enjoy a delicious tea. If you can come, email [communitycare@ljs.org](mailto:communitycare@ljs.org) or call the LJS office (020 7432 1281).



## ARTICLES BY PROGRESSIVES

The *Jewish News* has a page of opinion pieces and other commentaries by progressive rabbis and congregants. Please pick up a copy when you are next at the synagogue.

# Young LJS

We wish these young members of The LJS a very happy birthday in November:

Kaila Brooks  
William Buck  
Zoe Cohen  
Samuel Cooper  
Lily Crane-Newman  
Marina Dagtoglou  
Henry Davis  
Floriana Davis  
Nina Epstein Williams  
Seth Epstein Williams  
Sidney Gruber  
Amy Kay  
Helena Kondak

Rebecca Lawson  
Katherine Leventhal  
Matilda Leventhal  
Alessa Lindbland Hill  
Jack Malawer  
Noah Morgan  
Daniel Nielsen  
Natalie Ohana-Cole  
Tigist Silbiger  
Isaac Wilfond  
Abe Wolchover  
Yahel Yaroshevski

*On Sunday 27th November, we will be supporting Mitzvah Day as usual by collecting and wrapping books and gifts. For more information, please contact Rabbi René Pfertzel: [r.pfertzel@ljs.org](mailto:r.pfertzel@ljs.org)*

## TINY TOTS at the LJS

*Do you have little ones aged between 0 and 4?*

Please bring them to the LJS on *Shabbat* mornings

**5th, 12th, 19th, 26th November**

**3rd and 10th December**

for a delightful session of songs, stories, drawing and *kiddush*.



Activities for tiny ones with their parents, grandparents and carers.

The nursery is available every *Shabbat* for children to play or read.

Please email [education@ljs.org](mailto:education@ljs.org) to be added to the Tiny Tots circulation list.

## The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

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**Senior Rabbi**  
Alexandra Wright

**Rabbi Emeritus**  
David J Goldberg OBE

**Rabbis**  
Rachel Benjamin  
René Pfertzel

**Chairman of Council**  
Sue Head

**Head of Rimon Religion School**  
Dov Softi

**Nursery Head Teacher**  
Caroline Villiers

**Executive Director**  
Caroline Bach

**Community Care Co-ordinator**  
Aviva Shafritz

**Director of Music**  
Cathy Heller-Jones

**Organist**  
Tim Farrell

In case of bereavement:  
In office hours, ring 020 7432 1298  
At other times, ring 020 8958 2112 (Calo's)

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# Scenes from a kiddush

Some of the faces gathered to celebrate The LJS building's 25th birthday (and Alexandra Wright's 30 years as a rabbi... and David Goldberg's 45 years as a rabbi)



⇒ A lot had changed in the intervening years, she said. Apart from enjoying the beautiful new building, there had been an enormous growth in community activities, with not just the appointment of a Community Care Co-ordinator but the recruitment of large numbers of volunteers who now ran activities including Keep In Touch, Bereavement Support, Tea and Video, Singing for the Mind, Restaurant Tuesday, the

Asylum Seekers Drop-In and the Out and About club, which would be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year.

**Rita Adler**, LJS Chairman when the new building was completed, remembered the inspiring part played by Rabbi Alexandra Wright in the planning process. Then, following her appointment as Senior Rabbi, she had embraced opportunities for change. Rabbi Wright – who is currently celebrating her 30th year as a rabbi – had kept a clear focus on the future of the community.


'I feel that she has changed The LJS into a more caring and involved community', Rita said. 'We may be less fashionable, but new and younger members have joined. I think we all benefit with an inspiring leader who enthusiastically

teaches young and old.'

**Bob Kirk**, former LJS President, reflected on the development of Liberal Judaism since 1899 when Lily Montagu 'looked about her and worried about the future of Judaism'. Together with Claude Montefiore and Israel Abrahams she had founded the Jewish Religious Union, which had established The LJS. He reflected on the contribution of successive rabbis since that time; on the changes of liturgy and the publication of new prayer-books; on the blossoming of social service and the development of education.

'I think if Lily Montagu were to come in now and look round this sanctuary she would be reassured and pleased – not least to see Rabbis Alex, Rachel and René leading our community into the future.'

The LJS is a constituent synagogue of Liberal Judaism



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