



September
2016

Av-Ellul
5776

Jan and Eva Ruiz-Daum with their *shofarot*, getting ready to practise blowing for *Rosh Hashanah*. Jan has previously blown the *shofar* in our Family Services and at the end of *Yom Kippur* in the Sanctuary, while Eva has blown the *shofar* for the little children in the Gan and Tiny Tots services on *Rosh Hashanah*. With the retirement of Gerard Geneen, who has been our *Ba'al Tekiah* for many

years in the Sanctuary, Jan will now blow the *shofar* in the Sanctuary on the morning of *Rosh Hashanah*, while his sister Eva – the LJS's first female *Ba'alat Tekiah* – will sound the *shofar* in the Family Service.

Our grateful thanks and appreciation to Gerard for his many years of service as *Ba'al Tekiah* at The LJS.

● High Holy Days: see pages 3 and 16.

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How do you feel about wearing a tallit?

Is it a key part of your religious experience?
Or a distraction from the real business of prayer?

Find out what more LJS members have to say in the second part of our series, starting on page 6.



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Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Eva Abrahams, wife of Peter Abrahams and mother of Guy

June Ansell, wife of Richard and mother of Melanie and Andrew
Essex

Mary Jane Frampton, wife of Michael, mother of Sarah and Jonathan, and sister of Margaret Heilbron

Patricia Gafsen, mother of Martin, Juliette and Debbie

Malcolm Goldman, father of Naomi

Henry Grant, father of Marion and Peter

David Kay, brother of Hella Gordon

Brenda Nathanson, wife of Daniel, mother of Esther and Boaz

Anthony Pool, father of Suzanne and Ralph

Zvi Hans Schloss, husband of Eva and father of Caroline, Jackie and Sylvia

Clive Winston, former Chairman of the ULPS (now Liberal Judaism), father of Penny and Wendy

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר האבלים

May God comfort you and all who mourn

Thank you

to **Sybil Gottlieb** for her donation to the LJS flower fund in memory of her sister Betty Epstein and her father Samuel Epstein; and to **Joany Weinberg** and **Edi Fuchs** for their donation to the fund in memory of their parents, Carol and Morgot Weinberg

Congratulations

to **Anita Schwartz** who is now a Great Great Aunt (to Noah, her nephew, Lawrence Denton's new grandson)

TERROR, TRAUMA AND TRAGEDY

Come to the book launch at The LJS
at 19.00 on Wednesday 19th October

What happens when a tragedy occurs – a terrorist attack or a personal trauma? How does it affect our faith? What does Judaism have to say to those who are victims and to those who are witnesses? And where does God fit into it all?

Rabbis David Mitchell, Jonathan Romain and Alexandra Wright – who have all just contributed to the book on the subject – will be speaking at The LJS to launch the book. The book costs £9.99 but will be on sale to LJS members for £5.

Shabbat and festival services: September

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

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER	NOTES
Friday 2nd September	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Dahlia Levin <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
<i>Shabbat</i> 3rd September <i>Re'eh</i>	Alexandra Wright	Dahlia Levin <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
Friday 9th September	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Benji Mencer <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Young Adults' <i>Chavurah</i> supper at 19.45
<i>Shabbat</i> 10th September <i>Shof'tim</i>	Alexandra Wright	Benji Mencer <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> First day of Rimón term
Friday 16th September	René Pfertzel	Co-led by Zach Bueno <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> This service will be in French and Hebrew
<i>Shabbat</i> 17th September <i>Ki Tetze</i>	René Pfertzel	Zach Bueno <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> in the Sanctuary <i>Koleinu</i> Service in the John Rayner Room with <i>Torah</i> readers Michael Romain and Alan Parmenter
Friday 23rd September	Rachel Benjamin	
<i>Shabbat</i> 24th September <i>Ki Tavo</i>	Rachel Benjamin	'Community building and building community' Celebrating 25 years since we moved into our new synagogue, and some other special anniversaries
Saturday 24th September 19.45	<i>Selichot</i> Service	The service will be preceded by a short concert of violin music played by LJS member, Alan Parmenter accompanied by pianist Rufus Frowde
Sunday 25th September 11.00	Annual Memorial Service	The service will be held at The Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Pound Lane, NW10 2HG. All welcome
Friday 30th September	Alexandra Wright	
<i>Shabbat</i> 1st October <i>Nitzavim</i>	Alexandra Wright	
Sunday 2nd October <i>Erev Rosh Hashanah</i> 18.45	René Pfertzel	
Monday 3rd October <i>Rosh Hashanah</i> 10.30	Rachel Benjamin Alexandra Wright	Sanctuary Family Service
Friday 7th October	Alexandra Wright	
<i>Shabbat</i> 8th October <i>Shabbat Shuvah/Vayeilech</i>	Danny Rich	
Tuesday 11th October <i>Kol Nidre</i> 19.15	Alexandra Wright	
Wednesday 12th October <i>Yom Kippur</i> 10.30	David J. Goldberg Rachel Benjamin	Morning service in the Sanctuary Afternoon service in the Sanctuary

Shabbat morning services are now 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.

For the full list of High Holy Day services please see the information booklet

The LJS: an inclusive community

*'For my house will be called
a house of prayer for all peoples.'
(Isaiah 56:7)*

The LJS has a wonderful Vision Statement, which is more than just a set of words, but an expression of our underlying beliefs and our drive to make a better future.

As we approach the start of the new Jewish Year, it is a good time to remind ourselves of it. This is our vision:

'The Liberal Jewish Synagogue is an inclusive and egalitarian community of Members and Friends, staff and volunteers who seek to sustain and develop the Jewish people's sacred task to build a just and compassionate world that is based on our commitment and responsibility to each other and to the global environment, and to enrich and deepen the uniqueness of our identity in a context of shared spirituality and creativity, intellectual challenge and meaningful relationships.'

Our Vision was developed a few years ago and many members of the Council and the community, led by the rabbis, contributed their thoughts.

At the heart of our Vision, is our belief that, as Jews, we have a purpose and that is to work towards a world where the rights of all are respected



and treasured. We believe that we are working towards building a better and more just world-wide society.

Our LJS community itself aims to be a mirror of this belief: we are inclusive and our community of members, friends, staff and volunteers are all welcomed and treated equally. Isaiah's words at the top of the page underlie this.

The importance of ethics has always been at the heart of Judaism. In the eighth century BCE the prophets (Amos, Hosea, Isaiah) gave new emphasis to the fundamental of right moral behaviour. They railed against the Israelites who were happily visiting the Temple with their sacrifices, but treating the poor badly and cheating their customers and business partners. The

Israelites thought they had fulfilled their religious responsibilities, but they had not.

Amos wrote, 'Let justice roll down like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream' (5:24).

The prophets emphasised the need for righteous conduct and this has remained at the core of Judaism. It is encapsulated in the LJS Vision, as is each of us having a personal responsibility to take part in this shared task. It can also involve following the unpopular line and the LJS rabbis, and members of the community, have frequently taken that stance. Rabbi John Rayner, z"l, wrote that it is 'better to be few and right than many and wrong'.

Judaism has never stood still and Liberal Progressive Judaism is a dynamic learning community. This is part of how we, the members of The LJS, 'enrich and deepen the uniqueness of our identity in a context of... intellectual challenge'.

As we approach the High Holy Days, I wonder what are your views on our Vision and how we can engage our members more in the values which are contained in it and help to shape the life of the congregation.

Sue Head

Martin proposed as new President

It has been two years since Bob Kirk – a wise and caring, conscientious and dedicated elder statesman of our community – wore the mantle as President of The LJS – supported by his wife Ann.

Since that time, the Council felt that it wanted to wait to appoint a new President until the right person came along. Now is that time and I am delighted to commend to you the nomination of Martin Slowe as the next President of the synagogue.

At our last Council meeting in July, our Chairman Sue Head asked me to speak for a few minutes about Martin and these words from the Mishnah came immediately to mind:

‘There are three crowns: the crown of *Torah*, the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingship. And the crown of a good name outweighs all of them.’ (Avot 4:13)

‘The crown of *Torah*’: In relation to this, Leviticus (19:32) teaches, ‘You shall honour the face of the elder’. Martin is a man of wisdom and knowledge; a man who reads and studies, regularly attends classes at The LJS and who initiates opportunities for learning at the synagogue. In

the field of Jewish learning, he has enabled others to learn and understands the importance of bringing together people both socially and for intellectual and other purposes. He is a man who is utterly committed to Liberal Judaism and wants Judaism to thrive in its most ethical and moral form.

‘The crown of priesthood’: In relation to this, Exodus (19:6) teaches, ‘You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation’. Martin is a man of spirituality and devotion; he cares deeply for our services – *Shabbat*, festivals and other occasions when services are held by other organisations. He is always first to offer assistance. Prayer is important to him, the decorum of services, but also hospitality and welcome. He has been and remains a magnificently organised Chief Steward for High Holy Days and other significant services.

‘The crown of kingship’: Martin is a quiet leader, a peacemaker, whose guidance and friendship is valued deeply throughout the congregation.

‘The crown of a good name’: A ‘good name’ refers to the hidden deeds of loving

kindness undertaken quietly by Martin – visiting the sick, elderly and frail, helping with their affairs, offering quiet advice in his own diffident, yet practical way. The ‘crown of a good name’ also refers to Martin’s *yichus* – his family history. Martin’s father, Malcolm Slowe (*zichrono livrachah*) was President of the ULPS, his mother, Patricia (*zichronah livrachah*), Chairman of the LJS Women’s Society. Martin too sat on the ULPS Development Committee; he has had a lifelong involvement in the LJS. Above all, Martin is a great unifier and there is no one more suited to be appointed as The LJS’s new President.

It gives me great pleasure to commend his nomination as President of The LJS and to invite you to a general meeting at 18.45 on Thursday 8th September to support his nomination.

Annual Memorial Service at the Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Pound Lane

**at 11.00 on
Sunday 25th September**

Please join members of The LJS and other congregations for a service in memory of loved ones who have died this past year and those who were laid to rest in past years.

**The LJS is hosting an interfaith event on the
refugee crisis with surprise speakers from
10.30-12.00 on Monday 12th September**

Fringe benefits...

All LJS members are equal, says Rabbi Alexandra Wright – though when it comes to wearing a *tallit*, some members are apparently more equal than others

Who should wear a *tallit*? In the *Shema* (Numbers 15:37-41) and in Deuteronomy 22:12, the commandment to attach fringes to the corners of the Israelites' garments is expressed in the masculine plural. But this is ambiguous – for it could be addressed only to males or to both genders.

The Talmud implies that both men and women attached *tzitzit* (fringes) to the corners of their garments, stating that everyone, including women, is obligated (Menachot 43a). However, a statement by Rabbi Shimon releases women from this *mitzvah* because it is a positive, time-bound *mitzvah*, implying that if women were to accept the obligations of some *mitzvot* to be performed at certain times, they might interfere with other duties in the home!

The codifiers of Jewish law do not prevent women from wearing a *tallit*, although they do not encourage it. Moses Isserles warns women against putting on a show of 'haughtiness or pride in their piety' if they do wear a *tallit*, while Epstein, one of the foremost orthodox responsa scholars of the 20th century, argues that 'It is not fitting for a woman to wear *tzitzit*...' It was this kind of reaction to the visibility of a *tallit* on women that made it quite difficult, and still makes it awkward, for women to take upon themselves this particular *mitzvah*.

For decades, the obligation to wear a *tallit* at The LJS was only on those men who were leading or participating in the services on the *bimah*. In the congregation, men did not generally wear a *tallit* or cover their heads. That has slowly changed. More people, men and women, are now covering their heads and wearing a *tallit* in the congregation. On the *bimah*, girls and boys are required to wear a *tallit* for their *Bar* or *Bat*

Mitzvah, Kabbalat Torah students all wear a *tallit* (and used to make their own as part of the KT course) and some women choose to wear a *tallit* when they are called up to perform a *mitzvah*.

The freedom to choose whether to wear a *tallit*, or indeed *kippah*, while praying in the congregation, is important in Liberal Judaism. We want people to feel comfortable, but at the same time to be informed and knowledgeable about why they choose to wear or not wear a *tallit*. In recent decades, the Services Committee (now the Avodah Group), has documented and discussed dress on the *bimah*. Men are required to wear a *kippah* and *tallit* on the *bimah*. Since 2000, both men and women were required to cover their heads when on the *bimah*. But that is as far as our egalitarianism has gone. Women taking part in a service are still not required to wear a *tallit* – as the 'Decisions Document' says, 'It is in order for ladies to wear a *tallit* if they so desire'. If we are truly an egalitarian community, should we not apply those values of equality to the requirements and expect women to wear a *tallit* if we expect it of men? Before we make this decision, there probably needs to be some learning about the origins and meaning of wearing a *tallit*. Doing any *mitzvah* for the first time can feel awkward, as though somehow it doesn't belong to us. Change is difficult, but taking the first step can be liberating.

Perhaps in an age of scepticism and disbelief, when the art of prayer eludes us too easily, wearing a *tallit* is a way of enfolding us within a quiet and focused space to be able to address the deepest part of ourselves, which some people call God.



I grew up going to synagogue every week, sitting beside my father in the front row. I'd twiddle the rather tangled tassels on his *tallit* and rummage in his suit pocket for the sweets he regularly kept there. It was all very relaxing, soothing and occupied me as a small child. But I didn't think any more of it.

Even though I was one of the first girls to have a *Bat Mitzvah* for which I wore a *kippah*, wearing a *tallit* wasn't on the radar. In fact, I don't remember the first woman I saw wear a *tallit*. It wasn't til I was in my 20s that I was given a *tallit* as a gift.

That first time I put it on is a moment etched in my memory. Quite simply I felt like a person – as a friend of mine would say, 'a proper person'. I would add 'a proper Jewish adult'. At the same time, it felt daring and somewhat controversial.

Fast-forward a couple of decades, and it's interesting to notice how I feel about wearing a *tallit* now. In the context of The LJS my minority status is twofold, as not all

'Paradoxically, I feel both rather exposed, particularly as a woman, wearing a *tallit* – and simultaneously cocooned in a wrapping of centuries of Jews at prayer'

adult men wear *tallit*, and even fewer women, but there's a 'live and let live' attitude that leaves



me feeling comfortable and free to do as I choose. At the same time, I'm sometimes curious about how I'm regarded, and what lies behind the choices others have made.

The one thing I find missing from The LJS is the powerful experience of being part of a sea of *tallitot*. There are other

synagogue settings where I feel I blend in more, and yet other settings where it's definitely stretching the local *minhag* for me to present myself in my *tallit*.

But I made a promise to myself when I first began wearing a *tallit*, that it was not a fashion accessory which I could choose to wear or not, so I wear a *tallit*, whether or not it's comfortable for others.

The atmosphere does affect me, but mostly I have found that wearing a prayer shawl is a way of making the demarcation between that time of communal prayer and other times. It is both a public and a very private, personal act: paradoxically, I feel both rather exposed, particularly as a woman, wearing a *tallit* – and simultaneously cocooned in a wrapping of centuries of Jews at prayer.

Harriett Goldenberg

Whilst I am a fairly regular attendee at Saturday services I never wear a *tallit* nor cover my head; I accept that it is now an LJS requirement that if one is invited onto the *bimah* then one should wear a *tallit* and a *kippah*. While in the 16th century Jewish law made it compulsory, we are now in the 21st century – and Liberal Jews.

I feel it is quite unnecessary to wear a *tallit* while attending a service at The LJS. The very

fact of entering the sanctuary with its Israeli stone walls, the everlasting light and bronze gates to the ark – for me this is enough to 'separate my experience from everyday life' as quoted by Samantha Cozens (July LJS News).

I will continue to attend Saturday services without covering my head or wrapping myself in a *tallit* but if called onto the *bimah* will accept the LJS ruling.

Neil Levitt

'The very fact that, as a woman, I own and wear my own tallit makes me a proud advocate of the Liberal Jewish values of equality and reinvention of ancient practice in the modern climate'

I first wore my *tallit* standing on the *bimah* during my admission ceremony to Judaism a few years ago. It gave me a great sense of comfort and pride to wrap myself in this age-old garment as a new member of the Jewish community; and its weight on my shoulders brought an added sense of gravitas and commitment to that very special evening. I have since worn my *tallit* regularly at services and festivals and, every time do, I am reminded of the promises that I made when converting to Judaism and their importance to me. In this way my *tallit* carries a deep and personal symbolism and serves to reinforce the very special bond that I created when I became a Liberal Jew. Likewise, wearing my *tallit* during a service encourages me to focus my thoughts away from everyday life and toward the realm of the meditative and transcendent. Its presence creates a physical barrier across my shoulders separating the everyday from the spiritual, the Holy from the mundane; and, by extension, helps to ground my thoughts and direct them in contemplative and

wholesome consideration. That the *tallit* has been worn by Jews during prayer throughout the course of time, and that I am carrying on that same tradition helps, I find, to ascribe to my time in the sanctuary on a *Shabbat* morning a deeper context and, as a recent, Jew, helps to link me physically to the past that I have chosen to inherit, just as the personal symbolism of my own *tallit* equally links me to the commitments I made to a life of Liberal Judaism in the future.

As part of those commitments, I covenanted to adhere to the principles of Liberal Judaism; and the very fact that, as a woman, I own and wear my own *tallit* makes me a proud advocate of the Liberal Jewish values of equality and reinvention of ancient practice in the modern climate. As a Jewish woman, and a converted one at that, to own and cherish such a special garment with such importance and which holds such personal meaning makes my *tallit* a defining piece of my Jewish identity.

Izzy Davies-Benjamin

A beginner's guide to taming the *tallit*

I experimented with a gold plated clip trinket, with a securing chain between the two clamps. At first I felt nervous about tearing the *tallit* at a fixing point around the collar, but silk is a slippery and strong substance, which would sooner slide off my shoulders than yield to a weight-bearing widget.

Nowadays I feel more comfortable with the most common mode of weaving the shawl around the shoulders and both arms. I'm conscious of crumpling and therefore creasing



the fabric inside my elbows, but I feel dropping and tearing are greater hazards.

So when, at one of the customary moments for standing in the morning service, I heard a ripping sound at my left foot and felt an unfamiliar downward tugging on my left shoulder, there was the tearing sound I had been dreading!

On inspection, however, the integrity of the offended article was remarkably unblemished, despite the rude insult with the sole of my shoe. I lost a few strands from one of my *tzitzit*, but no knots.

Alan Parmenter

The separation and the celebration that come from wearing a *tallit*

When I was a child, my mother bought my grandfather a beautiful silk *tallit* from Israel. When my grandfather died, mum gave me this *tallit*, and I had always assumed that, if the time came when I wanted to wear one, I would wear my grandfather's with pride.

But in the event, Poppy's *tallit* felt far too big, and I wasn't comfortable wearing it at all. That left me with two problems – firstly to find another one, and secondly to find a new owner for my grandfather's fine *tallit*.

That was easy: my neighbour Alan Parmenter, who first set foot in The LJS as a violinist at my civil partnership commitment ceremony, and who has since converted to Judaism. I know not whether a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife, but this one was clearly in want of a *tallit*, and I know how much he treasures and cares for it.

When it came to choosing a *tallit* for myself, I wanted to find one that reflected the extent to which the LJS has been accepting of my 21st century family. I'd seen a *tallit* with rainbow coloured stripes,

and thought that something similar would be perfect.

It took me a while to wear my *tallit* as a matter of course, but it struck me that to wear it



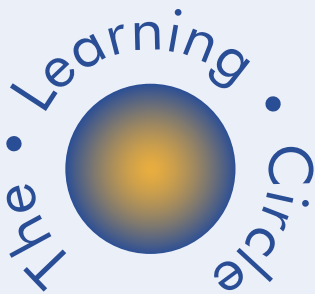
only on High Holy Days, or when I'm on the *bimah*, is to treat it like a fancy dress item; you either wear a *tallit* or you don't... Through Rabbi Wright's commitment to Women of the Wall, it had become clear to me that we should celebrate our freedom to wear a *tallit* – other women have paid our way here dearly, and it feels right and



important to recognise that.

As for the moment when I put it on, I found myself unexpectedly ambushed by the brilliance of some of our customs which I had often been happy to dismiss – why do we have to say a blessing before we do anything? For this particular *mitzvah* it makes such great sense; it forces you to take a moment to focus on what you're actually doing, drive whatever dross might be in your head into some temporary secondary location, and get yourself into a brain space within which prayer might make some kind of sense, or at least be possible. That moment of separation seems to me to be quite important; it mirrors for me the significance of the *tallit* as both shield and comforter; a visible layer that marks a distinctive protective barrier from external concerns, and yet seems to me to confer and demarcate, in a public and communal space, a private sphere for prayer and contemplation.

Karen Newman



at the LJS

Classes in Judaism and Hebrew
Sukkot term 5776/2016

Tuesday 11.15-12.30

20th September to 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. This year's topics will include the writings of Spinoza and Maimonides, Abraham Joshua Heschel, the Book of Daniel and the writings of Claude Montefiore. New members are most welcome. Biscuits are provided.

Tuesday 19.00-20.00

20th September to 13th December

Classical Hebrew

No class on 11th or 25th October

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

For those who have some grasp of Hebrew grammar class and can read accurately. We will be studying some of the less savoury, more challenging narratives of the books of the Hebrew Bible. Beginning with the story of Samuel, the course will examine the kingship of Saul and David and their tricky relationship.

Tuesday 13th September

Refreshments: 18.30 Lecture: 19.00

HOW DOES ART CONVEY TRUTH?– opening lecture of the *Sukkot* term● **How do artists approach their art?**● **What is their idea of truth?****Jeremy Lewison**

(Former Director of Collections of Tate)

Dr Chloe Reddaway

(Howard and Roberta Ahmanson Fellow in Art and Religion at the National Gallery)

Tuesday 20.00-21.00

20th September to 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.

20th September	Introductory session: What is Judaism? Jewish values and beliefs overview
27th September	Exploring <i>Rosh Hashanah</i> and <i>Yom Kippur</i>
4th October	Exploring <i>Yom Kippur</i> and <i>Sukkot</i>

Tuesday 20.00-21.00

1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd November

Judaism and Art**Rabbi René Pfertzel**Details available from Rabbi Pfertzel: r.pfertzel@ljs.org

Tuesday 20.00-21.00

High Holy Day Preparation

These two sessions will offer something for members and guests who want to excavate the themes of the Days of Awe more deeply.

20th September

Judgment in a deeply judgmental world.

27th September

Forgiveness in an unforgiving world.

Wednesday 12th October

Yom Kippur Study Sessions**13.15-14.00 in the Sanctuary**

During the middle of the day on *Yom Kippur*, there is an opportunity for some discussion and study – this year on the *Kaddish* – the prayer we recite at the end of every service and also at funerals. Come and discover some contemporary (secular) versions of this prayer and see how they change our perception of the traditional versions.

16.15-17.30 in the Assembly Hall

Come together for a young adults' discussion and study session during the Afternoon Service.

Shabbat 9.45-10.45**10th September 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.

Shabbat 9.45-10.45**10th September until 10th December****Beginners' Hebrew with Naomi Brightwell****Half term: 29th October**

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 course explores biblical Hebrew for intermediate adult learners, with a focus on practicing reading fluency and expanding our vocabulary. The group learns by reading key prayers from *Siddur Lev Chadash* and the weekly portion together as individuals and as a group. As we read through these key texts, the group expands its familiarity with biblical vocabulary and grammar, and practises Hebrew writing by collecting words, learning their roots and meaning and writing them by hand.

Sunday 5th February from 10.00-16.30**£25 including lunch**

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)**



Above: Joanna Chen, Fady Joudah and Choman Hardi

Right: Agi Mishol and her translator Joanna Chen



A path to peace, paved with poetry

I began my introduction to *The Poet's Quest for Peace: Contemporary Voices Across the Faiths* with the comment that poetry is often thought of as a minority activity, and so, sadly, is the pursuit of peace.

And yet in the true spirit of *Shabbat*, a little oasis of peace was created, which included strong feeling, fragility, and pain, held in an atmosphere of consideration, thoughtfulness, with great intelligence. And brilliant, powerful poetry.

Our international slate of award winning poets surpassed expectations. American-Palestinian Fady Joudah, Buddhist Maitreyabandhu, Kurdish Choman Hardi, Iranian Ziba Karbassi

together with her translator, Stephen Watts, Hungarian-born George Szirtes and Israeli Agi Mishol together with her translator Joanna Chen – awe

inspiring wordsmiths, who touched us all deeply with their readings, and their thoughts.

In the discussion, led by Raficq Abdulla, our panel of poets gave serious consideration to the part that their craft, poetry, can play in peace processes. They weren't optimistic, but they spoke eloquently and with gravitas. The slogan of the day, recounted to us by

Choman Hardi, will no doubt be 'make friends, then argue', words of wisdom conveyed to her by her brother.

There was a real buzz to the day: people milling around the campaigners' stalls, having a bite to eat and chatting with new acquaintances, and then listening to the readings, the centrepiece of the day.

It was such a pleasure to meet the poets, very talented, warm and down to earth people.

One of the very moving aspects of the day was the deepening of dialogue and understanding between them, coming from their very disparate backgrounds. And our audience,

again a real intersection of backgrounds: young girls in headscarves from Henrietta Barnett school who'd come to meet their hero, George Szirtes; a woman whose parents were survivors of the Armenian genocide; a young man from the Israeli Embassy who'd come particularly to hear his idol, Agi Mishol, to name but a few. So many stimulating, heartwarming conversations begun, with the promise of more to come.



George Szirtes



Ziba Karbassi

Harriett Goldenberg

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

Aman Abib
Edoardo Armstrong
Thomas Ballheimer
Brooke Behr
Georgia Bron
Max Daals
Avigail Frank
Tyler Golden
Natasha Goldstone

Joshua Gulperin
Aleksander Kondak
Rachel Kops
Charlotte Korn
Electra Levi-French
Mark Shapiro
Brooke Shipman
Claudia Spanier

Come and learn High Holy Day songs and prayers

with Rabbi Rachel Benjamin
and Music Director
Cathy Heller Jones

10.00 - 12.00 on
Sunday 11th September

*All welcome regardless of
previous singing ability*

Lessons from Genocide

Wednesday 21st September
from 19.00-21.00

Lessons from Genocide brings together speakers from the Holocaust Educational Trust, Remembering Srebrenica and the Aegis Trust for the International Day of Peace. We will explore how genocides have been allowed to happen in the past, as well as what societies and governments must do in the future to prevent such atrocities from being repeated.

Organised by the Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE) and City Circle, this interfaith event came out of a visit by the two organisations to Srebrenica earlier this year.

Tickets: £5
(concessions available)

TINY TOTS at the LJS

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

Please bring them to the LJS on *Shabbat* mornings

10th, 17th 24th September

1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd October

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

Gan and Tiny Tots services will take place from
10.30-11.30 on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*

Please see the full list of children's services and
activities for the festivals in the High Holy Day
information booklet



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
to be added to the Tiny Tots circulation list.

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.

**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.

**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.

ASYLUM SEEKERS DROP-IN

The LJS Drop-in for asylum seeker families will be on Sunday 11th September and Sunday 9th October 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) for more details.

**MEET THE RABBIS**

All those living in NW3 are invited to come to tea at the home of Jessica and Jeremy Sokel from 15.00-17.00 on Sunday 4th September.

If you haven't received an invitation, please contact Naomi Richland on 020 7432 1283 or email rabbispa@ljs.org

**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.

28th September Gigi

Musical comedy with Lesley Caron and Maurice Chevalier.

26th October How Does Your Garden Grow? Hercule Poirot receives a strange request for assistance from the elderly

Miss Amelia Barrowby.

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

**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 by email at a.shafritz@ljs.org or on 020 7286 5181.

**VENICE 500 AT THE LJS**

The LJS will commemorate the 500th anniversary of the establishment of the Jewish ghetto in Venice with music by the great Jewish composer Salomone Rossi on the weekend of Friday 28th and Saturday 29th October

**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



Jessie Shaugnassy and Joany Weinberg were among 53 members and helpers from the Out and About club who spent a wonderful day out in Worthing. The sun shone and the Chatsworth Hotel, as always, provided a delicious three course meal and tea.

Our excellent drivers from Westway Community Transport coped with the traffic on the way there and back and, thanks to all our helpers, everyone was able to get out on the promenade to buy souvenirs or just to enjoy sitting in the sun (and to take a look at the Classic Car Show).

Thanks to all the supporters whose generosity makes the outing possible.

Tickets for the High Holy Days

High Holy Day tickets will be sent out to all those who have paid their 2016 subscriptions. Please note that visitor tickets can only be bought for or by visitors (not members). As you probably know, the

synagogue's expenditure exceeds its income each year, and if members were to buy visitor tickets instead of paying their subscriptions, the synagogue would not be able to continue.

So please don't even ask!

Our services at the High Holy Days are very special and everyone who wishes to is able to come into the beautiful Sanctuary and not an overflow service as in some synagogues, and subscriptions allow us to continue to provide this excellence.

Looking forward to seeing you at our High Holy Day services.

Barbara Fidler

LJS Hon Treasurer

Festivals and Fasts 5777/2016-17

Rosh Hashanah	Sunday evening/Monday 2-3 October
Yom Kippur	Tuesday evening/Wednesday 11-12 October
Sukkot	Sunday evening /Monday 16-17 October
Chol Ha-Mo'ed	
Sukkot	Shabbat 22 October
Simchat Torah	Sunday evening/Monday 23-24 October
Chanukkah	25 December – 1 January
Tu Bi'Sh'vat	11 February
Purim	12 March
Pesach	11-17 April
Yom Ha-Shoah	24 April
Yom Ha-Atzma'ut	2 May
Shavuot	31 May
Tisha B'Av	1 August

**FOR
YOUR
DIARY**

The LJS is a constituent
synagogue of Liberal Judaism

liberal judaism



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