

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE



Heart of the matter

Sanusey Demba from Gambia (left), recovering in Israel after life-saving heart surgery, is one of hundreds of children from across the developing world who have benefited from the work of SACH – Save a Child’s Heart. Learn more about the charity we supported by coming to a talk after the LJS annual general meeting on 14 June: more details on page 2.

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June 2017

Sivan-Tammuz 5777

Bringing out the best in the next generation



‘The future of Liberal Judaism is in good hands’ – the verdict of LJS Chairman Sue Head on the ‘nine self-possessed young women’ (pictured above with Rimon head teacher Dov Softi and Rabbis René Pfertzel and Rachel Benjamin) who produced a ‘sobering yet inspiring’ KT service on 29 April. Read Sue’s reflections in full on page 4.



Welcome

to these new Members and Friends:

Claire Chitty (Friend)
Sarah Covey
Lily Crane Newman
Olivia Goldenberg
Lia Grant
Peter Isaacs and his daughters, Sarah and

Natasha Isaacs
Rebecca Lawson
Lily Lazarus
Ingrid Pfertzel
Helen Roth
Eva Ruiz-Daum
Jessica Spanier
Alexandra Trebulova (Friend)
Manya Wayne

Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Denis Cowan, husband of Claudine and father of Roland

המקום ינחם אתכם
בתוך שאר האבלים

*May God comfort you
and all who mourn*

How appeal funds help save young lives

The Annual General Meeting of The LJS will take place at 19.30 on Wednesday 14 June.

After the business meeting we will be joined by David Silverston from Save a Child's Heart, one of the charities we supported as part of our *Yom Kippur* appeal.

The 2016 appeal raised £70,000 for our chosen charities, among them Save a Child's Heart, which treats children who have almost no chance of survival in their native countries.

Every year hundreds of children are brought to Israel from all over the developing world for surgery to repair congenital heart defects. And every year, a small medical team travels to places such as Ethiopia, China, Tanzania and the Palestinian Authority, to perform operations and train local medical personnel. SACH saves the lives of children with no political, cultural, religious or racial preference whatsoever.

SACH's mission is to improve the quality of paediatric cardiac care for children from countries where the heart surgery they need is unobtainable. Its ultimate goal is to create 'centres of competence' around

the world, enabling local doctors to perform life-saving operations on their own population.

It is encouraging and timely to be reminded of Israel's excellence in so many fields, particularly in medicine, and that the expertise of the country's doctors, nurses,

anaesthetists and paediatric staff are shared with countries where even relatively simple operations are not available.

LJS members Caroline Weiss and Hannah Geneen spent a number of weeks volunteering in the SACH children's house, caring for children who were waiting for their operations.

**Aryan Rizgar Saleh
from Iraq - one of the
hundreds of children
treated by SACH.**



Shabbat services: June

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

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER	NOTES
Friday 2 June	Alexandra Wright	
<i>Shabbat</i> 3 June <i>Naso</i>	Alexandra Wright	25th Wedding Anniversary of Maggie and William Carver Rimon: half-term
Friday 9 June	Alexandra Wright	Young Adults' <i>chavurah</i> supper
<i>Shabbat</i> 10 June <i>B'ha'a lot'cha</i>	Alexandra Wright	Rachel Brooks <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> Nosh 'n' Drosh, Joan Salter: 'Vichy's Children'
Friday 16 June	Rachel Benjamin	
<i>Shabbat</i> 17 June <i>Sh'lach L'cha</i>	Rachel Benjamin	Teddy Levi-French naming and blessing
Friday 23 June	René Pfertzel	<i>Chavurah</i> supper for students in classes Zayin and Chet and their families
<i>Shabbat</i> 24 June <i>Korach</i>	Harriett Goldenberg ▲	The service will be led by members of Naomi Brightwell's <i>Shabbat</i> morning Hebrew class
Friday 30 June	Alexandra Wright	
<i>Shabbat</i> 1 July <i>Chukat</i>	Intergenerational Service ▲	Led by children from Rimon Religion School
Friday 7 July at 18.45	Alexandra Wright	Michael Berlingieri <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Friday 7 July at 20.00	Pride Service	The LJS is delighted to be hosting this year's Pride service, dinner and entertainment
<i>Shabbat</i> 8 July <i>Balak</i>	Alexandra Wright	Michael Berlingieri <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Rimon: last day Nosh 'n' Drosh: Rabbi Sybil Sheridan

▲ - Parking alert: cricket at Lord's today

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.

Farewell (but not quite) to Rabbi René Pfertzel

In July, Rabbi Pfertzel will be leaving The LJS for pastures new, having been recruited by Kingston Liberal Synagogue to work as their sole Rabbi. Having come to the rabbinate a little later on in life, Rabbi Pfertzel says: 'If I don't make the jump now to working on my own, I never will. It's a great opportunity.'

However, we are not saying goodbye to him completely, because he will continue his work on digitising the catalogue of Rabbi John Rayner's sermons, lectures and correspondence. We wish him well in Kingston. There will be a farewell *kiddush* for René on *Shabbat* 22 July.

The future of Liberal Judaism is in good hands

LJS Chairman Sue Head reports on an inspiring KT service and a Council meeting

Judging by the KT service, the future of Liberal Judaism is in good hands. Nine self-possessed young women completed the two-year *Kabbalat Torah* course led by Rabbis Rachel Benjamin and René Pfertzel, encompassing a wide-ranging curriculum which included a class trip to Amsterdam and culminating in planning and leading an *Erev Shabbat* and *Shabbat* morning service at The LJS. Against a backdrop of one of the more challenging *Torah* portions, they chose as their theme women's rights, and it was sobering yet inspiring to hear their reflections about the lives of some of our guests at our monthly Drop-in sessions for asylum seeker families, and witness their determination to make a difference to the world in which we live. Several of them are now looking forward to becoming assistant teachers in Rimon.

Our last Council meeting included an opportunity to learn about the magnificent work of Singing for the Mind. This activity, for people with mild to moderate dementia, sprang from Singing for the Brain, which was a joint activity



Sue Head: praised the KT group's 'determination to make a difference to the world'

with the Alzheimer's Society, but it is now run by a singing leader together with a group of dedicated volunteers stewarded by the indefatigable Mary Rossiter. We had the chance to see a wonderful short film about their work, which can be accessed at <https://vimeo.com/202820648>.

We also welcomed Interim Executive Director Lysa Schwartz to our meeting: she can be contacted by email at ExecDirector@ljs.org. We also said an official farewell to Caroline Bach, whose energy and determination will be greatly missed.

Work is progressing well on our new website; we had a spirited discussion about updating the LJS logo, which is much loved, but now looks a bit dated.

Council also agreed to investigate the possibility of having some kind of burial scheme. This was researched some time ago, and was found to be prohibitively expensive, but it was felt that we should look into it again; although we have our own cemetery, which is rare, not having a burial scheme disadvantages us in comparison with other synagogues.

The possibility of having some stained glass in the John Rayner Room was discussed, and it was agreed that the fundraising team could start to work on a full proposal for moving this forward.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Annual General Meeting at The LJS at 19.30 on Wednesday 14 June, when we will have the opportunity to learn more about the work of Save A Child's Heart – one of the charities to benefit from our 2016 Yom Kippur Appeal.

All of you will have received information about the candidates standing for election to Council; more information about them is available on the LJS noticeboard. This year we have four retiring Council members – Lisa Gershon, Harriett Goldenberg, Karen Maxwell, and David Rigal. I should like to place on record our thanks to each of them for several years of work and dedication to The LJS.

Sue Head

A Jewish manifesto for the General Election

Rabbi Alexandra Wright goes back to basics in her search for a fundamentally Jewish shopping list of priorities



The Rabbi writes

How we vote in the General Election of 8 June should be determined by the moral values that form the bedrock of Judaism. Liberal Judaism, precisely because it prioritises the ethical – love and righteousness – over ritual, has to engage with politics in its wider sense, what the Greeks called *politika* – literally ‘affairs of the cities’, because such affairs touch on practical moral and spiritual questions: on the questions of poverty, wealth and homelessness, health and social care, education and the upbringing of children, how we can ease the plight of asylum seekers and refugees, on human rights and war and peace.

It was Judah Magnes, an American-born Reform rabbi, Chancellor and then President of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who said: ‘Politics... is one of the basic spiritual, intellectual and practical concerns of life. The prophets of Israel never dissociated politics from religion. On the contrary, they were passionately interested in politics.’ If we evade the ‘affairs of the cities,’ then how can we educate ourselves to embody in our daily actions the Jewish teachings of justice and compassion that lie at the heart of the texts of our religious tradition?

And how would we decide how to vote in a General Election? Jewish manifestos in the past have, generally, tended to focus on the election from an exclusively Jewish point of view – perhaps understandably. They have been concerned with defending the right to a Jewish way of life – preservation of the laws of *kashrut*, the right to distinguish ourselves by wearing Jewish clothing, on defending circumcision and flexible working to be able to observe *Shabbat*. They have focused on opposition to anti-

Semitism and all forms of hate crime, including Islamophobia, on promoting positive relations between all the UK’s communities, supporting efforts to remember and understand the *Shoah*, advocating for a lasting and peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and ensuring provision for faith schools.

But as important as these issues are, Liberal Jews must also address the issues that affect the whole population, regardless of faith or race: issues relating to the job market, shortage of housing, Brexit and relations with Europe, the environment and the critical issues of pollution and climate change, immigration, education, crime and justice and the cost of living.

“A Jewish manifesto would recognise that work endows the individual with a sense of dignity and self-esteem”

A Jewish election manifesto would begin at the beginning: each child born in this country should be offered the best possible start in life. ‘You shall teach your children diligently’ [Deut. 6:7] should be taken to mean that early years, primary and secondary education should be given the highest priority. This is the meaning of the Mishnah’s statement *Talmud Torah k’neged kulam* – that the study of the *Torah* is equal to all the other mitzvot (m.Peah 1:1). The Mishnah refers to knowledge of the commandments, but if we read this symbolically to refer to universal education – ‘all your children shall be taught by the Eternal One’ [Isaiah 54:13], it underlines the moral purpose of education – that learning can help individual children to socialise, to

understand not only their own world, but the world of others. In an ideal world, this manifesto would remove the tests required for children as early as seven years old; it would acknowledge that each and every child is different and will fulfil their potential in different ways. Learning for the sake of learning, in order to earn a livelihood and to discover the moral pathway, are the purposes of education. It is every child's right to have access to the highest standard of learning at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The education of every child and young person in this country is our nation's investment in its future.

“Each child born in this country should be offered the best possible start in life”

A Jewish health manifesto would recognise the achievement of the creation of the National Health Service and the need to invest in the complex and immense task of caring for people of all ages. It would recognise the needs of the elderly, the demands of social care for those living on their own and growing more vulnerable, and it would address the urgent requirement of meeting the needs of those with mental health issues. Such a manifesto would place in every single school, in addition to its teachers, an individual who would attend to the emotional and pastoral needs of the children. In this way, perhaps schools could embrace the health needs of every single child in this country.

‘Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Eternal One your God’ [Exodus 20:9-10]. A Jewish manifesto would recognise that work endows the individual with a sense of dignity and self-esteem, as well as the requirement to rest and restore the spirit. It would acknowledge the need to create apprenticeships and to value skills, creating a structure for young people to follow a career path that provides security and hope for their future – a hope that would include the right to find housing that is affordable and that they can call their own.

Much has been written in these columns about asylum seekers and refugees. Getting to know

the guests at the LJS Drop-in from month to month has underlined the pointlessness of preventing active, intelligent and honest men and women from building a career and contributing to this country. A Jewish election manifesto would accept unequivocally the right of asylum seekers to seek refuge and stability in the UK on compassionate grounds – and this most certainly includes unaccompanied minors, children who seek to be reunited with family members in this country and others without family. Not only once, but 36 times, does the *Torah* demand of us to ‘love the stranger’ for we were strangers in the land of Egypt and know the heart of the stranger. Furthermore, this Jewish election manifesto would allow citizenship for all those for whom repatriation would impose a danger, or who have created a family life in this country and who have been waiting for longer than two years for ‘leave to remain’. As the *Torah* says, there should be ‘one law for the homeborn and for the stranger who lives among you’ [Exodus 12:49]. For those who have made their home in this country, raised children, desperately want to contribute, legislation should allow them to work, pay taxes and be subject to the same rights, responsibilities and privileges as other citizens of this country.

There are other issues that should also concern us: a serious acknowledgment of climate change and commitment to addressing pollution is one; valuing the shared spiritual and cultural aspects of our European heritage another; addressing issues of crime and justice, by investing in childhood support, education and youth provision.

Of course, the list is endless and yes, there is a measure of idealism in offering a manifesto for this General Election of 2017 without examining economic and financial provision. But without idealism and without the aspiration to create a society that is moral, based on justice and compassion, on a sense of fairness and trust among people, then what hope and what practical help can this country give to those who do not enjoy the same advantages and privileges as ourselves and whose future matters as much as anyone else's?

Alexandra Wright

The Shema – chanted, recited, or both?

לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת־כָּל־
מִצְוֹתַי וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם:
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי
אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לַחַיִּים
לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:
אֱמֶת וַיְצִיב וַיִּשֶׁר וַיִּקֵּם וְטוֹב

The Shema is central to our prayer: so why should one section be chanted and another just recited, asks David Strang

וַאֲהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם
עַל־לִבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּ לְבָנֶיךָ
וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ
וּבְלַחְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְבְּךָ

You may have noticed that in recent months the *Shema* has on occasion been chanted. Sometimes this has been led by one of the rabbis and, on one occasion at least, the choir participated in the chanting. As chair of the Avodah Group, which discusses issues related to our services, I would like to understand the views of the congregation on this practice.

When I refer to chanting, I am referring to singing the *Shema* using the musical notation which is used generally for *Torah* portions (also referred to as ‘leyning’) and when I refer to chanting the *Shema*, I am referring only to the first paragraph, beginning with *Shema Yisrael* and ending *Uvisharecha*. The following passage, *Lemaan Tizkiru*, is however also a part of the *Shema* and we almost invariably chant that passage using the *Torah* melody. Confusingly, we tend to sit down after the first and before the second passage of the *Torah*, as that is what the *siddur* tells us to do, but this does rather obscure the fact that both paragraphs are part of the *Shema*.

While the chanting led by the rabbis did not arouse much comment, the occasion on which the choir leyned it as well led to an adverse reaction on the part of some congregants. It may be in part that those congregants feel that the service is heading too far in a traditional direction; and there is also no doubt that initially some congregants will feel disconcerted by the familiar recitation being replaced by a melody, even if it is the melody of the *Torah*.

The Avodah Group has a relatively broad and

mixed membership and with the benefit of an interesting paper on the place of the *Shema* in our service (which I would be happy to send to interested parties) we had a good discussion on this practice earlier this month. Our conclusion was that while we did not wish to alienate congregants, neither did we wish to rule out the possibilities of changes to our service. Re-evaluating our practices over time is a central part of what we do as Liberal Jews. We also recognised the benefit of leyning for the children in Rimon as they prepare for their Bat/Bar Mitzvot. This is an additional opportunity to become familiar with leyning.

We recognised that the change in approach could perhaps have been better signalled, given the centrality of the verses to all congregants (and not just to fluent Hebrew readers), but concluded that it was hard to see reasons not to chant the *Shema* on occasion. Ultimately, like other issues relating to the content of the service, we saw this as a decision to be taken by the rabbis and Cathy, as Director of Music.

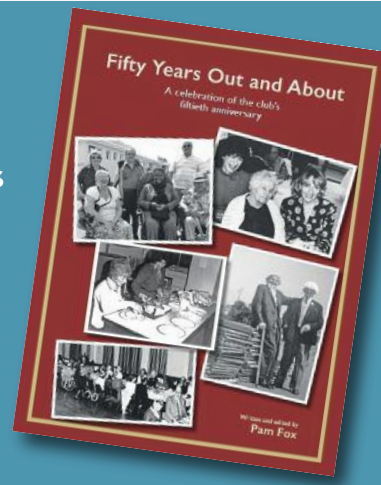
To date, we have only heard from those who object to this change and in the context of the whole congregation and even of regular attenders, those who have expressed their views represent a relatively small proportion. The question is whether those who have so far made their views known are representative of the congregation as a whole. We are therefore opening up the debate to all congregants, so if you have a view, do get in touch with me at davidivorstrang@gmail.com or speak to any member of the Avodah Group.

My friends and I might sometimes miss some of the other clubs, but we don't like to miss this one... I give it ten out of ten

During 2017 the Out and About Club is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. As part of the celebrations a book has been produced to tell the club's inspirational history. 'Fifty Years Out and About', written and edited by Pam Fox, contains a detailed history of the club and 'pen portraits' of each of the club's current members. Based on nearly 100 interviews with members, current and former voluntary helpers, and others connected with the club, as well as rich archival material, the book contains many poignant memories and both moving and amusing anecdotes.

The Out and About Club was set up in 1966 with the twin aims of providing activities and support for disabled people and an opportunity for young people, mainly from societies based at the synagogue, to work collectively in a socially useful endeavour. Over the course of its 50-year history, the club has consistently fulfilled both aims. However, it has achieved much more than its founders, ambitious and determined as they were, ever dreamed of. This proudly inter-denominational club has touched and enhanced the lives of hundreds of people who have been associated with the club since it was established. It has engendered joy and laughter, led to firm and long-lasting friendships, acted as a gateway to much needed help, advice and services, and developed skills, knowledge and understanding. Although there have been periods when people have had to work hard to

What started 50 years ago as a way of providing activities and support for people with disabilities has matured into an LJS-based institution – a proudly inter-denominational club that deploys the skills and enthusiasm of a small army of volunteers.



maintain the club's activities, it has survived and continues to flourish. The programme of activities is as relevant today as it was 50 years ago, and new members and helpers continue to join in its activities.

The book identifies the reasons why the club has endured for so long: the mutuality of the relationship between members and helpers; the availability of transport; the generosity of the LJS congregation and other benefactors; the support of its President, Rabbi David Goldberg; the inspiring leadership provided by Jenny Nathan and the time and energy she has devoted to the club over four decades; the skill, expertise and knowledge of the helper team, built up since the club's inception; and the continuing format of meetings and outings, which lend a reassuring sense of tradition. Research for the history section

uncovered many interesting but long-forgotten details of the club's development. Pam Fox succeeded in tracking down the club's first Chairman, Angela Stent, who is now an eminent professor in Washington, DC. Angela kindly sent Pam extracts from her 1966 diary that provided delightful insights into the club's early days.

Captured in the narrative are the personalities of many past club members, including the three fiercely independent members who, during the 1970s, drove themselves to meetings in their Invacars (the blue disabled 'trikes'). One of the trio was Vicky Dyke who refused to allow her disability to prevent her from doing whatever she wanted. One interviewee recalls:

'She was a lethal driver. She liked to be in the middle of the road and make

other people get out of her way! Somehow she survived and so did other people. She was a very determined lady, quite small and wiry, but always with a smile and a twinkle in her eye.'

A veritable army of volunteers carried out the member interviews. They had been briefed about how to conduct oral history interviews. They discovered many surprising facts about the members' lives. Jenny Nathan comments in her foreword to the book: 'Who would have thought that we had in our midst a darts champion, someone who had served The Kinks while working in a pub in Carnaby Street in the "swinging sixties", or a doctor who had treated the grandchild of Emperor Haile Selassie?'

What shines through from the second part of the book is the enormous contribution that members make to the club with their willingness to share their skills and life experiences, their determination to turn up to meetings on the coldest of nights and in spite of their disabilities, and their sheer zest for life.

One member comments: 'My friends and I might sometimes miss some of the other clubs we go to, but we don't like to miss this one! I give it ten out of ten.'

The book will be launched at an anniversary dinner on 20 June. Copies will be available after that date. For further information, please contact Jenny Nathan or Pam Fox.

Dear Editor...

Benefits of mixing some Hebrew into our services

The headline to the letter from Jonathan Schwartz [LJS News, April] is of course correct; 'Learning Hebrew does not make us better people' but we cannot draw from that the conclusion that we should therefore not learn Hebrew at all. If there is one thing that both binds us to our history and to the Jewish family, it is our language.

The feeling that we are reading words which our ancestors said and wrote down thousands of years ago is a powerful one and the English versions of our prayers obscure rather than reveal the meanings of the ancient prayers and writings. It is for me, and I think for my classes, a thrill to understand, even if only imperfectly, words the origins of which may be lost in history but which can still have real meaning for us. Jonathan is right to say that we need to study what the texts mean for our lives now, but to do so in English alone surely reduces the power and significance of those texts. This is not an 'intellect versus emotion' issue – the intellectual study of our religion is surely enhanced if we can glean more about the true meaning of our texts.

My other concern is that while it does not always seem like it, we are part of a worldwide religion with an enormous array of practices and beliefs. But despite those variations, any member of our congregation who understands Hebrew can join a service anywhere in the world and be at home, because of our common language. To abandon that risks our becoming ever remoter from our fellow Jews.

I welcome the reintroduction of Hebrew over time and while I am not in favour of services in Hebrew alone, I very much value the mix of Hebrew and English in our services and the opportunities our congregation offers to learn Hebrew.

David Strang



at the **LJS**

**Classes in Judaism and Hebrew
Shavu'ot term 5777/2017**

Tuesday 19.00-20.00

Until 11 July

Classical Hebrew

Half-term: 30 May

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 is 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 to pursue, please speak to Susannah, Sally or Alexandra.

Tuesday 20.00-21.00

Until 11 July

Exploring Judaism with Rabbi Rachel Benjamin

Half-term: 30 May

Exploring Judaism is for people who wish they knew more about Judaism or would like to brush up 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 for people choosing Judaism, by conversion.

Class members are encouraged to read materials which will be made available online. 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.

Tuesday 11.15-12.30

Until 18 July

Tuesday Texts

Half-term: 30 May

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 provided.

Shabbat 9.45-10.45

Until 8 July

Learning from Texts with Bernie Bulkin

Half-term: 27 May and 3 June

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

Until 8 July

Beginners' Hebrew with Naomi Brightwell

Half-term: 27 May and 3 June

Don't know your aleph from your – oh you know, that other letter at the end of the Hebrew alphabet? 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, feel free to join this class.

What have the Bach Passions ever done for Jewish-Christian relations?

An illustrated talk by
Rabbi Alexandra Wright and
the Rev Laurence Hillel
of St Ann's Church, Brondesbury
Monday 19 June at 19.00
at The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

The Annual General Meeting of **BRITISH FRIENDS OF RABBIS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

will take place at noon on
Monday 26 June at The LJS

All are welcome.

The 2017

Liberal Judaism Day of Celebration

will take place on Sunday 11 June
at Northwood & Pinner
Liberal Synagogue

Through a range of sessions and speakers, the day will address the question 'Is Liberal Judaism Political Judaism?'

The Day of Celebration will also see the announcement of the winner of the 2017 LAFTAs competition. The Liberal Academy of Film and Torah Awards (LAFTAs) is an opportunity for Liberal Jewish religion schools to create a short film related to the Day of Celebration theme.

Tickets are now available via Eventbrite or the LJ office. For more information, go to <http://tinyurl.com/l2xnqfo>



BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE~THE LIBERAL
JEWISH SYNAGOGUE ~ NEW LONDON
SYNAGOGUE ~ WEST CENTRAL LIBERAL
SYNAGOGUE ~ WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE
INVITE YOU TO THE FIRST OF

5 LECTURES IN 5 SYNAGOGUES*

'1967 ~ THE SIX DAY WAR: THEN AND NOW'

PROFESSOR DAVID NEWMAN,
BEN GURION UNIVERSITY

MONDAY 5TH JUNE 7.30 FOR 8.00 PM

**AT THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE, 28 ST JOHN'S WOOD
ROAD, LONDON NW8 7HA**

* 2ND LECTURE TO MARK THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION
ON 2 NOVEMBER 2017 AT THE NEW LONDON SYNAGOGUE

Suddenly it's all crystal clear

A large group of members of the Jewish Deaf Association, together with other LJS members, attended the Crystal Clear service on 5 May.

They participated in the service and were delighted when Rabbi Benjamin invited them to read from the scroll. One deaf/blind member asked if he could touch the scroll himself.

The service was followed by an Israeli-style supper which everyone enjoyed.



LIBERAL JUDAISM'S COUNCIL OF PATRONS ANNUAL DINNER

Thursday 22 June at 19.00

Hosted by The Rt. Hon the Lord Haskel

Chaired by Nicola Nathan, Chair of the Council of Patrons

An opportunity to support Liberal Judaism's projects, including its superb youth movement, LJY-Netzer, and other programmes

For further information please contact
j.shopper@liberaljudaism.org

LEO BAECK COLLEGE 60th ANNIVERSARY DINNER

6 June 2017 at 18.30

at the Institute of Directors
116 Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5ED

The guest speaker will be Diane Lees, Director-General of the Imperial War Museums.

Tickets are £125 each and all profits raised on the night will swell the faculty endowment fund in memory of the inspirational rabbis who changed lives in our community.

Please consider sponsoring a student rabbi to join your table – or even sponsoring a table of ten people.

For more information, email dinner2017@lbc.ac.uk or call Marc Green on 020 8349 5607.

LIBRARY INFORMATION

The library will hold an information session before the *Shabbat* morning service, at 10.15 on 29 July. Please come and meet library volunteers, who will guide you round the shelves and show you the book classifications.

The library is a lovely room where you can both browse and borrow.



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.

28 June: *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*

Classic American Western with the Wild West outlaws played by Paul Newman and Robert Redford.

26 July: *Florence Foster Jenkins*

Stephen Frears' rollicking comedy drama starring Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant. Based on the real story of the triumph of a tone-deaf heiress.

23 August: *Wildlife of Costa Rica* Documentary.



PAINT FOR PLEASURE

Every Monday a small group of enthusiasts meet from 10.30-13.00 to paint for pleasure at The LJS. No tuition is offered,

but we comment on each other's work and spend a pleasant and therapeutic time together. £3 donation. For more details call Jocelyne Tobin: 020 7722 8000.



DINNER FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Are you between the ages of 25 and 35? Do you have children or grandchildren in that age group? Friday evening dinners for Young Adults are held once

a month at The LJS. For more details, please contact Rabbi René Pfertzel at r.pfertzel@ljs.org



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 now costs £5.



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. You can contact her at

a.shafritz@ljs.org or 020 7286 5181.



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.



ARCHIVE TUESDAYS

The Archive Team works in the Assembly Hall on Tuesdays. Activities include sorting historical papers, cataloguing, photo preservation . Please contact the Archivist, Cinde Lee at cinde.lee@gmail.com



PLANNING A CELEBRATION?

If you are celebrating a birthday or other special event, you could contribute to the weekly *kiddush* following the *Shabbat* morning service. To find out more, email rabbispa@ljs.org or phone 020 7432 1283.

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

Ela Behr
Daniel Brightwell
Rachel Brooks
Maximilien Bueno
Hannah Cohen
Finlo Cowley
Niamh Eisenberg
Michael Falk
Jessica Geneen
Isabella Goodman
Lia Grant
Hugo Halford-Harrison
Mathilde Hindler
Celia Hou Kernkraut
Eva Kondak
Ethan Kulikovs
Estella Levi-French
Joseph Levin
Tomaso Levy

Costanza Levy
Tamara Lindbland Hill
Hannah Mautner
Kurt Mautner
Benjamin Miller
Antonia Moore
Romilly Morrison
Sienna Noppe
Mia Ohana-Samput
Samuel Ritblat
Yonatan Roodner
Johnny Rosen
Marco Rudolph
Samuel Salas
Rachel Semaya
Isaac Sharpstone
Victor Sparks
Zara Teacher
Miriam Torday
Gabriel Tuvey
Joshua Waha
Helena Walford

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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

Interim Executive Director

Lysa Schwartz

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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The next LJS News

will be for July/August 2017.

Final copy date: 7 June 2017.

Copy should be sent by email to info@daviescomms.com or to the Editors at The LJS.

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TINY TOTS at the LJS

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

Please bring them to The LJS on *Shabbat* mornings

10,17 and 24 June

1 and 8 July

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 with a parent or carer.

Please email education@ljs.org to be added to the Tiny Tots circulation list.

New clinic opened in honour of East End TB specialist Max Caplin

The Max Caplin TB clinic was officially named on 21 April and a photograph of Max was presented to the clinic by the Caplin family [in the photo are his children, Sarah, Judy and John]. Many of his family were present, including his sisters, Rose Glazer and Judy Newton. LJS member Max Caplin was a respected chest physician at the London Chest and Bethnal Green Hospitals; much of his professional life was devoted to the care of patients in the East End of London.



His experience in the management of TB meant that he was often referred the most difficult cases and he realised that many patients defaulted from therapy because they were homeless, often with problems due to alcohol abuse.

This led to the foundation of Caplin House, a refuge for homeless patients, where they were provided with food, a bed – and their tablets.

Today the need for a TB clinic in Tower Hamlets is just as great; one of the GPs working at the clinic said they are now trying to do a blood test on every new immigrant and asylum seeker in an attempt to detect and treat TB before symptoms appear.

It was a very moving occasion and an honour to be there – and to know that Dr Caplin's name is being remembered in this way.

Jenny Nathan

Departing Executive Director Caroline Bach (centre) is toasted at her last Council meeting by LJS Chairman Sue Head and Interim Executive Director Lysa Schwartz.



The LJS Drop-In for asylum seeker families will be open from 14.00-16.00 on Sunday 11 June. Volunteers are needed to help set up from 12.00.

The LJS is a constituent synagogue of Liberal Judaism

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