

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

Help us bring light to the Rabbi John Rayner Room at The LJS with a beautiful, specially commissioned stained glass window.

John Rayner was Senior Rabbi at The LJS from 1961-89. The Rabbi John Rayner Room, created in his memory, is now used for a variety of meetings, classes, alternative *Shabbat* services and occasions which call for a smaller, more intimate space.

We have invited the renowned artist Ruth Kersley to create at least one stained glass window in the John Rayner Room that will be visible from the synagogue foyer and would

like your support to make this a reality. Read more about the project, and how you can help, at <http://tinyurl.com/ycyyc6dq>



How Mattuck's sermons traced the descent to the Holocaust

The Nazis' path from anti-Jewish measures to a programme of all-out genocide can be traced through the war-time sermons of Israel Mattuck, the first LJS rabbi. Between 1933 and 1945, his sermons repeatedly returned to the topic of Nazi persecution, historian Marc Saperstein told an audience at The LJS, and thus provide an important primary source for historians of the period. Rabbi Saperstein, who is professor of Jewish history at Leo Baeck College, said

that as early as 1933, in his *Rosh Hashanah* sermon, Mattuck referred to the 'terrible calamity' that had befallen the Jews of Germany. We had assumed that Jewish suffering was a thing of the past, he reflected. Now we asked ourselves why this new persecution was happening - and how long it would last.

In October 1935, after the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws which stripped Jews

► [turn to back page](#)

'I wouldn't have survived, but for a Mattuck sermon'

Ann Kirk (*right, with Rabbi Saperstein*) pointed out that she was one of the limited number of children the government had allowed into Britain because they had sponsorship from the Jewish community. She would not be here now but for one of Rabbi Mattuck's sermons, in which he had urged the LJS congregation to rise to the challenge of welcoming Jewish children from Germany.



February
2018

Sh'vat-
Adar 5778



Thank you

to all our Members and Friends for your generous donations to the *Yom Kippur* appeal. Thanks to your generosity, a total of £71,205 was raised for the British Shalom Salaam Trust, the Jewish Volunteering Network and Swiss Cottage School, a special school in the London Borough of Camden.

Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Veronica Cohen, mother of Olivia Qizilbash and Imogen Cohen

Arthur Davidson QC, father of Joel

Jean Jaffa, mother of Lisa Gershon, Jenny Isaacson and Naomi Jaffa, and sister of Roy Gluckstein

Dr Anthony Roe, father of Adam, Michael and Lucy

Elizabeth Segal, wife of Dr Anthony Segal, daughter of Regina Van den Bergh, sister of Malcom and Richard Van den Bergh and Frances Girling

Harry Stern, father of Dale and Shaun

המקום ינחם אתכם

בתוך שאר האבלים

May God comfort you
and all who mourn



Congratulations

to LJS member **Joan Salter** (left) who received the MBE in the New Year honours list for her work in Holocaust education.

It's never too early to talk about *Pesach*

The LJS Communal *Seder* will be held on the second night of *Pesach*, *Shabbat* 31 March at 18.30

Members, Friends and visitors warmly invited.

An application form is included with this newsletter.

Pesach Shabbaton

Shabbat 24 March from 12.45, following *Kiddush*.

This is a wonderful opportunity to brush up our *Seder* leading skills, including reminding ourselves of the songs of the *Haggadah* and learning more about *Pesach*.

Members, Friends and visitors warmly included.

SHABBAT ATZMA'UT

Celebrating Israel's 70th birthday

Rabbi Gilad Kariv, Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, will be guest speaker at a very special service, held in conjunction with Liberal Judaism, to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel at 11.00 on *Shabbat* 21 April at The LJS.

Rabbi Kariv will also be the guest speaker at a special Nosh 'n' Drosh following the service.

All welcome.

Purim celebrations

Please save the date for
our Purim celebrations:
Wednesday 28 February.

Concert in memory of David Jacobi

Please note that the concert in memory of David Jacobi, son of Rabbi Harry Jacobi and brother of Rabbis Margaret and Richard Jacobi, will now be held at 15.00 on Sunday 25 February at Finchley Progressive Synagogue, 54 Hutton Grove, London, N12 8DR and not at The LJS.

Shabbat and festival services: February

Unless otherwise stated, Friday evening services start at 18.45 and *Shabbat* morning services at 11.00

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER	NOTES
Friday 26 January	Alexandra Wright	
<i>Shabbat</i> 27 January <i>B'shallach</i>	Dr Michael Hilton	
Tuesday 30 January <i>Tu Bi'Sh'vat Seder</i> 19.00		New Year for Trees
Friday 2 February	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by James Rogers
<i>Shabbat</i> 3 February <i>Yitro</i>	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> James Rogers
Friday 9 February	Igor Zinkov	
<i>Shabbat</i> 10 February <i>Mishpatim/Shekalim</i>	Igor Zinkov	13.15: Nosh 'n' Drosh with Dr Anne Summers: 'Anglo-Jewish Women 1880-1940: Hidden from History'
Friday 16 February	Rachel Benjamin	LJY-Netzer weekend at The LJS
<i>Shabbat</i> 17 February <i>Terumah</i>	Rachel Benjamin	<i>Kiddush</i> in honour of Harry Davies's special birthday
Friday 23 February	Igor Zinkov	<i>Chavurah</i> supper for the families of pupils in <i>Kittah Zayin</i> and <i>Kittah Chet</i> [11-13 year olds]
<i>Shabbat</i> 24 February <i>T'tzavveh/Zachor</i>	Sue Head	The LJS's annual Council <i>Shabbat</i> led by members of the LJS Council
Wednesday 28 February <i>Purim</i>		17.30 <i>Megillah</i> reading for families with young children: email Debi, education@ljs.org If you are interested in coming 19.45 <i>Megillah</i> reading followed by a <i>Purim Spiel</i> : email Joanne, rabbispa@ljs.org if you would like to be involved
Friday 2 March	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Niamh Eisenberg <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> <i>Chavurah</i> supper for the visiting choir of the Paris congregation <i>Kehilat Gesher</i>
<i>Shabbat</i> 3 March <i>Ki Tissa</i>	Alexandra Wright	Niamh Eisenberg <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> <i>Kehilat Gesher</i> choir sings with the LJS Members' Choir
Friday 9 March	Alexandra Wright	
<i>Shabbat</i> 10 March <i>Va-yakheil/</i> <i>Pekudei/</i> <i>Parah</i>	Alexandra Wright Igor Zinkov	Intergenerational service in the Sanctuary led by the children and teenagers of Rimon <i>Shema Koleinu</i> service in the John Rayner Room

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

The view from the LJS Council

LJS Chairman Sue Head reports on pastoral work, volunteering, fundraising, planning for the future, and the recruitment of a new rabbi



Council's first meeting of 2018 began with a key focus for this year, the appointment of a new rabbi to replace Rabbi Pferzel who left in the summer. A recruitment group has met with Rabbi Wright and agreed that we will advertise the post by the end of January.

Josie Lane, Chair of the '4Cs' (Community Care Co-ordination Committee) led a useful discussion on the range of work being undertaken by those involved in caring for members of the community. We considered the support people need at different stages of their lives and discussed the nature of volunteering, on which most of the work rests.

Rabbi Wright reported that, as part of this work, a Family Support Group is being established. The purpose of this group is to provide the professional team at The LJS with a sounding board of

experts who will help them in their pastoral work with families and with individuals.

Council also reviewed the new style membership renewal pack (which you should have received by now). This fresh approach draws upon the work of the Membership Think Tank, which recommended giving members more information about the benefits of membership and also making it easier to pay! The office staff worked hard to produce something attractive and useful. Please let us know what you think.

Our Annual Plan, 2018, is now in place, providing a strategic overview of the regular, ongoing activities of The LJS. It gives us a baseline on which to develop other ideas. As new activities are agreed, they will be added into the plan and budgeted. This is giving the synagogue a framework, enabling us to describe and cost what the synagogue does

and helping us take decisions about what else we could be doing. We will review the plan half way through this year.

We have good news about some of our fundraising appeals. The very successful 'Bagel and Banter' evening in the autumn raised £2,500 towards the new kitchen. Sue Bolsom and Gaby Lazarus have worked tirelessly on this project and we are very grateful to them. The appeal for the stained glass window in the John Rayner Room has so far raised £9,600, about 70% of what we need, so this too is doing well. Finally, the *Yom Kippur* appeal, when we look outside our own community and give to others, has achieved £71,200: this is excellent and it is still not too late to give!

Some news about the Council itself: Barbara Fidler, one of our two Honorary Treasurers, will be standing down from Council. Barbara gives a great deal to the synagogue and although we are very sorry that she will soon be leaving the Council, we are very appreciative of all that she does.

Members of Council will be participating in the *Shabbat* morning service on 24 February. The Council was delighted to be asked to do this as it reminds us of our underlying beliefs and why it is that we are volunteers at The LJS.

Sue Head

What to do when someone dies: a guide

In the first of a two-part series, Rabbi Alexandra Wright answers some of the questions people have when someone close to them dies

Each of us has a name
Given to us by the sea
And by the way
We die.

Verses taken from
L'chol ish yesh shem
by the Hebrew poet Zelda

All societies and cultures possess their own mourning rituals, ways in which the living can say farewell to the dead, pour out their grief and recall the lives of those who have died. Judaism, too, has developed a structure of *mitzvot* – observances and traditions – which help those in the last stages of their life to acknowledge their mortality, and the living to begin to grieve and come to terms with their loss. When someone dies, our first reaction is often a sense of shock and numbness and the last thing we feel like doing is making decisions about burial or cremation, how many nights of *shivah* (the seven day mourning period that follows the funeral) to observe, or responding to similar questions. Many people help their families or those closest to them by writing their final wishes in their will or in a letter. Occasionally

these matters are discussed while the dying person is still able to communicate. But for others, those decisions are too hard to make while they are alive and it is left to the living to face these questions at a time when they may find it difficult to make decisions.

This article is based on a booklet published by Liberal Judaism and is designed to help ease some of those choices and offer explanation and encouragement to use Jewish observance as something that can be practical, helpful and comforting.

What should we do when a family member or friend is close to death?

It is always helpful to contact the synagogue when you know that a loved one is near to death. Jo-Anne Winston, the LJS Funeral Co-ordinator (synagogue@ljs.org or 020 7432 1298) offers sound and reassuring practical advice. It is often the uncertainty about what to do that causes anxiety for next of kin. Jo-Anne organises all LJS burials and cremations, as well as Jewish funerals for non-members, together with the LJS's funeral directors, Calo's.

The rabbis would like to know if a loved one is



'It is always helpful to contact the synagogue... it is often the uncertainty about what to do that causes anxiety for next of kin'

– Rabbi Alexandra Wright

‘Liberal Judaism recommends a funeral taking place sooner rather than later, but would also take into consideration the needs of family or friends...’

near to death and will always offer to visit a home, hospital, hospice or nursing home. It's not everyone's choice – the appearance of clergy can sometimes be frightening – but it can also be reassuring.

For those for whom prayer is an important part of their life – whether at home or at synagogue – a brief moment of prayer, reciting Psalms, encouraging family and friends to say what they wish to say when someone is nearing the end of their life can be comforting and important.

Unlike many other synagogues, The LJS does not have a burial scheme which requires an additional annual payment by members, on top of the membership renewal fee. Instead, the synagogue offers members and friends the right to burial at the LJS cemetery in Willesden, at a cost which is far less than for a non-member.

What happens immediately after a death?

Jewish observance is based on the rabbinic principle of *kibbud ha-meit* (showing respect for or honouring the dead). How we speak in the presence of the dead, how we handle the body, the swiftness of burial or cremation, the lifting of certain religious obligations for the living – all these things are considered important in Jewish practice because they reveal our respect for the dead lying before us as well as the feelings of the mourners.

When someone dies in a hospital or hospice, the first call should be to the LJS Funerals Co-ordinator during office hours. If someone dies at home, please contact the GP and then The LJS or Funeral Director. The LJS Funerals Co-ordinator will guide you through the steps of obtaining a medical certificate from a GP or hospital doctor, cremation papers if necessary and the registration of a death in the local register office. In some cases, a death will need to be reported to a coroner. The LJS Funerals Co-ordinator or the funeral director will help you through each stage of this process.

Burial or cremation (or woodland burial)

Most individuals express their final wishes in their will or to their family. Liberal Judaism allows cremation and leaves the choice of burial or cremation to the individual. It is important to try and respect the final wishes of the deceased. The traditional practice of holding the funeral as soon as possible after death ensures the dignity of the deceased, and for the mourners, a short period of being in limbo during the period of *aninut* (the period of mourning between death and a funeral).

Liberal Judaism recommends a funeral taking place sooner rather than later, but would also take into consideration the needs of family or friends who may have to travel some distance. The LJS Funerals Co-ordinator will also ask whether a widow or widower or other family members or partners wish to reserve an additional plot. The LJS cemetery offers side-by-side graves as well as in-depth burials.

Increasingly, individuals are enquiring about woodland burials and Liberal rabbis are more than willing to officiate at funerals which have regard for the well-being of the environment. In-depth and woodland burials are certainly in keeping with the Liberal Jewish ethos of concern for the environment.

What happens at the funeral?

It is helpful to arrange a meeting with the officiating rabbi before the funeral. If it isn't possible to meet in person, then time should be made to speak to the rabbi on the telephone. A meeting is an opportunity to ask questions about the funeral service and *shivah*, as well as other rituals and to talk about the deceased.

The Hebrew term for funeral is *l'vayah* which means 'accompanying'. Attending a funeral implies 'accompanying' the dead on their last journey, together with the mourners and members of the community in which the deceased lived. All individuals are buried or

‘Liberal Judaism is not prescriptive, but it does commend rituals and observances that may be helpful and comforting at certain times in a person’s life...’

cremated in a simple wooden coffin with no adornment. The deceased is usually wrapped in simple white shrouds (*tachrichin*).

It is also traditional to be wrapped in one’s *tallit*. Tradition deems that one of the *tzitzit* (fringes of the *tallit*) should be cut. However, not everyone has a *tallit*, or you may wish to pass your *tallit* on to a child or grandchild. None of this is mandatory for Liberal Jews, it is a matter of individual choice. All ornaments are removed. Behind these customs is the recognition of the equality of death. Wealthy or poor, all are equal before God. The dead should be dressed simply. Just as we come into the world without possessions, so in the same manner do we go out of this world.

The funeral liturgy used for burials and cremations is composed of Psalms and prayers with an emphasis on the life of the soul which returns to God. The *hesped* (eulogy) is often given by the rabbi, but occasionally by a member of the family or a very close friend.

Kaddish

Our familiarity with the prayer known as *Kaddish* (Aramaic: ‘Sanctification’) stems mostly from the daily, *Shabbat* and festival services. It is the prayer which concludes our worship at every service. But it is mostly closely associated with mourners. It is a prayer affirming the holiness and greatness of God, verses which say implicitly: ‘My life is changed by the loss of someone close to me, yet still I affirm my faith in a just and loving God!’ In orthodox communities, it is traditional for the male mourners only to recite the *Kaddish*. Liberal Judaism encourages men and women to participate as equals in all its services. It is not unusual at a Liberal Jewish funeral, for the whole congregation to support the mourners by joining in with the *Kaddish*.

Liberal Judaism is not prescriptive, but it does commend rituals and observances that may be helpful and comforting at certain times in a person’s life. Whether one remains for some time with a person after they have died, whether

one recites prayers or Psalms, what instructions to give nursing staff in hospital or at a home, whether to bring children to a funeral, how many nights to sit *shivah* and other questions, are all dealt with in Liberal Judaism’s booklet *On Death and Mourning: A Guide*, which is available from Jo-Anne Winston in the office. An electronic version is also available. A shorter, practical leaflet entitled *When someone dies: How to arrange a funeral through The LJS* is also available. If you would like a copy, please contact Jo-Anne Winston, Funerals Co-ordinator: synagogue@ljs.org or 0207 432 1298

■ Part 2 of this article, in the March newsletter, will deal with the rituals and observances after a funeral, from the period of *Shivah* to the stone setting.

Alexandra Wright

Israel at 70

Hills • Valleys • Encounters

3-10 June 2018



LJS community trip to Israel
with Rabbi Alexandra Wright

Three days touring in the North

Four nights in Jerusalem
with a day in Hebron

**BOOK NOW TO AVOID IMMINENT
AIR FARE INCREASE**

Itinerary and details from
SueBolsom@gmail.com

Final fundraiser for the kitchen brings total up to £69,466

Following the success of the first Comedy Night in 2016, the fundraising committee hosted

'Banter and Bagels 2' in November to complete three years of fundraising for the kitchen. This year's

event was held in the Montefiore Hall, creating more of a



comedy club atmosphere for just under 100 people who attended.

After a bagel buffet, the superb banter was provided by comedians Zoe Lyons, Hal Cruttenden, and Joe Bor, with our home-grown compere Philip Simon.

Thanks to the generosity of everyone who bought tickets, made donations, or took part in the raffle, Comedy Night raised £2,500; and with gratitude to the community's support of a variety of events since 2015, the total amount raised for the kitchen is a staggering £ 69,466.

Gaby Lazarus,
Chair of

fundraising committee

Do you want to study Judaism or Hebrew? Download details of all our adult education courses from <http://tinyurl.com/ycey9hh>

FAITH FOR THE CLIMATE PRESENTS
THE SECOND INTERFAITH CLIMATE SYMPOSIUM

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

WEDNESDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2018
5PM - 9PM

THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE
28 ST. JOHN'S WOOD ROAD
LONDON NW8 7HA

How can we harness local action on climate change to enact change globally? How can we celebrate and encourage local cooperation?

Come and explore through workshops and talks how we can work across and within different faith traditions in the UK to tackle an issue that affects millions worldwide.

Speakers include:

- Lord Deben, Chair, UK Committee on Climate Change
- Rabbi Alexandra Wright, Liberal Jewish Synagogue
- Ashok Sinha, Chair, London Sustainability Commission
- Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, Muslim Council of Britain
- Rt Revd Richard Cheetham, Bishop of Kingston

Tickets are only £5 including supper

Book now via the link to avoid disappointment:
www.ticketsource.co.uk/faithfortheclimate



The charmed life of a true professional

Jean Jaffa

3 May 1926 – 19 December 2017

The eldest child and only daughter of Sir Louis and Lady Gluckstein, Jean Sylvia Jaffa was born on the first day of the General Strike in 1926. Her father, who combined the roles of President and Chairman of The LJS, was an MP and prominent national figure and Jean was very much part of the LJS congregation, particularly enjoying its musical heritage.

Gracious and beautiful, talented, loyal, independent, dependable, modest and with a robust sense of humour, Jean became the archetypal nurturer and provider to her family, confidante to friends, a woman who said that she lived a charmed life and that her glass was always more than half-full.

Jean attended Francis Holland School and then Moira House, where she was a boarder from the age of 14. Her school reports record that she was lively and full of energy – a larger than life individual. She was fiercely protected by her father, particularly from suitors he disapproved of, but he also recognised that his daughter possessed, not only an independent spirit, but also a great singing voice and that it needed to be nurtured.

It wasn't until she met her singing teacher, Madame Reynolds, that Jean began formal singing lessons, acquiring the timeless techniques that nurtured a voice of purity, of stirring interpretation and great clarity. She began to learn the repertoire and to sing publicly – the Lieder repertoire and contralto solos in the Verdi Requiem, Messiah and Dream of Gerontius, among many other works. She was one of 800 singers who auditioned for the chorus at Glyndebourne and was chosen together with three others. These were some of her happiest years, singing in the chorus with small solo roles and bringing her sense of mischief to performances and rehearsals. It is said that she once brought a dead fish on stage

for the witch's scene in a performance of Verdi's Macbeth, provoking suppressed laughter among fellow performers.

There were plenty of suitors back in London, but when she met Max she knew that she had met the love of her life. They met in Portsmouth and the engagement, initially, was a professional one. Jean was booked to be the soloist with the Max Jaffa trio – she was somewhat hesitant and Max had confided to his fellow musicians, 'I do hope she can sing.'

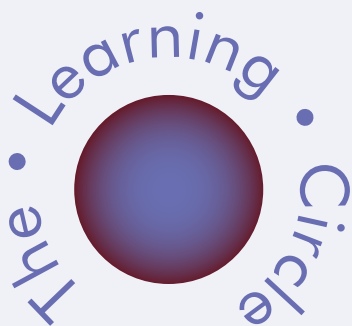
There was mutual admiration and adoration – Max loved her singing and she adored the sound of his violin. She remained a truly professional musician, inhabiting everything she sung, every word ringing out with clear enunciation and a sense of drama and poignancy, sharing Max's unique interaction with audiences.

With the birth of Naomi and then Jenny and Lisa, Jean generous-heartedly juggled the demands of family life with her singing. She ran their two homes in London and near Scarborough where Max would work for 17 weeks during the summer with his orchestra.

For 27 years she would go down to the concert hall to listen to Max with her needlepoint and always waited to sit down for dinner with him after his concert had finished. It was a devastating loss when he died in 1991, and she missed him enormously.

Jean loved entertaining and cooking; she was something of a perfectionist. She enjoyed various other interests including curling, bridge and golf. She was active in the Westminster Society and other charitable work and, of course, her music. She would sit quietly in synagogue on *Kol Nidre* listening to Tim Farrell, the LJS organist, playing the organ before the service. She was really a people person. She cared deeply about everyone – her family and friends and those whose lives came into contact with hers were, in turn, steadfastly loyal to her.

She is survived by her daughters Naomi, Jenny and Lisa, and her brother Roy, and their families.



at the **LJS**

Classes in Judaism and Hebrew
Purim term 5778/2018

Tuesdays 11.15-12.30

9 January to 27 March

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 Holocaust Theology, as well as a course by our visiting Rabbi, Dr Michael Hilton, from 6-27 March, on Samson in the Book of Judges.

Tuesdays 19.00-20.00

9 January to 27 March

Classical Hebrew at all levels

Half term: 13 February

Beginners' Hebrew with Susannah Alexander

Are you learning to read Hebrew for the first time, or have you tried to get your head around the letters for years, and never quite achieved success? If so, join this fun and supportive class, open to all, where we will use a tried-and-tested method to get you reading faster than you ever thought possible. Beginning with Jonathan Romain's Primer 'Signs and Wonders' and moving on to a taste of grammar, liturgy and Bible, this class will equip you to take your first steps into the wonderful world of Hebrew with skill and confidence.

Next steps in biblical Hebrew with Sally Gold

This class is for those who would like to practise guided reading, at their own pace, of simple Hebrew from the *Siddur* and the Hebrew Bible. We will gradually build reading skills and knowledge of vocabulary and simple grammar at an unhurried and manageable pace. The class allows plenty of time to gain, revise and consolidate using texts from the *Siddur* and some simple exercises which help with progressive understanding and confidence.

Saul: an unsuitable case for a king; David: warrior and lover king with Rabbi Alexandra Wright

The Book of Samuel includes the stories of the first king of Israel, a complex character, not altogether suited for kingship, as well as the rise of King David from simple shepherd boy to conqueror of the Jebusite town that became Jerusalem. These stories are told in consummate narrative form. The Hebrew is not too difficult. The class aims to improve your reading, widen your vocabulary and build knowledge of various grammatical forms.

Exploring Judaism with Rabbi Rachel Benjamin and Student Rabbi Igor Zinkov

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.

6 February	Exploring God and belief
13 February	Half term
20 February	Exploring <i>Purim</i>
27 February	Introduction to life cycle and early life rituals
6 March	Education and coming of age
13 March	Conversion
20 March	Marriage and mixed faith blessings
27 March	<i>Pesach</i> workshops

Jewish-Muslim relations – taught by Dr Jonathan Gorsky

The course will start with an overview of key historical and theological issues, and try to provide a model for understanding Jewish-Muslim relations, drawing on different disciplines.

We will examine the impact of Islam on medieval Judaism, including our understanding of *Torah*, Maimonidean philosophy, classical spiritual and ethical texts and Jewish Sufism. The course will also cover contemporary issues, focusing on the plurality of Islam today. We will look at the influence of Wahabism (an extreme Saudi Arabian Islamic ideology) on the Muslim world and by contrast we will introduce Liberal Islam, which has considerable common ground with modern Judaism.

We will also discuss current positive and hopeful developments in what can be a very fraught relationship between the two communities.

A fifth session at 20.00 on 20 March will be offered introducing the group to Scriptural Reasoning.

Jonathan Gorsky graduated in history from Liverpool and Manchester Universities in 1976 and spent a number of years in advanced Jewish study. He was Education Director of the Yakar Centre until 1992 and Education Officer of the Council of Christians and Jews until 2006. In 2007 Jonathan joined Heythrop College as lecturer in Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations and he was degree convener for the BA [Abrahamic Religions] until the college's closure in 2017.



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 or phone 020 7289 6321.

Shabbat 9.45-10.45

6 January to 24 March

Torah study and Jewish thought

Half term: 10 and 17 February

This term we are studying the teachings of Moses Maimonides, the Rambam.

The class is sometimes self-led and sometimes has professional input. Rabbi Michael Hilton will introduce the Rambam and Rabbi Alex and Student Rabbi Igor Zinkov will also lead classes about him. We have a nucleus of regular members but we do welcome new students. No prior knowledge is necessary and you are welcome to just come and sit with us to determine whether you wish to continue. For further information contact Michael Romain at romain@netgates.co.uk or Harriett Goldenberg at hgoldenberg@btinternet.com

Shabbat 9.45-10.45

6 January to 24 March

Beginners' Hebrew with Naomi Brightwell

Half term: 10 and 17 February

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. No previous knowledge required. Previous students have even gone on to lead *Shabbat* morning services.

Moving up in Hebrew with David Strang

The aim of this class is to help students to understand the Hebrew prayers and songs in our services. New students will need basic reading skills but we will spend some time increasing reading fluency. We will also look at the basics of Hebrew grammar using the textbook *Prayerbook Hebrew the Easy Way* which will be available for purchase. We will build up your vocabulary too, and there will be five words a week to learn. We will also start learning how to write the Hebrew letters, using simplified versions of the block letters in the *siddur*.

Intermediate Hebrew with Nitza Spiro

The aim of these sessions is to explore the Hebrew texts which the learners will come across in synagogue services on *Shabbatot* and festivals.

Some of the texts which will be introduced and studied in preparation for each festival (like the Passover *Haggadah*, the Book of Esther, and the Book of Ruth with some verses from the Book of Proverbs) might even be sung at times. Hopefully this knowledge will also be shared with families at home. The class will be working on fluency in reading but at the same time will also be learning about the historical, ethical, philosophical, and ideological messages of the texts. Through such familiarity every student will gain a deeper understanding and sense of identity with our heritage as well as appreciation and love for the Hebrew language.

Second talk in 'Great Lives' series

16.00 on 18 March

The first in a series of talks entitled 'Great Lives' – on Mohammed – was given at St John's Wood Church by the Director General of London Central Mosque, Dr Ahmed al-Dubayan. The second talk in the series will be given at The LJS on Sunday 18 March at 16.00 by the Rev Dr Anders Bergquist on 'Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179): abbess, scientist, mystic, musician, and more.'

A third talk, on Rabbi John Rayner, will be given by Rabbi Alexandra Wright at the London Central Mosque, date and time to be confirmed.

Anniversary year ends with a party

The final celebration for the 50th anniversary of the Out and About Club was a dinner for 120 people held in the Montefiore Hall. A delicious three course meal was cooked by Shelley Salter who had expertly mastered the new 'Combi' oven in the brand new LJS kitchen.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed a very witty speech by our President, Rabbi David Goldberg, and this was followed by a most uplifting and stimulating talk by our guest of honour, Esther Rantzen, one of the founders of the club. Lady Isabel Flight, the Westminster Champion for Older People enjoyed meeting many of our members who have attended the very popular Silver Sunday events she has initiated.

The year ended with a 90th birthday party for Frank Knight which was shared with our youngest helper Anshel Cohen, who was celebrating his 21st birthday. They can be seen in the photo with the special

cakes that Sonia Leanse baked and decorated. The evening also included a fascinating talk by Anna Kochan about her time working for Future Hope, a charity looking after street

children in Kolkata, and her beautiful book of Indian recipes called *Rice and Spice* which is being sold to raise funds for the charity.

Jenny Nathan



Above: Esther Rantzen congratulating David Hogarth on being awarded the British Empire Medal.



Left: Frank Knight and Anshel Cohen with their respective birthday cakes and their friend Rose Griffiths.

Leave a legacy

Congregants appreciate the warm welcome they receive at The LJS and the contribution of our many volunteers. In return, please support the synagogue by including The LJS in your will. Your legacy would help to ensure our community continues to thrive. To find out more, contact the Rabbis or the Executive Director.

Please join our friendly team of LJS Greeters and help us ensure that every *Shabbat* we are able to offer the famous LJS welcome. You'd only spend one or two mornings each quarter welcoming members and visitors. Please call Jemma or Laura on 020 7432 1296 or email membership@ljs.org if you can help.

Mark the event

Have you thought about contributing to the weekly *kiddush* following our *Shabbat* morning service to mark a special birthday or other big event? If you would like to take part in the service to mark the occasion, please contact Joanne Beaumont on 020 7432 1283 or email her at 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. Enjoy soup on arrival then a DVD (film classics, musicals, etc) followed by a delicious tea including home-made coffee ice-cream.

Donation of £2.

28 February: *Mama Mia!*

28 March: *Ethel and Ernest*

25 April: *Bugsy Malone*

23 May: *The Artist*

27 June: *Genevieve*

25 July: *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*

22 August: *Whisky Galore*

26 September: *Meet Me in St Louis*

24 October: *Brief Encounter*

28 November: *The Snowman and Father Christmas*



LOCAL WALKING GROUP

The LJS local walking group is scheduled to hold its first walk at 11.00 on 1 February. All LJS members and friends are welcome to join in. For more details, please contact Jody Graham at awithj@gmail.com



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 12.45 and now costs £5.



YOUNG ADULTS' DINNERS

Are you between the ages of 25 and 35 – or thereabouts? Do you have children or grandchildren of a similar age? Or friends whom you would like to introduce to The LJS? Friday evening dinners for Young Adults are held once a month. For more details contact a.wright@ljs.org



BRIDGE CLUB



The Bridge Club meets from 14.00 to 17.00 every Monday 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.



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 020 7286 5181 or a.shafritz@ljs.org



PAINT FOR PLEASURE

Both experienced artists and beginners are welcome to join this friendly, informal group to paint together. Bring pastels, water colours, acrylic, oils or other materials. The group meets at 11.00 every Monday [except on Jewish festivals and Bank Holidays]. For more details, email Jocelyne Tobin at jocelynetobin@talktalk.net



ARCHIVE TUESDAYS

The Archive team works in the Assembly Hall on most Tuesdays. Activities include sorting historical papers, cataloguing and photo preservation. If you'd like to help with this important work, please contact Cinde Lee at cinde.lee@gmail.com



SINGING FOR THE MIND

This is a popular weekly activity for people with memory problems who come with a family member, friend or carer. Music brings fun, confidence and a time to relax among new found friends. To apply, email sfm@ljs.org or phone 020 7286 5181. For further information pick up a leaflet or visit the LJS website.

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

Rebekah Allen
Alexander Boizard
Zack Braham
Adam Cang
Joshua Cang
Vera Cohen
Rebecca Collett
Jason Covey
Tomas Cowley
Rachel Crawley
James Crawley
Jessica Falk

Noah Gershon
Alice Gilbert
Layla Grant
Daniel Isaacson
Erik Klein Wassink
Lily Lazarus
Raphael Lewis
Ariana Malbon-Arvanitakis
Jeremy Mencer
Louis Miller
Jake Phillips
Maia Rynehart
Isabella Sinclair
Hannah Spearman-Walters
Daniel Tahar
Herbie Warner

TINY TOTS at the LJS

Do you have little ones aged between 0 and 4?

Tiny Tots will be meeting on

**3 and 24 February,
3, 10, 17 and 24 March**

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

Activities for tiny ones with their parents, grandparents and carers. The nursery will still be available every *Shabbat* for children and their parents or carers.

Please email education@ljs.org to be added to the mailing list.

New acquisitions in the library

- *Deep calls to deep: transforming conversations between Jews and Christians* edited by Rabbi Tony Bayfield
 - *Jews and Words* by Amos Oz and Fania Oz-Salzberger
 - *Belonging: the story of the Jews 1492-1900* by Simon Schama
 - *Christian and Jewish Women in Britain 1880-1940* by Anne Summers
 - *Makers of Jewish Modernity* edited by J. Picard and others
- Books may be borrowed for one month.

The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

Patrons

Bernie Bulkin and Vivien Rose
Richard and Joy Desmond
Peter and Leanda Englander
Willie and Jo Kessler
Hugh and Angela Marsden
Anthony Roe (*zichrono livrachah*)
The Eranda Rothschild Foundation
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The Liberal Jewish Synagogue is a company limited by guarantee (Company No 9113305) and a registered charity in England and Wales (Charity No 1159292).
Registered office:
28 St John's Wood Road
London NW8 7HA

Tel 020 7286 5181
Fax 020 7266 3591
Linked to Typetalk
E-mail ljs@ljs.org
Website www.ljs.org

Senior Rabbi

Alexandra Wright

Rabbi Emeritus

David J Goldberg OBE

Rabbi

Rachel Benjamin

President

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Head of Rimon Religion School

Dov Softi

Nursery Head Teacher

Caroline Villiers

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)

LJS News Team

Editor

Peter Singer

Artwork

Davies Communications
Tel 020 7586 0850

Road to Holocaust charted in Mattuck sermons, Nosh 'n' Drosh audience told

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of their legal rights and prohibited social relations between Jews and Christians, Rabbi Mattuck declared that forcing Jews back into the ghetto was a challenge to European civilization and a sign of Germany's degradation.

In a sermon in October 1938, Mattuck said that 400,000 German Jews now faced only two possibilities of escape from Nazi persecution: death or emigration. Yet with the German take-over of Austria and the Sudetenland, another 2-300,000 Jews had been added to the numbers of potential victims. Jewish rights were also being eroded in countries not yet under Nazi rule, such as Italy and Hungary.

In his 1940 *Kol Nidre* sermon, Rabbi Mattuck said that Jews in the occupied countries had been reduced to the status of pariahs and slaves: he accused

the Nazis of treachery, arrogance, greed and barbarism. At *Chanukkah* 1942 Mattuck referred to the struggle of the Maccabees. What was happening in Europe was not just a repetition: millions of Jews were in Hitler's power and facing the threat of extermination. But the Jewish spirit would survive: their loyalty to their religion was the condition of their survival.

In September 1944, when it was clear that Germany was facing defeat, he looked forward to a time when all men would be guaranteed their human rights and protected from persecution.

In February 1945, he called for punishment not just of the torturers and murderers but of the Nazi 'gangsters' who had directed the persecution. It would be immoral to treat the Germans as if the war had not happened.

Future Nosh 'n' Drosh sessions planned include:

Shabbat 10 February:

Dr Anne Summers: Anglo-Jewish Women 1880-1940: Hidden from History. Dr Summers is an Honorary Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, and a founding editor of History Workshop Journal.

Shabbat 10 March:

Beverley Mautner: The Judaica Collection at the British Museum

Shabbat 21 April:

Rabbi Gilad Kariv, Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism: the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel

Nosh 'n' Drosh has proved to be one of our most successful innovations of the past two years. If you would consider sponsoring a Nosh 'n' Drosh, please ask Martin Slowe or Rabbi Alexandra Wright for more information.

The great Jewish contribution to human rights law

The Jewish contribution to the development of human rights law was outlined at December's Nosh 'n' Drosh meeting by barrister Geraldine Van Bueren.

She described the contribution of René Cassin, a former president of the European Court of Human Rights; of Sir

Hersch Lauterpacht, a judge at the International Court of justice from 1955-60; and of Louis Brandeis, the first Jewish judge of the US Supreme Court.

She pointed out that despite the advances of the last 70 years, human rights law in the UK was still among the weakest in Europe.



Geraldine Van Bueren QC

The LJS is a constituent synagogue of Liberal Judaism

liberal judaism



The next LJS News will be for March 2018. Final copy date: 6 February 2018. Copy should be emailed to info@daviescomms.com or to the Editors at The LJS.

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