

Don't miss this...

Not just Brahms (left) and Mendelssohn (right): explore the many connections between Jewish culture and the evolution of classical song on our new course, starting at 11.15 on 26 June. See full details on page 10.



Leader of Israeli progressive Judaism visits LJS



Rabbi Gilad Kariv, Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, was the guest speaker at a special service held on 21 April to mark the 70th anniversary of Israel's declaration of independence.

Here he is pictured with (l to r) Rabbi Alexandra Wright, Danny Rich [Senior Rabbi of Liberal Judaism], Sharon Bar-Li [Israel's Deputy Ambassador in London] and Rabbi Rachel Benjamin.

June 2018

Sivan-
Tammuz
5778



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General Data Protection Regulations at The LJS

Like all organisations, The LJS is changing its data protection in line with the new regulations that come into place on 25 May 2018. In joining The LJS you have provided us with the information we need to include you as a member and remain in contact, and we have operated a strict policy to keep the information you give us secure and used appropriately.

The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is intended to improve the protections available to individuals in relation to their data and builds on the current legislation already in place. As part of the GDPR, The LJS has conducted a data audit and is undertaking

several changes in line with the new regulation. The most important item is that we have updated our privacy notice which will now include additional details about the information we collect. This new notice will be up on our website, linked via the weekly Shalom LJS, and also available in print form from the main foyer.

During the coming year we will also contact every member to check the data we hold and do the same with all non-members who volunteer.

If you want to find out more about how we implement data protection, at any time, please speak to Lysa Schwartz, the Executive Director, on 020 7286 5181.

Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Armand Azoulay, partner of Alex Rosen

Jean Solomons, wife of Anthony, mother of Nicola and the late Jennifer Solomons

המקום ינחם אתכם
בתוך שאר האבלים

May God comfort you
and all who mourn

Don't miss the LJS Annual General Meeting

Dr Jonathan Boyd, Executive Director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, will be speaking about the statistical report he has produced with Dr Donatella Casale Mashiah on synagogue membership in the United Kingdom. This reveals that total synagogue membership has dropped below 80,000 households for the first time since records began.

The AGM is in the Montefiore Hall at 19.30 on 20 June.

After six years: Peter's last issue as editor

This is Peter Singer's last issue as editor of *LJS News* and, on behalf of the congregation, I want to say an immense thank you to him for having taken on the task.

Editing a newsletter is constant, there is scarcely a break with ten issues a year. Each month, Peter has gently encouraged his many contributors to stick to

deadlines and word counts, hardly batting an eyelid when they are defied. He has juggled the various needs of those urging priority for their own educational, ritual, community care and social events.

He has turned up at nearly every major event (and many minor ones too) with his camera to record who was there – whether members,

guests, VIPs and others. Consequently, The LJS now has a remarkable record of its activity over the last few years.

We owe you a huge debt of gratitude and thanks, Peter. It has been a pleasure to work with you and I hope the high standards you have set as editor will be maintained in the future.

AW

Shabbat and festival services: June

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

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER	NOTES
Friday 25 May	Igor Zinkov	
Shabbat 26 May Naso	Igor Zinkov	We will be using the new Shabbat morning liturgy from the draft <i>Siddur Shirah Chadashah</i> and instead of a sermon will hold a Nosh 'n' Drosh discussion, lunch and a talk about what we think of the new liturgy
Friday 1 June	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Axel Cohen <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 2 June B'Ha'a'lot'chah	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Axel Cohen
Friday 8 June	Rachel Benjamin	
Shabbat 9 June Sh'lach L'cha ▲	Rachel Benjamin	
Friday 15 June	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Estella Levi-French <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 16 June Korach ▲	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bat Mitzvah</i> Estella Levi-French
Friday 22 June Both services start at 18.45 ▲	Alexandra Wright Igor Zinkov	Co-led in the Sanctuary by Claudia Spanier <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> <i>Koleinu</i> Service in the John Rayner Room Young Adults' <i>Chavurah</i> supper <i>Chavurah</i> supper for Rimon classes Zayin and Chet
Shabbat 23 June Chukkat ▲	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bat Mitzvah</i> Claudia Spanier
Friday 29 June	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Jonas Sellar <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> LJ Biennial in Birmingham this weekend
Shabbat 30 June Balak ▲	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Jonas Sellar
Monday 2 July 19.00	Leo Baeck College ordination	At The LJS
Friday 6 July	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Sam Frank <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 7 July Pinchas	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Sam Frank Rimon last day of term

▲ = Parking alert: cricket at Lord's on these dates

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.

Good news on the rabbinic front

Last month, I shared with you the excellent news that we have appointed student rabbi Igor Zinkov to the post of rabbi at The LJS, which he will take up when he receives his rabbinic ordination in a year's time. This month I have more good news. In addition to Igor, we are employing Elana Dellal as part-time rabbi.

Rabbi Dellal studied at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati and was ordained in 2011. Her husband is English and from London. Elana and her husband are moving back to the UK this summer, with their three small sons. In 2008-09, during her time as a rabbinic student, Elana undertook work experience here in the UK, as education consultant for Liberal Judaism.

During the next year, Rabbi Michael Hilton will continue as our Scholar in Residence and Rabbi Rachel Benjamin will take some services (including those over the High Holy Days) until December (although she officially leaves in July). This gives The LJS a strong and dynamic rabbinic team, led by Rabbi Wright.

At our recent Council meeting we carried out a mid-year review of our Annual Plan. Over the last six months we have had success in many areas we prioritised last September. These included expanding our learning programmes, recruiting new rabbis and ensuring we are compliant with the new data protection law. This list is not exhaustive! We are also about to launch the long awaited new website.

The AGM will be held at 19.30 on 20th June. I am delighted to report that we have received four nominations for Council: Sue Bolsom, Stephen Laughton, Benita Plax and David Rigal. In addition, two members of Council, Russell Delew and Steve Penn, are standing for election for a second term.

Following the official business of the AGM, Dr Jonathan Boyd, Executive Director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, will be speaking. Dr Boyd, together with Dr Donatella Casale Mashiah, published a report on behalf of the Board of Deputies, on synagogue membership in the UK. There are 454 synagogues in this country, the largest number recorded but, for the first time since records began, membership has dropped below 80,000 households.

According to the report, the overall decline masks important developments at a denominational level. The sector that has dropped most sharply is central Orthodoxy, whereas membership of the strictly Orthodox synagogues is growing. Liberal, Reform and Masorti figures have been fairly stable, but this picture

of stability is somewhat misleading: in reality, Liberal and Reform synagogues are losing members at a similar rate to central Orthodox congregations, but they are also attracting members which offsets those losses.

This should be a thought-provoking and interesting talk and discussion to which I hope you will all come.



As The LJS chooses its new part-time rabbi, Chairman Sue Head reveals that progressive Judaism is attracting new members to offset its losses

Sue Head



Countdown to that big KT moment...

Nine young members of The LJS celebrated their *Kabbalat Torah* at the *Shabbat* service on 28 April. Pictured immediately before the service are (back row, l to r) Benjamin Mencer, Michael Falk, Rabbi Alexandra Wright, Toby Levitt, Dalia Gelfer; and (front row) Amelia Osband, Annabel Grade, Naomi Hanna-Kemper, Dahlia Levin, Rebecca Collett.

11.00 on *Shabbat* 14 July

A service to say thank you and *au revoir* to Rabbi Rachel Benjamin who will be back in August to lead services and who will be with us for *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* and once a month until December.

Please join us for a special service of music, gratitude and a *kiddush* afterwards.

Saturday 21 July at 20.30

in the John Rayner Room

Erev Tisha B'Av

A service to commemorate the destruction of the First and Second Temples, the expulsion of the Jews from England and Spain, the pogroms of Poland and Eastern Europe and the *Shoah*

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 spend one or two mornings each quarter welcoming members and visitors. Please call Jemma or Laura on 020 7432 1296.

A coincidence

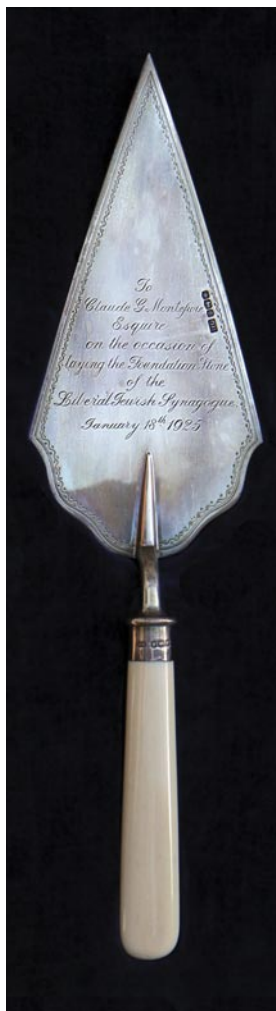
The Reverend Israel Leventon was the rabbi in Dublin in 1880. His combined functions included Reader, Teacher, *Shochet*, Minister and Secretary to a congregation of well over 100 families – all without any assistance. Despite his many activities, he found time to present the community with a *sefer torah*. As well as making the parchment, collecting the goatskins, putting them through the necessary tanning process and sewing them together, every single letter was written by him.

The scroll is still in use today. In 1892 a purpose-built synagogue was opened in Adelaide Road with the Rev Leventon as the minister. The Chief Rabbi, Dr Herman Adler delivered the dedication sermon and said that Ireland was the only country where the Jews had never been persecuted. Our current Senior Rabbi, Alexandra Wright, is Leventon's great, great granddaughter.

His daughter, Tillie, married Joseph Levitt. She had a remarkable singing voice and won the first prize for the soprano solo competition at the Irish Musical Festival in Belfast, and again won first prize at the Royal Irish Academy of Music for vocal national music the following year. (James Joyce gained the third prize and in disgust threw his medal into the River Liffey.)

Max Loble who presented and sang with students from the Royal Academy of Music at The LJS in March this year is Tillie's great, great grandson.

Neil Levitt



Montefiore's memento

Stored among the spare *Torah* silverware at The LJS is the trowel presented to Claude Montefiore to commemorate his laying, as the President, of the foundation stone of the original building on the current site (photo below). It is inscribed: 'To Claude G. Montefiore Esquire on the occasion of laying the Foundation Stone of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, January 18th 1925'.

The centenary history of The LJS mentions the synagogue being erected in 1924 and includes a photo of a child laying one of the first bricks. It also includes a photo of the frontage, showing the position of the foundation stone, which was moved to the LJS cemetery when the building was demolished in 1988.

The silver trowel with its ivory handle was presumably not actually used for mortar but presented to Montefiore by the Council as a memento; it is not known why he or his son Leonard returned it to The LJS.

Bryan Diamond



Mazal Tov on your marriage (or mixed faith blessing)

The continuing decline of marriages – particularly religious marriages – in the general population is mirrored in the Jewish community, with more couples cohabiting and the prevalence of same sex couples in the Jewish community, higher than in the

Christian population. But if you are bucking the trend and planning to have a Jewish marriage, then you might want to read on. (Mixed faith blessings and same sex marriages will be dealt with in a future issue.)



It's summer, the season for weddings. Rabbi Alexandra Wright looks at the continuing popularity of Jewish marriage – and the practicalities.

Jewish adults (59%) were living in couples, a higher proportion than any other religious or ethnic group, reflecting an older than average age profile and low male mortality in the Jewish community. Most Jews in couples

are married (89%), but one out of ten (11%) cohabits. Between 2001 and 2011, there was a significant 17% increase in the number of cohabiting Jews.

Over a third of Jews in their mid to late twenties cohabit (34%), although this is not true, of course, among the Haredi community who marry at a very young age. The average age at first marriage for Jewish men is currently 32 years and for Jewish women 29 years, similar to the general population in England and Wales and reflecting a steady increase in the age of marriage for men and women.

Just over 2,200 Jews live in same sex couples, or 1.8% of all Jews in partnerships. In 2011 about a third of this group was in a civil partnership. The report highlights the interesting statistic that the prevalence of Jews in same-sex couples (1.8%) is slightly higher than the national average (1.6%), notably higher than the Christian population (1.2%), but lower than people of mixed ethnicity (4.0%).

In the Anglo-Jewish community, married Jews account for 78% of the Jewish population, 22% are intermarried; while among cohabiting couples 32% are in endogamous relationships (living with a Jewish partner), while 68% are in exogamous relationships (living with a non-Jewish partner), which means that less than one out of three cohabiting Jews has a Jewish partner. The report goes on to analyse why

It's summer and the season of marriages, mixed faith blessings, civil partnerships and love. With the number of marriages in the UK, especially religious marriages, falling year by year, it is always something of a surprise and a pleasure to be asked to officiate at a wedding.

In 2015, the Office of National Statistics recorded that marriage rates were at their lowest level on record, following a gradual long-term decline since the early 1970s. The number of marriages between opposite-sex couples decreased by 3.4% in 2015, compared with 2014, in spite of increasing rates of weddings for men over the age of 50 and women between the ages of 35 and 39 and 45 years and over.

In the first full year for which marriages were available for same-sex couples (2015), they accounted for 2.6% of all marriages and marriage rates were higher among women than men at ages 20-39 years; while at ages 50 and over, rates were higher among men.

In the Jewish community, a Jewish Policy Research report on Marriage and Intermarriage in 2016 reported that in 2011, six out of ten



The 'flying' chuppah in the sanctuary at The LJS

there is such a high rate of exogamous relationships among cohabiting partners: 'a more fluid and less committed form of partnership than marriage and... more attractive to younger and less religious Jews' [Jews in Couples: Marriage, Intermarriage, Cohabitation and Divorce in Britain by David Graham, JPR Report, July 2016].

Given these statistics, it is remarkable that within our own community here at The LJS, there are individuals who still want a religious wedding; non-Jewish partners are joining our conversion course in a steady flow, not simply for the Jewish wedding at the end, but more significantly because they want to belong to a community, because they want to bring their children up within a Jewish family, to build a Jewish home and to establish for themselves solid Liberal Jewish values.

If you are planning a wedding under the auspices of The LJS, here is some practical advice. Under the Marriage Act of 1949, Jews are permitted to solemnise marriages with their own Secretaries of Marriages, appointed by The LJS, who act as Marriage Registrars. A Secretary of Marriage is required to be present at a wedding,

whether it takes place in our beautiful sanctuary underneath its 'flying' chuppah, at a hotel or any other venue, indoors or out. Unlike civil marriages, venues do not need to be 'licensed' for a Jewish marriage to take place.

It is always a good idea to contact the Rabbis' PA who will put you in touch with one of the Secretaries of Marriages. S/he will instruct you in

the legal aspects of your marriage, which involves registering your marriage in the area in which you live and signing the Marriage Registers at the conclusion of your wedding along with the *ketubbah*.

The religious aspects are determined by the Hebrew word for marriage – *kiddushin*. This word is derived from the word *kadosh*, which means 'holy.' *Kiddushin* is the 'setting apart' of a relationship for the special purpose of companionship and posterity.

The entire wedding service is conducted beneath the *chuppah* (canopy), representing the shelter and privacy of the home the bride and groom will create following their marriage. The home is central in Jewish life – it is the place where we grow up, learn to share and love, and from which we also secure our independence. Bride and groom stand right under the *chuppah*, while the 'walls' are usually formed by their families – parents and sometimes grandparents, children in the case of second or subsequent marriages.

Originally Jewish marriage was celebrated as two separate events – *erusin* (betrothal) and *nissuin* (marriage).

The formal betrothal was performed in the house of the bride, sometimes up to a year before the actual marriage took place in the home of the groom. The two celebrations were joined together in the Middle Ages and today are only separated by the reading of the *ketubbah* (marriage certificate).

Before the service

Before the ceremony, couples can opt to have a private moment together with the Rabbi in a ceremony known as *bedeken*. Traditionally, *bedeken* was a ritual during which the groom would check on the identity of the bride and then cover her with a veil, recalling the biblical story of the patriarch Jacob who had intended to marry his beloved Rachel, but ended up with her older sister Leah. In Liberal Judaism this is not a 'checking' ritual, but rather provides a quiet time of reflection helping the couple to prepare for the solemnity of the marriage blessings and vows. When this happens, the bridegroom sometimes covers the bride's face with a veil, while the bride wraps the groom in his *tallit*.

The marriage service

The bride and groom make their way to the *chuppah* – sometimes the bridegroom waiting for the bride under the *chuppah*, occasionally the entire wedding party and their families in a procession accompanied by music. The custom of the bride circling the bridegroom seven times has been interpreted as the symbolic building of a wall of love around the bride and groom. Seven represents the most sacred of all numbers in Judaism. Couples are encouraged to share this ritual in a more egalitarian way.

The couple are welcomed with the singing of Psalm 118:26, *Baruch Ha-ba*

['Blessed are you who come in the name of the Eternal One'] and with the fragment of a mediaeval hymn, *Mi Addir* ['May God who is supreme above all']. These two pieces form a musical prelude to the service. The latter follows a verbal acceptance of the duties of a husband and wife.

The blessing over betrothal, *Birkat Erusin* (the betrothal blessing) expresses the resolve of the bridegroom and bride to create a Jewish home, dedicated to God and to the well-being of humanity.

The couple are then ready to exchange rings and declare their betrothal vows to each other. These words: 'By this ring you are consecrated to me according to the law of Moses and Israel' form the essence of the marriage service. The circle of the ring is a symbol of the eternal nature of the marriage covenant and reflects not only God's eternal nature, but God's covenant with the Jewish people.

Following the ring ceremony, the *ketubbah* (marriage certificate) is read, attesting to the marriage that has taken place and reflecting the words just spoken by the bride and groom.

The Seven Benedictions that are read and sung following the reading of the *ketubbah* are very ancient and set the bride and groom into a wider social and sacred context.

They are arranged as follows:

- ① Blessing over the wine – symbol of joy.
- ② Blessing praising God to whom all creation proclaims praise.
- ③ God is praised as Creator of humanity.
- ④ God is praised Who created humanity in the Divine image.
- ⑤ Hope for the messianic future.

⑥ Prayer for the happiness of the bride and groom.

⑦ The individual hope for happiness for the couple is combined with a prayer for joy in the messianic future.

After the couple have shared the cup of wine, the service concludes with the recitation of the priestly benediction (Numbers 6:22-26) and with the breaking of a glass by the bridegroom.

There are many different interpretations of the breaking of the glass. Some maintain that it represents the destruction of the Temple and the tragedies of Jewish history and thus links the new couple to the Jewish people, whether in sadness or in joy.

Contemporary interpretations have suggested that it represents our fragmented society, where so many are in need, or that it symbolises the fragility of the marriage bond, and therefore, the need for love and understanding if the marriage is to survive and flourish.

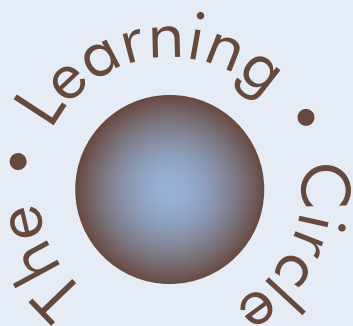
After the service

The bride and groom and their witnesses sign the *ketubbah* and civil marriage registers before making their way to their reception.

The introduction of same-sex marriages and mixed faith blessings in Liberal synagogues have helped to underline the value of inclusivity and have created new and innovative ceremonies in which couples can declare their love for each other, drawing on Jewish traditions and rituals and creating new forms of prayers and blessings. These will be addressed in future issues of the newsletter.

Alexandra Wright

'It is remarkable that at The LJS there are individuals who still want a religious wedding; non-Jewish partners are joining our conversion course in a steady flow...'



at the **LJS**

Classes in Judaism and Hebrew
Purim/Shavuot terms 5778/2018

Tuesdays 11.15-12.30

Until 10 July

Tuesday Texts

Led by our Rabbis, Dr Dov Softi and Susannah Alexander, we study biblical texts and commentaries and enjoy sessions on Jewish art, philosophy, theology and other subjects. Discussions are lively and relevant to contemporary issues.

Watch out for two taster sessions given by Norbert Meyn and musicians from the LJS choir in June and July:

Love of Song – from Mendelssohn to Brahms:

tracing Jewish connections and intercultural mobility in the art of Lieder:

a study course with Norbert Meyn of the Royal College of Music and Ensemble Émigré

After two successful concerts with Ensemble Émigré at The LJS in 2016 and 2017, Norbert Meyn returns to join Cathy Heller Jones and fellow musicians for a short study course. Together they will explore the role of Jewish cultural figures in the evolution of the art of classical song (with piano accompaniment). They will also discuss how Jewish and other émigré musicians from Nazi Europe helped to make it more popular in Britain. Includes live performances.

11.15-12.30 on 26 June: Mendelssohn

This lecture looks at the cultural vision of Moses Mendelssohn and the music of his famous grandson Felix, whose music gained great prominence in Germany as well as Britain, where Victoria and Albert were ardent devotees. This session will also feature music by Mendelssohn's sister Fanny and the English composer William Sterndale Bennett.

11.15-12.30 on 3 July: Brahms

In this second session we will explore the influence of Johannes Brahms and his circle, which included the violinist Joseph Joachim and the composer and pianist Robert Kahn, who eventually emigrated to Britain in 1939. The programme will also feature music by Clara Schumann and emigre composer Hans Gál.

These two 'taster' sessions will be followed by a four-week course on Tuesday evenings in November.

Cost: Free for LJS members and registered proselytes; £10 per week for non members.

Tuesdays 19.00-20.00

Until 10 July

Classical Hebrew at all levels

Half term: 29 May

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.

Tuesdays 20.00-21.00

Until 10 July

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.

29 May	Half term
5 June	Different forms of Judaism
12 June	17 Tammuz, 3 Weeks, Tisha B'Av
19 June	Who is a Jew?
26 June	Humankind in Jewish thought
3 July	Ask the Rabbi
10 July	Siyyum/end of year celebration

Beginners' Hebrew with Naomi Brightwell**Half term: 2 June**

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.

Torah study and Jewish thought**Half term: 2 June**

This term we will continue to study the teachings of Moses Maimonides, the Rambam. We have a diverse range of leaders including Rabbi Alex and Rabbi Rachel. Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, our scholar in residence, will be leading two classes. We are also maintaining our contributions from members of the class and others. We have a nucleus of regulars and also welcome new students. Why not come and sample a class? For further information contact Michael Romain at romain@netgates.co.uk or Harriett Goldenberg at hgoldenberg@btinternet.com

**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.

Married to the sound of seagulls

Louie (née Rodrigues) and Anthony Silkoff were married on Cattlewash Beach, Bathsheba in Barbados on 3 May. The bride, in an off-the-shoulder cream lace dress, appeared barefoot in the sand,

standing next to the groom who wore navy shorts, yellow shirt and a bow tie. He had sensibly retained his shoes for the breaking of the glass!

As the ocean surf crashed on the beach, a strong wind threatened to gather up the *ketubbah* and sweep it into the sea. A steel drum accompanied the bride and groom as they processed among the 50-strong congregation who had joined them on the beach and, with *ketubbah* successfully signed by them both and their witnesses, the only things to take flight were the Barbadian laughing gulls, whose curiosity about what was happening on the sea shore had got the better of them.



Rabbi Alexandra Wright was the fortunate *mesadderet kiddushin* [officiant]. She also managed to take this photograph of the couple at a pre-reception reception after the *chuppah* in the garden of a house backing on to the beach.

Shake up your ideas

Nosh 'n' Drosh – lunch, a speaker and a discussion on *Shabbat* afternoons – has proved to be one of our most successful innovations. These are the future bookings:

Shabbat 26 May

The rabbis introduce a new *Shabbat* morning liturgy for Liberal Judaism – followed by a discussion

Shabbat 14 July

Carol Gould: 42 Years in Britain – 37 Years in network television

Shabbat 1 September

George Dublon: Paul Ehrlich and his magic bullet

Shabbat 20 October

Judy Miller: The experiences of a volunteer in the Six Day War of 1967

Thank you to all those who have sponsored a Nosh 'n' Drosh over the past two years.

Would you like to sponsor a Nosh 'n' Drosh? If so, please ask Martin Slowe or Rabbi Alexandra Wright for more information.

Our next Drop-in for asylum seeker families

will be from 14.00-16.00 on Sunday 10 June and 8 July. We need volunteers from 13.00 to help prepare for our guests.

If you are interested in coming along once a month or a few times a year, please contact Rabbi Alexandra Wright – a.wright@ljs.org. We are especially looking for younger members of the community to help with the heavier work.

You are invited to the Annual General Meeting of British Friends of Rabbis for Human Rights

on
Thursday 14 June
at The LJS

13.00 in the Assembly Hall
Lunch provided

Full details of all LJS adult education courses can be found in the Learning Circle brochure: download your copy from www.ljs.org/resources/

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.

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*



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].



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.



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



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.



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



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.



LOCAL WALKING GROUP



The LJS local walking group is planning its next outing for Thursday 14 June, leaving from The LJS at 11.30. Walks adopt a friendly pace and last no more than an hour and a half.

Future walks are scheduled for 5 and 26 July. All members and friends are welcome. To find out more, please contact Jody Graham (awithj@gmail.com) or Michael Romain (romain@netgates.co.uk).

Young LJS

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

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

Costanza Levy
Tamara Lindbland Hill
Kurt Mautner
Hannah Mautner
Benjamin Miller
Antonia Moore
Romilly Morrison
Mia Ohana-Samput
Samuel Ritblat
Yonatan Roodner
Samuel Salas
Isaac Sharpstone
Victor Sparks
Zara Teacher
Miriam Torday
Gabriel Tuvey
Joshua Waha
Helena Walford
Ida Wiesenfeld

TINY TOTS at the LJS

Do you have little ones aged between 0 and 4?

Please bring them to The LJS on *Shabbat* mornings

**9, 16, 23 and 30 June
7 July**

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 to play or read.

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



Graphic account of Israel's 70-year journey

Israel's dramatic declaration of independence was recalled in graphic detail by historian Simon Schama (*below*) in a 70th anniversary lecture at West London Synagogue.

He explained that the declaration had to be staged in Tel Aviv because Jerusalem was still besieged; that it happened against the background of 50-60,000 survivors of the *Shoah* still living in displaced persons' camps in Cyprus; and at a time when French Jews attempting to recover their property in Paris, as

well as Jewish servicemen in the UK, faced antisemitic riots.

Despite the hostile environment of 1948, the founders of the state had appealed to the Arab population of Palestine to preserve the peace and participate in building the new state on an equal basis. It had been a big gamble to offer citizenship to the Arabs, he said: but if they had accepted the UN's partition plan they would have made up some 40% of Israel's population.

He went on to chart the evolving response of successive Israeli governments, moving from the early years' preoccupation with rescuing threatened Jewish communities from persecution in the Middle East and North Africa; through the optimism that followed the 1967 war; and the intractable problems brought by the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

■ Simon Schama's lecture was the third in a series of 'Five Lectures in Five Synagogues', devised by Rabbi Alexandra Wright, Rabbi Jeremy Gordon of New London Synagogue, Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick of West Central Synagogue, Rabbi Benji Stanley of Westminster Synagogue and Rabbi Sybil Sheridan of West London Synagogue.



Thanks for supporting the Out and About appeal

On behalf of the Out and About Club we would like to thank everyone who donated to our annual appeal. This money will be used to pay for accessible transport and also for the musical entertainers our members enjoy so much.

If anyone missed the opportunity to make a donation, it is never too late and any additional donations would be gratefully received. Please make cheques payable to The LJS and write Out and About Club on the back.

UK. In particular, they raise money to provide holidays for children on dialysis. If you would like to bring your stamps to The LJS please leave them at the reception desk, marked for the Out and About Club.

Many thanks.

**Jenny Nathan
Sonia Leanse**

We also collect stamps, British and overseas, for Kidney Care

The LJS is a constituent
synagogue of Liberal Judaism


liberal judaism

The next LJS News will be for July/August 2018. Final copy date is 11 June.

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