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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

LJS News



Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg OBE 25 February 1939 – 30 April 2019

The LJS Rabbis, Council and LJS community mourn the death of Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg. Initially working here as a student rabbi in 1968, David was appointed Associate Minister in 1975, becoming Senior Rabbi in 1989, and Rabbi Emeritus in 2004.

We are deeply indebted to David for his outstanding contribution to Liberal Judaism and to all of us at the LJS, his own congregation. A towering intellect and thinker, outspoken iconoclast and prolific writer, David never compromised his principles. His sermons were eagerly anticipated as they were invariably thought-provoking and beautifully crafted – and usually spiced with anecdotes or jokes which had the congregation in tears of laughter.

We send our heartfelt condolences to David's wife, Carole, son and daughter, Rupert and Emily, and grandson, Oscar, as well as to his brother, Jonathan, and sister, Sandra.

David, you will be greatly missed.

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Tribute to Pauline Weldon

Member of the LJS for 36 years and outstanding volunteer

Pauline Weldon, unfailingly cheerful, kind and helpful, has died at the age of 83. She was immensely giving of her time to her family, her friends, the LJS and the wider community.

Born in northern Holland, Pauline had a much-loved elder brother, Wolf, and sister, Maja. After spending a year in France as an au pair, she came to England where she used her languages in the international department of the telephone exchange. She subsequently trained as a nurse and had a long and distinguished career first in nursing and midwifery, then as a health visitor, and thereafter as a teacher of nursing and later social policy in institutes of Higher and Further Education.

In 1981 Pauline married Ernest, a lecturer in psychology and management at Imperial College. They were extremely well matched, and their son, Gerald, born a year later, brought his parents much happiness. And although Pauline had to bear the relatively early loss of Ernest, she did experience towards the end of her life the joy of Gerald's marriage to Kay, and of seeing them so happy together. She much appreciated the love and support they gave her.

Throughout her life Pauline was keen to learn and make the most of her time, and in retirement was an indefatigable volunteer. Apart from being a regular Ark opener, the list of LJS communal activities she was involved in was long: the Out and About Club; Restaurant Tuesday where her vegetarian dishes



– she was ahead of her time in this having turned vegetarian in the 1970s – were much appreciated; Video and Tea (featuring her legendary apple cake); the coffee rota; and the Keep in Touch parties where she dispensed delicious food and good-natured conversation in equal measure.

Pauline will be remembered with great fondness for her kindness and integrity. She was truly 'a woman of worth' – as expressed in the Book of Proverbs and by one of the many friends paying tribute to her.

Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Rabbi Harry Jacobi MBE

father of Rabbi Dr Margaret Jacobi,
Rabbi Richard Jacobi and the late David Jacobi

Dorothy (Dolly) Conway

mother of Gerry Conway

Jacqueline Pinto

mother of Jane Kessler, Rosemary Pinto
and Andrew Pinto

Pamela Simons

member of the LJS for 68 years

Pauline Weldon

mother of Gerald Weldon
and sister of Wolf Kattenbusch

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר האבלים

May God comfort you and all who mourn

A tribute to Rabbi Harry Jacobi MBE ז"ל will appear in the next issue of *LJS News*.

Shabbat and Festival services: late May/June/early July 2019

Friday evening services are at 6.45pm. *Shabbat* morning services are at 11.00am unless otherwise stated. Please see below for times of festival services.

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER AND NOTES	
Friday 31 May	Igor Zinkov	<i>Kulanu</i> (for young adults) will be hosting a <i>Chavurah</i> supper for interns with the Bishops' Conference (Catholic) – see page 4.
Shabbat 1 June B'Midbar	Igor Zinkov	
Friday 7 June	Elana Dellal	
Shabbat 8 June Naso	Alexandra Wright	No <i>Rimon</i> this morning, but see Sunday morning's (9 June) activities.
Saturday evening 8 June Erev Shavuot 6.45pm	Igor Zinkov	<i>Erev Shavuot</i> service, <i>Chavurah</i> Supper and Quiz at the LJS, followed by <i>Tikkun Leyl Shavuot</i> at West London Synagogue - see page 12 for details.
Sunday 9 June Shavuot 11.00am	<i>L'Dor va'Dor</i> service led by Rabbis Elana Dellal and Alexandra Wright	<i>Rimon</i> will be meeting at 10.00am for activities before a special <i>L'Dor va'Dor</i> festival service, followed by lunch sponsored by a <i>Rimon</i> family. All welcome.
Friday 14 June	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Daniel Brightwell <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 15 June B'ha'a lot'cha	Elana Dellal	Lihu Salomon-Bar <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> 1.00pm discussion on the future of young adults within the LJS community – see page 4.
Friday 21 June	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Lorcan Eisenberg <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 22 June Sh'lach L'cha	Alexandra Wright	Lorcan Eisenberg <i>Bar Mitzvah</i>
Friday 28 June	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 29 June ♦ Korach	Elana Dellal	Ela Behr <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
Friday 5 July ♦	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by Hannah Mautner <i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
Shabbat 6 July Chukkat	Alexandra Wright and Elana Dellal	Hannah Mautner <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> Kurt Mautner <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> (after <i>Kiddush</i>)
Sunday 7 July	Ordination service at West London Synagogue	Please let Igor Zinkov know if you would like to attend his ordination.

♦ 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.

Our next Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker Families

The next date is Sunday 16 June. (Please note this is – unusually – the third and not second Sunday of the month.) Dates thereafter (Sundays) are 14 July, 11 August, 8 September, 13 October, 10 November and 8 December. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 1.00pm to help set up.

Volunteers are also needed from 5.00pm on Thursday 13 June and on the Thursdays immediately prior to the Drop-In dates to sort clothes.

Volunteering



Standing L-R: Karen Newman, Anthony Sefton
Sitting L-R: Ben Wright, Louise De Wolf

In advance of the Community Service on 18 May to celebrate the work of our volunteers, *LJS News* caught up with four LJS Members taking part in the service – Louise de Wolf, Karen Newman, Anthony Sefton and Ben Wright – to find out about their volunteering work, and what it means to them.

Between them they cover a great range of activities

which include stewarding, helping the elderly members of the community, volunteering with the Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker families, serving as a representative on the Board of Deputies, and holding Council positions which might involve anything from discussing the content of services to updating the heating system.

Ben explains that the motivation for his volunteering stems from the oft-repeated commandment to 'love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt'. Volunteering may, however, just happen because you're asked to do something and then find yourself doing it because of the moral imperative to give back to society. As Karen explains (with apologies to Shakespeare): 'Some are born volunteers, some achieve volunteer status, and some have volunteer status thrust upon us.' Ultimately the important thing is to play your part. And all the volunteers agreed that they found it truly rewarding to make a contribution to the well-being of the community.

Kulanu Young Adults' Group

Kulanu is the group concerned with young adults and professionals within the LJS community. We currently hold monthly Friday evening *Chavurah* suppers and other events.

Our mission is to drive and encourage young adults to be active members of the LJS and broader Jewish community by organising events, discussions and activities that are of interest to them.

Our vision is a community where younger members are engaged and involved in all activities that contribute to maintaining a vibrant, active community.

Please note the following key dates:

Evening of Friday 31 May

After the service which starts at 6.45pm we will be hosting a *Chavurah* supper with a group of interns from the Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Please bring a vegetarian dish to share. After supper we are holding the first of what promises to be a fascinating series of 'In Dialogue' sessions with our guests.

1.00pm Shabbat 15 June

We invite the wider community to join us to discuss the future of *Kulanu* immediately after the morning service. This is an opportunity to reflect on past experiences as well as to share ideas to create a great future for our young adults.

Please share this message with friends and all members of the LJS who might be interested in making their contribution to the future of LJS young adults. All (not just young adults!) are welcome.

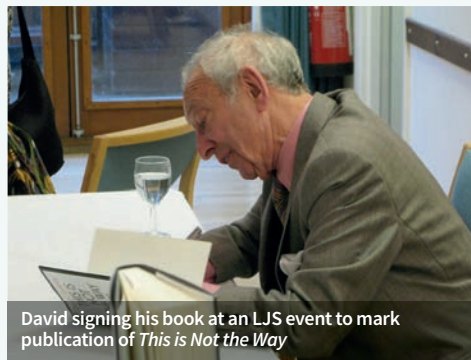
If you have any questions or suggestions, or if you would like to receive more information, please contact Student Rabbi Igor Zinkov: zinkovigor@gmail.com

Remembering Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg OBE z”l

David was our Rabbi Emeritus, having served the congregation as Associate then Senior Rabbi since 1975. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School, Oxford University, and Trinity College, Dublin, receiving his Rabbinic Ordination from the Leo Baeck College in 1971.

David served many generations of LJS families, and supported them through all their significant life-cycle events. In a full and varied career which enhanced the reputation of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue as one of the world's leading congregations, David was particularly proud of four 'firsts': the first prominent Jew in the UK publicly to call for recognition of legitimate Palestinian rights in an article in *The Times* in 1978; the first rabbi to initiate dialogue meetings between Judaism, Christianity and Islam when the Regent's Park mosque opened in 1978; the first Jew to recite *Kaddish* in Westminster Abbey when co-officiating at the Memorial Service for Yehudi Menuhin; the first – and as far as he knew, the only – rabbi ever to have had an article in *Wisden*, the cricket lovers' bible, or to have been interviewed on Test Match Special!

Active in interfaith work, in 1999 David was awarded the Gold Medallion of The International Council of Christians and Jews for his 'outstanding contribution to interfaith harmony and understanding'. In 2004 he was awarded an OBE for his services to interfaith work. David also had a long and highly active association with the Out and About Club, and served as its President for twelve years.



David signing his book at an LJS event to mark publication of *This is Not the Way*



Well known for his outspoken and radical views, and a former Chairman of the Rabbinic Conference of the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues (now Liberal Judaism), and Co-Chairman – later Co-President – of the London Society of Jews and Christians, David contributed regularly on Jewish and Israeli topics to all the major newspapers and journals, including *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer*, *The Guardian*, *Independent*, *Mail on Sunday*, *New Statesman* and *History Today*. He wrote, or edited, several highly regarded books including *The Jewish People: Their History and Their Religion* (1987) which he co-authored with Rabbi John Rayner whom he described as his 'mentor, guide, closest colleague and dearest friend'. David's other book publications are: *To the Promised Land: A History of Zionist Thought* (1997) of which the Italian translation won the prestigious Premio Iglesias prize in 1999 for best book in the Culture and Politics category; *The Divided Self: Israel and the Jewish Psyche Today* (2011); *This is Not the Way: Judaism and the State of Israel* (2012); and *The Story of the Jews* (2014).

Memories of Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg OBE

‘Each of us has our own particular memories of David: precious times of rejoicing or mourning – life cycle moments in our own lives. We may have listened to one of his cogently argued and unflinchingly honest sermons, for which he would draw from an eclectic range of sources from Heraclitus to J. M. Coetzee; or we may have read one of his books.

‘With a remarkable team David oversaw the rebuilding of the LJS. Not only was he instrumental in creating a beautiful sanctuary, but he helped the LJS become a lively community centre. Bringing into the synagogue high profile figures, among them Vanessa Redgrave and Nicholas Hytner, he facilitated occasions that attracted many members and guests.

‘A pioneer in interfaith work, David was also involved in unofficial tripartite meetings between the PLO, Israeli representatives and Anglo-Jewish intermediaries, and he led the way in speaking about the Israeli government in a more nuanced and critical way. He is remembered as a man who was fearless and of great moral courage.’

Alexandra Wright, Senior Rabbi

‘In the introduction to his book, *This is Not the Way*, Rabbi David Goldberg said, ‘I write as a Liberal Jew’. This commitment to progressive Judaism ran through everything David accomplished in his life as a rabbi.

‘Always radical and often provocative, David’s belief in social justice and his preparedness to take an unpopular stand where he felt it was right characterised his attitude to Judaism. He was never reluctant to tackle controversial issues, nor was he afraid to be a solitary voice, challenging established beliefs and practices where he felt they no longer made sense. David hated the parochialism and self-absorption that characterise parts of the Jewish community, but he was nevertheless deeply committed to Judaism and to being a Jew.

‘This was David as rabbi, but what else will we remember of him? His warmth, his intelligence, his integrity, his love of life, his humour. We will miss him.’

Sue Head, Chairman of Council

‘Rabbi Dr David Goldberg OBE approached dying as he lived life: with integrity, realism, mischief, intellectual fascination and a degree of planning. He faced his death without self-pity, and with the support of his wife of nearly fifty years, Carole.

‘David considered himself a lucky man – lucky in meeting Carole, lucky to have been the recipient of a kidney transplant sixteen years ago, and fortunate in his association with the LJS. He appreciated joining the Liberal rabbinate at a time when he perceived Liberal Judaism to be really radical in that it placed principle above practice and considered modern knowledge more important than ancient tradition.

‘For over 40 years David was my teacher, and throughout my rabbinic career, it was often to David that I turned to find clarity of liberal thinking. He was able to combine a fine knowledge of classical literature with a real pride in the course of Jewish history and the Jew’s distinct and resilient adaptability.’

Extract (edited) from Rabbi Danny Rich’s tribute to David

‘David was a complex mix of verbal acerbity and loyalty and kindness, intellect and wit, youthfulness and wisdom, meticulousness and generosity, authority and rebelliousness, gravitas and charm.

‘A mentor to his younger colleagues, he was also mindful of our welfare, encouraging interests beyond rabbinic duties. He taught us to create a ‘hinterland’ for ourselves, which for him were reflected in his wide circle of friends, his writing, his love of literature, music and the arts – contacts and interests which came to benefit the aesthetics and profile of the synagogue – and he had a love of cowboy films, walking and cricket, all of which featured on occasion in his sermons.

‘David’s witty banter would create a sense of camaraderie not just amongst his colleagues and LJS staff, but also among the numerous teenagers whom he taught; and his easy relationship with little children was endearing to behold.’

Extract (edited) from Rabbi Kathleen de Magtige-Middleton’s tribute to David

Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg's reflections on his contribution to the LJS

Around the time of his 80th birthday in February this year, Rabbi Dr David Goldberg contacted LJS News to express his wish to write an article especially for the LJS. He asked for this article to be held till after his death. The time has now come for us to read it.

We all know from an early age that one day we are going to die. After all, that is the lesson of Genesis, Chapter 3, verses 22 and 23, where God expels Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, not only because they have eaten from the Tree of Knowledge to know good from evil, but also lest they become immortal and live forever. It is rarer to know when one is going to die due to an incurable illness, although from my personal experience cancer specialists are no more accurate in predicting *when* that date will be than they were in confidently asserting that they had halted the spread of my original tumour. But as Thackeray says somewhere in *Vanity Fair*, the sands in the old man's glass were running out, so I have been enjoying whatever time is left to me by celebrating a wonderful 80th birthday – thanks to Carole and our son, Rupert – savouring some excellent wines, and, although virtually blind and deaf, listening to some favourite books and music. So far the pain is tolerable as I await the Great Mystery.

I have already dictated a longer article about my religious views, which will be familiar to anyone who has listened to my sermons or read my books over the years. Here, I would like to consider my particular contribution to the LJS. Unlike Israel Mattuck and John Rayner, I cannot claim to have been a pioneer of Liberal Judaism's principles or a radical liturgist. However, I was the first Liberal Rabbi to encourage the participation of a non-Jewish parent in the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ceremony of their child, and to initiate the category of Friend of the LJS for non-Jewish partners sympathetic to our aims, and to officiate at the wedding blessing of a Jew to a non-Jew. I chose the biblical quotation 'My House shall be a House of Prayer for all Peoples' at the top of the street notice board to emphasise our inclusive approach.



The Ark doors surrounded by Jerusalem stone

Art, literature, culture, and the philosophies of Judaism always spoke more to me than *halachah* or prayer. My unique privilege was to have been involved as Senior Rabbi in the rebuilding of the LJS as part of the small team led by Sir Peter Lazarus and including Trevor Moross, Neil Levitt, Tony Margo and Pru Baker, that successfully saw us through two and a half years of exile before triumphantly returning to a beautiful new sanctuary. We ensured that every wood and material used in the new building was environmentally friendly and that the Palestinian workers who came over for several weeks to erect the Jerusalem stone surrounding the Ark were always treated fairly and equally by their Israeli employers.

But a missing ingredient was the Holocaust Memorial for which money had been specifically donated. Nobody could agree on its nature. There were many heated, inconclusive discussions. As a cowardly stratagem I initially courted Anthony Caro, who had LJS family ties, to undertake the project in the hope that when a critical viewer saw his eminent name on the work of art it might modify any adverse reaction to 'how interesting', but he did not yet feel ready to undertake a project of



Holocaust Memorial by Anish Kapoor

such magnitude. Eventually, after advice from Jeremy Lewison, who was then Deputy Director of the Tate Gallery, Vicki Slowe and I, with help from my wife, Carole, made a last attempt to find a suitable sculptor. We looked at submissions from over a hundred and fifty applicants and came up with a shortlist of two: Anish Kapoor and Antony Gormley. Although neither was as yet as famous as they were to become, it was, I like to think, a nice example of our judgement. Our sole criterion was artistic excellence, not religious background, but it was a bonus subsequently to discover that Anish Kapoor was of many generations of Jewish descent on his mother's side. The inauguration service for the Memorial was the most moving I have ever organised. Anish Kapoor spoke with becoming modesty about the honour of designing his two-tonne Kilkenny stone monument, Dame Janet Suzman read a passage from Primo Levi that left the large congregation in tears, and the ghostly strains of *El Male Rachamim*, sung by Rabbi Mark Solomon, floated into the sanctuary before everyone filed past the

Memorial with thoughts too deep for words. Of all the hundreds of Holocaust remembrances throughout the world in synagogues, museums and Jewish community centres, ours is surely the most arresting and unique.

Bill Utermohlen, who was married to my landlady's daughter at Oxford (it sounds like the beginning of a rude ditty) was the artist and creator of the three Harvest Festival murals in the back foyer. In the old building, the Montefiore Hall had been a cavernous and unadorned auditorium. Irvine Sellar, of Shard fame, gave a generous donation in memory of his father and we commissioned Bill to enliven the side wall of the hall with his depiction of *Pesach*, *Sukkot* and *Shavuot*. I invited a well-oiled Norman St John-Stevas, the then Arts Minister, to unveil the mural, which he did in a superb speech while clearly knowing little about the LJS, the Harvest festivals or the artist. Utermohlen was never recognised as his talents deserved. He contracted Alzheimer's at a relatively young age and posthumously his work has increased enormously in value because he painted many self-portraits which demonstrated the appalling effects of that disease on a sufferer's self-perception. We regarded the mural so highly that when the synagogue was rebuilt we had the architects ensure that it would fit on the foyer wall.

The large *Menorah*, which we use at *Chanukkah* services, was designed by Frank Meisler,



Menorah by Frank Meisler



Harvest Festival mural by Bill Utermohlen

one of Israel's best known craftsmen, who had been a friend since 1970. Appreciation of his Lions of Judah design led to it being copied by many other synagogues and was the reason that Frank was later commissioned to create the *Kindertransport* sculpture at Liverpool Street Station and also the one outside the Friedrichstrasse Railway Station in Berlin.

When Sir Peter Lazarus, who also knew he was dying of cancer, read the Book of Jonah for the last time on *Yom Kippur*, he sat down beside me on the *bimah* afterwards wracked with sobs. As he gazed out at the sanctuary he had done so much to inspire, I murmured to him '*si monumentum requiris, circumspice*' – 'if you seek his monument, look around', the

inscription to Sir Christopher Wren in St Paul's Cathedral.

Ultimately, the afterlife consists not in physical resurrection, but in being remembered by future generations. Whenever people fall silent before the Holocaust Memorial, gather in conversation opposite the Harvest Festival mural or celebrate the festival of *Chanukkah*, I hope that they will remember positively my aesthetic contribution to our synagogue over thirty years.

Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg OBE, April 2019
(dictated to his friend and former PA,
Joan Shopper)

Council Update

by Lysa Schwartz, Executive Director (sitting in for Sue Head)



The Council meeting this month focused on the young adults within the LJS community, a very diverse group ranging from long-standing family memberships and *Rimon* alumni to new members exploring their faith and people preparing for conversion. Ben Wright (one of our Board of Deputies representatives) and student rabbi Igor Zinkov brought a wide range of ideas and suggestions to improve engagement: social action, education and spiritual connections. The success of the recent *Purim* event and the young volunteers at the Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker Families confirms that we offer activities that engage and arouse interest. We need to do more to encourage occasional and regular participation; Igor is working on a longer-term plan. After *Kiddush*, at 1.00pm on 15 June there will be an opportunity for everyone to contribute to how we enhance and expand the role of young adults at the LJS. Please come.

Council then approved nominations for the Council elections. You will find details of everyone standing for Council on the notice board by the main staircase.

Nominations include:

- Steven Behr, standing for a second term
- Harriett Goldenberg, standing for a first term (Harriett has been co-opted onto Council as Chair of the Social Action Committee)
- Simon van Someren, standing for a first term (Simon participates regularly at services, and volunteers as a greeter, a member of the Library Committee and in the general office)

The new members of Council will be announced at the AGM (Wednesday 19 June at 7.30pm); everyone is welcome to attend. We are delighted Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton will be giving a talk. Please refer to the page opposite for a preview of what promises to be a most interesting lecture.

In my report, I confirmed that the *Annual Review* will be sent to all Members and Friends along with a copy of the details we store on the new LJS membership database. This information must be checked and confirmed to remain compliant with the General Database Protection Regulation. Can I please ask that you do this and return the form in the postage paid envelope as soon as you can.

At the start of the meeting Rabbi Alexandra Wright spoke eloquently about the loss to Liberal Judaism of Emeritus Rabbi Dr David Goldberg and Rabbi Harry Jacobi. I had occasion to meet and to be welcomed warmly by both of them and wished every success when I joined two years ago. Last year I had the experience and benefit of Rabbi David Goldberg's company and vast cricketing knowledge when the LJS was invited by the President of the MCC to attend a 20:20 match. Not real cricket in David's eyes but it was a delightful evening, with David generously sharing his memories and insights of cricket, Judaism and the LJS.

And that's what I love most about the LJS – people sharing their skills, their experience and their time. The common thread of members, staff, volunteers and visitors is our love of learning and the search for knowledge. I agree with David's take on life in finding joy in every day being different.

Our Scholar in Residence, Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, is giving this year's talk at the AGM which takes place on Wednesday 19 June at 7.30pm. Here Michael introduces his topic, taking us into the world of Jews in seventeenth-century Venice.

THE VOICE OF A FOOL?



The famous city of Venice has always been a meeting place of East and West. At the time when Shakespeare created the character of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, it was a place where Jews met both Christians and other Jews. Shakespeare's play of 1600 reminds us that Christians across Europe were aware of the Jewish community in Venice. There were four synagogues: Ashkenazi, Italian, Eastern and Potentine – the Spanish and Portuguese Jews. By 1655 there were nearly 5,000 Jews crammed into the few streets of the Venice Ghetto.

One of the most celebrated rabbis there, indeed one of the most curious and remarkable rabbis in all Jewish history, was Yehuda Ariele known as Leon Modena (1571-1648). Unfortunately his life was devastated by an addictive gambling habit, but that did not stop him from being a prolific preacher, teacher and writer, steeped not just in the Jewish learning but also in the secular learning of his time. Modena wrote many books of which the strangest is called *Shaga'at Aryeh* ('The Roar of the Lion') – a reference to his own name. The introduction

tells a story. In 1622, Modena was depressed because his son Zebulun had been killed in a duel. One day, he was wandering around, lonely and depressed, along the banks of one of the canals when he met a fellow Jew who had recently come from Spain. They got into conversation and the man said he would show him a small manuscript of three essays written 120 years before, the book being critical of the rabbis of old and of the Oral *Torah*. Modena was eager to see it, and the man brought him the book, which he then proceeded to reproduce in full in his own book.

The book discovered by Modena is called *Kol Sachal* (*The Voice of a Fool*). But to us, it does not seem foolish. Why do we add extra days to the festivals when the *Torah* is very clear on the precise number of days? Why should it be thought necessary to spell out the work forbidden on the sabbath in absurd detail, when a few principles alone would suffice? *The Voice of a Fool* reads like an early Progressive Jewish essay, but 200 years too early. Who wrote it and why? At our AGM on 19 June I shall be revealing the answer to this mystery.

Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton



Forthcoming Events

Erev Shavuot at the LJS and West London Synagogue (WLS)

**6.45pm Saturday 8 June – 6am Sunday 9 June
(feel free to stay for as long as suits you!)**

A wonderful programme of events has been put together as a joint initiative with WLS:

CHOSEN?

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot – A Night of Choices

6.45pm: *Shavuot* service at the LJS

7.30pm: *Chavurah* supper
– please bring a vegetarian
or sweet dish to share

RSVP Felicia:
rabbispa@ljs.org
or call 020 7432 1283

Supper will be followed
by a cheesecake
competition –
please bring your
own home-made
cheesecake if you
wish to enter the
competition.

There will also be a quiz:
'Choose your Jews: Who am I?'

8.40pm: walk to WLS at
33 Seymour Place W1H 5AU

9.30pm: Plenary: 'Are we the chosen people?'
chaired by Senior Rabbi Julia Neuberger, WLS

10.50pm: All-night study

4.45am: *Shacharit* (morning prayer) on the roof

The first part of the evening at the LJS will be the *Erev Shavuot* service, the *Chavurah* supper, the cheesecake competition, followed by the quiz. We will then walk to West London Synagogue for Senior Rabbi Julia Neuberger's plenary, 'Are we the chosen people?'

Rabbis from both the LJS and WLS will then lead a range of fascinating study sessions through the night – participants will be spoilt for choice. These sessions will be interspersed with a number of cheese and ice-cream breaks.

The first set of sessions starting at 10.50pm includes:

Choose your battles: antisemitism and when to fight it

Choose your partner: a look at intermarriage as raised in the Book of Ruth

Jews by choice: a special session for those converting

Choose your cause: a session on social action

Later sessions which follow the hour-long *Rabbis at midnight* also offer options: *Choosing our language*; *Choosing our heroes*; a film screening and discussion.

The final session is *Choosing your textual menu: Ruth – the first Jew by choice*.

Morning prayer – *Shacharit on the roof* – will be followed by a bedtime breakfast.

We look forward to welcoming you and making you feel so invigorated, stimulated and ice-creamed out you won't notice the time!



Film Club at the LJS

7.00pm-9.30pm Wednesday 12 June

Our new bi-monthly film club is presented by Cristina Galisi, a graduate in Modern Languages and Cinema Studies. It features recent Israeli films related to either current Jewish themes or Festivals. Our next screening is *Tapuchim Min Ha'Midbar* - Apples from the Desert (in Hebrew with English subtitles), and is about an Orthodox girl who shocks her Sephardi family in Jerusalem's cloistered community by breaking taboos by running away with a man to his desert *kibbutz*.

Drinks and popcorn will be served at 7.00pm before the film starts promptly at 7.30pm. There will be a discussion after the film. There is no charge for admission, but contributions to costs will be much appreciated.

For further information please contact Cristina Galisi: cristina@galisi.com, or to register for the Film Club, please contact Felicia Beder: rabbispa@ljs.org or call 020 7432 1283.

The LJS 2019 Annual General Meeting and Council elections

7.00pm for 7.30pm Wednesday 19 June

This year's AGM will be held on Wednesday 19 June 2019 at 7.30pm. Please join Council for refreshments from 7.00pm.

At the AGM the LJS membership will confirm the election of new members to the LJS Council.

Our guest speaker, Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, will be talking about an intriguing topic – a progressive Jewish voice in seventeenth-century Venice.

You can read Michael's introduction to his talk on page 11.

Liberal Judaism's Day of Music at Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue

Saturday 22 June

Liberal Judaism is holding a Day of Music which will take place at Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue (NPLS), with the theme of 'Music reflecting the text'. You are welcome to attend whether you are a singer, music leader, instrumentalist or just interested in learning some new tunes.

Through a range of song sessions and workshops, we will look to the future and ask what direction our synagogue music might take as Liberal Judaism introduces its new *Siddur*. The day will end with a musical event in the evening. The last Day of Music was held two years ago, and was a huge success with people travelling far and wide to attend. For more details of this year's event please email Cantor Tamara Wolfson and Ruth Colin of NPLS at: music@npls.org.uk. Tickets can be bought online via the Liberal Judaism website.

Liberal Judaism's Day of Celebration at the LJS

Sunday 23 June

The LJS is hosting Liberal Judaism's Day of Celebration. The theme is 'If I am only for myself. . .', and the day will focus on the role of communities in supporting their members and how, in turn, we can empower members to support others inside and outside the synagogue walls. Dame Margaret Hodge, a Labour MP and former Minister for Children, and Jean Gaffin OBE, an eminent figure in British healthcare, will present the keynote session. Come and celebrate the current best practice, the Jewish textual basis for community relationships, and the deeper questions around community responsibility versus state responsibility.

LJY-Netzer will be running a parallel programme for children aged between 6 and 15, and there will be a fully staffed crèche for the youngest delegates. Tickets can be bought online via the Liberal Judaism website.

Concert at the LJS

7.00pm Thursday 27 June

A piano recital is being held at the LJS under the auspices of *Yad Vashem*. The distinguished concert pianist Maria Garzon will be playing the music of the Austrian Jewish composer, Viktor Ullmann, who remained musically active even after his deportation to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. For more details of what is sure to be a very special event please email: events@yadvashem.org.uk or call 020 8359 1146.

Kabbalat Torah 2019/5779



Back L-R: Josh Cang, Leila Goldstone, Brooke Curtis-Shipman, Adam Cang
Front L-R: Tabby Penn, Niamh Eisenberg, Jason Covey, Michael Berlingieri

This year's *Kabbalat Torah* (KT) service, for which the students chose to use the *L'Dor va'Dor* service booklet, took place on 27 April. Each of the eight students took an active role in leading the service which included reading from the *Torah*, the *Haftarah*, as well as truly beautiful singing and most accomplished guitar-playing from the *bimah*. There were highly insightful reflections from the students on their chosen theme of 'passion'.

At the end of the service, Sue Head, Chairman of the LJS, and Dov Softi, *Rimon* Head Teacher, presented the KT students with their certificates and books. Sue Head commented how the students' passions reflected key principles of Judaism: justice, truth and peace, and said these principles should guide them through their lives. Rabbi Alexandra Wright told us what a delight it had been to teach the students, describing them as responsive, articulate, thoughtful, ethical, spiritual, respectful and polite. She said, 'Yours is a generation who are expressing their spirituality through sacred activism, as well as through prayer, music, science, the creative arts and other ways.' She offered her closing prayers to

each of the eight KT students individually as they now enter a new chapter of learning and enquiry, and of involvement in *Rimon* as teaching assistants.

The theme of 'passion'

The *Torah* portion for the KT service from Leviticus describes the ancient cultic practice of *Yom Kippur* involving the sacrifice of one goat and the sending of a second goat into the wilderness bearing the sins of the whole Israelite community.

The *Haftarah* chosen to accompany the text was from Isaiah 58:1-9a in which the prophet emphasises that *Yom Kippur* rituals, such as fasting, have no meaning unless they are accompanied by morality, and by care and concern for our fellow human beings.

Following on from study of these texts, the eight KT students chose the theme of 'passion' and each of them gave their own interpretation of this subject:

The concept of passion was analysed and seen as a driving force for good, but with the potential to do great harm if misplaced. Being passionate

necessarily entails feeling strongly about something, but this covers both love and hate and must never descend into fanaticism.

Passion can, however, be a great force for good, and several students spoke about their passion for *Tikkun Olam* – for repairing the world, be it addressing climate change and global warming, reducing if not eliminating waste, in particular plastic, and protecting our animals. The students expressed the importance of everyone working together because we won't get a second chance to protect our precious Earth. They gave examples of the many practical ways in which we can implement change to make a significant difference to our environment.

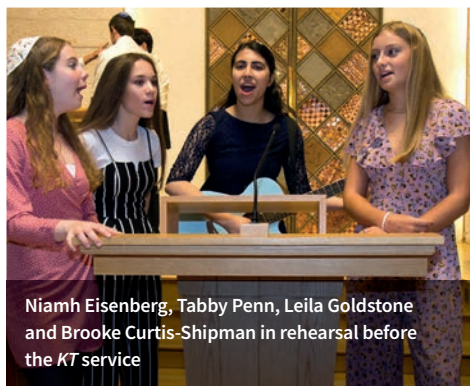
Acknowledging that we must all face up to the reality of the current state of the world, the concept of 'denial' was analysed – the negative denial when one doesn't acknowledge the truth, as exemplified by Holocaust denial, but also the potentially positive force of self-denial which clears the mind to reflect on important issues and to be open to learning. The notion of the scapegoat, so relevant to the sacrificial goats cited in Leviticus, was also investigated, with examples given including not only the ways in which Jews have been cast as scapegoats through the ages, but the continuing prevalence today of blaming minorities, including those of different genders, religions, races, nations and sexual orientations, for the ills of the world.

The need for forgiveness was explored, and how this is only valid if remorse is shown and if there is genuine repentance. It was recognised that we

need to work to be forgiven, and that there are paths of healing and reconciliation which can lead to positive outcomes.

The uniqueness of children was spoken of, and how their place in society must be valued. This was most pertinent given that each of these young people who stood on the *bimah* are on the threshold of adulthood. And as they develop, so they have choices and decisions to make. The *KT* students are indeed in the process of just that – affirming their Judaism in a deeply positive way.

It was a wonderful experience to hear them speak so thoughtfully, eloquently and indeed passionately about their theme. Sue Head spoke for us all when she addressed the students, saying: 'You have been thought-provoking and sometimes challenging. This is precisely what Jews should do: ask uncomfortable questions and challenge expectations. You are exactly the right people to take Judaism forward.'



Niamh Eisenberg, Tabby Penn, Leila Goldstone and Brooke Curtis-Shipman in rehearsal before the *KT* service

The voices of the *KT* parents

Watching their children prepare for *Kabbalat Torah* is very meaningful for the parents of the *KT* students. Here they convey their experiences:

*'Watching our youngest child 'graduate' with the *KT* class has been both joyful and emotional. The *LJS* education has been a great benefit to all our children, not only for religious studies, but to prepare them for aspects of their secular life, too.'*

*'We are thrilled that our daughter decided to continue discovering more about her Jewish identity by following *Kabbalat Torah*. This has allowed her to reinforce some great friendships and to further her involvement in our wonderful community at the *LJS*.'*

*'It has been a privilege and a pleasure for us as parents to watch our daughter blossom in these *KT* years into a young woman who has forged a close bond with her Jewish heritage and faith as well as having been given a deeper understanding of it.'*



at the **LJS 5779/2019**

Classes in Judaism and Hebrew

DEEP CALLS TO DEEP: TRANSFORMING CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

Tuesday 11 June 8.00-9.30pm

The study session originally scheduled for 7 May is now taking place on 11 June, and will be the final session of this course based on the essays of *Deep Calls to Deep*. The Revd Alan Race and Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers will be discussing *Religious Absolutism*.

The book *Deep Calls To Deep* is the fruit of several years of inter-religious learning between a group of Christians and Jews.

You are welcome to attend the session even if you have not been to previous classes as each session is self-standing. This final session is free to Members and Friends, and £10.00 for guests with concessions available. It will be followed by a *Siyyum* – a celebration with wine and refreshments to mark the end of this course.

TUESDAY MORNINGS:

11.15am-12.30pm

Classes run until 23 July

Tuesday Texts

This friendly group is led by our rabbis, including our Scholar in Residence, Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton. We study biblical texts and commentaries and enjoy sessions on Jewish art and music. New students are always welcome.

TUESDAY EVENINGS: 7.00-8.00pm

Shavuot term classes run until 9 July (no class during half-term on 28 May)

CLASSICAL HEBREW AT ALL LEVELS

Absolute Beginners Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

A new course for people who don't know their *Alef* from their *Bet*, and who would like to learn Hebrew from scratch. No prior knowledge is needed. You will be learning in a fun and interactive way with a native Israeli. The course will focus on reading skills and offer a basic understanding of how Hebrew is used, both in the liturgy and in spoken Hebrew.

Classical and Prayer Book Hebrew for Beginners

Tutor: Susannah Alexander

Have you tried to get your head around Hebrew letters for years and never quite achieved success? If so, join this fun and supportive class, where we use a tried-and-tested method to get you reading faster than you thought possible. Beginning with Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders*, we move on to a taste of grammar, liturgy and the Bible.

Next Steps in Prayer-Book Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Sally Gold

This course is to improve your understanding and confidence in Hebrew. We will be learning the Hebrew of the *Tanakh* (Bible) on the path towards greater enjoyment and participation in synagogue services. We practise reading simple Hebrew from the *Siddur* and the Hebrew Bible, building reading skills, knowledge of vocabulary and simple grammar at an unhurried pace.

David: Warrior and Lover King

Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright

New students are welcome as we continue with the story of David, who is either defending Israel from the raiding Philistines or on the run from the murderous intentions of Saul, now his father-in-law. Neither his military prowess nor his close friendship with Jonathan, Saul's son, mitigate the king's jealousy of David. We read in Hebrew, texts provided, translating and analysing the Hebrew carefully.

TUESDAY EVENINGS: 8.00-9.00pm

Classes run until 9 July (no class during half-term on 28 May)

Exploring Judaism

Tutor: Student Rabbi Igor Zinkov

Exploring Judaism is for people, including non-Jewish family members, who wish to know more about Judaism or who would like to brush up on their Jewish knowledge. It is also an essential programme of instruction for people choosing Judaism by conversion. Class members are encouraged to read materials which will be made available online during the year. In addition to offering knowledge of Judaism, the course encourages practical experiences of Liberal Judaism and space for personal reflection within the group. Resources can be found on: www.ljsexploringjudaism.wordpress.com

Shavuot Term 2019

Continuation of classes which started 30 April. (No class on 28 May during half-term.)

Tuesday 4 June Exploring *Shavuot*

Tuesday 11 June 7 Tammuz, 3 Weeks, Tisha B'Av

Tuesday 18 June Who is a Jew?

Tuesday 25 June Humankind in Jewish Thought

Tuesday 2 July Ask the Rabbi

Tuesday 9 July *Siyum*/End of Year Celebration

SHABBAT MORNING CLASSES:

9.45-10.45am

Saturday mornings 15 June, 22 June, 29 June, 6 July (no classes 1 or 8 June)

Shabbat study: *The David Story*

Led by members of the class, guest speakers and our rabbis, this term the class will be studying the Book of Samuel and the first two chapters of Kings.

No knowledge of Hebrew is required for the course. Please contact Michael Romain (romain@netgates.co.uk) for further information.

BEGINNERS' HEBREW

Tutor: Naomi Brightwell

This class uses Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders* to help absolute beginners to decode Hebrew. Classes include a little bit of grammar and vocabulary, the structure of the liturgy, plenty of off-topic conversations on Jewish food, and anything else that helps us have fun while learning. No previous knowledge is required.

KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING CLASSICAL HEBREW

Tutor: David Strang

This class is designed to increase students' understanding of classical Hebrew as used both in the *Torah* and the *Siddur*. We are using the text book *Prayer Book Hebrew the Easy Way* and will aim to complete it by the end of the academic year. Each lesson involves a mixture of reading, learning vocabulary and grammar, and translating from Hebrew to English. Students are expected to be able to read with reasonable fluency and to know how to write in block Hebrew script.

INTERMEDIATE HEBREW

Tutor: Nitza Spiro

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

Community Events

BRIDGE CLUB

The Bridge Club meets at 2.00pm every Monday (except Jewish and Bank Holidays) and finishes at 5.00pm with a break for refreshments. The standard of Bridge playing is average, but players should know the basics of the game. This is as much a social afternoon as a competitive one. Cost is £2.00 per person. We welcome new members. For more details please contact the LJS (020 7286 5181) who will pass on the message to Neil Levitt or William Falk.

BRIDGE CLUB



LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Our next walks will be on Thursday 13 June and Wednesday 17 July, meeting at the LJS at 11.15am. All Members and Friends are welcome. There is a Walking for Health two-page form to fill out before walking for those who have not walked with us before. We walk in Regent's Park for an hour or so and aim to end up at a café for coffee or lunch. To find out more, please contact Jody Graham on awithj@gmail.com or on her mobile 07765 214867 or contact Michael Romain on romain@netgates.co.uk or on his mobile: 07818 000849.

VIDEO AND TEA

The LJS warmly invites you to this monthly event on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 1.30-4.30pm. Just come along – there's no need to book. Cost is £2.00 for the film and refreshments. Enjoy soup on arrival then a DVD (film classics, musicals, etc) followed by a delicious tea including home-made coffee ice-cream.

Forthcoming screenings:

26 June: *Mamma Mia*

24 July: *Esio Trot*

28 August: *42nd Street*

25 September: *Blithe Spirit*

NOSH 'N' DROSH

Shabbat lunchtimes 1.15-2.15pm

13 July

Following a celebration of his first *Bar Mitzvah*, Raymon Benedyk will talk about his life and times, including being a Bevan Boy, conscripted to work in the coal mines during the Second World War, and as Organising Secretary of the LJS.

14 September

Rafiq Abdulla and Mohammed Keshavee will speak about Sharia Law.

If you would like to sponsor a Nosh 'n' Drosh please speak to Sue Bolsom or Rabbi Alexandra Wright.

COMMUNITY CARE

Aviva Shafritz, our Community Care Co-ordinator, is ready to help with difficulties experienced not only by our older members, such as with illness and provision of care, but also across the spectrum of life. You can contact Aviva on email: a.shafritz@ljs.org or by telephone on 020 7286 5181.

SINGING FOR THE MIND

Singing for the Mind is open to anyone with memory problems or in the early stages of dementia. We meet once a week, serving tea and biscuits as people arrive to allow participants and their companions the chance to chat before we start singing. The hour-long singing session is led by a trained music leader, supported by volunteers. A dementia specialist is available for help and advice. For further details and advice on joining the group, please email sfm@ljs.org or phone the LJS on 020 7286 5181.

RESTAURANT TUESDAY – watch this space!

This is an informal lunch club for the more elderly members of the congregation. We have been meeting at 12.30pm on the third Tuesday of every month. Please note that Restaurant Tuesday is having a break for a few months but with plans to re-convene. We hope to announce our new arrangements shortly.

Young LJS

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

Ela Behr	Hannah Mautner
Charles Boizard	Kurt Mautner
Daniel Brightwell	Antonia Moore
Rachel Brooks	Ronilly Morrison
Hannah Cohen	Samuel Ritblat
Finlo Cowley	Yonatan Roodner
Alfred Davidson	Samuel Salas
Niamh Eisenberg	Lihu Salomon-Bar
Michael Falk	Alma Sharabi
Lia Grant	Isaac Sharpstone
Celia Hou Kernkraut	Victor Sparks
Estella Levi-French	Gabriel Tuvey
Costanza Levy	Helena Walford
Tomaso Levy	Ida Wiesenfeld
Tamara Lindbland Hill	

Please note that on Sunday 9 June *Rimon* will be meeting at 10.00am for activities before a special *L'Dor va'Dor* festival service with Rabbi Elana Dallal at 11.00am. This will be followed by lunch kindly sponsored by a *Rimon* family.

Tiny Tots at the LJS

Delightful sessions at 11.00am during Rimon term times of songs, stories, activities, drawings and Kiddush for little ones between the ages of 0 and 4.

NEXT SESSIONS: Sunday 9 June and Shabbatot 15, 22, 29 June; 6 July



The Nursery is always available for children to play or read in every Shabbat with a parent or carer present.

Email education@ljs.org if you would like to be added to the Tiny Tots email circulation list.

Rimon Deputy Head Teacher, Susannah Alexander, tells us about the charity, Crisis, which the children in Rimon have chosen to support this year.

What does Crisis do?

Crisis offers homeless people safe hostel accommodation, as well as education, counselling and help with finding work and permanent housing.

Why did we choose Crisis?

Although the young people at *Rimon* are aware of the high number of rough sleepers on London's streets, we didn't realise that homelessness isn't just about sleeping on the streets, and can happen even to people who are well-educated and in work. We want to contribute towards ending this unacceptable situation.

Where does our money go?

Every £10 we raise can help someone take the first steps out of homelessness; every £25 can help someone regain their self-esteem through healthcare and counselling; every £50 can help someone gain the skills and qualifications to turn their life around.

What's Jewish about Crisis?

Crisis's work is strongly congruent with Jewish values. The *Torah* commands that a poor person be given 'sufficient for what lacks, according to what is lacking to him', and the *Talmud* explains that this includes basic housing. In the *Haftarah* reading for *Yom Kippur*, Isaiah explains that it is a religious obligation to help end homelessness, and that this is more important than fasting, or any other ritual observance.

How can you help?

Please ensure that your child brings *tzedakah* every week. The amounts children bring can really add up and make a difference. Some of the older children will be visiting the younger classes in the coming weeks to talk about Crisis. If your child is particularly interested, you can visit the Crisis website.

Thank you so much for your support.

LJS Member and Out and About Club regular, Rosie Saunders, celebrates her 101st birthday in style

Rosie Saunders celebrated her 101st birthday with a special party at the Out and About club. She was truly thrilled when the entertainers Alan Breslaw and Barbara Golstein, known as the Right Mix, sang a song which they had composed especially for her using one of her poems called *Friendship*.



Rosie Saunders pictured beside Sonia Leanse, co-chairman of the Out and About Club, who baked Rosie's birthday cake

Communal Seder at the LJS

About 70 people took part in a highly enjoyable communal *Seder* led by Rabbi Alexandra Wright and Student Rabbi Igor Zinkov on the second night of *Pesach*.



The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

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At other times, call 020 8958 2112 (Calo's)

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