

May 2019
Nisan/Iyyar 5779

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

LJS
NEWS



‘Behind the Mask’ *Purim* celebration

This year’s very well-attended *Purim* celebration, conceived by Rabbi Elana Dellal, was innovative, thought-provoking and deeply moving. After the study session, led by student rabbi Igor Zinkov, and a shared *Megillah* reading, we enjoyed supper provided by Spice Caravan, a group of refugee women. Taking the theme of ‘Behind the Mask’, four speakers then shared their remarkable life stories which in very different ways exemplified a key theme of the Book of Esther: the secrecy of hidden identities and transitioning to one’s authentic self. It was an honour to hear such articulate and eloquent speakers recount their personal histories: Rabbi Indigo Raphael on becoming a rabbi, gender affirmation and transition; Izzy Posen’s journey from Hasidism to being a secular university student; Hilary Totterman’s listening to her inner voice and converting to Judaism; and Dex Grodner, a gender non-conforming drag artist, evoking a life mirroring that of the Jewish people – of transition, migration and re-invention. To quote from Dex’s poem, *Translation*: ‘We carry our roots in our legs.’

Pictured above: L-R: Rabbi Indigo Raphael, Izzy Posen, Hilary Totterman, Dex Grodner

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Library update

Sally van Noorden, our Honorary Librarian, informs us that the library has acquired the following books:

Enemies and Neighbours: Arabs and Jews in Palestine and Israel, 1917-2017

by Ian Black

The House of Islam: a Global History

by Ed Husain

Christianity through Jewish Eyes

by Walter Jacob

Themes and Issues in Judaism,

edited by Seth D. Kunin

Agony in the Pulpit: Jewish Preaching in Response to Nazi Persecution and Mass Murder, 1933-1945

by Rabbi Marc Saperstein

(kindly donated by Ann and Bob Kirk)

Chief Rabbi Nathan Marcus Adler

by Derek Taylor

Sally asks readers to note that *Agony in the Pulpit* is kept in a locked glass-fronted cupboard. Please ask the duty librarian to unlock the cupboard or ask the office to contact Sally to arrange a time to look at it. Sally also reminds us that books may be borrowed for a month, and kindly asks readers to return overdue books!

We welcome all our new Members and Friends and their children including:

Tal Bar and Oren Salomon

Anya Gold and Daniel Tobias

Mario MacKenzie

Daniel Morgenthau and Frankie McCoy

Julie Sellier

Yvonne Tobias

Rachel Varley and Sabrina Bassan

Drop-in for Asylum-Seeker Families

The next LJS Drop-In for asylum-seeker families will be on Sunday 12 May from 2.00pm-5.00pm.

Volunteers are asked to arrive at 1.00pm to help set up.

Dates thereafter (Sundays): 16 June (note this is unusually the third and not second Sunday of the month), 14 July, 11 August, 8 September, 13 October, 10 November, 8 December.

Volunteers are also needed from 5.00pm on Thursday 9 May and on the Thursdays immediately prior to the Drop-In dates to sort clothes.

VOLUNTEERS PLEASE

If you are interested in volunteering once a month or a few times a year, please contact asylumproject@ljs.org for more details.

We are especially looking for younger members of the community who can help us with some of the heavier work. Thank you.

Kiddush Celebrations

If you would like to take part in the service or contribute to the weekly *Kiddush* to mark a special occasion – such as a birthday, anniversary, baby blessing or *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* – please contact Felicia Beder on 020 7432 1283 or at: rabbispa@ljs.org

KULANU Young Adults' Group

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 and other events are held each month at the LJS for young professionals. The next *Kulanu Chavurah* supper will follow the service on Friday 31 May (see opposite page).

Contact e.dellal@ljs.org for more details.

Council and all Members and Friends of the LJS extend their sympathy to Willie Kessler on the loss of his sister, Adele Berger, and to Vivien Rose on the loss of her mother, Jacqueline Rose.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר האבלים

May God comfort you and all who mourn

Shabbat and Festival services: late April/May/early June 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 26 April 6.45pm	Service led by the <i>Kabbalat Torah</i> class	
Shabbat 27 April Acharey-Mot 10.30am – please note the early start of this service	Service led by the <i>Kabbalat Torah</i> class	Please join us for this special service led by members of the <i>Kabbalat Torah</i> class – the culmination of their years at <i>Rimon</i> .
Friday 3 May	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 4 May Kedoshim/ Shabbat Ha-Shoah	Rabbi Professor Marc Saperstein, former Principal and now Professor at Leo Baeck College; his most recent book is <i>Agony in the Pulpit</i> (see page 2)	Rabbi Saperstein will preach on Rabbi Dr Mattuck's sermons on Zionism and the State of Israel. This <i>Shabbat</i> will include special readings to commemorate <i>Yom Ha-Shoah</i> and lighting of candles in memory of those who perished in the <i>Shoah</i> .
Friday 10 May	Igor Zinkov	
Shabbat 11 May Emor	Robin Moss, Director of Strategy, UJIA, which works to engage the British Jewish Community with Israel	Nosh 'n' Drosh with Louise and Michael Carmi: 'Can touch heal?'
Friday 17 May	Alexandra Wright	Manuel Binder Admission to Judaism ceremony
Shabbat 18 May B'har	Community and Volunteers' Service	The service will be led by volunteer members of the LJS, and everyone is invited to join us to celebrate our many events and activities in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Westminster, our local MP Karen Buck, and other guests.
Friday 24 May	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 25 May B'chukkotay	Alexandra Wright	
Friday 31 May	Igor Zinkov	<i>Kulanu</i> (Young Adults Group) will be hosting a <i>Chavurah</i> supper for interns with the Bishops' Conference (Catholic).
Shabbat 1 June B'Midbar	Igor Zinkov	
Friday 7 June	Elana Dellal	
Shabbat 8 June Naso	Alexandra Wright	No <i>Rimon</i> this morning.
Saturday evening 8 June Erev Shavuot 6.45pm	Igor Zinkov	<i>Erev Shavuot</i> service, <i>Chavurah</i> supper, quiz and cheesecake competition at the LJS, followed by <i>Tikkun Leyl Shavuot</i> (all-night study session) at West London Synagogue. Please see page 6 for details.
Sunday 9 June Shavuot 11.00am	<i>L'Dor va'Dor</i> Service with <i>Rimon</i> families	<i>Rimon</i> will be meeting at 10.00am this morning for activities before a special <i>L'Dor va'Dor</i> festival service.

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.

Council Report

'If I am not for myself, who will be for me?' Pirkey Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), 1:14



In the April meeting, Council discussed the importance of community: what is the nature of community, where is it to be found? This is fundamental to the job of Aviva Shafritz, our Community Care Co-ordinator, who described to us her responsibilities at the LJS.

Much of Aviva's time is spent with isolated people, particularly those who are very frail. She outlined the difficulties for people who once lived active lives and who are now lonely and relying on the care of others. Aviva also engages with the families of people in need who often do not know what services are available and how to access them.

There are an astonishing eighty volunteers who, having received safeguarding training, work with Aviva to give support. These amazing people run a whole range of activities; for example, Phone a Member (PAM), Keep in Touch (KIT), Singing for the Mind.

This year, Aviva's role has expanded to include young people, such as those with mental health issues. We employ Aviva for two and a half days a week, and this is clearly not enough time for all that needs to be done. Tough decisions often have

to be taken, though we do our best to offer all the support we can.

Council is very appreciative of Aviva, the volunteers, and also the rabbis, for the pastoral work that they do.

Our sense of community is also seen in the setting up of a Social Action Committee with its aim of raising awareness of topics related to the concept of social justice, a key principle of Progressive Judaism. The issues that it will deal with are varied and include the environment, homelessness, poverty, disability, discrimination. At its inaugural meeting, there were a very impressive twenty-eight people attending, illustrating the desire of the community of the LJS to follow the precept of *Tikkun Olam*: 'repairing the world.' Harriett Goldenberg was elected Chair of the committee, and Council was very pleased to hear that this important initiative is underway.

Another very useful new team has just had its first meeting. This is the Marketing and Communications Committee and is chaired by Benita Hart. The first meeting considered what the aims of such a group should be and the potential audiences (existing LJS members, potential new members, the wider world). This committee will be key in promoting the LJS and its values.

At the Community Service on *Shabbat* 18 May, we will be celebrating all our volunteering accomplishments. There you will be able to see the work of those involved in community care and also other activities of the synagogue, including the functions of Council and the new initiatives of Social Action and Marketing. (*Please see pages 8 and 9.*) We hope you will come!

A reminder (and see page 7): the AGM will be on Wednesday 19 June. This may seem a long way ahead, but we are asking if anyone would like to stand for Council. Nominations need to be received by Tuesday 7 May. If you are interested, please contact Lysa Schwartz (execdirector@ljs.org or 020 7286 5181) for a nomination form.

Sue Head, Chairman of Council

Notes from the Rabbis' Desks

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

Continuing our series on the Jewish life cycle, we focus on *Bar Mitzvah* and *Bat Mitzvah* at the LJS



'At 13, one is ready to do mitzvot...'
Pirkey Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), 5:21

Young people who celebrate *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* in our synagogue are taking an important first step in their Jewish life. While many parents make the decision to enrol their children in *Rimon*, the LJS's Religion School, and are already passing on the traditions and values of Liberal Judaism, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is often a decision young people make for themselves.

On one level, it is a declaration of their seriousness and commitment to Judaism and their Jewish identity, following an intensive course of study and preparation leading up to their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. On another level, it marks the transition from childhood to puberty and the physical and emotional changes that take place in a young person as they enter their teenage years – the opportunity to celebrate a sacred rite of passage. In more than one way, it is also an initiation rite. The young person must master the skill of reading Hebrew, lead the congregation in public prayer and read or chant from the *Torah*, as well

as delivering their own interpretation of their *parashah* (*Torah* portion). There is a fair amount to be learnt before they become *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*.

We are often asked what the requirements are for *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at the LJS. The LJS attracts many different families with varied needs and wishes. Whilst the structure and expectations are here to help you feel supported through the spiritual and educational process, there is always room for flexibility. If you come from abroad and are living temporarily in London, or if one parent is not Jewish, or your child is at boarding school, or has special learning needs, we will always include your child in our programme and find a way for them to celebrate their *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*. We encourage you to speak to one of the Rabbis to discuss your individual needs.

All students must have attended a minimum of two years' Religion School before becoming *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* at the LJS. As well as this 'two year rule', and attendance at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* seminar when your child is in Class *Zayin*, we ask families to ensure that their child attend *Rimon* regularly, become familiar with synagogue services and that young people commit themselves to continuing their Jewish learning to *Kabbalat Torah*.

A *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is a joyous occasion. The LJS supports a child gently by helping them to achieve their potential without the pressures of exams or academic expectations. This is a spiritual and sacred process that helps the individual to build confidence through their learning, their friendships and discovering more about their Jewish heritage and identity.

Please contact Rabbi Alexandra Wright or Rabbi Elana Dellal to find out more about *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* and to explore the different options that are available at the LJS.

Alexandra Wright and Elana Dellal

Forthcoming Events

Leo Baeck College 2019 Annual Dinner 6.45pm Sunday 12 May

The annual dinner celebrating recent and forthcoming rabbinic ordinations will be held at West London Synagogue, 33 Seymour Place W1H 5AU, starting with a reception at 6.45pm.

The guest speaker is Professor Stephen Toope, Vice-Chancellor, University of Cambridge.

Tickets for the dinner are £125.00 per person. For more information please email: dinner2019@lbc.ac.uk or call Juliet Moss on 020 8349 5604.

Historic Walking Tour of St John's Wood Synagogues

11.00am Sunday 26 May

Rachel Kolsky, award-winning Blue Guide, author of *Jewish London* and popular LJS speaker, will be conducting a walking tour of three local synagogues: New London, St John's Wood United Synagogue and the LJS. At each stop, an expert will be on hand to guide the tour and talk about the synagogue's history. Rabbi Wright will host for the LJS. The tour will start at 11.00am and take about 2 hours. Places are limited. The cost for LJS members will be £12.50, and non-members £17.50. For further information and booking go to: <https://tinyurl.com/yxaagcej>

Inheritance Day at Willesden Cemetery Sunday 26 May

Willesden Jewish Cemetery (next to the LJS cemetery at Pound Lane) will open shortly as a heritage site for the public. Sunday 26 May 2019 will be their first 'Inheritance Day' at the cemetery and they are inviting people who have relatives buried there to visit for this first open day. During the day, the gate between our two cemeteries will be re-opened, having been bricked up for more than 50 years. This will allow visitors on this and other special occasions to move freely between the two spaces, visiting family and finding out more about our rich, shared heritage.

Booking for this event will open in early May. For further information check *Shalom LJS* or ring the office on 020 7286 5181.

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.

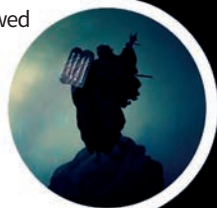
There will also be a quiz: 'Choose your Jews: Who am I?'

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



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 to run 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 Wednesday 19 June

This year's AGM will be held on Wednesday 19 June 2019 at 7.30 pm. Our guest speaker Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, Scholar in Residence, will talk about 'A Progressive Jewish Voice in Seventeenth Century Venice'. Please join Council for refreshments from 7.00pm.

At the AGM the LJS membership will confirm the election of members standing for a second term and new members to the LJS Council. There will be places for up to five additional members.

If you are interested in standing for Council please contact Lysa Schwartz (execdiretor@ljs.org or 020 7286 5181) and she will send you details of nomination procedures and arrange for you to have a chat with Chairman Sue Head. Nominations, including a formal seconder, must be received by 9.00am on Tuesday 7 May 2019.

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 and tickets please email Cantor Tamara Wolfson and Ruth Colin of NPLS at: music@npls.org.uk, or go to: <https://www.liberaljudaism.org/calendar/day-of-music/>

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. For more information and tickets go to: <https://www.liberaljudaism.org/calendar/day-of-celebration>

All are welcome to the Community Service

On Saturday 18 May there will be a very special Community service at 11.00am to offer heartfelt thanks to all those who volunteer their services for the many activities taking place at the LJS. All LJS Members and Friends – new and longstanding – are warmly invited, as are our local MP, Karen Buck, a great supporter of the LJS, and the new Lord Mayor of Westminster, together with councillors, local clergy and other special guests.

A 'Freshers' Fair' from 10.30am, and continuing after the service and *Kiddush* until 1.30pm, will showcase some of the myriad events and activities that take place within our walls and which mark us out as a vibrant, intergenerational community, buzzing with activity. These activities range from service planning to community care to social action; from spiritual nourishment to physical activity; from governance to finance; from enlightening talks to singing opportunities. This volunteer work is undertaken with commitment and dedication by and for our Members and Friends, as well as reaching out to the wider community. Everything we do plays a part in putting into action the core values of the LJS.

Here we give you a taster of the stalls at the fair so you can see the extent to which we depend on our volunteer Members and Friends, and to whom we are so grateful. It is by no means an exhaustive list, but offers a fair representation of the community's endeavours. Come for a coffee and chat, and take the opportunity to find out about your LJS. Discover where and how you might like to be involved – or further involved – to suit your timetable, or to take advantage of the services we offer. Or, if you're up for helping organise one of the events which we periodically hold, do let us know of your interest.

This information about the stalls at the Freshers' Fair is correct at the time of going to press. Please note it is not a comprehensive list of all the volunteer work undertaken by the LJS. All volunteers should please be assured that their contribution, whatever area it is in, is recognised and appreciated.



Spring flowers planted by our volunteer gardeners

Archives

Ensure the LJS story is both safeguarded and kept alive.

Board of Deputies of British Jews

Find out how LJS Members represent us and play an influential role in British Jewry.

Bridge Club

Enjoy playing cards with a friendly group of participants.

Buildings and Facilities Committee

Be part of overseeing projects, both large and small, to maintain and improve our wonderful building.

Cemetery Committee

Help take care of our historic prayer hall and the planting at our Willesden Green cemetery.

Community Care Co-ordinating Committee

Find out about this outstanding service which is invaluable for so many in offering a wealth of support and activities: Video and Tea; Phone a Member (PAM); Singing for the Mind; Keep in Touch Group (KIT); the Out and About Club. Bereavement support is also offered.

and 'Freshers' Fair' on *Shabbat* 18 May 2019

Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker Families

Help us give a warm welcome and much-needed practical support one Sunday a month to families waiting to receive asylum; this group of volunteers is about to celebrate its 5th anniversary and has made a huge difference to the lives of many who face enormous challenges and hardship.

Education

Discover our highly-regarded programme offering life-long learning from the LJS Nursery (children from 2½ to 5), the religion school, Rimon, through to Kabbalat Torah, and on to The Learning Circle, with its wide array of learning options for adults.

Film Club

Be part of a new initiative – a bi-monthly film screening of a recent Israeli film, complete with drinks, popcorn and discussion.

Gardening Group

Enhance our environment and enjoy nature.

Greeters

Make the most of your social skills – and get to meet new people.

Kulanu (Young Adults' Group)

Are you around 25-35 or do you know people of that age group looking to find other young professionals? Join us for our monthly Friday evening suppers and other events.

LJS Council

Consider being on our overall governing body which oversees all aspects of the synagogue, ensuring we keep to our vision and values, and that we make best use of our time, resources and money.

LJS Security

We take this very seriously; there's a great camaraderie within the team – and you get a chance to wear a high-vis jacket!

LJS Travel

Be part of a group of interesting like-minded fellow travellers.

Library

Help look after our extensive and comfortable library, a great resource and which regularly receives and makes new acquisitions.

Marketing and Communications Committee

Learn about our remit to be as effective as possible in creating a sense of belonging and involvement, and in keeping our Members and Friends as well as the wider community well informed.

Members' Choir

Come and sing with an enthusiastic group of singers who regular take part in our services.

Membership Committee

We are nothing without our Members and Friends!

Nosh 'n' Drosh

Monthly post-Shabbat morning service talks and discussions by invited speakers over smoked salmon and bagels.

Shammashim

Be one of the team who welcome and assist congregants attending services.

Social Action

This important group has just re-formed, so come and help shape its development as we look at ways of moving closer towards social justice.

Sunridge Court

Help further develop the strong links we have with this residential care home for elderly Jewish residents in north-west London.

Walking Group

Why not clock up those steps, vital for good health, whilst enjoying companionship in nearby Regent's Park?

And if you still don't think any of these offer scope for your interests and skills set, chat to any of us about another volunteering option, be it flower arranging or joining the coffee rota – guaranteed to make you popular! We look forward to welcoming you on 18 May.



at the LJS 5779/2019

Classes in Judaism and Hebrew

Deep Calls To Deep: Transforming Conversations between Jews and Christians

Tuesday evenings 8.00-9.30pm

There are a further three study sessions of this very special course which are being held in May. Each study session is complete in itself so you can attend any or all of the remaining sessions. There is no need to register. Please note the course is free to Members and Friends of the LJS, and £10.00 per session for guests. Concessions are available.

Deep Calls To Deep is the title of a volume of essays, the fruit of several years of inter-religious learning between a group of Christians and Jews. In an era of dangerous populism and nationalism, this course examines the ways in which Jewish-Christian dialogue has progressed, and how we engage with each other in the 21st century and with the cultural and political realities of the world we inhabit together.

This course is for anyone who is concerned about the nature and need for dialogue. It looks honestly at what unites our faiths, but also at what divides us.

Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, the LJS's Scholar in Residence, curated the course, and the speakers are all contributors to the book.

7 May Revd Alan Race and Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers: *Religious Absolutism*

14 May Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton and Bishop David Gillett: *How Do We Cope With Our Past?*

21 May Revd Patrick Morrow, Rabbi Vivian Silverman, Rabbi Natan Levy and Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton: *Christian Particularity – Incarnation and Trinity and Jewish Responses*

Please note that some of these titles may be subject to change.

TUESDAY MORNINGS:

11.15am-12.30pm

30 April – 23 July (there is no break for half-term – classes continue)

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. Previous classes have examined the influence of Jewish texts on Leonard Cohen and Bob Dylan, Adventures in Jewish History, the Love of Song, *Talmud*, the Psalms and an Introduction to *Kabbalah*. New students are always welcome.

TUESDAY EVENINGS: 7.00-8.00pm

Shavuot term runs 30 April – 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 liturgy and in spoken Hebrew. Using Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders* (available for purchase, £10.00) this class will take you step by step into the wonderful world of Hebrew with skill and confidence.

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

30 April – 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

Tuesday 30 April Life after Death, Messiah and Messianic Age

Tuesday 7 May Home Rituals and Prayers, including *Kashrut*, *Mezuzah*, *Tallit* and *Tefillin*

Tuesday 14 May Different Forms of Judaism

Tuesday 21 May Jewish Music

Tuesday 28 May (No class 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 *Siyyum*/Celebration End of the Year

SHABBAT MORNING CLASSES:

9.45-10.45am

Saturday mornings 27 April –18 May;

16 June – 6 July

(no classes 25 May, or 1 and 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. It deals with the birth and call of Samuel and the lives of the first kings, Saul and David. It would be helpful, but not essential, to have a copy of *The David Story* (available online for about £10.00) – a translation and commentary of the text written by Robert Alter. We will be asking such questions as why the tribes wanted a king; how they were chosen and how they behaved; and whether David was the perfect role model.

We welcome new class members to the class, and the beginning of this term is an ideal time to join as we are starting a new subject. 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. Former students have even gone on to lead *Shabbat* morning services.

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* (available for purchase, £27.00) 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. There is a core of students who have been following the course for two years now, but please be assured that new students will be made very welcome.

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.

Full details of all LJS Adult Education Courses can be found in The Learning Circle brochure: download your copy from www.ljs.org and click on Learning.

Hebrew and Yiddish lessons with Spiro Ark

In all Spiro Ark's classes, in addition to acquiring a new language through enjoyable and effective methods, you receive encouragement and personal attention. The classes give you a window into Jewish history, links to biblical Hebrew, Jewish ritual and customs, Israeli history and current affairs. All classes continue term after term so you can progress from one level to another. In our current advanced classes we have a number of students who started with no knowledge of Judaism or Israel at all.

For full details please visit www.spiroark.org/classes or contact us on 020 7794 4655 or education@spiroark.org



Focus on quilting

Two quilters tell us about their meaningful creative work



Sue with the Shibori indigo dyed quilt she's exhibiting

LJS member Sue Aron is always up for learning something new. With a lifelong interest in art, design and textiles, a visit to the London Quilters Exhibition in 2013 inspired her to consider taking up quilting, and she became a member of London Quilters the following year. Sue says it's been a steep learning curve and there is still much to learn, but she's found it immensely rewarding. There is something quite meditative about quilting - it takes patience and commitment. And although it can be a solitary pursuit, there is a whole quilting community to make the experience collaborative.

Sue attended workshops and courses, but also found a wealth of YouTube tutorials and dedicated Facebook groups to help her progress. Instagram has proved to be a rich source of inspiration, with fellow quilters keen to offer help and share information about everything from sourcing fabrics to patterns and design apps.

There is a dazzling array of techniques involved in quilting, as well as endless style possibilities. Sue herself is drawn to what are termed 'modern' quilts, improvising with big, bold shapes and plain colours, and especially enjoys dyeing fabric.

London Quilters holds an exhibition every two years at Swiss Cottage Library, and each member – including Sue – has the opportunity to exhibit. Sue would love LJS members to come along to the next exhibition 3 – 28 June (www.londonquilters.org.uk) – and perhaps even find a new creative outlet just as she has done.

Rimon students Charlie and Sam Grainger, sons of Paul and Holly, already know about the special gift they will receive when they reach *Bar Mitzvah*. Their paternal grandmother, Rosemary, a seasoned quilter, has started a family tradition creating specially designed quilts for her five grandchildren to mark this Jewish milestone.

The tradition started rather by accident. Rosemary wanted to give to her eldest grandchild Eli a particular quilt she'd made, but at the time he was only 11 and Rosemary felt it was a bit too adult for him. A friend suggested Eli be given the quilt when he became *Bar Mitzvah*, and although Rosemary thought this was a good idea, she wanted her gift to have a connection with Judaism for that occasion. This prompted her to consider how the quilt might be given a Jewish connection, and she came up with a wonderful idea: she would add a backing to the quilt which would feature Eli's Hebrew name, Elijah Reuven, with the letters prepared within Stars of David, together with a screen print of his *Bar Mitzvah Torah* portion, both in Hebrew and English and accompanying illustrations. This was all created on specially sourced fabric from the USA covered in tiny dark blue Stars of David.

The making of this quilt was extremely time-consuming, but Rosemary is clearly a devoted grandmother, and is already planning on creating special Jewish-themed quilts for her four other grandchildren – including Sam and Charlie, of course – when the time comes!



Rosemary's special *Bar Mitzvah* quilt

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 Wednesday 15 May, Thursday 13 June and Wednesday 17 July, meeting at the LJS at 11.15am. All members and friends are welcome. For first-timers there is a Walking for Health two-page form to fill out before walking. 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:

22 May: *The Glenn Miller Story*

26 June: *Mamma Mia*

NOSH 'N' DROSH

Shabbat lunchtimes 1.15-2.15pm

11 May

Louise and Michael Carmi on 'Can touch heal? A Journey with Havening Techniques reducing stress responses and building resilience'

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

Rafiqq 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 – CAN YOU HELP?

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, possibly in a different format. We are actively looking for more volunteers to help with cooking and serving. If you are able to assist with this, please call us on 020 7286 5181.

Young LJS

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

Benjamin Allen
Zachary Benson
Nora Bielawski
Nina Bluestone
Sonny-Joe Caplan-Higgs
Vaughn Conway
Elliott De Winter
Leo Delijani
Lorcan Eisenberg
Amelia Gale
Dalia Gelfer
Caio Goldman
Sophia Grade
Ella Jackson-Drexler
Sydney Johnson

Roxanna Lang
Seth Lefebvre Sell
Leo Mendelsohn
Olivia Moore
Samuel Nash
Cecily Newman
Eva Ruiz-Daum
Ari Salomon-Bar
Shira Salomon-Bar
Eleanor Sanderson
Bianca Schapira
Charlie Segal-Knowles
Xavier Sparks
Adrien Tahar

Please note that *Rimon* will be leading a *L'Dor va'Dor* service with Rabbi Elana Dellal at 11.00am on Sunday 9 June. This will be followed by a special *Rimon* lunch.

Tiny Tots at the LJS

If you are a parent, grandparent or carer, please bring your little ones between the ages of 0 and 4 years old to the LJS on Shabbat mornings for a delightful session of songs, stories, activities, drawing and Kiddush.

Tiny Tots meets on Shabbat mornings at 11am during Rimon term times.

**NEXT SESSIONS: Shabbatot
4, 11, 18 May; Sunday 9 June and
Shabbatot 15, 22, 29 June; 6 July**



© shiz287@aol.com

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.



Debi Penhey teaches Tiny Tots about Purim



Students from *Rimon* enjoy dressing up for Purim!

Board of Deputies Reports:



In March, in light of what was to be an imminent Brexit, a group of six Board of Deputies members travelled to the European Parliament in Brussels for a learning and information-sharing exchange with MEPs and Jewish lobbyists from a wide range of European as well as international Jewish organisations.

Concerns were voiced relating to antisemitism, and the need for a greater number of countries to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism. Of particular interest was a lecture by Peter Niedermüller, a Hungarian MEP, on the rise of representation of the Far Right within the European Parliament.

British Jewry has more leverage within the EU than outside it – a truth much lamented by UK MEP Charles Tannock (Conservative, London). But whatever transpires, it will be important to continue to build relationships and keep the dialogue open. *Shelley Salter*

When I was asked to join the Board of Deputies of British Jews last year I had two questions: does the Board reflect LJS values; and will I be able to make meaningful contributions? My trip to Blackburn on 14 March as part of a three-person delegation to meet key members of the Muslim community gave me a resounding ‘yes’. We met councillors, the chair of the Association of Mosques, and visited a boys’ school. We received the warmest welcome, our discussions were open and engaging, touching on topics such as antisemitism and Islamophobia, with learning on both sides – particularly poignant in view of waking up to the distressing news from New Zealand only the following day. *Karen Maxwell*

Social Action at the LJS

Twenty-eight interested people met on Saturday 16 March to discuss the future of Social Action at the LJS. Rabbi Alex put the conversation within the context of the principles of ethical Judaism – *Tikkun Olam* (to repair the world). We ended up with a wide range of concerns and possible areas to pursue.

If you are Interested in Social Action, please come to our stall on the 18 May after the Community Service to find out more, and perhaps to sign up for some activities. *Harriett Goldenberg*

Final copy date for the June edition of *LJS News* is 6 May. Copy and ideas should be emailed to: newsletter@ljs.org

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The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

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