

October 2019
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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

LJS NEWS



The staff of *Rimón* Religion School

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel once stated that the teacher is the text the students never forget. The young people of *Rimón* are blessed to have teachers who are passionate about Judaism, community, and creating a warm environment. Not only are our teachers skilled but they are also great role models.

The mission of *Rimón* is to provide a framework of learning within the community which offers a broad and stimulating foundation in Jewish education, to foster Liberal Jewish identity, and to be a place of value, nurture, meaning and warmth for a child to grow and learn.

On the morning of 7 September *Rimón* staff gathered together for a teacher inset to plan for the year ahead – four hours filled with learning, discussions and laughter.

Rabbi Elana Dellal's account of the *Rimón* inset morning is on page 15.

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Shabbat and Festival services: late September/October/early November

Friday evening services are at 6.45pm. *Shabbat* morning services are at 11.00am unless otherwise stated. Please refer to the High Holy Day Information booklet available with your tickets, and note special timings for other Festival services.

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER AND NOTES	
Sunday 29 September <i>Erev Rosh Hashanah</i> 6.45pm	Igor Zinkov	
Monday 30 September <i>Rosh Hashanah 10.30am</i>	Alexandra Wright Elana Dellal and Igor Zinkov	Service in the Sanctuary Family Service in the Montefiore Hall
Friday 4 October	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 5 October <i>Shabbat Vayelech/ Shuvah</i>	Guest speaker: Danny Rich	Rabbi Danny Rich has been the Senior Rabbi and Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism since 2005 and was rabbi to Kingston Liberal Synagogue for nearly two decades. We also celebrate Denise Asserson's special birthday.
Tuesday 8 October <i>Kol Nidre at 7.00 pm</i>	Elana Dellal	Bruch's ' <i>Kol Nidrei</i> ' will be played this year by cellist Raphael Wallfisch
Wednesday 9 October <i>Yom Kippur 10.30am</i>	Alexandra Wright Elana Dellal and Igor Zinkov	Service in the Sanctuary Family Service in the Montefiore Hall A study session after the Morning Service will be led by Rabbi Igor Zinkov on the highly topical subject of his rabbinic dissertation: 'Guard my tongue from evil' (<i>Berachot</i> 17a): Jewish concepts of ethical communication and social media
	Elana Dellal	Rabbi Elana Dellal will give the <i>Minchah</i> (Afternoon Service) sermon; during this service (4.00pm -5.15pm) Rabbi Igor Zinkov will be leading a discussion for <i>Kulanu</i> (group for young professionals) in the Assembly Hall. Tea and honey cake will be provided at the end of <i>Yom Kippur</i> as we break our fast together; <i>Havdalah</i> will be led by Caroline Hagard and the children in the congregation.
Friday 11 October	Igor Zinkov	
Shabbat 12 October <i>Ha'azinu</i>	Igor Zinkov	Please join <i>Rimon</i> Religion School and the rest of the congregation to help decorate the <i>Sukkah</i> . Delivery of any greenery (laurel and other long-lasting and luxuriant foliage) should please be delivered in advance.
Sunday 13 October <i>Erev Sukkot 5.00pm</i>	Please note the early time of our <i>Erev Sukkot</i> celebration in the <i>Sukkah</i> which follows the end of the Drop-In. There will be a delicious vegetarian supper, shaking of the <i>lulav</i> and blessings for being in the <i>Sukkah</i> on this joyous occasion. Children very welcome.	
Monday 14 October <i>Sukkot 11.00am</i>	Elana Dellal	Children's activities led by Caroline Hagard from 11.00am
Friday 18 October <i>Erev Shabbat Chol Ha-Mo'ed Sukkot</i>	Alexandra Wright	

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER AND NOTES	
Shabbat 19 October Shabbat Chol Ha-Mo'ed Sukkot	Sermon to be given by Rita Adler	Rita Adler, a former Chairman of the LJS, initiated the Drop-in for Asylum Seeker Families five years ago, and is now stepping back a little from its day-to-day running. We say thank you to Rita for her passion and commitment, exemplifying the values of Liberal Judaism.
Sunday 20 October Erev Shemini Atzeret-Simchat Torah 6.45pm	Igor Zinkov	Please join us for a joyful celebration of <i>Shemini Atzeret-Simchat Torah</i> . Liberal Jews combine the 8th and 9th days at the end of <i>Sukkot</i> into one (8th) day which is traditionally <i>Shemini-Atzeret</i> (the end of <i>Sukkot</i>) and <i>Simchat Torah</i> . The service is followed by a <i>Chavurah</i> supper. Please bring vegetarian or sweet food to share.
Monday 21 October Shemini Atzeret-Simchat Torah 11.00am	Alexandra Wright	The <i>Torah</i> will be read on both the eve and morning of <i>Simchat Torah</i> by members of the congregation. Please come and support them. At this service we will be rolling the scroll all the way back from Deuteronomy to the beginning of Genesis, and need many hands to help with this <i>mitzvah</i> .
Friday 25 October	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 26 October Shabbat Bereshit	Charles Middleburgh	Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh is Director of Studies at Leo Baeck College. We honour him as our guest speaker this <i>Shabbat</i> as he celebrates the 50th anniversary of his <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> .
Friday 1 November	Alexandra Wright	Co-led by <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Abe Wolchover
Shabbat 2 November Shabbat Noach	Alexandra Wright	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Abe Wolchover Rabbi Igor Zinkov will be leading a <i>Koleinu</i> service at 11.00am in the John Rayner Prayer Room.

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

Koleinu services

Our next *Koleinu* service, led by Rabbi Igor Zinkov, will be held 11.00am-12.30pm on *Shabbat* 2 November.

Koleinu services are informal, meditative musical services with interactive discussion around the weekly *Torah* portion, and offered as an alternative to the service in the Sanctuary.

Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Berry Goldstein widow of our former rabbi, Rabbi Dr David Goldstein, and mother of Joshua, Daniel and Benjamin

Joseph Konzon husband of Mildred and father of Anna

Esther Rosen mother of Edward and Hilary

Elizabeth Roth mother of Lionel, Michael and Daniel

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר האבלים
May God comfort you and all who mourn

Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker Families

The next Drop-In dates are the following Sundays: 13 October, 10 November, 8 December from 2.00pm-5.00pm. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 1.00pm to help set up. Volunteers are also needed from 5.00pm on the Thursday afternoons prior to the Drop-In dates to sort clothes.

Council Report

'Many are the plans in the mind... but it is the purpose of Adonai...' (Proverbs, 19:21)



The LJS Council has been working on its Strategic Plan and we invite your comments on our new objectives.

It is probably helpful to remind everyone of our Vision because the aim of our Plan is to work towards its aspirations.

Our Vision states that the LJS 'is an inclusive, egalitarian community of all ages, working together to explore Jewish traditions, texts and values and applying them to the challenge of living ethical lives [in the] twenty-first century'.

Our Strategic Plan has four areas: Religion, Learning, Community, Sustainability. Within each, there are aims and activities which are ongoing and part of the routine of being a synagogue. If we take 'Religion' as an example, much of our work is clearly delivering *shabbat* services, observing festivals, celebrating *b'nei mitzvot*.

What will be new in the next couple of years? Let us consider these four areas one at a time. Under 'Religion' our objectives will centre around building the new rabbinic team with Alex and Elana being joined this year by our recently

ordained rabbi, Igor. With their complementary skills and experiences, we can develop our religious programmes to increase the involvement of members at services and festivals, especially considering young families. We are also mindful of Liberal Judaism's plans for a new *siddur* and aim to be part of any discussions on this.

Our second area is 'Learning'. Dov Softi, *Rimon* Religion School Headteacher, resigned from his post at the end of the summer to take up a place as trainee rabbi at Leo Baeck College. We therefore reviewed the organisation of the Religion School and decided to take a new approach: we are developing a rabbinic-managed *Rimon* programme with Elana as the main lead. This will take careful planning and evaluation and is thus a key objective for this year. Alongside this, we are aiming to expand the adult education programme to increase its appeal to a wider audience.

'Community' is our third area. Social contacts and the support people receive from the synagogue keep us all connected. The LJS, with an enormous volunteer team, does much to sustain its members, particularly in times of need. In the coming year, we aim to increase both understanding and support for those with mental health issues. We are also aware of needing to safeguard the vulnerable in the community and therefore a more developed Safeguarding Plan will be implemented.

Key to the success of the previous three areas is our fourth, 'Sustainability'. Not only do we need the finances to survive, but we must also maintain the LJS building in an environmentally responsible way and provide a range of activities and services that attract new members and retain existing ones. These are key objectives. They run through all our Strategic Plan and will ensure the continuation of the LJS.

This is a summary. Do let us know what you think. The fuller version will be available in November and you will be welcome to receive a copy.

Sue Head, Chairman of Council (chair@ljs.org)

Willie Kessler

6 April 1927 – 30 July 2019

We pay tribute to Willie Kessler – a much-loved and highly respected member of the LJS, former Council member, Vice Chairman, and President of the synagogue 1999-2006

Imposing of stature, bushy-browed, twinkly-eyed and with a winning smile, Willie Kessler was a man of open-hearted generosity, warmth and bonhomie – a man of great appetite both literally and metaphorically. He dedicated himself to his key roles: as Kessler family patriarch, devoted husband to Jo, loving father to his four sons and their partners, as well as doting grandfather and great-grandfather; as head of a highly successful family business for which he worked tirelessly for 77 years; and as a loyal member of our community, taking his official duties seriously and always with integrity and humanity. Willie was an enabler, investing especially in young people, giving freely of his time, and offering encouragement, wise counsel, and opportunities so they could fulfil their potential.

Born in Vienna in 1927, Willie was the son of Leopold and Cecily Kessler, and was deeply attached to his younger sister, Adele. Their father spent six months of each year in England where Willie's grandfather, mindful of the rainy climate, had cannily set up a business in umbrella handles. It was this UK business which made it possible for the family to escape from Vienna in 1938.

Willie attended the local grammar school, but at fifteen, at the behest of his somewhat overbearing father, he went to work for the family business. The going was often tough, especially in the early years. But with his business acumen and an ongoing openness to new technologies (it was difficult to prise Willie away from his latest gadget), combined with a deep interest in each individual who worked for him, Willie was able to grow the business into the flourishing enterprise it remains today, commanding great loyalty from his staff.



It was in 1948 that Willie met his future wife, Jo, both having enrolled at evening classes at the LSE. Theirs was to be an enduring partnership of mutual love and respect. They married at the LJS in 1952 and over a period of ten years they had four sons, George, Charles, James and Edward.

From the early days of their marriage, Jo and Willie became involved in the LJS, Willie as Chairman of the Younger Members' Organisation (YMO), as Council member, Treasurer and then as a highly active President of the LJS, nurturing many deeply valued friendships along the way. In 1996 they instigated the Kessler Cup, awarded to a young staff member of the *Rimon* Religion School who showed dedication and initiative beyond the call of duty – indeed the very attributes Willie himself demonstrated throughout his long life. Willie's commitment to progressive Jewish life was taken to a new level when he became Chairman of Leo Baeck College, where he was held in high esteem for his inspiring leadership.

The life of a retiree was not one for Willie. He lived by the maxim that the more you put into life, the more you get out of it – a philosophy which served him and all who knew him so well.

A celebration of Willie Kessler's life will be held at the LJS at 4.00pm on Sunday 24 November. Everyone is most welcome to attend.

Forthcoming Events

Film Club at the LJS

Israeli films in Hebrew with English sub-titles
Wednesday 16 October at 7.00pm for 7.30pm



Ushpizin – Sukkot Guests
directed by Gidi Dar

A comedy drama about the custom of receiving visitors at *Sukkot*.

Moshe and Mali, an Orthodox Jewish couple in Jerusalem, are childless and without means to celebrate the

week-long holiday of *Sukkot*. After much prayer, they receive unexpected money, and Moshe is told about an abandoned *Sukkah* where the couple can celebrate *Sukkot* and receive guests. However, they are visited by two ex-convicts with an unexpected link to Moshe's past, and the celebration becomes a series of emotional trials.

Drinks and popcorn served from 7.00pm; screening at 7.30pm; post-film discussion till 9.30pm.

Please note that the next film will be at 7.00pm on Thursday 28 November in conjunction with West London Synagogue, and will be shown there: 33 Seymour Place W1H 5AU. This is a 2019 film called *Elohei Ha'Psanter* ('God of the Piano') directed by Itay Tal: when a concert pianist learns her new-born son is deaf, she resorts to drastic measures to ensure her child can hold his own within her competitive, musically accomplished family.

Sunday 3 November

7.00pm at the LJS

'All that Jazz' –
an evening of live jazz with LJS member, Peter Werth (*pictured*), his Jazz Crew and award-winning vocalist Sara Dowling

Music – socializing – buffet of Lebanese mezze.

Tickets £35.00 in aid of our building renewal.

For tickets: allthatjazzatljs.eventbrite.co.uk



Piano recital at the LJS – Angela Hewitt

Wednesday 13 November at 7.30pm

The LJS is delighted to be hosting a piano recital given by the internationally renowned pianist Angela Hewitt, who will be playing a programme of Bach and Beethoven.

This event is part of the Hampstead Arts Festival, and tickets can be bought via their website:

<http://www.hampsteadartsfestival.com/whats-on/angela-hewitt.html>

Please note that a 20% discount is being offered to LJS members – during the ticket purchase process, simply enter the discount code: LJS

Seminars on antisemitism

We are holding two seminars on the subject of antisemitism with distinguished academics and authors who have recently written books on this subject. Please note the seminars are free for members of the LJS and cost £10.00 for non-members.

'A noxious weed': antisemitism in a disturbed political environment

Tuesday 12 November

8.00-9.15pm at the LJS

Dr Keith Kahn-Harris and Dr Dave Rich will address the following questions:

Where has the rise of antisemitism in the 21st century come from? How do we distinguish between antisemitism and anti-Zionism? And what can our communities and faith groups do to combat the rise of racism in the current political climate?



Keith Kahn-Harris is a sociologist and writer. He is a Senior Lecturer at Leo Baeck College and runs the European Jewish Research Archive at the Institute for Jewish Policy Research. *Strange*

Hate: Antisemitism, Racism and the Limits of Diversity is his sixth book.

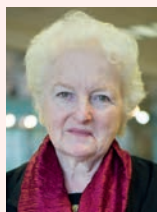


Dave Rich is Director of Policy for the Community Security Trust (CST), and an Associate Research Fellow at the Pears Institute for the study of antisemitism, Birkbeck, University of London.

He is the author of

The Left's Jewish Problem: Jeremy Corbyn, Israel and Antisemitism, and writes regularly about antisemitism and extremism for newspapers and journals both nationally and internationally.

Save the date for the second seminar:



Tuesday 21 January 2020

8.00-9.15pm at the LJS

**Antisemitism:
What it is. What it isn't.
Why it matters.**

Rabbi Julia Neuberger,
Senior Rabbi of West London

Synagogue, will lead this seminar based on her newly published book of the same title, published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2019.

World AIDS Day

Friday 29 November at the LJS at 7.00pm

The LJS will be marking World AIDS Day jointly with Beit K'Lal, Laviot, KeshetUK and GJIL. Following a finger buffet in the Assembly Hall and Mattuck Room, there will be an *Erev Shabbat* and World AIDS Day service in the Sanctuary at 8.00pm led by Rabbi Mark Solomon, with Sir Nicholas Hytner as our guest speaker. The evening will continue with dessert and an opportunity to socialise. (Please note that our regular *Erev Shabbat* service will take place as usual at 6.45pm in the Sanctuary, led by Rabbi Elana Dellal with Gideon Putnam, *Bar Mitzvah*. The World AIDS Day reception will be taking place upstairs during this service.)

Celebration of the life of Rabbi Harry Jacobi

Sunday 15 December at 3.00pm at the LJS

You are most welcome to attend this celebration of the life of Rabbi Harry Jacobi. Further details will be provided in the November newsletter.

Celebration of the life of Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg

Sunday 19 January at 5.00pm at the LJS

Please join us for this celebration of the life of our former Senior Rabbi, Rabbi Dr David J. Goldberg. Further details will be provided in the December/January newsletter.

Rabbi Igor Zinkov's Jewish Journey

For the 10-year-old Igor, the light bulb moment came when in 1999, at the suggestion of his grandmother, he went to a Jewish summer camp. Until that point, he had little awareness of his Jewishness in his community in the industrial city of Chelyabinsk in the Urals.

Igor's family, all highly qualified engineers, had been sent from Ukraine to Chelyabinsk to work in a factory producing machinery and military supplies. This industrial city had a sizeable Jewish population (and even a synagogue) dating from Tsarist times when Jews as young as 12 were conscripted and sent to the army camp there to assimilate. Indeed, Igor's parents, both of whom worked at Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant, preferred to identify themselves as Russians rather than Jews.

But back to the 10-year-old Igor: the one-week Jewish summer camp in nearby Ekaterinburg was a transformative experience for him. The sense of freedom, the informality – the director went around on roller skates – appealed to Igor and his elder brother, Konstantin, giving him a sense of belonging and a sense of being part of something much bigger than himself.

Building on this, Igor became involved in the local Progressive Jewish Youth Club. He undertook a year-long training course to be a *madrich* (youth leader), teaching other children then co-ordinating youth groups throughout the region. There was a weekly *cheder*, and in time – whilst still a teenager – Igor became head teacher, understanding early on the value of learning through teaching. The summer camps continued, with Igor progressing from participant to leader.

This involvement in the Jewish community continued apace throughout Igor's five years at Chelyabinsk University where he studied Engineering and also set up two businesses: one an events agency and another, with Konstantin, a business importing welding electrodes from China. In his final year, the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) organised a twinning with a synagogue in Manchester, a trip



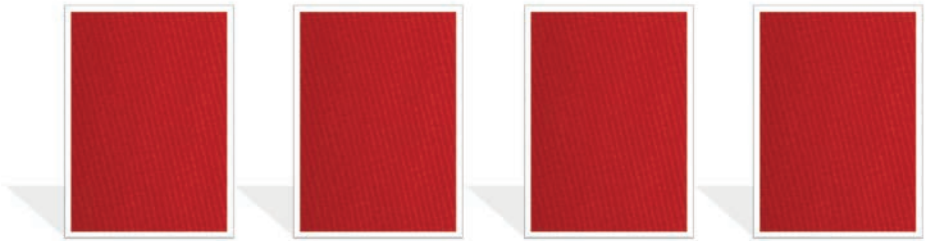
which proved to be hugely influential for Igor. He experienced a different kind of community – one which was more organised and developed than anything he'd previously encountered – and the visit triggered serious thoughts about a rabbinic career. On his return to Chelyabinsk, and following a request for a rabbi, Igor decided this was the role for him.

Igor completed his university studies and wound up his businesses. He knew he would need to learn both Hebrew and English, and spent 2013 undertaking an *ulpan* and attending a conservative *yeshiva* in Jerusalem – an improbable choice but the only available scholarly English-speaking programme about Judaism. This was his first exposure to an English-speaking environment. Five years in London studying at Leo Baeck followed, during which Igor became our student rabbi from 2017.

Although Igor had intended to return to the FSU (Former Soviet Union) to serve as a progressive rabbi, and indeed this had been a condition of his WUPJ sponsorship, by now he had acquired a more international perspective, one which he wanted to explore further. With his customary resourcefulness and talent for multi-tasking, Igor solved this by taking on the role of rabbi at the LJS as well as leading summer camps for Russian-speaking Jews. Here at the LJS we are delighted that Igor's Jewish journey has led him to us, and in turn he is greatly looking forward to serving us.

What is 'beauty'?

Rabbi Igor Zinkov reflects on the concept of beauty and its relevance to the festival of *Sukkot*.



What is beautiful? Why do we consider one thing a beautiful piece of art, but attribute no artistic value to another? In his 1981 book *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, the American art critic and philosopher Arthur Coleman Danto asked himself this same question and produced a thought experiment:

Imagine a row of identical canvases painted red, each of which has a different story and name. Let us say that one is called 'The Red Sea', an allusion to the biblical story of Exodus; another is 'Red Square', a communist tribute painted in the style of Malevich, similar to the famous 'Black Square'; a third is 'Red Tablecloth', written by a disciple of Matisse; the last one is just a canvas painted in red as preparation for an artwork to be worked on. They all look alike, but each has a different story.

Danto asked a rhetorical question as to whether all four canvases could be on display in a museum and have identical artistic value. He declares that we have reached 'the end of art' a time when the line between art objects and ordinary objects is invisible. The only thing which distinguishes a piece of art from an ordinary object is our perception and interpretation. In other words, each of us has a superpower to turn objects into a piece of art.

The chain of Jewish autumn festivals includes *Sukkot*, the week-long Festival of Tabernacles, when we express ideals of national unity, coexistence and diversity. We decorate our

Sukkot – tents – and strive to be united with the beauty of nature by spending a week outside our permanent homes.

Similar to Danto's identical but different paintings, *Sukkot* is associated with verses which have the same, but also different, Hebrew word, *hadar*. Leviticus 23:40 requires us 'to take a fruit of a beautiful (*hadar*) tree' on the first day of *Sukkot*. Rabbis of the Babylonian *Talmud* ask what tree this might be and what makes this tree so special and beautiful. They conclude that this is the *etrog* tree, because its fruit is not seasonal but dwells continuously all year on the tree (*ha-dar* literally 'dwells'). The *etrog* tree is beautiful because its fruit keeps its beauty irrespective of the time or season. The same word is used in Leviticus 19:32, which commands us to stand up in honour of the elderly. The word used for honour is *hadar*. The linguistic wonders of our tradition encourage us to find beauty in an old face, and honour those who came to this world before us and who preserved it for us.

The festival of *Sukkot* is therefore a week when we choose to see the beauty of ordinary things – the nature and people who surround us every day, turning each moment of our lives into a piece of art. There are times when everyone becomes overwhelmed by the routine of everyday life, by domestic and social issues. The wisdom of *Sukkot* reminds us that we can always choose to see beauty.



The Learning Circle

Adult education classes at the LJS

Sukkot term classes

TUESDAY MORNINGS 11.15am-12.30pm

Classes run 17 September – 10 December
(no half-term break)

TUESDAY TEXTS

This friendly group is led by our rabbis. We study biblical and rabbinic texts, modern poetry and short stories, and enjoy sessions on Jewish art and music. The starting point is always a text or painting, whether ancient or modern, but the class is based around discussion on a variety of different topics. New students are always welcome.

TUESDAY EVENINGS 7.00-8.00pm

Classes run from 17 September – 10 December
(no class on *Kol Nidre*, Tuesday 8 October or during half-term on 22 October)

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 understanding and confidence in prayer-book Hebrew. At the same time we will be learning the Hebrew of the *Tanakh* (Bible). You will be on the path towards greater enjoyment and participation in synagogue services. We practise reading simple Hebrew, building your reading skills and knowledge of vocabulary and grammar at an unhurried pace.

Reading the Psalms in Hebrew

Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright

The Psalms are intensely personal songs of praise, lament and yearning. Many are familiar to us – 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...'; 'I will lift up mine eyes to the hills...'. Some are read or sung in our Friday evening, *Shabbat* morning or festival liturgies. But how are they constructed, how do they sound in Hebrew, and what are they really saying? Join a class for Hebrew readers (at any pace that is comfortable for you) which will help you with your reading and understanding, and open up one of the most beautiful books in the Bible in its original language.

TUESDAY EVENINGS 8.00-9.00pm

Classes run from 17 September – 10 December
(no class on *Kol Nidre*, Tuesday 8 October or during half-term on 22 October)

Exploring Judaism

Tutor: 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 Hebrew knowledge. It is also an essential programme of instruction for people choosing Judaism by conversion. Class members are encouraged to read the materials made available online during the year. In addition to offering knowledge of Judaism, the course encourages practical experiences of Liberal Judaism and space for reflection within the group. Resources can be found on: www.ljsexploringjudaism.wordpress.com

Exploring Judaism Sukkot term 2019

1 October:

Exploring *Yom Kippur*

8 October:

Kol Nidrei Service at 7.00pm

15 October:

Sukkot and Simchat Torah Overview

22 October:

No session – half-term

29 October:

What is Judaism?

Jewish Values and Beliefs Overview

5 November:

Jewish History Overview

12 November:

Tanakh and Sefer Torah

19 November:

Rabbinic Literature

26 November:

Liturgy and Prayer Book

3 December:

Jewish Ethics

10 December:

Exploring *Chanukkah*

Seminars on antisemitism

Tuesday 19 November and

Tuesday 21 January 8.00-9.15pm

Information about these two seminars on antisemitism given by distinguished academics and authors can be found on page 7 under Forthcoming Events.

Hebrew and Yiddish lessons with Spiro Ark



For details of lesson times and charges, please visit www.spiroark.org/classes or contact Spiro Ark on 020 7794 4655 or at: education@spiroark.org

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.

SHABBAT MORNINGS 9.45-10.45am

Classes run from 14 September – 7 December

(no classes on 19 and 26 October during half-term)

Beginners' Hebrew

Tutor: Naomi Brightwell

This class uses Jonathan Romain's *Signs and Wonders* to help absolute beginners 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!

Key to Understanding Classical Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

This class is designed to increase students' understanding of classical Hebrew as used both in the *Torah* and the *Siddur*. We study using *Prayer Book Hebrew the Easy Way* (available for purchase £27.00) and 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. New students are particularly welcome.

Intermediate Hebrew

Tutor: Nitza Spiro

The aim of this class is to allow students to explore different Hebrew texts which they will come across in synagogue services on *Shabbatot* and festivals – from the morning blessings of the *Tefillah* to the Books of Ruth and Esther, and much more. The class will work on increasing fluency in reading, but at the same time we will also explore the historical, ethical, philosophical and ideological messages of the texts.

Exploring the Psalms in English

Facilitator: Michael Romain

Addressing the question as to how reading the Psalms can help us in today's world, we will be looking at a number of different Psalms, led by our rabbis and other teachers. No previous knowledge is required. If you would like to know more, please contact Michael Romain on 07818 000849.

The LJS Yom Kippur Appeal 5780/2019: our chosen charities

Consideration is given to many charities during the process of deciding on the beneficiaries of our Yom Kippur Appeal. The choice is difficult as there are many we would like to support. We believe that the three that have been selected this year are especially deserving causes. As is our custom, we have selected an Israeli charity, a UK charity, and an Anglo-Jewish charity. Here we tell you about each of them.



Leket Israel

Leket Israel, our Israeli charity, is the National Foodbank of Israel, 'rescuing' food which would otherwise go to waste, and distributing Israel's surplus food resources through partner non-profit organisations to those who need them most. Under the auspices of Leket Israel, an average of 175,000 people are fed each week. Food is delivered to hostels caring for different population groups in need, be they the homeless, those recently released from prison, people with mental health issues, ex-sex workers or individuals with substance abuse problems.

Leket Israel was founded by David Agaev who himself experienced homelessness. He says that whilst people who live on the streets are hungry, thirsty and need to shower, we must be mindful that they are still part of our society. We can reach out to them by feeding them, and this in turn opens the gateway to their re-entry into society, enabling them to lead productive lives.

The Hebrew word *leket* means 'gleanings' and the ethos of Leket Israel aligns with the Biblical command of Leviticus 23.22: *'And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger.'* We can fulfil this obligation by supporting Leket Israel.

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, our UK charity, provides care for children with very serious conditions and illnesses – children who are unlikely to reach adulthood. From October 2019 the hospice will have a beautiful new building, The Ark, to provide residential care in addition to its current 'hospice- at-home' care. Set in the grounds of a nature reserve in Barnet, The Ark will have six large and airy bedrooms looking out onto the reserve, together with play areas, a multi-sensory room and





a multi-faith prayer room. There will be special rooms for families to stay overnight and spend time with their child.

The LJS has been asked by Noah's Ark to support the Family Link Team. Led by a social worker, this team is the first port of call for families. A Family Link Team staff member visits the family in their home to assess their needs and find out what they are really struggling with. This individual becomes the family's point of contact and begins the work of signposting them to different professionals as well as helping them build resilience in the face of unimaginable adversity.

As the charity moves into The Ark, the Family Link Team will be expanding. It will be our privilege to support this charity as it further develops the services it offers.

Liberal Judaism

Liberal Judaism is our Anglo-Jewish charity. Liberal Judaism has made a commitment to fund bursaries for a certain number of students to train for the rabbinate at Leo Baeck College (LBC). In light of the fact that this autumn we welcomed the newly-ordained Rabbi Igor Zinkov to the LJS, fresh from his five years of study at LBC, and that Dov Softi, the former Head Teacher of *Rimon* Religion School, is now embarking on his rabbinic training at LBC, we are reminded anew of our strong affiliation to the College. Indeed, LBC has been at the heart of our

community for 63 years, training rabbis for the progressive Jewish rabbinate, bringing learning, spirituality and vocational training to their roles in congregations.

By supporting Liberal Judaism in offering bursaries to LBC students who would not otherwise be able to fund their rabbinic training, we are in essence ensuring the future of a vibrant Liberal Judaism movement. We at the LJS have benefitted over many years from the presence of LBC students and rabbis. We therefore ask you to give generously to a cause which is central to the continued flourishing of our community and to the growth of the LJ movement and all its constituent congregations.



We also include the UJIA (United Jewish Israel Appeal) in our *Yom Kippur* Appeal, as we do every year, for their youth and education projects which benefit LJ and LJY-Netzer, and through this, our own young people.

A full version of the *Yom Kippur* Appeal for 5780/2019 can be viewed on: www.ljs.org

Thank you, as always, for your generosity in supporting others at this very special time of the year.

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).

BRIDGE CLUB



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.

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.

We are looking for new volunteer helpers, and would appreciate hearing from you. Please contact the office on 020 7286 5181.

Forthcoming screenings:

23 October: *Quartet*

27 November: *Coppélia* (ballet)

There is no film in December.

The first screening in 2020 will be on **22 January**.

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.

NOSH 'N' DROSH

Shabbat lunchtimes 1.15-2.15pm

9 November: Dr Edie Friedman, from the Council for Racial Equality: *Lift the Ban: Why asylum seekers should have the right to work.*

14 December: Suzanne Higgott, Curator at the Wallace Collection: *'The most fortunate man of his day' – Sir Richard Wallace: connoisseur, collector and philanthropist.*

18 January 2020: Dr Tony Klug, special adviser on the Middle East to the Oxford Research Group and an international member of the Palestinian-Israeli journal, will talk on Arab-Israeli issues.

LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Our next walks will be on **Thursday 10 October, Thursday 14 November and Thursday 12 December**, meeting at the LJS at 11.15am. All members and friends are welcome. 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 / 07765 214867 or contact Michael Romain on romain@netgates.co.uk / 07818 000849.

RESTAURANT TUESDAY – relaunched!

This is an informal lunch club for the more elderly members of the congregation. Everyone is welcome! Join us at 12.45pm on the third Tuesday of the month for a chance to meet and chat and have a delicious meal, hosted by our delightful team of volunteers. We suggest a donation of £5.00. Our next lunches are on **15 October** and **19 November**. Please call the office on 020 7286 5181 to let us know if you are coming.

Rimon Corner

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

Raphael Abib	Michael Josefs
Ethan Abolins-Loguiiko	Lukas Klein Wassink
Eva Abolins-Loguiiko	Freya Lefebvre Sell
Freddie Albert	Toby Levitt
Edward Boizard	Alma Munthe Sforza
Eliza Davidson	Jacob Pleass
Shoshana Davidson	Lola Pollak
Gideon De Winter	Rachel Posner
Harry Delew	Helen Roth
Katie Delew	Zoe Rushbrook
Raphael Dellal	Andrea Schapira
Katie Falk	Michael Sokel
Ruth Forster	Eve Spearman-Walters
Charles Grainger	Josh Wald

Tiny Tots at the LJS

These sessions for little ones between the ages of 0 and 4 with their parents, grandparents or carers are held at 11.00am on Shabbat mornings during term times.

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

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

Kiddush Celebrations

If you would like to take part in the service or contribute to the *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

Rimon teacher inset morning



Rabbi Elana Dellal describes the *Rimon* teacher inset which took place on 7 September:

The morning began looking at the mission of *Rimon* (see page 1) and discussing

the teacher's role in creating an environment of learning that reflects the mission. Over lunch the assistants and the teachers had time to discuss the lesson plans for the coming year. There were sessions on safeguarding, on behaviour management, and on how teachers can encourage assistants to grow and learn in their role. There was also a welcome from Harriett Goldenberg who has given her gifts of passion, wisdom and leadership to the role of chair of the education committee for the last five and a half years, and from incoming chair, Sarah Lasher, who grew up at the LJS and who has brought her commitment and energy to *Rimon* as a teacher for the last decade.

The staff team discussed the changes in the leadership structure of *Rimon*. As from this new academic year, *Rimon* will be overseen by the rabbinic team with Rabbi Elana functioning as *Rimon* Lead. Dov Softi, who has been the head of school for the last nine years has begun his rabbinic training at Leo Baeck College. He will continue to give his skills to *Rimon* as Education Consultant, helping to guide and train the *Rimon* staff and supporting the rabbinic team through the transition. Debi Penhey, Education Coordinator, will continue in her role overseeing the logistics of *Rimon* with her creativity, experience and organisational skills.

The morning ended in the Sanctuary with a textual study session led by Rabbi Igor. The staff then gathered together in front of the open ark, and Rabbi Elana offered a blessing to the teachers for a year of learning and growth for them and for all the young people at the LJS.

Out and About Club news

We are delighted to announce that Charles Kessler has kindly accepted our invitation to become the new President of the Out and About club. Charles has been Treasurer for the past 35 years so is very experienced, and he has steered the club extremely successfully. He is following in the footsteps of Rabbi Dr David Goldberg and Dr Max Caplin.



The photo shows Meg Pennycook and George Coombes enjoying lunch at the Chatsworth Hotel on the annual outing to Worthing. This is the tenth year that we have been to this hotel where they once again produced a wonderful Sunday roast lunch. The weather was fine and everyone managed a walk out on the promenade to find rock or other souvenirs to take home.

Jenny Nathan, co-chairman of the Out and About Club

Summer weddings at the LJS



Mazel tov to Anya Gold and Daniel Tobias whose wedding was officiated by Rabbi Elana Dellal (see photo on the left) and to Siena Carver and Yonatan Golan (pictured right) whose wedding was officiated by Rabbi Alexandra Wright.

Final copy date for the November edition of *LJS News* is Monday 7 October. Copy and ideas should be emailed to: newsletter@ljs.org

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The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

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