

April 2020
Nisan/Iyyar 5780

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

LJS
NEWS



‘In Pursuit of Justice’ *Purim* event

Pictured above: L-R: Graham Carpenter, Eliane Glaser, Jeffrey Newman, Vivien Rose, Alfred Dubs

This year’s *Purim* event, led by Rabbi Igor Zinkov, started with spirited readings in Hebrew and English of the Book of Esther. After a very tasty supper, Rabbi Alexandra Wright introduced our five speakers who recounted their personal journeys in pursuit of justice: Lord Dubs spoke of his Kindertransport experience leading to his work on behalf of refugees; an LJY-Netzer camp set Graham Carpenter on a path to working with Jewish organisations to fight for justice, dignity and respect for all; Dr Eliane Glaser’s academic work led her to work in investigative journalism to reclaim idealism and counter the forces of populism; Rabbi Jeffrey Newman was inspired by rabbis here at the LJS to become a rabbi himself and later to become a committed member of Extinction Rebellion; Dame Vivien Rose’s questioning of the fairness of the Adam and Eve story as a child was an early indication of an interest in the legal profession, which is at the heart of a just and fair society.

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Social Action at the LJS

Our over-arching theme for the year is 'Food Sustainability and Food Poverty'. For *Tu Bi'Sh'vat* we held a 'Green Kiddush' which elicited a lot of interest. We will hold another in due course to continue to raise awareness about the environmental impact of our communal eating habits. We are joining Eco Synagogue, and plan on carrying out a gradual but thorough audit of all the departments in the synagogue from an environmental perspective. Volunteers will be needed.

February Festival Day at UCL Academy was an LJS initiative in partnership with UCL Academy (a local school, with 60% of the school population on free school meals), the National Literacy Trust, and the Portman Restaurant. This pilot for our planned involvement over the summer was a great success, with Arsenal football coaches and a performance artist called Laura Rhea

taking part, and with delicious food prepared and donated by the Portman Restaurant. Twenty children thoroughly enjoyed the day. If you would like to be involved in planning the summer holiday programme, or you'd like to help with sponsorship, please do let me know: hgoldenberg@btinternet.com.

Social Action deals with the reality of social problems within the wider community, and social justice attempts to change that reality. For *Pesach* we want to add a social justice arm to our activities, and will be supporting campaigns initiated by CPAG (Child Poverty Action Group). Watch this space for further developments, and as ever, if you'd like to become more involved yourself, please get in touch.

Harriett Goldenberg

Bereavements

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn:

Barbara Alexander, wife of Bernard and mother of Victoria and Judith

Rachel Hoffenberg (known as Rae), mother of Terry, Suzanne and Madelaine

Mildred Lefton, mother of Sue and Pamela

We also extend our sympathy to Harriett Goldenberg on the death of her sister, **Gloria Waisman**

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

Drop-In for Asylum-Seeker Families

The next LJS Drop-Ins for asylum-seeker families will be on **Sunday 19 April** and **Sunday 10 May** from 2.00pm-4.00pm.

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 (16 April and 7 May) to sort clothes.

The LJS 2020 Annual General Meeting and Council Elections

Wednesday 24 June at 7.00pm for 7.30pm



This year's AGM will be held on Wednesday 24 June at 7.30pm, with refreshments provided from 7.00pm. Our guest speaker will be Gillian Merron, Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies

of British Jews (*pictured*). At the AGM the LJS membership will confirm the election of members standing for a second term and new members to the LJS Council. We currently have a Council of 15 and can have up to 19 in total.

If you are interested in standing for Council please contact Lysa Schwartz (execdirector@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 Monday 4 May 2020.

Shabbat and Festival services: April and early May

Friday evening services are at 6.45pm. *Shabbat* morning services are at 11.00am unless otherwise stated.

DATE	RABBI/SPEAKER AND NOTES	
Friday 3 April	Sue Head	
Shabbat 4 April <i>Tzav/Shabbat Ha-Gadol</i>	Vivien Rose	Vivien Rose is giving the sermon to celebrate her 60th birthday: <i>Legitimacy and power: How do people in positions of influence maintain public trust without 'following a multitude to do evil'?</i>
Wednesday 8 April	No service	Please note there is no <i>Erev Pesach</i> service this evening. If you can offer hospitality at your <i>Seder</i> table or if you require hospitality, please contact Abi Rose: rabbispa@ljs.org (see page 5).
Thursday 9 April <i>Pesach</i> 11.00am	Alexandra Wright	First Day <i>Pesach</i>
Thursday 9 April	The Rabbis	Communal <i>Seder</i> at 6.30 pm. For details please see page 5.
Friday 10 April <i>Erev Shabbat Chol</i> <i>Ha-Mo'ed Pesach</i>	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 11 April <i>Chol Ha-Mo'ed Pesach</i>	Alexandra Wright	
Tuesday 14 April 6.45pm <i>Erev 7th Day Pesach</i>	Igor Zinkov	An intimate service held in the John Rayner Prayer Room to mark the last evening of the festival of <i>Pesach</i>
Wednesday 15 April 11.00am <i>7th Day Pesach</i>	Igor Zinkov	This service will feature the chanting of Moses' <i>Song of the Sea</i> (Exodus 15)
Friday 17 April	Igor Zinkov	Co-led by <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Leo Gavshon
Shabbat 18 April <i>Shemini</i>	Igor Zinkov	<i>Bar Mitzvah</i> Leo Gavshon
Tuesday 21 April 6.30pm for 7.00pm <i>Yom Ha-Shoah</i>	Gillian Walnes Perry	Marking <i>Yom Ha-Shoah</i> , our guest speaker will be the lecturer, speaker, educator, adviser, Honorary Vice President of the Anne Frank Trust UK and author of <i>The Legacy of Anne Frank</i> , Gillian Walnes Perry (see page 5).
Friday 24 April	<i>Kabbalat Torah</i> class	The three members of the <i>KT</i> class will lead the Friday evening service
Shabbat 25 April 11.00am <i>Tazria/M'tzora</i>	<i>Kabbalat Torah</i> class	The three members of the <i>KT</i> class will lead our annual <i>Kabbalat Torah</i> service. Please note the start time is 11.00am (and not 10.30am as in previous years).
Wednesday 29 April 7.00pm <i>Yom Ha-Atzma'ut</i>		Marking <i>Yom Ha-Zikkaron</i> (Memorial Day for fallen soldiers) and <i>Yom Ha-Atzma'ut</i> (Israel's Independence Day), the LJS Film Club will be showing the award-winning film <i>Fox Trot</i> - see page 7 for details.
Friday 1 May	Alexandra Wright	
Shabbat 2 May <i>Acharey-Mot/Kedoshim</i>	Alexandra Wright	

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

Life-long Learning and Intellectual Challenge



The Jewish belief in the importance of education is seen in our synagogue's Statement of Values. The third one says, 'The LJS prioritises life-long learning and the intellectual challenge of Jewish texts, ideas and practice.'

The LJS provides a huge range of education programmes, both for children and for adults. Council receives regular reports from those involved in developing these and enjoys hearing about the exciting work undertaken. In March, Barbara Fidler, Chair of the Nursery Committee, and Caroline Villiers, the Nursery School's Head Teacher, came to speak to us, but the focus of the beginning of the discussion was very different from previously because of the coronavirus crisis.

Council heard of the measures in place in the Nursery School to deal with coronavirus. High levels of hygiene and cleanliness were being promoted, and staff had been involved in scenario training. The school was receiving daily advice and instructions from Westminster Council which they were following. The discussion was broadened to the steps that the synagogue is taking to keep our community safe. It was felt that we should carry on normally for as long as possible because of our being such an important place for those who need support. However, it was recognised that the situation could change.

As well as this, we heard about developments in education at the synagogue. The Nursery School has a new Early Years curriculum, and has introduced interesting new projects. One example, a forest school programme, develops children's self-confidence through hands-on learning in a natural environment with trees; a second is an

inter-generational initiative, bringing together the Nursery children with older members of the community, to the enjoyment and benefit of both.

Sarah Lasher, Chair of the Education Committee, gave an overview of *Rimon*, our Religion School. This has been a time of transition in *Rimon*, moving towards a rabbinic-led school with Rabbi Elana Dellal as the lead person. One improvement this year has been to run a variety of clubs during the children's break; particularly popular have been storytelling sessions in the library. A new curriculum is being introduced and there are regular music sessions.

A priority for the Education Committee, which oversees *Rimon*, is to develop programmes of interest for the parent community and to review the experience of the older students to encourage them to stay with us beyond their *Kabbalat Torah* year.

We also heard about the ever-impressive range of adult learning taking place. There are regular core classes, such as those on Tuesday mornings and evenings, and *shabbat* mornings. Throughout the year there are seminars, mini-courses and lectures. An interesting talk which is planned is entitled 'Diversity and solidarity; speaking out for Britain's Jews' which will be given by Gillian Merron, Chief Executive of the Board of British Deputies. This is on Wednesday evening 24 June at the start of our AGM (see page 2).

Rabbi Igor Zinkov runs the Exploring Judaism evening class. He is working on developing friendship amongst the class members, such as by bringing them together for Friday night dinners; he sees this as key to people staying members of the LJS after the course finishes.

Albert Einstein wrote, 'It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.' We are all very grateful that we have amazing teachers, promoting Jewish education at the LJS.

Sue Head, Chairman of Council

Forthcoming Events

Offering or requesting home hospitality on the First Night of Pesach

The first night of *Pesach* falls on Wednesday 8 April. If you would like home hospitality or can offer hospitality to a guest please contact Abi Rose on 020 7432 1283 or rabbispa@ljs.org, and she will match you with a guest or host.

Communal Seder on the Second Night of Pesach

Thursday 9 April at 6.30pm at the LJS
Led by the Rabbis

The actual *Seder* service begins at 6.30pm so please arrive in good time. The cost of this event is as follows:

Members and Friends: Adults: £36.00; Children up to 12 years: £16.00; Family of two adults and two or more children: £92.00

Non-members: Adults: £60.00; Children up to 12 years: £28.00; Family of two adults and two or more children: £150.00

Please note that financial assistance towards the cost may be available. Helena Miller will once again be offering her exceptionally tasty *Seder* buffet. Pre-booking is essential for this event and should be made by **Thursday 2 April**. Please contact Abi Rose on 020 7432 1283 or email: rabbispa@ljs.org



Erev Seventh Night of Pesach

Tuesday 14 April at 6.45pm in the John Rayner Prayer Room

All are welcome to join us for an informal service and discussion.

Seventh Day of Pesach

Wednesday 15 April at 11.00am

Do join us to mark this occasion, which will include the chanting of Moses' *Song of the Sea*.

Yom Ha-Shoah

(Holocaust Remembrance Day)

Tuesday 21 April at 6.30pm for 7.00pm

'The Surprising Global Legacy of Anne Frank'

We are delighted to announce that our guest speaker is Gillian Walnes Perry MBE, lecturer, speaker, educator and adviser, Hon. Vice President Anne Frank Trust UK, and author of *The Legacy of Anne Frank*. Gillian will be speaking about and reading from her remarkable book which explores Anne Frank's story through a new lens: how learning about a Jewish girl's experiences in the Holocaust has had a redemptive and healing effect in some of the world's most violent regions.



Kabbalat Torah service

Shabbat 25 April at 11.00am

You are warmly invited to join us for this special service led by members of the *Kabbalat Torah* class - Eva Bielawski, Sam Hanna-Kemper and Noah Simon. (See page 13.)

Please note the start time of 11.00am (and not 10.30am as in previous years).

Visit to The British Library Tuesday 28 April at 11.15am

Hebrew Manuscripts: Journeys of the Written World – Journey beyond the Bible to discover the history, culture and traditions of Jewish people from all corners of the world through the ages.

Our visit will be led by the exhibition curator, Ilana Tahan

Everyone is welcome to join the Tuesday Texts group for an outing to this exhibition (see page 10). We are most fortunate in having the curator of the exhibition as our guide, so this is an exceptional opportunity for LJS Members and Friends. Please register your interest with Abi Rose: rabbispa@ljs.org or 020 7432 1283. Numbers will be limited to a maximum of 15.

Information about the exhibition is available at: <https://www.bl.uk/events/hebrew-manuscripts>



Here, LJS Member **Beverley Nenk**, Curator of Medieval Collections and Judaica at the British Museum, offers us a preview, conveying the scope and variety of this remarkable exhibition:

This beautiful exhibition of Hebrew manuscripts explores the importance of the written tradition in Jewish history and culture around the world. The manuscripts on display highlight the richness and diversity of the Jewish diaspora, and explore the interactions, influences and exchanges of knowledge between Jewish writers and scholars and their neighbours in the countries in which they lived.

As well as displaying some of the British Library's iconic Hebrew treasures, such as Maimonides' 'Guide for the Perplexed' (pictured), produced in Spain during the 14th century, the exhibition also showcases many lesser known objects, some of which have never been displayed before. Some 40 manuscripts span communities from China, India, the Middle East, Europe and North Africa, and include works of literature, science, law, music, magic, alchemy, *Kabbalah* and religion.



The earliest object in the exhibition, the first Gaster Bible, dates to the 10th century. In addition to Hebrew, the texts show the other languages used by Jews in these diasporic communities, such as Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-Persian, Judeo-Urdu, and Yiddish. Beautifully illuminated manuscripts with intricately

detailed illustrations, scientific diagrams, music scores, astronomical tables, and a spell book containing magical and medical recipes, are just some of the works included.

Audio-visual digital displays in the exhibition illustrate the Hebrew alphabet, reveal the sound of the musical scores and bring to life animations of micrographic images, illustrations composed entirely of minute Hebrew letters. The exhibition celebrates the completion of the Hebrew

manuscript digitisation programme, making the collections publicly available online. The curator of the exhibition, Ilana Tahan, is Curator of Hebrew and Christian Orient Studies at the British Library, and Ilana is guiding the LJS exhibition tour. Many members of the LJS will remember the late Rabbi Dr David Goldstein, who became Curator of Hebrew Manuscripts at the British Library after leaving the synagogue.

Film Club at the LJS

Israeli films in Hebrew with English subtitles

Wednesday 29 April at 7.00pm for 7.30pm



Fox Trot (2017)

Directed by Samuel Maoz

This award-winning film is about a couple who are informed that their son, an IDF soldier, was killed in action. We are screening it to mark *Yom Ha-Zikkaron* (Israel's Day

of Remembrance for fallen soldiers and civilian victims of terrorism) and *Yom Ha-Atzma'ut* (Israel's Independence Day) which fall on consecutive days, 28 and 29 April.

Drinks and popcorn served from 7.00pm; screening 7.30pm - 9.00pm; post-film discussion. There is no charge for admission but a contribution to costs would be much appreciated.

For further information please contact Cristina Galisi at cristina@galisi.com or to register please email rabbispa@ljs.org or call 020 7432 1283.

Films are presented with the kind support of West London Synagogue.

Understanding the fate of the Uyghurs in China

Monday 4 May at 7.30pm

The LJS, together with René Cassin - the charity which works to promote and protect universal human rights, drawing on Jewish experience and values - is holding an evening with members of the Uyghur community here in the UK, listening to their story and finding out what we can do to draw attention to the horrific plight of one million Muslims in China who have been robbed of their freedom. The evening falls during Ramadan, and we will be holding an *Iftar* (breaking of the fast) with food after hearing from members of the Uyghur community. RSVP to Abi Rose, rabbispa@ljs.org or 0207 432 1283

Liberal Judaism Biennial Conference

22-24 May at the De Vere Staverton Estate, Daventry

The theme for the event is 'Liberal Judaism: Collaboratory'. The Collaboratory is both an open space and a creative process where partners work together to find solutions to sometimes complex problems. Liberal Judaism is made stronger via its partnerships, be they internal (with our communities) or external (with other organisations and faiths). Our Collaboratory will be the place to see this happen.

For more information and to book please go to: <https://www.liberaljudaism.org/calendar/biennial/>



Shavuot at the LJS

Evening of Thursday 28 May through the night to morning of Friday 29 May

Please join us at the LJS for the *Erev Shavuot* service, followed by a *chavurah* supper and our all-night *Tikkun Leyl Shavuot*. Further details in the May newsletter.

Two June Shabbat morning services for your diary

On 6 June we will join Bob and Ann Kirk in celebration of their 70th wedding anniversary and Bob's 95th birthday. (Please note the date is different from the one previously announced.) On 13 June we will officially welcome Rabbi Igor Zinkov.

‘From language to life’ – translating *Attah gibbor*



In her novel *Fugitive Pieces*, about a hidden child in Poland who escapes the fate of his parents, the author Anne Michaels observes: *‘Translation is a kind of transubstantiation; one poem becomes another. You choose your philosophy of translation just as you choose how to live: the free adaptation that sacrifices detail to meaning; the strict crib that sacrifices meaning to exactitude. The poet moves from life to language, the translator moves from language to life; both like the immigrant, try to identify the invisible, what’s between the lines, the mysterious implications.’*

Over the past few months, I have been attempting to translate some of the Psalms we use in our *Erev Shabbat* services for the new prayer book planned by Liberal Judaism, *Siddur Shirah Chadashah*, and I have found myself facing the choice that Anne Michaels presents: should I be faithful to the Hebrew words and convey with exactitude their meaning to the worshipper, or can I offer a free adaptation that speaks to us using contemporary syntax and idiom? This is a difficult enough choice; even more challenging is the problem of translating biblical or, in the case of our prayers, rabbinic theology into something that resonates with our own faith and the questions we have about God, humanity and the unpredictable uncertainties of our world. I find myself caught between the desire to be linguistically faithful to the Hebrew text while at the same time attempting to create

a literary vehicle that might be closer to our contemporary world view.

At a recent rabbinic gathering in Oxfordshire, the editors of the new draft *Siddur* invited colleagues to do an exercise in translation of certain prayers. Rabbi Richard Jacobi and I were given the second blessing of the *Amidah*, known as *Gevurot* – ‘power’ or ‘might’. This is the blessing that begins with the words, *Attah gibbor le’alam Adonai m’chayyeh meitim attah, rav, l’hoshiah* – ‘Unending is Your might, Eternal One; You are the source of life; great is your power to redeem.’ The blessing focuses on God’s might in nature – ‘causing the wind to blow and the rain to fall, the sun to shine and the dew to descend’. We acknowledge God’s sustaining love, granting us eternal life, supporting the falling and healing the sick, freeing the captive and keeping faith with those who sleep in the dust. The blessing ends with a series of rhetorical questions: ‘Who is like You, Source of all strength? Who is Your equal, sovereign Author of life and death, whose will it is that goodness shall prevail?’ And its closing words return to the opening theme: *V’ne’eman attah l’hachayot meitim. Baruch attah Adonai, m’chayyei ha-meitim* – ‘Trusting in You, we see life beyond death. We praise You, O God, Source of Eternal life.’

In its ancient form, this blessing was known as *t’chiat ha-meitim*, ‘the resurrection of the dead’, and this was (and in some synagogues today still is) its most significant theme. *M’chayyei ha-meitim*, the phrase that occurs at the beginning and end of this blessing, means literally ‘who revives the dead’.

In the new draft *Siddur*, the translators have chosen something that is closer to ‘free adaptation’, sacrificing detail to meaning, rather than ‘the strict crib that sacrifices meaning to exactitude’:

Source of All, Your vital energy sustains our world, redeeming from lifelessness. The wind blows and the rain falls, the sun shines and the

dew descends. In Your compassion, You have granted us life. You renew our will to honour life, raising up those brought low and supporting those who stumble. Your healing powers work ceaselessly within us. Inspire us to free the enslaved and to remember those who sleep in the dust. How can we understand this Miracle of Life, and to what could it be compared? The eternal cycle of death and life rules over all, but in this is hope of renewal. Faithful is the cycle and faithful it shall remain. Blessed is the Source of All, continually renewing life.

One of the great strengths of *Siddur Lev Chadash*, our current prayer book, are the translations. In translating the Psalms for *Erev Shabbat*, I could not improve on their faithfulness to the text, their elegance, their rhythm and musicality. And the same is true of these blessings – there is an elegant simplicity to the translations in our current *Siddur*, which does not mean that they are simplistic, but rather that complex thoughts are expressed with clarity and poetic eloquence. In the draft version, the ‘translation’ moves away from the Hebrew not only in the choice of words and rhythm, but also in structure and sense in an attempt to appeal to a worshipper who may be struggling with the theology of God as omnipotent Prime Mover, Creator, Healer, Liberator of the captive and Source of life and death.

So what do you do with a blessing like this? Return to literalism and exactitude and offer it as a literary composition for the worshipper to reflect on? Or create a prayer that is suggested by the themes of the blessing, a paraphrase that will sit alongside the Hebrew, but that will not help the student of Hebrew to learn the language in an accurate way?

Creating a prayer book for regular worship, a fixed liturgy that needs to speak to the deepest yearnings of our heart, that needs to address our doubts and questions with honesty and truth – this requires something else. Perhaps it is enough for it to exist ‘between the lines’, as Anne Michaels has written. Nothing needs to be spelled out; we will discern its ‘mysterious implications’ for ourselves individually.

But perhaps there is a third way: a way that captures the meaning of the Hebrew but also allows us to ask our own questions about God, humanity and the world.

Here is my very imperfect adaptation into English of *Attah gibbor*, trying to capture the rhythmic movements of each line and its powerful repetitions without searching for different or complicated vocabulary each time. It includes both faithful translations when possible and free interpretative expressions, preserving the poetic nature of this blessing which draws on phrases from the Psalms and elsewhere in the Bible. Can it mean something to us? Yes, provided we are willing to suspend disbelief, become part of a praying community, allow its words and music to infuse our spirits and so unite us to each other and to the heritage of our Jewish faith.

*Eternal is Your might, Adonai,
Source of life and death,
Strong to rescue.
The wind circles the earth,
The rain falls,
The sun shines,
The dew descends.
And You, O God, sustain life in Your loving
kindness and great compassion;
Holding those who fall,
Giving strength to the sick;
And hope of freedom to the captive,
Faithful to those lying in the dust.
Who is like You, Source of strength?
And who can be compared to You?
Source of death and life,
Strong to rescue.
Faithful are You to the living and the dead.
Baruch attah Adonai m'chayyeh ha-meitim –
Blessed are You, Adonai, in life and in death.*

Alexandra Wright

This is an abridged version of a sermon given on *Shabbat Shemot 5780*



The Learning Circle

Adult education classes at the LJS

Shavuot term classes

Tuesday morning and evening classes run from 28 April to 14 July, with a break for half-term on 26 May. *Shabbat* morning classes run from 25 April to 4 July with no classes on 23 and 30 May when it is half-term.

TUESDAY MORNINGS 11.15am-12.30pm

TUESDAY TEXTS

This friendly group is led by our rabbis and other guest tutors. 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.

ALL WELCOME TO OUR VISIT TO THE BRITISH LIBRARY!

Tuesday 28 April at 11.15am: Visit to The British Library

*Hebrew Manuscripts:
Journeys of the Written World*



Everyone is welcome to join the Tuesday Texts group for an outing to this exhibition led by the exhibition curator, Ilana Tahan. We invite you to read LJS member Beverley Nenk's article on page 6 for a preview of the treat in store. Information about the exhibition is available at:

<https://www.bl.uk/events/hebrew-manuscripts>. Please register your interest with Abi Rose: rabbispa@ljs.org or 020 7432 1283.

The group size will be limited to a maximum of 15.

TUESDAY EVENINGS 7.00-8.00pm

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 class will help you to improve your 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

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 *Shavuot* term

28 April

Israel – People and Land

5 May

Messiah and Messianic Age

12 May

Conversion

19 May

Exploring *Shavuot*

26 May

No class – half-term

2 June

Synagogue and Home; Home Rituals and Prayers (including *kashrut*, *mezuzah*, *tallit* and *tefillin*)

9 June

Different forms of Judaism

16 June

Who is a Jew?

23 June

Humankind in Jewish Thought

30 June

17 *Tammuz*, 3 Weeks, *Tisha B'Av*

7 July

Ask the Rabbi

14 July

Siyyum/End of Year Celebration

SHABBAT MORNINGS 9.45-10.45am

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!

Moving Up in Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

The aim of this class is to allow students to begin to understand the Hebrew prayers and songs used in services. Those joining the class will need basic reading skills, and we will spend some time each week increasing reading fluency. We will look at the basics of Hebrew grammar using the textbook *Prayer Book Hebrew the Easy Way* (available for purchase £27.00). We will build up your vocabulary and there will be five words a week to learn. We will also start learning how to write Hebrew letters using simplified versions of the block letters we use in the *Siddur*.

Inspiring Hebrew Texts

Tutor: Nitza Spiro

The aim of this class is to allow students who have knowledge of reading to explore different Hebrew texts which they will come across in synagogue services on *Shabbatot* and festivals – from the morning blessings of *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.

Modern Jewish Scholars

Facilitator: Michael Romain

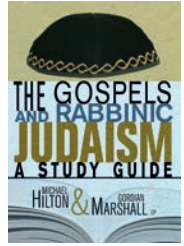
This term we will be looking at the writings of modern (20th century onwards) Jewish scholars. Our rabbis and other contributors will choose their own subjects which include, among others, Lily Montagu, Rabbi Regina Jonas, Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, and our own scholar in residence, Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton. We welcome new members to the class. If you would like more information, please contact Michael Romain: romain@netgates.co.uk

Our special Tuesday evening short course continues in May after the Passover and Easter break

The LJS in conjunction with the London Society for Jews and Christians:

The Gospels and Rabbinic Judaism

inspired by Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton and Father Gordian Marshall's study guide of the same title



Following on from three sessions held in March, the course will continue on three Tuesday evenings in May from 8.00pm – 9.00pm, led by experts in both Judaism and Christianity. Please note that each class is self-standing, so you can join us at any point.

Judaism and Christianity developed as sibling faiths, built on the texts of the Hebrew scriptures in the aftermath of the destruction of the Second Temple. Come and study the rabbinic texts and compare them with the Gospel texts. In the first three sessions (held in March) we saw a high degree of synergy between the Jewish and Christian texts; in the second set of three sessions (in May) there are some sharp contrasts.

5 May: *Shabbat* Observance with Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton and Rev. Patrick Morrow

12 May: *Divorce*: speakers include Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton

19 May: *Who can forgive?* with Rabbi Alexandra Wright and Rev. Kristina Andreasson

This course is free to LJS Members and Friends, and to Members of The London Society of Jews and Christians; the cost to Non-Members is £10.00 per session. All participants are required to buy a copy of the book at a cost of £10.00. To register, please email education@ljs.org or call 020 7432 1284.

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.

Sunday 25 October to Sunday 1 November 2020

A Liberal Jewish Synagogue Journey with EcoPeace

Crossing the Jordan River: Water Scarcity and Environmental Peacemaking

with Rabbi Alexandra Wright & Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith

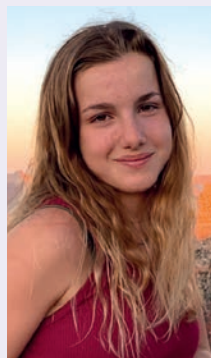
Flying into Amman, journeying down the Jordan valley and returning from Tel Aviv, we will be looking at projects involving Israel and her neighbours in water management, desert ecology and peace initiatives. This community trip is over the UK Autumn school half-term, and accompanied children post-*Bar/Bat Mitzvah* (13+) and young adults are very welcome. Now booking, full details from SueBolsom@gmail.com. Numbers are limited by the available accommodation.



© Frank Dabba Smith

The *Kabbalat Torah* class of 2020

On Erev Shabbat 24 April and Shabbat 25 April three young people celebrating their *Kabbalat Torah* will be leading the services at the LJS. Everyone is warmly invited to come to these special occasions. Here the class introduce themselves...



Eva Bielawski

My name is Eva, and I'm 14 years old. I attend Francis Holland School in Regent's Park. So far, my favourite classes have been sports and religious studies. I love studying philosophy, interpreting religious texts, and comparing religions and each of their values. I have been a member at the LJS for around 8 years now, and even at 6 years old, I was aware of the inclusiveness and warmth of the LJS community. Going every week and getting a chance to see my friends and learn about the rich background and history of my ancestors has helped shape me into who I am today. To me, the *KT* service means affirming my connection to Judaism. I look forward to giving back to this community that has done so much for me by becoming an assistant teacher.



Sam Hanna-Kemper

My name is Sam. I'm 15 and have attended *Rimon* Religion School since *Kittah Alef*. I enjoy spending time here with my friends and the sense of community we share. In my spare time I enjoy football, badminton, running and space hopper. My GCSE choices include the three sciences and various languages.

I think *KT* will represent a bit of a step up for us, though I relish the challenge. I hope that we will be able to adjust to the new level. Hopefully the congregation will enjoy our service. I look forward to becoming a full member of the community.



Noah Simon

My name is Noah. I'm 15 years old and in year 10 at the Compton School. I like clothes and football - I support Crystal Palace. I also like cars and music, and I play piano. Another thing I enjoy is theatre. We go to the theatre a lot and I was in a musical over February half-term. I have been going to *Rimon* since *Kittah Gan* and it feels weird that this is my last year. I will definitely miss it, having been here almost every Saturday since nursery. I am going to come back as an assistant (and maybe even a teacher, who knows?) because it looks fun and I'd like to give back a bit to the community. Liberal Judaism and the LJS mean a lot to me, so for me my *Kabbalat Torah* has great significance, and having worked so hard, I am excited about it.

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).



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 always welcome new volunteer helpers, and would appreciate hearing from you. Please contact the office on 020 7286 5181.

The next three screenings:

22 April: *Sully: Miracle on the Hudson*

27 May: *Pal Joey*

24 June: *Block-Heads* (Laurel and Hardy)

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.

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 by email: a.shafritz@ljs.org or by telephone on 020 7286 5181.

RESTAURANT TUESDAY

This informal lunch club, successfully relaunched, is 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 £6.00. Our next lunch is on **Tuesday 21 April**. Please call the office on 020 7286 5181 to let us know if you are coming.

NOSH 'N' DROSH

Shabbat lunchtimes 1.15pm-2.15pm

Talks and discussions over a bagel lunch – all welcome; no charge

30 May 2020: the life of LJS member Walter Wolfgang, who died last year, will be celebrated by his close friend, Carol Turner.

LOCAL WALKING GROUP

Our next walks will be on **Thursday 16 April** and **Thursday 14 May**.

We meet 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.

Rimon Corner

Susannah Alexander reports on drawings inspired by the Psalms

“The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky proclaims God’s handiwork”

These words will be familiar to many of you from Psalm 19, which you’ll find in the *Shabbat* morning service. To our young people they are less familiar. Very often, we focus on the *Torah* service and the prayers our teens need to know for *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah*, but these earlier parts of the service receive less attention.

During this academic year *Kittah Zayin* (Year 7 students aged 11-12) learned about the structure of the *Shabbat* morning service, and about *Birchot HaShachar* and *P’sukei d’Zimra*, the earlier sections of the service. Alone or in small groups, the students chose a Psalm which inspired them, and picked a particular phrase which resonated or felt special. They then designed large images to represent what the words or phrases they chose meant to them. As you can see in the drawings displayed here, the images created were striking, and allowed the young people to bring the text to life in a colourful manner, enabling them to understand and express the beauty of the text in their own way.



Happy are those who dwell in your house, who are ever singing your praise from Psalm 84



The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky proclaims God’s handiwork from Psalm 19



To tell of your love in the morning from Psalm 92

Tiny Tots

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.

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

Nena Atwell	Sam Hanna-Kemper
Tom Ballheimer	Jude Message
Kobe Behr	Zoe Roeder Wald
Isaac Bendel	Ava Rosenthal
Axel Cohen	Jessica Spanier
Wilfred Ginsberg	Baxter Spurr
Emily Gruber	Emilia Stonehill
Ethan Haller	Thomas Stonehill
Naomi Hanna-Kemper	Tom Wald



The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

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Joy and Richard Desmond
Jo Kessler
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Effie and Michael Romain
Michele and Rick Senat
Martin Slowe
Janine and Michael Sternberg
Christine and the late Sam Stevenson

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Rabbin

Elana Dellal
Igor Zinkov

Scholar in Residence

Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton

President

Martin Slowe

Chairman of Council

Sue Head

Executive Director

Lysa Schwartz

Vice-Principal of Rimon Religion School

Rabbi Elana Dellal

Nursery Head Teacher

Caroline Villiers

Community Care Co-ordinator

Aviva Shafritz

Director of Music

Cathy Heller Jones

Organist

Tim Farrell

LJS News Team

Editor: Judith King
Artwork: Tingle Design

In case of bereavement:

In office hours, call 020 7432 1298
At other times, call 020 8958 2112 (Calo's)

Pictured above: L-R: LJS member and Out and About Club helper Sybil Watson celebrating her 90th birthday; LJS members William and Maggie Carver with the maquette of the statue of Licoricia of Winchester, the medieval businesswoman who was the subject of their Nosh 'n' Drosh session; Fred Shelley, who was our caretaker at the LJS for 25 years, celebrating his 80th birthday at the Out and About Club

Remembering VE Day on Shabbat 9 May

Where were you on 8 May 1945? What are your memories of VE Day?

Were you in the army?
Or at home? Were you at school? What did it mean for you if you had come to this country as a refugee?

'Let us remember those who will not come back... let us remember the men

in all the services, and the women in all the services, who have laid down their lives. We have come to the end of our tribulation and they are not with us at the moment of our rejoicing.' King George VI

We would like to mark the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day at our *Shabbat* morning service on 9 May by listening to memories recalled by our own members at the LJS. Perhaps you have memories shared by older family members who lived through VE Day and would like to share them with the congregation. If you would like to speak for a few minutes at the service, please contact Rabbi Alexandra Wright at a.wright@ljs.org



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

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