



THE LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

## The Rabbis, President, Officers and Council wish all Congregants a Happy and Healthy New Year

# Costs and Benefits

Spiritual accounting has always been an integral part of the meaning of the Days of Awe. Even during the preceding month of Elul our tradition bids us to engage in *cheshbon ha-nefesh* or soul searching – the accountancy of the spirit – by surveying our good and bad deeds over the past year, in the hope that the credit column will outweigh the debits, before we present ourselves, as it were, to the great Auditor and pray to be inscribed in the book of life and moral solvency.

As we prepare ourselves in this spiritual vein, however, some may be engaged in more earthly economic calculations about the role of the synagogue in their lives. This may, of course, happen not so much in September as in January when the bill arrives for membership renewal, but perhaps many will reflect on it as they receive their High Holyday tickets and ready themselves for the annual “synagogue season”.

Some time ago the treasurers received a letter from a young man for whom I had, the previous year, conducted a wedding blessing in a well-known Park Lane hotel. He had, he said, undertaken a cost-benefit analysis and come to the conclusion that, for the number of times he was likely to attend synagogue in the course of a year, it was not worth it for him to renew his membership. While grateful for the service – in both senses of the word – he had received, he clearly felt that the cost of membership outweighed any benefit he was likely to receive by being a member of the LJS.

We were shocked to receive such a letter. Presumably everyone makes some kind of prudential calculation about joining, or remaining a member of a synagogue, as with any organisation, but never before had someone expressed it to us in quite such crude and dispassionate terms, terms that belong in the hard-nosed world of business and seem strangely out of place applied

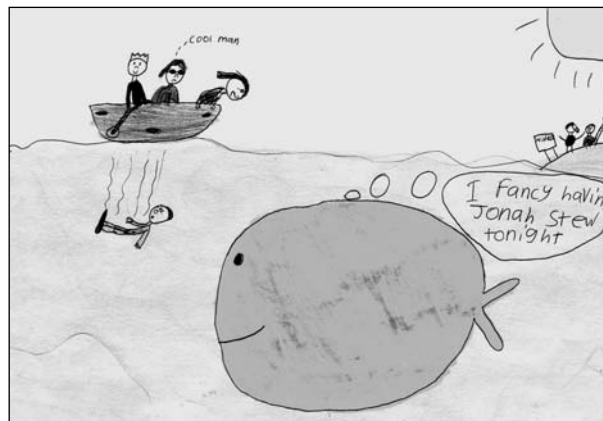
to a house of worship whose purposes are spiritual and charitable. Distaste at the use of a term like “cost-benefit analysis,” however, should not blind us to the wider issue: that whereas synagogue membership once seemed an obvious state for a Jew, so that those who didn’t want it needed to opt out, changing patterns of society and Jewish identity, and perhaps a general suspicion of organised religion, make it more a matter of opting in. In other words, what may formerly have seemed a religious and communal obligation is now a lifestyle choice, like joining a gym or subscribing to the opera, subject to the free-market scrutiny of costs and benefits.

What are the costs of belonging to a synagogue? The not-inconsiderable membership fee, obviously, and the sense of obligation induced (one hopes) by the various appeals – High Holyday, United Charities Fund, synagogue offerings and other good causes – that arrive periodically with the post. The responsibility, for those who accept it, of security duty ... and then what? Many choose to volunteer for Council and committees, helping to care for

elderly and sick members, coffee rota, stuffing the newsletter, arranging the flowers or singing in the members’ choir, but those and many others are strictly optional costs, which bring their own rewards. Whether sitting through sermons is a cost or a benefit I leave to congregants to decide.

There may be other, less easily identifiable costs as well. Being part of a community, like a family, means taking the rough with the smooth, putting up with annoyance when things don’t go smoothly or people get on your nerves, suffering the griefs of others and worrying about the things that do, or might, go wrong. For some, the past year and the departure of a much-loved rabbi, who showed care and kindness to so many members, will have brought a great emotional cost, or

*Continued on page 4* ▶



*One of the winning greeting cards from the Religion School competition, by Jessica Geneen. See page 8.*

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Editors at the LJS.

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**Friday 7th September at 6:45 pm**

**The Erev Shabbat Service followed by a Chavurah supper with**

**Deborah Jaffé**

**author of *Ingenious Women: From Tincture of Saffron to Flying Machines.***

Deborah Jaffé is an expert on the Great Exhibition and on women and technology in the Nineteenth Century. She has written *Victoria: A Celebration* and has appeared on Channel 4's *History Hunters*, *Richard and Judy* and BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*. Recently she became a patron of *ideas21*, an organisation that gives intellectual property advice to inventors. She is married to George Kessler, son of Jo and Willie who are are generously donating the Chavurah supper. All welcome.

## **Selichot Service**

**A solemn preparation for the Days of Awe**

**Saturday 8th September at 11 pm**

This beautiful late night service will take place in the Sanctuary led by the Rabbis with singing led by Rabbi Mark Solomon and a member of the LJS choir accompanied by organist Tim Farrell. The service lasts about an hour.

If you would like a lift to or from this service please contact the LJS office on 020 7286 5181

**On Shabbat Shuvah 15th September**

**our guest preacher will be**

**Rabbi Dr Michael Shire**

**Vice-Principal of Leo Baeck College**

Rabbi Dr Michael Shire leads the rabbinic programme of the only rabbinic seminary currently existing in the UK. As Vice-Principal, he has responsibility for the strategic development of the College. Rabbi Dr Shire is a graduate of Hebrew Union College, University College, London and Leo Baeck College with a doctorate in the pedagogy of Jewish spiritual education. Born in the UK, he studied extensively in the U.S. with Jewish professional posts in New York and California. He has published widely in the field of spiritual education and authored four books on creative liturgy on which he lectures and teaches in academic and communal settings. He is a 'Distinguished Advisor' to the Centre for the Spirituality of Childhood and Adolescence in Minneapolis and published the first ever Jewish Theology of Childhood. He is married to Texas born Rabbi Marcia Plumb, Rabbi of Akiva School and Southgate Reform Synagogue as well as Director of the Spiritual Formation programme at Leo Baeck College. They make their home in North London with their children Anya and Micah.

**Have you been invited to take part in the service during the High Holydays or festivals of Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur?**

There is an opportunity to speak to one of the Rabbis or one of the *shammashim* and practise your mitzvah – whether reading or opening the ark on one of the two following dates

**Thursday 6th September 6 - 8 pm**

**Sunday 9th September 10 - 12 pm**

If you are unable to make either of these times, please don't hesitate to contact one of the Rabbis who would be glad to hear or see you practise at another time.

# Shabbat, High Holyday and Festival Services

DATE	RABBI	TIME	NOTES
Friday 31 August	Mark Solomon	6:45 pm	
Saturday 1 September <i>Shabbat Ki Tavo</i>	Alexandra Wright	11 am	
Friday 7 September	Alexandra Wright	6:45 pm	
Saturday 8 September <i>Shabbat Nitzavim – Vayelech</i>	Mark Solomon	11 am	Shabbat Morning service
	The Rabbis	11 pm	Selichot service
Wednesday 12 September	Alexandra Wright	6:45 pm	Erev Rosh Hashanah
Thursday 13 September	Sanctuary David J Goldberg Montefiore Hall Mark Solomon	10.30 am  10:30 am	Rosh Hashanah  Family service
Friday 14 September	Mark Solomon	6:45 pm	
Saturday 15 September <i>Shabbat Shuvah/ Ha'azinu</i>	Rabbi Dr Michael J Shire	11 am	
Friday 21 September	Sanctuary Alexandra Wright Montefiore Hall Mark Solomon	7:15 pm  7:15 pm	Kol Nidrey  Cantorial service
Saturday 22 September	Sanctuary Mark Solomon Montefiore Hall Alexandra Wright Afternoon service Alexandra Wright	10:30 am  10:30 am	Yom Kippur
Friday 26 September	Alexandra Wright	6:45 pm	Erev Sukkot
Saturday 27 September <i>Sukkot</i>	Mark Solomon	11 am	Sukkot
Friday 28 September	'tent' service with Anna and Avivit	6:45 pm	
Saturday 29 September <i>Shabbat Chol Ha'Mo'ed Sukkot</i>	Alexandra Wright	11 am	Special welcome and <i>chanukkat limmud</i> for new Religion School children and Reception for LJS Friends
Wednesday 3 October	Mark Solomon with Michael and Jenny Nathan	6:45 pm	Erev Simchat Torah Chavurah Supper
Thursday 4 October	Alexandra Wright	11 am	Simchat Torah
Friday 5 October	Alexandra Wright	6:45 pm	No Chavurah supper
Saturday 6 October <i>Shabbat Bereshit</i>	Mark Solomon	11 am	Baby blessing: Jason Lee

Congregants must bring their High Holyday tickets with them for services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Please also bring your copy of *Machzor Ruach Chadashah*

We welcome visitors and guests of members to The LJS for all our services. The charge for a ticket to all the High Holyday Services is £150. There is no charge for students, or for members of other Liberal Judaism, Union for Reform Judaism, or World Union of Progressive Judaism synagogues, but it is necessary to apply for a ticket and complete a short security questionnaire. For tickets please contact The LJS office at 020 7286 5181.

**The Council and Rabbis of the LJS invite all 'Friends' of the LJS and their families to a special Shabbat Morning Service breakfast and Kiddush on Shabbat 29th September Breakfast at 10 am Service at 11 am Kiddush at 12:30 pm**

## PALANTYPE SERVICE FOR YOM KIPPUR

**Shabbat 22nd September 11:45 am – 1 pm**

The Jewish Deaf Association will be arranging palantypist and screen in the Montefiore Hall on Yom Kippur morning from 11:45 am to 1 pm during the Charitable Appeal, Sermon and Closing Prayers of the Morning Service.

Members of the congregation who would like to avail themselves of this service are invited to join the Family Service from 11.45 am onwards. The words of the service and the sermon will be projected on to a screen at the front of the Montefiore Hall.

## Costs and Benefits *Continued from page 1*

rather a wound that will take a long time to heal.

What then of the benefits? The man who wrote the infamous letter obviously thought of synagogue fees in pay-to-pray terms: divide the sum paid by the number of services attended, and decide whether the result is justified. How much *is* a single service worth, anyway? That way, surely, lies absurdity. One pays not to come to services – for visitors are welcome anyway – but to be a part of a community and ensure that the synagogue can exist, for members and non-members alike. At the very beginning of the Rabbinic movement Hillel asserted the principle *Al tifrosh min ha-tzibbur*: “Do not separate yourself from the community (or congregation),” and even earlier, in the Torah, being “cut off” from the community was seen as the worst of punishments.

There is a famous *midrash* on the ritual of the four species at Sukkot, which sees the palm branch, myrtle, willow and citron as representing Jews of varying levels of learning and religious observance, all of which are needed as part of the bundle, or the *mitzvah* cannot be performed. Or as my Rabbi in Sydney used to quip, the synagogue needs two kinds of members, the Pillars and the Caterpillars – the pillars are always there to hold the place up, the caterpillars creep in and out occasionally. It’s fine, I suppose, as long as the caterpillars don’t turn into moths, and fly away!

Perhaps, for individuals, synagogue membership is a form of insurance, which you pay in case something happens – a *simchah* or, God forbid, illness and bereavement – so that you know the community, the sanctuary, and the rabbis will be there when you need them. Needless to say, if no-one paid for the upkeep of the community, there could be no synagogues, no professionally trained, full-time rabbis, no Jewish cemeteries and no religion schools.

There is a bigger picture too, however. It could be argued that the existence of synagogues (and churches, and so on) is a benefit not just to members but to society as a whole, particularly when, like the LJS, synagogues engage in

interfaith dialogue, social action, outreach and building what has come to be called community cohesion.

Do we do enough of these things? Does every single member feel cared for and valued? Are all our children and youth fired with love and loyalty to Judaism and the LJS? Are we open enough to the society around us, and are we doing all we could to inform people of the spiritual and ethical riches of Judaism? Do we do enough as a synagogue to influence and improve our country and our environment? No, alas, we fall short in all sorts of ways, as the penitential season reminds us. But we are here, thanks to all those who bear the costs of membership and involvement, and we do strive, however imperfectly, to do better each year.

As one of our Shabbat morning prayers asks, “May we never be too mean to give, nor too proud to receive, for in giving and receiving we discover You, and begin to understand the meaning of life.” Judaism has always been a gregarious, communally minded religion, teaching that prayer and repentance are best done collectively, with all the added strength that the community can lend to the thoughts and yearnings of each individual.

We all need to live in the harsh real world of bank balances and budgets, but let’s not be too distracted by the purely financial costs and the purely liturgical benefits. The real cost of membership is what each of us can contribute of ourselves, our voice, our hands, our spirit, for the good of all; and the real benefit is the enlargement of our souls, the enlightenment of our minds, the awakening of our hearts through the *Shechinah*, the presence of God that rests with the community, if we strive to make it felt.

May we all be written in the Book of those who spend themselves in the love of God and of their fellow human beings, and who benefit from that love a thousandfold in return. On behalf of all the rabbis, staff and Council, a happy and healthy New Year to all. *Shanah Tovah!*

*-Rabbi Mark Solomon*

## Rosh Hashanah Greetings from the President

5767 has been a turbulent and uncomfortable year, internationally, nationally and, sadly, also for our own congregation. I am tempted to misquote a radio show that was popular in the 60s: That was the year, that was; it’s over, let it go. One of the eighteen benedictions of the weekday services asks for a blessing on the year, and abundant produce for all to share, so that the earth – and humanity – may have a future and a hope.

That benediction encapsulates all our hopes in just a few words. The abundance of produce we can’t do much about, especially when floods overwhelm standing crops, but we can work towards sharing fairly what there is. We have made a small start by becoming a Fairtrade organisation.

Ann joins me in wishing you all *Shanah Tovah* – a good and happy year, in which to reach out to each other and to our neighbours in friendship and peace.

**Bob Kirk**

## FRIENDS OF PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM: VOLUNTEERS WANTED.

Would you like to get involved with the most important charity for the funding of Progressive Judaism? The LJS needs to be represented!

FPJ (formerly Friends of Progressive Judaism) need volunteers to get involved in important work helping to fund our growing communities in Europe, the Former Soviet Union and Israel.

If you have enthusiasm, energy and ideas then we want to hear from you.

For further information contact: **Jane Greenfield** at [janegreenfield@lineone.net](mailto:janegreenfield@lineone.net) or LJS Council member **Carol Roberts** on tel: 020 7328 8303



# Welcome to The Learning Circle

## TLC@LJS

Classes in Judaism and Hebrew

*“And do not say, when I have leisure I will study. Perhaps you will never have leisure.”*

(Avot 2.4)

### High Holyday Preparation

The High Holydays make severe spiritual demands on us and although the call to attend services is strong, once we reach the synagogue, we often find ourselves at a loss as to how to pray, how to understand the concepts of judgement, repentance, forgiveness and atonement. Preparation, in the form of learning, helps us to think and reflect and provides a framework for our worship and interaction with each other and with God at this season. Learning can help to change us; it opens our eyes to new ideas and new connections. Good teaching can be uplifting and inspiring, it can empower and sustain our spirit in ways we may never have imagined to be possible.

#### Exploring Judaism<sup>1</sup> (Part I)

Visiting a new country or new terrain for the first time requires a clear guide-book with an introduction to key words and phrases, an explanation of the contours and shapes of the landscape and some signposts with clear directions and descriptions of the surrounding topography. Exploring Judaism provides that easy and accessible introduction to a religious culture and way of life that is nearly four thousand years old.

#### Exploring Jewish Festivals - Beginners

Tuesday evenings 7:45-8:45 pm

Tutor: Rabbi Mark Solomon

4 September	How the Jewish Calendar works
11 September	Exploring <i>Rosh Hashanah</i>
18 September	Exploring <i>Yom Kippur</i>
25 September	<i>Sukkot</i> - The Festival par excellence
2 October	Exploring <i>Sukkot</i> and <i>Simchat Torah</i>

#### Four Conversations in preparation for the Autumn Festivals

Mostly, in our lives, we move from one sphere of activity to the other: from home to work and back again; from school to university and out into the working world; from the influence of our parents towards independence and back towards dependence on our children or others when our bodies and minds grow frail. Sometimes, we are too afraid to stop and take stock, to think – what am I doing with my life? Is there anything I should change? How do my thought processes and feelings influence my conduct? And can Judaism help me to become a better person – happier, more fulfilled, kinder, more generous and more giving? In these four sessions, we will engage in conversation with a human rights lawyer, a psychotherapist, Rabbi and teacher to explore the themes associated with these four festivals and create a vibrant interchange between the world outside and our own interior worlds.

Tuesday evenings 8-9:30 pm

11 September, High Court Judge Sir Kim Lewison

#### Judgment and Self-Judgment

Rosh Hashanah is known by various names, among them *Yom Ha-Din* – the Day of Judgement. On the one hand, the theme of

judgement carries with it the loaded imagery of the end of days and how we will be judged when we come before God. But on the other hand, living in an increasingly litigious society, with our attention diverted towards crime – either serious or petty, the increasing prison population, justice and judgement are daily and ubiquitous elements which we must confront.

#### Tuesday 18 September, Harriett Goldenberg A Journey of Transformation?

Where do the spiritual, emotional and the ethical meet on Yom Kippur Day? The principles of ethical Judaism infuse a highly personal spiritual/religious and emotional journey through the High Holyday season (*Yamim Nora'im*), leading to a sense of culmination and completion by the end of Yom Kippur day. Harriett Goldenberg and Rabbi Alexandra Wright will lead conversation about how we avail ourselves of the full transformative potential of Yom Kippur, experiencing the day within the context of the High Holyday season and the broader context of our being in the world.

**Harriett Goldenberg** MA, MSc, C Psychol, AdDipEx, UKCP Reg. Now an LJS member, previously Chair of a Reform Community, and Chair of ULPS/RSGB Social Action, works as a psychotherapist and counselling psychologist, teacher, and writer. Someone who has lived as a 'stranger' for her adult life, dedicated to the biblical injunction '*tikkun olum*' (repair the world), and the practice of ethical living.

#### Tuesday 25 September, Rabbi Pete Tobias

A special session on *Sukkot* – The Festival par excellence with Rabbi Pete Tobias who will also offer the opportunity to sign his new book *Liberal Judaism: A Judaism of the Twenty-First Century*, constructed around Rabbi John Rayner's "Affirmations of Liberal Judaism." Rabbi Tobias writes: "Why did our ancestors refer to *Sukkot* as The Festival? What was the ancient symbolism of the *lulav*? Why do all the biblical festivals (and some post-biblical ones) have a greater connection with *Sukkot* than with any other festival?" A discussion with Rabbi Pete Tobias (author of 'Liberal Judaism: A Judaism for the Twenty-First Century') about the nature and focus of our biblical ancestors' worship and belief.

**Rabbi Pete Tobias** worked as a primary school teacher before training for the rabbinate. After graduating from the Leo Baeck College in 1990, Pete served the Birmingham Progressive Synagogue and the Glasgow New Synagogue (Reform) before joining The Liberal Synagogue, Elstree full time in September 2003. Pete is frequently in the media, contributing both to the Guardian newspaper and previously as a regular speaker on Radio Scotland's "Thought for the Day". He is now broadcasting on the Terry Wogan show on Radio 2.

#### Tuesday 2 October, Rabbi Alexandra Wright Creative Journeys

How do Liberal Jews read the Torah? Are we any different from other Jews? Is there one way to interpret the Bible, or is there a multitude of ways of interpreting and reading the narratives of our tradition? Perhaps even more important in the reading of the Torah, are the gaps – the things that are not said, on which the Torah remains silent. Join us for this final session just before *Simchat Torah* to analyse those gaps in the story of Creation. What is left unsaid and what can we learn from the silences of the Torah?

<sup>1</sup> "Exploring Judaism" replaces what was formerly called "Choosing Judaism"

# SUKKOT TERM

## Exploring Judaism (Part II)

Tuesday 9 October – Tuesday 11 December, 7:45-8:45 pm  
Half term 23 October, Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright

## Exploring Jewish Festivals, Prayer and History

9 October	Exploring <i>Shabbat</i>
16 October	Jewish Prayer I: Blessings, <i>Birkat Ha-Mazon</i>
30 October	Jewish Prayer II: Daily and <i>Shabbat</i> Liturgy
6 November	How do Jews read the Bible?
13 November	<i>Kashrut</i> : Traditional and Liberal Views
20 November	Outward Signs: <i>Mezuzah</i> , <i>Tallit</i> and <i>Kippah</i> , <i>Tefillin</i>
27 November	History I: Patriarchs and Matriarchs, Kings and Prophets
	History II: Exile and Return and Exile Again
4 December	Exploring <i>Chanukkah</i>
11 December	History III: Medieval and Modern

## HEBREW CLASSES 2007-2008

### Beginners' Hebrew

Tuesday 4 September – Tuesday 11 December, 9-10 pm  
Tuesday 8 January – Tuesday 18 March, 9-10 pm  
Tuesday 22 April – Tuesday 8 July (Half-term: 27 May), 9-10 pm  
Tutor: Rabbi Mark Solomon and others

Using Rabbi Jonathan Romain's well tried and tested primer *Signs and Wonders*, this course aims to help you to begin learning Hebrew by decoding the letters. By the end of the first term, you will know all your letters and vowels and be able to decode simple sentences. No previous knowledge of Hebrew required.

### Hebrew Reading Level 2

Tuesday 9 October – Tuesday 11 December, 9-10 pm  
Tuesday 8 January – Tuesday 18 March, 9-10 pm  
Tuesday 22 April – Tuesday 8 July (Half-term: 27 May), 9-10 pm  
Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright

Once you have mastered the basic skills of decoding, you are ready to read from the *Siddur* (the daily prayerbook). This class will help you to become familiar with the statutory daily and *Shabbat* prayers such as the *Shema*, the *Tefillah* and the *Kaddish*, as well as significant blessings. You will master some key vocabulary and a little tiny bit of grammar with the aim of being able to follow the services and decipher the meaning of certain prayers.

## DAYTIME CLASSES TUESDAYS & SHABBATOT

### Tuesday Texts

Tuesday 18th September – Tuesday 11th December 2007  
Tuesday 8 January – Tuesday 18 March 2008  
Tuesday 22 April – Tuesday 8 July 2008  
Time: 11:15-12:30pm Tutors: The Rabbis and Jan Roseman  
Tuesday Texts is an informal discussion group on Tuesday mornings that looks at ancient and modern texts – from the Psalms to the sermons of Rabbi John Rayner. New students always welcome.

### Beginners' Hebrew on Shabbat Mornings

8 September – 15 December (Half-term: 20 and 27 October)  
12 January – 15 March 2008 (No half-term)  
3 May – 5 July 2008 (Half-term 24 May)  
Time: 10-10:45 am

### Tutors: Gary Lane and Harriett Goldenberg

Using Rabbi Jonathan Romain's well tried and tested primer *Signs and Wonders*, this course aims to help you to begin learning Hebrew by decoding the letters. By the end of the first term, you

will know all your letters and vowels and be able to decode simple sentences. No previous knowledge of Hebrew required.

### Festival Discussion Sessions

Occasional on Shabbat Mornings, 10-10:45 am  
Tutor: Jan Roseman

## SUKKOT TERM LECTURES

### Islamic Influence on Judaism

#### A series of two lectures by Rabbi Mark L. Solomon

The three Abrahamic religions are all unique but at the same time organically interrelated. In one sense, Christianity grew out of Judaism, and Islam drew on both Christian and Jewish inspiration. Perhaps less well known is the extent to which medieval Judaism was dramatically altered and shaped by its contact with Islamic culture and thought. These two talks will explore various aspects of this remarkable influence.

#### Thursday 18 October at 8 pm

##### "The Basic Eloquence of Our Language:"

##### Law and Commentary, Grammar and Poetry

The first lecture will begin with a discussion of the influence of Judaism on early Islam, and give an overview of Jewish life in the Islamic empire. It will then look at the ways in which Arab developments in areas such as jurisprudence, grammar, scriptural interpretation and poetry had a profound influence on Jewish scholars and writers from the tenth century onwards, and led to some of the glories of mediaeval Jewish culture.

#### Thursday 15 November at 8 pm

##### "The Secret Light:" Philosophy and Mysticism

The second lecture will focus on the important Islamic influence on Jewish philosophy and mysticism. Muslim rationalistic philosophers such as Alfarabi and Avicenna both transmitted and reshaped the ideas of classical Greece in a way that permanently altered the character of Jewish, and later Christian thought, and the most famous Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, openly acknowledged his intellectual debt to his Muslim predecessors. At the same time, the pattern of Sufi devotion left an elusive but indelible mark on Jewish ethical and mystical writings, which this talk will explore.

## PURIM TERM 2008

### Exploring Judaism (part III)

Tuesday 8 January – Tuesday 18 March 2008

Time: 7:45-8:45 pm

Tutor: Rabbi Mark Solomon

### Exploring the Jewish Life Cycle

8 January	The Jewish Life Cycle – Rabbinic views
15 January	Birth and Naming, Circumcision and <i>Pidyon Ha-Ben</i>
22 January	Tu bi-Sh'vat Seder
29 January	Coming of age: <i>Bar/bat-mitzvah</i> and <i>Kabbalat Torah</i>
5 February	Jewish views of Sex and Sexuality
12 February	Marriage (and Divorce)
19 February	"Be fruitful and multiply;" views on Abortion and Contraception
26 February	Health and Sickness: medical treatment and <i>bikkur cholim</i>
4 March	The end of life: views on dying and euthanasia
11 March	Rituals of Death and Mourning
18 March	Exploring Purim

Continued overleaf ▶

## Welcome to The Learning Circle (cont.)

**Jewish and Modern, 8 January – 12 February 2008**

**Time: 8-9:30 pm, Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright**

In every age, Judaism has been influenced and shaped by the political, social, religious and philosophical thought that has taken place around it. And Jews, in turn, have made their mark in almost every conceivable intellectual domain imaginable. Once segregated, Jews now see themselves as fully integrated into the larger societies in which they live. The Enlightenment, Emancipation, Modernity and most recently – Post-Modernity have produced positive developments for Jews formerly marginalised, but such opportunities may have come at a cost to the cohesion of our identity. Can we be “Jewish and Modern”? Is it possible to preserve the notion of Jewish peoplehood, Jewish identity and nurture our communities, when contemporary life offers so much choice and so many cultural challenges? If you are concerned about the current and future direction of the Jewish community in the Diaspora and Israel, then do join us for this course.

**Pesach Workshops and Preparation, Sunday 13 April 2008  
10-4 pm**

A day devoted to preparation for the festival of *Pesach* for individuals and families. There will be learning and preparation sessions for those who wish to lead a Seder, study-sessions on texts associated with the observances of the festival, cookery and art sessions, including glass painting, creating your own Seder Plate out of clay and silk painting. Family activities will include a treasure hunt and Seder Monopoly game, a drama session exploring the themes associated with the festival and a calligraphy session. Refreshments will be provided.

## SHAVUOT TERM 2008

**Exploring Jewish Belief**

**Tuesday 22 April – Tuesday 8 July (Half-term 27 May)**

**Time: 7:45-8:45 pm, Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright**

- 22 April Judaism and Belief: Principles of Faith and Affirmations
- 29 April God and Problem of Evil
- 6 May *Yom ha-Atzma'ut* and the Land of Israel
- 13 May The People of Israel
- 20 May Revelation and Torah: Traditional and Modern Views
- 3 June Exploring *Shavuot*
- 10 June *Talmud Torah* and Lifelong Learning
- 17 June Jewish Ethics
- 24 June The Human Being in Jewish Thought
- 1 July Messiah and Messianic Age
- 8 July Life after Death

***Torah L'Am* (Torah for Everyone) – 6 week course**

**Tuesdays 13, 20 May, 3, 10, 17, 24 June 2008**

**8-10 pm Tutor: Jan Roseman**

If you have covered “Exploring Judaism” and would like to progress to a second level of study, *Torah L'Am* offers a six week structured programme with the aims of helping you to discover the themes and structure of the Torah and to provide the language and tools for studying, discussing and even teaching the Torah with friends and family, colleagues and in our community. In addition to becoming familiar with the processes of traditional study, you will develop your own thoughts, ideas and commitments to the Torah.



## Kiddush Honours Michael Nathan

A special kiddush honoured Michael Nathan, on the occasion of his 80th birthday, and in tribute to the 45 years he has served as Chairman of the United Charities Fund. Rabbi David Goldberg paid tribute to the great contribution that Michael has made via the UCF, as well as the wonderful work that Jenny Nathan does with the Out and About Club, where Michael has been a staunch supporter. Michael's role with the UCF will now be taken up by Tim Simon, shown here with Michael and Jenny at the Kiddush.

## The Out and About Club: Change of President

**Dr. Maxwell Caplin** has been our much loved President for 25 years and as he now finds it very difficult to participate actively in the Club's activities, feels it would be best if he stood down as President. We are delighted that he has accepted our invitation to be our Hon. Life President. We are also very pleased to announce that **Rabbi David J Goldberg OBE** has agreed to be our new President. He and Carole have been staunch supporters of the Club for more than 20 years, always attending the annual dinner and responding to the toast to the LJS with a suitably funny story. David took up his position as President at the Club's meeting on Tuesday 17th July and we were delighted to mark the occasion by presenting him with a bottle of carefully selected Chateau David wine.



## Farewell and Thank You to Director of Administration Mike Jacobs

Mike Jacobs will be retiring from his position as Director of Administration on 7th September and we wish him and his wife, Jackie a happy and healthy retirement in Spain where they will be moving in October. Mike has done so much to support the congregation and the staff of The LJS and we are all indebted to him for his patience, his fine attention to detail, his absolute fairness and discretion. We have indeed been very fortunate to have had a period of consolidation with Mike in office. Thank you, Mike.

## Religion School Calendar 2007-2008: Sukkot Term

Classes start at 9:45 am unless otherwise stated

Shabbat 8 September	Registration for new pupils at 9 am New term starts
Thursday 13 September	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i> Family Services at 10:30 am
Shabbat 15 September	Classes
Shabbat 22 September	<i>Yom Kippur</i> – no classes Family Services and Children's activities at 10:30 am
Tuesday 25 September	<i>Sukkah</i> decorating from 2 pm onwards
Thursday 27 September	<i>Sukkot</i>
Shabbat 29 September	Classes, <i>Chol Hamoed Sukkot</i> <i>Chanukat Limmud</i>
Wednesday 3 October	<i>Erev Simchat Torah</i> – Children's activities
Thursday 4 October	<i>Simchat Torah</i> – Children's activities
Shabbat 6 October	Classes
Shabbat 13 October	Classes, <i>Kittah Tet</i> (GCSE) Induction morning for parents and students
Shabbat 20/27 October	
Shabbat 3 November	Classes

Shabbat 10 November	Classes, Torah Breakfast <i>Kittah Chet</i> 9am, Induction morning for <i>Zayin</i> students and parents
Shabbat 17 November	Classes, <i>Kittah Gimmel</i> PACE morning. Assembly.
Friday 23 November	<i>B'nei Mitzvah</i> Service and <i>Chavurah</i> Supper at 6:45 pm
Shabbat 24 November	Classes
Shabbat 1 December	Classes – Family Service
Tuesday 4 December	<i>Chanukkah</i> 1st candle lighting
Shabbat 8 December	Classes, <i>Kittah Gan</i> PACE morning and <i>Chanukkah</i> celebrations

### END OF TERM

### PURIM TERM 2008

Term starts	12 January
Half Term	16 February
Term ends	15 March

### SHAVU'OT TERM 2008

Term starts	26 April
Half term	24 May
Term ends	5 July

## Help Decorate The LJS Sukkah

**Tuesday, 25th September, 2 pm onwards**

One of the great joys of the Autumn season, when Yom Kippur is finished, is decorating the *Sukkah*.

Please come by in the afternoon or early evening to help – the more the merrier. Bring branches, leaves, and fruit.

## LJS Art Competition

A judging panel recently selected winners and runners up for the LJS art competition that was held in June and July. Many thanks to the 50+ children who submitted art work (and to the judges). Selecting the winning entries was very difficult and our panel of judges was extremely impressed with the range and talent in the collection.

The winners were:

**Leo Ackerman**, age 9, **Sam Nash**, age 6,  
**Jessica Geneen**, age 7 and **Aleksander Griebel-Phillips**, age 9

The runners up were:

**Maddie Bono**, age 12, **Lily Crane-Newman**, age 5,  
**Toby Lane**, age 10

Prizes and certificates will be awarded on the first day of the Religion School term on 8th September when all of the entries will be on display in the Montefiore Hall. The winning drawings have been used to prepare LJS note cards - on sale in packs of 8 cards with envelopes to the entire LJS membership from September for £10.

## LJS Awayday - Remembrance Sunday November 11th 2007

Sternberg Centre 80 East End Road, London N3 2SY  
**10am-4pm**

*Mark Remembrance Day in a very special way.*

There will be a 30 minute break for a 'prayer of remembrance' and to observe the 2 minute silence.

As we remember on Remembrance Sunday all those who have 'fallen' in war we try to understand the background to the Israel conflict. The day's programme is planned to help us understand conflict from both Palestinian and Israeli viewpoints.

Recent LJS study days have taken place away from the LJS to enable participants to concentrate on the subject matter. This year the problem of Israel has been foremost in many minds, and the Education Committee has put together an exciting programme of textual study and discussion from all points of view.

Do come and join in. All welcome. Bring your friends. Book your place with Abigail Bloom a.bloom@ljs.org or 020 7432 1284, £35 including coffee, lunch and tea, payable in advance. Concessions available.

### SUKKOT FOOD COLLECTION FOR THE HOMELESS

**Please don't forget to bring unopened packets of pasta, rice etc or tins of food and toiletries for the Homeless Centre in Bayswater. If you are flying and receive a toiletries bag, please bring it along – the contents are valuable to the homeless. Please place your contribution in the box in the foyer.**

# What happened at July Council?

*Here is a summary of the issues discussed at the July meeting of the Council.*

**New Council:** Rita Adler was elected as the new Chairman of Council. A gift was presented to Ellen Schmidt and she was warmly thanked for all her hard work over the past three years.

**Accounts:** The Hon. Treasurer gave the quarterly report. Income from Lettings and Membership fees is below budget. Income from both the Nursery School and the Cemetery is above budget.

**Education:** The Nursery School is thriving. It has a very active parents' group which has raised funds for the Notice Board. Caroline Villiers was thanked for all her hard work.

**I.T. Committee:** Judith Diamond is chairing a new committee to ensure best practice in all aspects of computer equipment, software, and security at The LJS.

**Social and Fundraising Committee:** The Music In May concert had been very successful. Martin Slowe was thanked for organising the brochure which resulted in a healthy profit for The LJS.

**Fairtrade:** All tea and coffee served in the Synagogue is now Fairtrade.

**Criminal Records Clearances:** Although, at present, there is no requirement beyond the Nursery School, these are to be carried out on all persons in touch with children or vulnerable adults.

**John Rayner Memorial Fund:** No progress has been made on the visualisation. Ellen Schmidt has agreed to take on the role of co-ordinator in the hope of moving this project along.



*Newly elected President Bob Kirk and members of Council for 2007/2008 at the Annual General Meeting in June*

**Revolving Door Membership:** The problem of members joining purely for a life-cycle event was discussed. Other than a requirement for a full year's membership, which is in force, no solution appeared.

**Rabbis' Reports:** Amongst their many activities, both rabbis emphasised the importance of their Inter-Faith work.

**Activities:** A full, varied and success programme had been carried out by various individuals and Committees in the past months. These included the *Voice of Women* Concert organised by Cathy Heller-Jones and the visit to the Hindu Temple organised by The Social Action Group.

*Members are reminded that a copy of the minutes of Council meetings is available in the library.*

## A FEW OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JUNE COUNCIL MEETING:

- The Chairman thanked Rabbi Kathleen Middleton for her contribution to the community over the past seven years. A baby blessing and Kiddush is being planned [*this will be on 24th November*].
- Mike Jacobs, the Director of Administration is retiring to Spain and will be leaving the LJS in September. Council expressed their regret at his departure and their gratitude for his leadership skills over the past two and a half years.
- The nursery school goes from strength to strength and appreciation was expressed to the team who had worked so hard to make this a viable venture.

- A marketing drive is in hand to increase the revenue from lettings of the Synagogue facilities.
- Michael Nathan is retiring after 45 years as Chairman of the United Charities Fund.
- A visualisation of the proposed project in memory of Rabbi John D Rayner is due to be produced over the summer, at which time the John D. Rayner Memorial Fund will be launched.
- A Kiddush in honour of the Friends of the LJS is planned for the Sabbath of Succot on 29th September.
- The LJS team was congratulated on its win in the LJ inter-synagogue quiz.
- The problem of noisy guest children during the service at times of Baby Blessings was discussed and a charge to cover a crèche is now in place.

## Restaurant Tuesday

After our holiday break in August, we look forward to a 'full house' on 18th September. New members are always welcome, but please phone Alice on 020 7286 5181 beforehand, and, equally, if you are a regular and cannot come, please also let her know.

## Volunteer Receptionist wanted

The LJS is looking for a number of volunteers to staff the front desk for a couple of hours at a time. It's an interesting, stimulating and worthwhile job - greeting the children and their parents as they come into the Nursery first thing in the morning; helping visitors to the Synagogue; keeping any eye on security and directing people to meetings. You are the first person visitors and members encounter as they enter the LJS. If you can help please contact Mike Jacobs on 020 7286 5181.

## VIDEO PLUS TEA

People are welcome to come from 1 pm when soup is served. The film begins about 1:30 pm and is followed by tea. There is no meeting in September

*Wednesday 24th October:*

### "When Ben was Here"

starring Bing Crosby and Sammy Davis Junior.

*Wednesday 28th November:*

### "The Browning Version"

with Michael Redgrave and Jean Kent.

There will be no meeting in December.



We wish the following members  
of the Religion School  
a very happy birthday  
in September

Aleksander Griebel-Phillips	29 September 1997
Max Hannam	22 September 1993
Daniel Harrington	15 September 1993
Chloe Lasher	28 September 1995
Charlotte Lawson	27 September 1997
Eloise Macdonald	27 September 1994
Jack Roth	05 September 1996
Madeleine Welch	26 September 1998

## Donations

We are grateful to the following for donations to the Synagogue-

**David Ive**

**Vivien and Bernie Bulkin**

**Steven and Vanessa Behr**

**Susan Crane and Karen Newman**

... and to the Flower Fund

**Tony Weiss**, on his 60th birthday, **Lyn Helbig, Juliane Wallace**

... and to the Israel Abrahams Library

**Bob and Ann Kirk, Herta Meisel, Gerard Geneen, Ergun Arican, Elaine Feinstein.**

## Congratulations to:-

**Jessica and Jeremy Sokel**, on the birth of their daughter Angelina

**Esther and Joel Berkowitz**, on the birth of their son Nathan, and grandparents Brenda and Daniel Nathanson

**George Kessler, CBE** on being awarded an Honorary Fellowship of Queen Mary's College

## Bereavements

**Raymond Cywie**, grandfather of Samuel

**Harry Fidler**, father of Peter

**Evelyn Grant**, mother of Edward

**Ruth Lewis**, wife of John

**Natalia Karpf**, mother of Ann

**Leah Garcia**, grandmother-in-law of Jeremy Gilmore

**Boris Prevezer**, the brother of Jocelyne Tobin

**Mavis Jaffe**, mother of Deborah Kessler

**Henry Muskat**, father of Anthony and Andrew

**Wanda Joseph**, wife of Rex and mother of Valerie Anderson



## Sandwiches and Songs at the KIT Tea Party

The annual Tea Party organised by the Keep In Touch Group took place on 10th June in the Montefiore Hall. A record 105 people attended and enjoyed the entertainment provided by Rabbi Mark Solomon, accompanied by Stephen Goldwater on the piano. There was a wonderful array of sandwiches and cakes, plus Jo Kessler's now legendary coffee ice cream. There was also time for some intense conversation with old friends. The success of the event was summed up in the following letter:

**Dear Mrs Birk,**

*As one of the many so fortunate as to have been at the KIT tea party, I write to express my gratitude for the kind hospitality and splendid entertainment which we enjoyed. I should be grateful if you would please convey to your committee my warmest thanks for the lovely occasion which took place in an atmosphere of fellowship and friendliness. I hope that the appreciation of your guests will go some way towards thanking you for all the work and effort which must have gone into the organisation of so successful an event.*

Yours sincerely, Jerrold Assersohn

## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new LJS Members and Friends:

**Annie Auerbach, W2; Diana and Paul Salmon, W14; Rosalind Clayton, EC1; Ian Southern, N10; Alexandra and Georgia Ginsberg, W11; Isaac, Fay and Noah Strang, NW6 and Hythe; Robert Bor and Brandon Storey, NW3; Karen and Sethu Palaniappan; Dani Jeffrey, NW3; Alexander Limpach, W14; Shirley Breakey, NW3; Julie Gottlieb and Adam Kops, NW6; Zoe Graham and Oscar Berkenbosch, SW7**

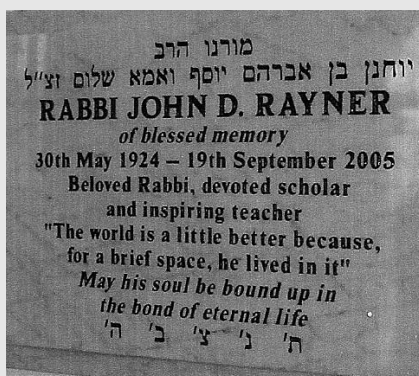
## Alumni Society Chanukkah Dinner: that photo!

A small correction to the note regarding the photograph of the Alumni Society Chanukkah Dinner held in the Montefiore Hall in 1952. The photograph was in the possession of Joan Sharkey (at that time Joan Kutner) who was present at the dinner. It is she who has kindly donated it (via Jo & Willie Kessler) to the LJS Archive.

There were about 75 people at the Dinner, including Rabbis Leslie Edgar and Philip Cohen and their wives. We have managed to identify quite a few of the guests, but would be grateful for help in naming a few more. Bryan Diamond, the LJS Archivist, has the photograph, and Joan has also found some other photographs of Alumni outings and seminars - do go and have a look. They make a wonderful tribute to a long-flourishing and much-missed Alumni Society.

## John Rayner Memorial at the Cemetery

The plaque in memory of our beloved rabbi and teacher John Rayner is now installed in the chapel at the LJS Pound Lane Cemetery.



## ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICES

The Liberal Judaism Annual Memorial Services will take place on

**Sunday 9th September as follows:**

Western Cemetery, Bulls Cross Ride, Cheshunt, Herts EN7 5HT

at 10:30 am

conducted by Rabbi Harry Jacobi

The Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Norman Court, 59 Pound Lane, Willesden NW10 2HG

at 3:30 pm

conducted by Rabbi Alexandra Wright and Rabbi Mark Solomon

Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 8LW

at 2 pm

conducted by Rabbi Thomas Salamon

An independent service will also be held on Sunday 9 September at

**Golders Green Crematorium at 3 pm**

conducted by Rabbi Dr Frank Hellner

These services are open to all who wish to attend

The Montagu Centre, 21 Maple Street, London W1T 4BE

Tel: 020 7580 1663 email: [montagu@liberaljudaism.org](mailto:montagu@liberaljudaism.org)

## Toni Assersohn: memorial

Jerrold Assersohn extends to members of the congregation an invitation to attend the tombstone consecration in memory of his late wife, Toni, to take place on Sunday 7th October, 12 noon at The Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Pound Lane, Willesden, NW10.

The LJS is a constituent synagogue of Liberal Judaism

liberal judaism

## Announcing Pizza Party and Hangout Session for Post Kabbalat Torah (18 and below) at the LJS

Have you finished Kabbalat Torah?  
Still looking for a way to see your friends from around the Synagogue??

Come for an afternoon of pizza making, chat with former Cheder classmates and a chance to decide what sort of programmes you want for future hang outs.

- Theatre trips •
  - Social action in the local community •
  - Movies • Sleepovers in the Synagogue •
- Your imagination is the limit!

All of your friends that work in the Religion School will be there!

**October 13th - timing to be confirmed**

## Could YOU do this??

We are now entering our 7th year as editors of *LJS News* and we are looking for someone to take on this rewarding job! There are 10 issues of the *News* each year; for many congregants it is the main way in which the Rabbinic team communicate with them and by which they find out what is going on at the LJS. The production process is now a smoothly oiled machine, you have the satisfaction of seeing a physical output from your labours each month, and of knowing that you are making a valuable contribution to the life of the Synagogue.

### You DO need

- to have good editorial skills and a high standard of literacy
- to be reasonably competent in Word and in using broadband email
- to be able to devote a couple of hours over the month and a burst of time around the start of each month
- familiarity with what goes on at the Synagogue

### Your DO NOT need

- desk top publishing skills – that is done by our creative designer Dave Hopper
- to write the material yourself – we always have more items than we have room for
- to organise envelope stuffing and posting – that is done by the LJS Office

It really is not all that difficult and we will be on hand to help you get the hang of it. If you would like to discuss this – or perhaps “shadow” an issue to see how it works, please get in touch at [newsletter@ljs.org](mailto:newsletter@ljs.org) or speak to Vivien Rose/Bernie Bulkin at the Synagogue.



