



European Union for Progressive Judaism

December 2014 Newsletter

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How to light your Chanukiah

Place the candles from right to left. On the first night, there should be one candle on the far right of the Chanukiah, plus the shamash in the centre. On the second night, there should be two candles on the right plus the shamash, and so on. There was once a Talmudic dispute about whether all the candles should be lit on the first night and then decrease each night, or whether they should increase. The way that won out became the normative way, which is to increase the lights each night. The reason given is that sanctity should always be increased, not decreased. Light the candles in the opposite direction from how we place them in the chanukiah. Light them from left to right, so that the newest candle is always lit first. Light the shamash first, and used it to light all the other candles. Chaunkah Sameach!



From the Chairman

We in the northern hemisphere shall soon reach the shortest day of the year. I always find 21 December a watershed because after that date the daylight hours increase, ever so slightly, on their way to spring. One ray of light – pun intended – is Chanukah.

For eight evenings in the depths of winter we light an ever-increasing number of candles in our homes. There are many layers of meaning to this and, not being a rabbi, I won't even try to get to the core; but in addition to the notion of rededication during these darkest days of the year I particularly enjoy the promise of new beginnings in the plant and animal worlds.

May our Chanukah be a time of rededication, getting together with friends and family, appreciating the wonder of nature's rebirth, and also to latkes, dreidels and Chanukah gelt.

Finally I remind you that on 22 March there will be an open meeting of the [EUPJ European Assembly](#) in Geneva (see page 2). All are welcome and I hope to see many of you there.

Miriam Kramer



[CONNECTIONS 2015](#). [Click here](#) for latest news.

Chanukah

Chanukah reminds us that we fight twin battles in every age against anti-Semitism and assimilation. The Greeks posed the Jewish community with both threats: on the one hand, they made it difficult for Jewish life to flourish by attacking their rights to follow traditional customs, yet on the other hand they inspired them to "Hellenise", seducing Jews away from studying Torah towards a Greek culture rich in philosophy, theatre and intellectual life. Chanukah recalls the tensions that were thrown up within the Jewish community, and the near civil war that broke out between those with more traditional tendencies and those of a more reforming bent.

In a few days we will begin lighting our candles, and it is a chance to reflect on the miracles of the season. A historical perspective upon Chanukah can give us pause for thought on the battles that we face in our own times. Are these to be waged within our own community, or rather on the society in which we live? Should we be encouraging our children to blend in with their peers, or rather to be proud of their differences? Each family has decisions to make about their own practice, but what should be our role as a Jewish community? What is the optimum strategy for ensuring Jewish survival and continuity – and should that even be our goal?

We can take heart from our long history, which seems miraculous in itself. The problems we face today, both from an invidious anti-Semitism and from a no less persistent tendency towards assimilation, are not worse than in times gone by. Yet they both have the potential to diminish or blow out our candles, the lambent but flickering flames that we continue to light and nurture. ... We do not know what the future brings, but we can look to it with hope.

תנופה

Rabbi Nathan Alfred, International Jewish Center of Belgium
[From Rabbi Alfred's farewell in the IJC newsletter [here](#).]

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EUPJ General Assembly Geneva 22 March

Please join us for our next European Assembly. This will be held at **GIL in Geneva on Sunday 22 March**. An ideal opportunity for EUPJ members and supporters to get together, discuss our organisation and meet all those involved with it. All members of constituent EUPJ and WUPJ organisations are welcome. Please be aware that only official delegates may vote. Details of the weekend can be found [here](#).

Social Action Program awards

The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) and the Union for Reform Judaism's Religious Action Center (RAC) announce the Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch International Social Action Award, a prize of US\$1000 to recognise exemplary work in communities around the world, **excluding North America**. [Click here for links and application](#).

Israel's ambassador to the UN delivers a VERY blunt message

UN Question of Palestine Debate on November 24: A speech delivered to the UN General Assembly by Ambassador Ron Prozor.

[Click here to read it](#).



Israeli ambassador to the UN Ron Prozor

Corrections from the November issue

Page 4: The heading reads "Czech Republic, United Kingdom" and presents the Dublin Progressive Jewish Congregation. Dublin, however, is in the independent country of Ireland - part of the European Union, but not of the UK.

Page 7: Visiting rabbi at Beth Shalom Milan Leigh Lerner is retired rabbi from Temple Emanuel in Montreal, not Toronto as reported.

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Subscribe to the EUPJ Newsletter [here](#).

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Read the Community Connections Newsletter [here](#).

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Synagogues everywhere

Progressive Shabbat services can be found nearly everywhere during your travels. Click on a blue link to find a synagogue near your destination. [Europe / Worldwide](#)



EmetweSchalom in Nordhessen, Germany

Community Connections

We are pleased to let you know that you can read the most recent Community Connections Newsletter and all our past newsletters: just [click this link](#). We hope you will be interested in the news from our twinned communities and friends in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia as well as in the UK, and we thank all our members for your work in making our twinning links successful. If your community is not yet part of our network and you would like to find out more about how you could set up a link, please do contact us by email at communityconnections@eupj.org and visit our website [here](#).

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Friends of Progressive Judaism
in Israel and Europe.
They support us.
www.fpjie.org.uk



Jewish December

It's almost Chanukah! This year the holiday begins on December 16th. Each of the eight evenings, we will light another candle in our chanukiot, say the blessings, sing Chanukah songs, retell the Chanukah story, and exchange Chanukah presents. Enjoy!



The NLPS Trust
for Progressive Judaism

New NLPS Trust Website

The NLPS Trust for Progressive Judaism has launched their new website (www.nlpstrust.org.uk) where you can access information about the Trust and the latest grant application form.

Healthcare professional needed

LJY-Netzer are looking for a healthcare professional to accompany LJY-Netzer's Israel Tour (12 July - 5 August), to support a 16-year-old participant with complex care requirements. All expenses paid. Please pass this notice on to anyone you know who may be interested. Contact Gabriel for further information.

Mitzvah Day 2014

Progressive communities across the globe give back. Members of Progressive communities took part in projects for Mitzvah Day, the Jewish community's global annual day of social action and giving. Mitzvah Day International takes place each year in November and was founded in 2006 by [Alyth](#) (North Western Reform Synagogue, UK) member [Laura Marks](#), Senior Vice President of the [Board of Deputies of British Jews](#).

It seemed as if the spirit of Tikkun Olam was everywhere. In Germany, the Liberal Jewish Community [Beth Shalom](#) joined forces with the city of Munich's Department of Social Services to help people who have fallen on hard times. In Britain, [Glasgow Reform Synagogue](#) joined with the Calderwood Jewish Day school at [Giffnock and Newlands Hebrew Congregation](#) to pack food parcels for asylum seekers in Glasgow.

This was also the year that Mitzvah Day was celebrated for the first time by Progressive community members in Barcelona. Volunteers of [Liberal Congregation ATID](#) collaborated with [Congregation CIB](#) to assemble clothing and toys. In total, 54 huge bags and 50 drawings were brought to the [Sant Joan de Déu Children's Hospital](#).

Mitzvah Day 2014 broke all records, attracting 37,000 volunteers from 20 countries who simultaneously participated in over 1,200 varied social action projects, making a meaningful and long-term difference across a range of compelling causes, issues and charities.

Riding for Reform in Israel



The 12th annual Ride4Reform is just around the corner! We invite you to join us for this unforgettable experience! Come meet fellow Reform and Progressive Israelis, visit IMPJ communities and enjoy the beautiful scenery that Israel has to offer. Come for an unforgettable ride through the width of the Galilee, passing by the Carmel region and Emek Jezreel, and support Israel and the Reform Movement.

Following feedback from the past year we have made the light route easier so that more people can participate. Combined with the original "challenging" track and the walking track, the R4R event is suitable for all levels of riders and walkers.

We will hit the road on Sunday, April 26 and end our ride at the sea of Galilee on Thursday, April 30 (for more information about the route [click here](#))

Join those who have already confirmed their participation (click to see the [R4R 2015 participants' gallery](#)) and send us an e-mail with a picture and a few words about yourself to r4r@reform.org.il.

The EUPJ asks all those interested to respond directly to the IMPJ but also to cc Michael Reik, EUPJ Vice-Chairman at jhgroup.t21@btinternet.com. Michael is chair of the EUPJ Israel Committee and wants to coordinate individual involvement with community representation between the EUPJ and IMPJ.

Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives

New book by former WUPJ President

Rabbi Stephen Fuchs, formerly senior rabbi at [Congregation Beth Israel](#) in West Hartford, a leader of [Interfaith Fellowship for Universal Health Care](#) and a past president of the WUPJ, has written a new book: "What's in it for Me? Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives".

The book invites readers to discover a middle ground that takes biblical narratives seriously without regard to their historical or scientific truth. The "truth" of these stories has nothing to do with, "Did this really happen?" Their truth emerges in the valuable lessons these stories can teach all of us.

Learn more about ['What's in it for Me? Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives'](#)



Italians forming national Progressive association

On Sunday 7 December the presidents of the four Progressive communities in Italy and additional delegates met in Florence thanks to the hospitality of local congregation Shir Hadash. Progress was made on the plans for the formation of a national Italian association and the formalities should be concluded in the not-too-distant future. Rabbi Joel Oseran of WUPJ as well as Miriam Kramer and David Pollak of EUPJ were also present.



Italian synagogue presidents (l-r): Leonard Robinson (Shir Hadash, Florence), Franca Coen (Beth Hillel, Rome), Carey Bernitz (Beth Shalom, Milan) and Carlo Riva (Lev Chadash, Milan).

Enriching Your Hanukkah

On Tuesday December 16th, the first night of Chanukah, we recite three blessings (brachot) before we light our first candle: One bracha thanks God for the obligation to observe Chanukah, and a second blessing thanks God for the many miracles done for us as a people. Only on the first evening do we recite an additional third blessing: Shehehiyanu, a blessing that thanks God for having kept us in life, so that we might celebrate Chanukah once again.



But why is it that we recite the third blessing only for reaching this particular moment on the first night? Shouldn't we be grateful for every night of Chanukah? Aren't those nights every bit as special?

Perhaps Jewish tradition is telling us that making the decision to begin a journey is uniquely challenging. Taking the first step of change is often the time we need the most support. That is why rabbinic wisdom teaches: Mitzvah goreret mitzvah. One commandment leads to another. With each mitzvah we perform, with each inspired choice to change and transform our lives, the next one... the next step, becomes easier. Chanukah offers us the opportunity to become in touch with our gratitude to God, and it allows us to direct our gratitude to those people who support us when we seek to begin a new way in life. As we light the first candle, let us think about special ways to express our gratitude to people who enable us to take the plunge, the crucial first step.

Happy Festival of Lights from the City of Light,

הג אורים שמח מעיר האורות

Rabbi Tom Cohen and Kehilat Geshet



ULIF COPERNIC
Union Libérale Israélite
de France

Women to read from the Torah at ULIF Copernic

[This article announces an historic change of policy at ULIF Copernic. Previously, only men could read from the Torah at their services. -Ed.]



Our community has met to discuss the question: can women read from the Torah at Copernic? We, with our two rabbis, explain why this change seemed necessary to us.

It is fully consistent with Halakha, simply a matter of implementing the Jewish principle of intellectual, moral and spiritual equality between men and women.

It is fully consistent with the evolution of morality in the world, for Jew and non-Jew. The prohibition of Torah reading by women is based on sexist views.

This decision is fully aligned with our commitment to reinvigorate our community, whose motto "Tradition and Modernity" implies evolving.

To this question, almost all the assembly answered yes, with only some abstentions, and no opposition. We also concluded that women reading from the Torah can do so with or without yarmulke or tallit, including for a Bat Mitzvah. Equally, they may participate in the procession carrying the Sefer Torah.

The goal of the Board of ULIF is to consensually make possible what is morally, intellectually, spiritually and humanly necessary. You can count on us to carry forward and develop our beautiful community, and always to seek the path of unity.

Jean-François Bensahel, President



Concert at ULIF: Soon Chanukah

On Sunday 7 December Copernic gave a splendid concert. The programme included Chanukah songs Excerpts from Handel's oratorio Judas Maccabaeus and Beethoven's Variations on a Theme of Judas Maccabaeus for cello and piano

Performers were The Copernic Choral Ensemble, conducted by Itai Daniel, The Voci Copernic Choir conducted by Laurence Temime Martine Bailly, cello, and Yun-Yang Lee, piano Funds went to the national Tzedakah appeal

A beautiful Shabbaton in Lyon!



A group aliyah at Keren Or, Lyon

The youth of the CJL Ile-de-France and the Franco-American community Kehilat Geshher spent a weekend in Lyon to meet young people and the community of Keren Or. Their enthusiasm, kindness, their involvement (and their number!) have left a beautiful memory. On behalf of the entire Keren Or community, thank you to them and to their facilitators Charlotte and Etienne.

And from Charlotte, Etienne and all the young people from Paris, a big thank you to the families who hosted them, the teachers and the many Keren Or members who were present throughout the weekend to help with the organizing.

To be continued in a future episode!

AJTM panel discussion on 17 December at 20:00 with Paul Amar

Beth Yaakov in Paris will present Paul Amar and his latest book, "Wounds" (Blessures) published in August 2014 by Taillandier Editions, followed by a discussion with Gérard Haddad, psychiatrist-psychanalyst and author of numerous books.

With extreme sensitivity, his book bluntly describes his discomfort and indignation against the rise of racism and anti-Semitism. He who defines himself as a French republican, secular and humanist suffers from being designated as a Jew and questions French political life. With extreme sensitivity, he bluntly describes his discomfort and indignation against the rise of racism and anti-Semitism. Paul Amar defines himself as a French republican, secular and humanist who suffers from being designated as a Jew and questions French political life. Combining memories and thoughts, these pages show an indignant man, deeply hurt and worried about the future of his country and its values.

At the end of the discussion, it will be possible to buy the book autographed by the author.

Given the expected crowd, signing up at secretariat@ajtmonline.fr is essential. You can also register online [here](#).



EUPJ Newsletter en français

Click [here](#) for the French edition of past EUPJ Newsletters, translated by Celia Naval.



"Stump d'Rabbi" evening

KG's meetings bridge for young adults 18-30 yrs old took place on Monday 15 December. The theme was: "Birds do it, bees do it"... so why not let's just talk about it? The evening was an exchange around pressing questions about healthy relationships, communication, and decision-making related to sex and love as seen through the prism of a Liberal Jewish tradition.

Many young adults came for some drinks, food and candid conversations about the topic that everyone thinks about! As "rabbi Woody Allen" said: "everything you always wanted to know about.... but were afraid to ask."

Chanukah Concert in Paris with Rabbis Pauline Bebe & Tom Cohen

21 December at 20:00 at Centre Maayan, featuring Francoise Atlan. Chanukah candle lighting at 19:00.

Grand Concert de Hanouka
Le 21 Décembre à 20h00 au Centre Maayan

L'ESPRIT de CORDOUE

FRANÇOISE ATLAN • CHANT NIDHAL JAOUA • QANUN WALID EL MEIRI • PERCUSSIONS

Françoise Atlan et ses musiciens tissent une broderie poétique et musicale résolument sépharade à travers chants de noces, berceuses, chants d'amour mystiques et profanes.

19h00 - Allumage de la 6^{ème} bougie de Hanouka
Avec les rabbins Pauline Bebe et Tom Cohen
20h00 - Concert

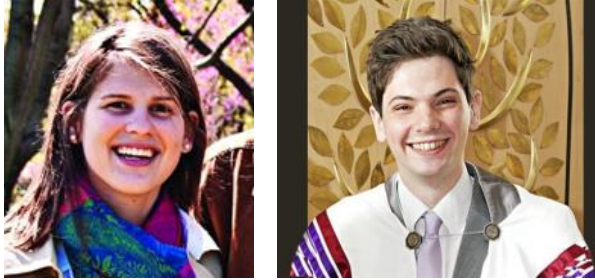
PAF - 15 euros jusqu'au 21 décembre - 20 euros sur place - 10 euros pour les étudiants et les enfants

Centre Maayan 10-14 rue Moufle 75011 Paris Métro: Richard Lenoir
Tél: 01 55 28 83 84 Site: www.cj-paris.org Mail: contact@cj-paris.org

Kehilat Geshher 7 Rue Léon Cogniet 75017 Paris Tél: 01 39 21 97 19
Site: www.kehilatgesher.org Mail: contact@kehilatgesher.org

Online Chanukah learning was 15 December

Rabbis Benji Stanley and Leah Jordan from the UK Movement for Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism respectively brought illumination and warmth to upcoming Chanukah celebrations with an online learning event on 15 December. They explored some underlying themes of the festival, asking what it means to see the darkness and bring light to the world.



The husband and wife team of Rabbis Leah Jordan and Benji Stanley

MRJ 2014 Highlights

2014 has been a busy and successful year for the Movement for Reform Judaism. [Click here to download '2014 Highlights'](#) and [here to read an end of year message](#) from Robert Weiner, Chair of the Movement for Reform Judaism.

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

The [December issue](#) of Lulav, is now published. Please see the Events Column on the front page for our events up until the middle of January. Events for the next few months, with full venue details linked to maps, are all listed in our [Diary](#). Thursday evening 11 December was the latest meeting of You Know How it Feels, our volunteering project. Full details are on page 8. If you want to go to the Menorah lighting at the City Chambers on 18 December, but have not yet put your name forward, you must, with some urgency now, send an email to [Helen Johnston](#) of the Lord Provost's office. Give your full name, address, and affiliation. Full details of this event were provided in the [November issue of Lulav](#).

About Pro-Zion

Pro-Zion is the UK-based organisation that works to support Progressive Judaism in Israel and to promote Israel in Progressive Jewish Communities in the UK. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Click the logos for news of UK movements



Chanukah in the Square



Europe's largest Chanukah at 18ft stands in London's Trafalgar Square in 2012

Tuesday 16 December, 5:30 - 7:30 again this year! Many members of the Liberal Judaism community attended the lighting of the Trafalgar Square Chanukah. The LJS arranged a group, met at Charing Cross Station at 5:30 and had a drink locally after the celebrations.

Rabbi Neil Janes was organiser for the the group.

West London Synagogue games night



Adult Education 2015 at Leo Baeck College

Biblical Hebrew with Dr Alinda Damsma
Spinoza's Jewish Philosophy with Rabbi Mark Solomon
Jewish Sacred Music
High Holy Days: nusach, melodies and texts with Dr Annette Boeckler
Why did God laugh? - Introduction to Midrash with Rabbi Colin Eimer
To sign up, read more [here](#).



Netherlands, Spain

Discover the Dutch Rimon website

Have you ever looked at www.rimon-ljloc.nl ? This is the Dutch language website of Rimon, the educational centre of Liberal Judaism in Holland, part of the Levisson Institute. Rimon develops teaching materials for the Talmud Torah classes for our communities. The website features games for children and there is much to do for parents as well. Practice Hebrew words with your child, even if you are not able to read Hebrew, create your own Chanukah, make Chanukah coins or tell a story. Meanwhile, the children can learn through play about Jewish holidays, places in Israel, search words or see a movie about the shul. Fun for the whole family!

Dutch communities winter machane for young people 21-28 December

Email kwc@haboniem.nl for information and to sign up.



Klezmer, pop, jazz and classical concert in Amstardem



Moir Levin and Eran Har Even

The Cultural Commission of LJJG Amsterdam invites you to a concert by Moir Levin and Eran Har Even. "Klezmer, pop, jazz and classical: All in One!" Location: Uilenburger Synagogue, Amsterdam. Date: December 20 at 20:00, doors open at 19:30. Admission: Tickets: www.kunstenisrael.nl/ Tickets €10 presale online (excluding transaction costs.), €15 at the hall.

Moir Levin, clarinet, and Eran Har Even, guitar, are young talented and versatile Israeli musicians. She is best known as an interpreter of contemporary classical music, he has made his mark in jazz. They have put together a special program where they klezmer, Bach, Piazzolla, Gershwin, and the Beatles called 'All in One'. Expect an evening full of surprising musical crossover and renewal!

Registration required, preferably by e-mail to cc.ljgdenhaag@gmail.com or LJJG Secretariat at 070-750 46 80.

LJJG Amsterdam seeking an Associate Rabbi



The Liberal Jewish Community of Amsterdam is a thriving contemporary Jewish community with a varied offer of services, education for children as well as adults, and a variety of social and cultural activities.

The LJJG Amsterdam is the largest community within the Union of Progressive Judaism in the Netherlands.

We are looking for an Associate Rabbi (M/F)

Centre of activities

In and around Amsterdam.

Willingness to relocate to Amsterdam or its vicinity is required.

Contract and term of agreement

Full-time appointment (36 hours/week), initially with a one-year contract. (with the possibility of extension to a permanent position.)

Position within the organization of the LJJG

The rabbi will be working under the guidance of the senior rabbi of the LJJG Amsterdam, Rabbi Menno ten Brink. The rabbi is present at community board meetings.

Please contact us for further information if needed. Applications, including a resume and cover letter, will be received until December 3, 2014 by e-mail: sollicitatie@ljjg.nl

Beit Emunáh in Asturias hosts web conference

Beit Emunáh recently finished a web conference given by Rav Yerahmiel Barylka from the Rambam Synagogue in Madrid, and we were awed by his presentation. This was part of the webinar program Beit Emunáh runs, inviting different rabbis to talk about Judaism in modern times.



Rav Yerahmiel Barylka

On behalf of the chaverot and chaverim we thank the rabbi for being so generous to us. Participants from Asturias, Cádiz, Galicia, Barcelona, Alicante, Navarra, Lisbon and Brazil also thank Rav Barylka.

We were able to learn about the development of halacha, its evolution and current application, and major steps taken in modern times. We talked about tolerance and perception of the "other", whether the other a Jew, an Arab or a Christian.

Rav Barylka explained about the different streams of Judaism (now) in Israel and the Golah as well as the position and changing role of women in modern orthodoxy. He presented such complex issues as incineration, insemination, technology adapted to halacha, transplants, homosexual relations, HIV, adoption and lack of dialogue between the streams of Judaism.

It has been very enlightening and enriching, and everyone learned a lot. We are very pleased to have been able to hear so much and, even more, it has opened the door to a new video conference.

Aida Oceransky

Beit Emunáh בית אמונה
Comunidad Judía del Principado de Asturias

Christian group attends GIL service



Jewish-Christian Fellowship visiting Beith GIL, Geneva

A group from the Amitié judéo-chrétienne (Jewish-Christian Fellowship) from Annecy, France came to Geneva's Beith GIL for the Shabbat morning service on 22 November, Shabbat Toledot. A branch of the ICCJ whose aim is to promote mutual knowledge and friendship between Jews and Christians worldwide, the group includes members from various Christian denominations.

After an introduction by Rabbi François Garaï concerning the theological structure of our siddur, everyone proceeded to the Shabbat service. A fair number of those who attended (most of them synagogue first-timers) expressed their surprise at how close their own tradition could be in terms of texts used (especially the Psalms), and above all they were astonished by the universal appeal of the liturgy. In this respect one can hardly overemphasize the positive impact of using a bilingual and egalitarian siddur which allows everyone, Jews and non-Jews alike, to feel familiar with and fully participate in the liturgy. After Kiddush, everyone had the opportunity to ask questions, and they all went back home with very positive feelings.

Dreidels to Mountains

Prague's Bejt Simcha weekend family getaway

From November 7 to November 9, [Bejt Simcha](#), the Jewish Progressive community in Prague, hosted a special weekend for families in the beautiful Bohemian countryside. Activities started with Shabbat evening services adapted for the children.



Havdallah at Bejt Simcha's weekend for families

Next, an origami workshop about Noah, his ark, and its many different animals. Then, a fun theatre workshop told the story of Abraham in an educational way. In anticipation of Chanukah the kids also played games with dreidels.

It was a gorgeous weekend to experience the great outdoors. The kids made the most of it: exploring a large garden and jumping on a trampoline.

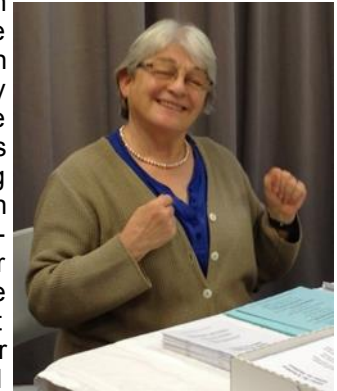
On Sunday, everybody climbed Mount Moninec, and all were rewarded with an awesome view. The weekend was an unforgettable experience - for children and adults alike!

Migwan – Liberal Jewish Community in Basel

Migwan, the Liberal Jewish Community of Basel, underwent the High Holy Days as a special community experience and successful accomplishment for all involved. The preparation period was marked by uncertainty and tension, so all the more pleasing was the positive result, meeting the challenge by a joint effort.

Rabbi Bea Wyler has for years led Migwan and our partner organisation Ofek through the High Holy Days, but just before Rosh Hashanah she suffered an accident that made her unable to walk for several weeks. Although she provided technical assistance with the preparation, she could not spend the Rosh Hashanah celebrations with us.

Migwan is a small Jewish community, and we were challenged. However, with intensive exchanges by e-mail and telephone and preparatory meetings we succeeded in having a complete Rosh Hashanah programme with well-attended services in our Migwan premises. We were delighted that United States Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein Suzan "Suzi" LeVine and her family



Rabbi Bea Wyler

spent Rosh Hashanah with us. She took the role of shofar blower and mastered an impressive wake-up call for a prosperous new year.

For Yom Kippur, the Migwan- and Ofek community happily welcomed Rabbi Wyler back, and we experienced the ceremonies in the traditional way under her expert guidance.

Migwan was founded few years ago by young families wanting a progressive Jewish experience for their children. During 2014 Migwan offered a whole range of Bar / Bat Mitzvah ceremonies. For Shabbat Chol ha Moed Sukkot we celebrated the Bat Mitzvah of Deborah Rietschi under the leadership of Rabbi Wyler. For the first time Migwan set up its own sukkah in the backyard of our new premises. On November 1 followed the Bar Mitzvah of Yossi Herzka. The occasion was presided over by student rabbi Sonja Pilz, who at the same time successfully completed her internship at Migwan.

A year ago, just in time for Chanukah, Migwan celebrated a small miracle and could move to our new premises at Herrengrabenweg 50. A lot has been accomplished since then. Thanks to positive conditions we have the opportunity to increase our religious offerings based on our strategy "members for members". Our successful liberal-progressive educational programme is expanding to include more children and young people from the Jewish community in and around Basel. Migwan, which means "diversity", respects and values all forms of Jewish identity.

Peter Jossi (president), David Conn (religious committee)
www.migwan.ch, info@migwan.ch

Beit Warszawa welcomes Jews by Choice

The Sages in the Talmud taught: 'Ein me'arvin simcha besimchah', Do not combine two joyful events together" [Talmud, Mo'ed Qatan 8b-9a]. Indeed we should have celebrated the certification of Shlichei Tzibbur on another Friday night, but since all Shlichei Tzibbur trained by Beit Polska and/or Beit Warszawa are also Jews by Choice, and many of them took the course of Jewish liturgical music at the same time they took the 'Step by Step' course, we felt it appropriate to combine these joyous occasions together.



Rabbi Gil Nativ

Progressive Judaism in Poland needs rabbis for its ten congregations, and our Shlichei Tzibbur will serve as non-commissioned rabbis in the foreseeable future. They will frequently deliver a dvar Torah on the weekly portion, choose between different prayers in the Siddur, and chant verses from the Torah and/or the Haftara. Hopefully our Shatzim will also assist in establishing new congregations in various parts of Poland.

How fortunate we are that some of our 'Jews by Choice' found a musical entrance to the Jewish people and Jewish tradition. May the melodies they learn and lead encourage each of us individually and all of us as congregation in connecting to a unique God – the God of the joy of good deeds.

Rabbi Gil Nativ

Poland overturns ban on religious slaughter

Poland's constitutional court has overturned an earlier ban on the religious slaughter of animals for meat which had affected the Jewish and Muslim communities, saying the constitution guarantees freedom of religious practice. [Read more.](#)

Beit Krakow at UK Limmud

We are pleased to inform you that Magda Koralewska, Chair of Beit Krakow, has been invited as a speaker at the largest Limmud in the world - Limmud UK, where she will represent the Polish Jewish Community with six lectures. If you are planning to visit Limmud UK, we hope you can join her.



Magda Koralewska

Chanukah

Chanukah is so rich in meaning and associations: renewal, identity, rededication, miracle, values, victory of light over darkness, a struggle of a small minority against and overwhelming majority etc. So many of these subjects are so relevant to us in our daily work of renewing Jewish identity and life in today's Poland.

And each milestone is like another miracle or another candle on the chanukiah illuminating our future - *ba'yamim ha'hem ba'zman ha'ze* (in those days in this time). Therefore the upcoming days of Chanukah in Beit Krakow will also be diverse and full of meaning, rich in reflection and inspiration, in joy and sense of community.

Join our work of renewal - see you in Beit Kraków.

Rabbi Tanya Segal

www.beitkrakow.pl

www.facebook.com/pages/Beit-Krakow



Chanukah song and dance mashup



Click [here](#) to see a fabulous performance of Israeli singers and dancers with Elliot Dvorin and the Key Tov Orchestra.

The origin of Jewish last names

Here is the fascinating origin of almost every Jewish last name. Have a look at how Jewish surnames were chosen in 18th century Europe [here](#).



Germany

Abraham Geiger College: Source of Courage and Hope

Chancellor Angela Merkel and other dignitaries mark 15th Anniversary of rabbinical seminary.

On Nov 25th, Abraham Geiger College celebrated its 15th anniversary. EUPJ Vice President Sonja Guentner brought greetings and said: "Who would have thought 20 or even 15 years ago that Geiger College would not just exist but also be the flourishing institution it is?" Among the many congratulators who applaud the college's achievements was German Chancellor Angela Merkel: "many did not believe that after the Holocaust Jewish life would flourish in Germany." The college also conferred its Abraham Geiger Medal on Parliamentary State Secretary Thomas Rachel, MP, acknowledging his role in establishing the Potsdam School of Jewish Theology. The laudatory speech was given given by Dr Charlotte Knobloch, Past President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, while Dr Guiseppe Veltri, the chairman of the German Association for Judaic Studies, gave the anniversary lecture.

Currently, Jewish students from around the world are enrolling at the University of Potsdam's School of Jewish Theology. The comprehensive BA and MA courses are complemented by the College's vocational training programmes for rabbis and cantors.

The state-funded programme was founded in 1999 by Rabbis Dr Walter Jacob and Dr Walter Homolka, who noticed that the Jewish community in modern Germany was lacking rabbinic leadership. The development of the college corresponded with the re-emergence of progressive Judaism in Germany. Its struggle for recognition by the German government and the Central Council of Jews in Germany was then seconded by the WUPJ leadership.

President Walter Jacob says: "We are training homegrown rabbis and cantors who are in tune with modern society." American friends like the Women of Reform Judaism soon became committed partners in this endeavour.

In 2010, Geiger College was accredited by the Central Conference of American Rabbis. A year ago, on November 19, 2013, the School of Jewish Theology, which comprises seven professorial chairs,



L-R: College President Rabbi Walter Jacob, Heidi Weidenbach Mattar for the German Conference of Education Ministers, Brandenburg State Education Minister Sabine Kunst, Federal Secretary of State for Education Thomas Rachel, Charlotte Knobloch for the German Jewish Communities, Rector Rabbi Walter Homolka, Potsdam University president Oliver Günther

was officially inaugurated. Today, there are 98 students enrolled, with more than 20 pursuing rabbinical or cantorial careers.

The students come from a variety of backgrounds and prove that, as WUPJ President Rabbi Daniel H Frelander put it, "Abraham Geiger College is maturing and growing, creating a new rabbinate for Europe". Since 2006, the college has ordained 20 rabbis and invested six cantors serving Jewish communities throughout Europe and beyond, with four graduates having taken pulpits in South Africa. To Rabbi Walter Homolka, the college is "a vision come true." "We assume that Judaism in Germany and beyond will continue to flourish and that our graduates will stand at its center."

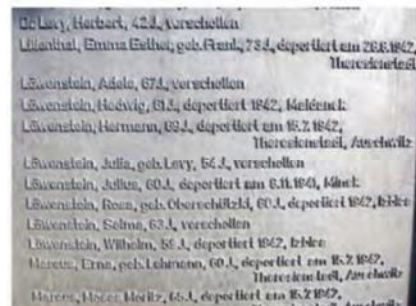
A memorial in Hamelin

We have never forgotten them.

We have rebuilt the synagogue where it once stood, and we have re-established Jewish life and presence where it once flourished. Our new synagogue is a living memorial and a beacon of light for the future. Standing together on the 9th of November with members, friends, neighbours and strangers in remembrance of those whose lives were blotted out just because they were Jews may not lessen our pain, but it does console us.

And so, we gathered together with a solemn crowd of more than 100 people to remember the more than 100 Hamelin Jewish men, women and children who were murdered at the hands of the Nazis. Our youth leader, Patrizia Berhovski, and classmate Henri Schulte read the names of dead, their young voices quivering with emotion. Pastor Herman recited Psalm 80 and members of the Society of Christians and Jews read excerpts from the life of the Binheim family, hearing memories of the family's daughter Ruth and the discrimination she had to endure from her classmates in 1934. Rabbi Irit Shillor sang "El Male Rachamim" and led us in the recitation of Kaddish. Wreaths were laid and our choir sang.

The memorial service concluded with several minutes of silence and the assembled were ushered into the synagogue for the opening of an exhibit we and the Society of Christians and Jews hosted for



Shoah memorial plaque in Hamelin

two weeks, "Anti-Semitism in Germany today." First of many to view the exhibit and sign the guest book was our new mayor, Mr Claudio Griese.

People lingered at each poster with their thoughts and emotions, spoke softly with one another, warmed themselves with a cup of tea and went quietly home.

Rachel Dohme

Read the full newsletter [here](#).

Germany

Ten weeks with Rabbi Stephen Fuchs – and a visit from Jerusalem

A Report from Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
In the Jewish Community of Kiel, the ten weeks beginning with Rosh Hashanah were deeply influenced by the visit of the former president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), Rabbi Dr Stephen Lewis Fuchs and his wife Vickie, née Steinberg from West Hartford, Connecticut, USA. Thanks go to Pastor Ursula Sieg from Altholstein church district for the wonderful cooperation, organisation, and encouragement to undertake this project and to the Friends Association for Judaism in Schleswig-Holstein for their generous support.

Rabbi Fuchs and his wife taught Shiurim, prayed Slichot, celebrated Rosh Hashanah and led us through Yom Kippur together the community's chairman and prayer leader W Joshua Pannacker. Everybody was impressed by Rabbi Fuchs' Torah teaching – lively, engaged, and in a way that both absolute beginners and advanced students could learn something new. His most important question: "What's in it for me? (also the title of his new book, see page 3). One sentence will be especially remembered by everybody: "God doesn't give up and demands of us to establish a just, caring, and compassionate society."

We celebrated Sukkot with an assemblage of rabbis: the State Rabbi of Schleswig-Holstein, Dr Walter Rothschild, officiated together with Rabbi Fuchs – and we welcomed the former Rabbi of the State of Saxonia, Salomon Almekias-Siegl.



Vickie and Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

We were also joined by a group of pupils making a film about Jewish life in Schleswig-Holstein. Simchat Torah ended with a happy service, Torah-dancing, and a festive meal.

During the week of Sukkot we also had a charity concert as an interfaith project with the Neuwerker Kammerchor from Rendsburg conducted by Roland Möhle, Pastor Martin Gregor of Lutherkirche and our prayer leader W Joshua Pannacker.

Besides all the activities in our community Rabbi Fuchs opened the new semester at Abraham Geiger College in Potsdam. Vickie and Stephen Fuchs were also welcomed to many schools and church congregations for interfaith meetings, interview sessions, kosher cookery courses, talks, sermons, an exhibition made by pupils about the life of Vickie's mother and many, many more. We must also mention our Shabbat service in Neumünster, a town which has never in its history had an independent Jewish community.

The visit became deeply personal as Rabbi Fuchs was able to speak at three commemorative events for the Kristallnacht memorial in Leipzig – the city in which his father was arrested to be deported in 1938. Afterwards Stephen and Vickie Fuchs spent some time in Breslau and visited its Jewish community.

Another great pleasure in November were several events with our friends Rabbi Ada Zavidov and Cantor Evan Cohen from the Har-El Synagogue in Jerusalem. They were once again in Schleswig-Holstein at the invitation of the church district Schleswig-Flensburg for bible study sessions, talks, and concerts. On occasion of their visit to our synagogue, they presented us with a wonderful piece of art by their member Abraham Yakin that will find a worthy place in our synagogue.

Hillel and Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich Sponsorship Program (ELES)

The International Jewish campus organisation Hillel has expanded its global footprint into Germany, Austria and Switzerland to strengthen Jewish identity, Jewish life and build identification with Israel. A partner is the Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich Scholarship Fund under the leadership of Rabbi Walter Homolka, Rector of the Abraham Geiger College.



Rabbi Walter Homolka (I) at Hillel launch ceremony

ELES requirements: above-average academic performance, social commitment, knowledge of German, membership in a Jewish community, studying at a German university. Application deadline is 1 January. Considerable financial aid is available, including support for PhD studies.

Go to [Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich Studienwerk](#)

Hillel's college activities will cover Basel, Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Munich, Münster, Potsdam, Stuttgart and Vienna. The programme will bring Jewish and pro-Israel programming to more than 1,000 students – a 150 percent increase over the 400 students presently served by ELES alone. The German government also supports the programme.

Read the UpJ newsletter

Union progressiver Juden in Deutschland (UpJ), the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, publishes a newsletter in German. Read and subscribe to it [here](#).





Rabbi Ira Goldberg named IJC rabbi

The IJC congregation is delighted and proud to announce Rabbi Ira Goldberg as its new rabbi. This follows a seven-month search to find a replacement for Rabbi Nathan Alfred who leaves for Singapore later this month.

Rabbi Goldberg's skills, experience and personality perfectly match IJC's values and mission. Rabbi Goldberg stands for a Judaism that is compassionate and pragmatic, pluralistic and egalitarian, nurturing and respectful. He is for a Judaism for people who live in a complex, often difficult world full of challenges.

Rabbi Goldberg comes to the IJC with a wealth of experience. He was ordained by the Levisson Institute, the Dutch liberal rabbinical seminary established by our first IJC rabbi, Rabbi David Lilienthal. Rabbi Goldberg was born in Chicago in 1968 and grew up in a family that is very much involved in the Jewish community.

He met his wife Max (Maxine) Mark in Budapest. In 2005, the couple, with their son Yirgalem, moved to the Netherlands where their other two children, Ronit and Saraf, were born. Rabbi Goldberg is eager to help our congregation grow and we are excited to welcome him as our spiritual leader and as a member of the IJC family. We look forward to welcoming Rabbi Goldberg and his family to the IJC on the occasion of his first set of services as the IJC's Rabbi on Shabbat January 9th and 10th.



Rabbi Ira Goldberg



Life at Beth Hillel, at the heart of Europe

In Brussels a hard and painful 2014 comes to an end: Beth Hillel, just as the other Belgian Jewish congregations and organisations keep in their mind and hearts the assassination of four innocent persons in May at the Jewish Museum of Belgium. But for Beth Hillel life must also go on and in 2015 we will celebrate our Jubilee: 50 years of presence of Liberal Judaism in Belgium, 50 years of a thriving, diverse and open community.

"Ledor vador. From one generation to the next one, carrying through a Judaism for the present."

In 2015 Beth Hillel will organise a large number of events, starting with an Opening Session on January 18 and closing with the "Troisièmes Rencontres du Judaïsme Libéral Francophone" on November 13, 14 and 15.

If you wish to attend one of these events or simply be kept updated about the life at Beth Hillel, you can contact us at secratariaat@beth-hillel.org.



Apply to Paideia! Fellowships in Jewish Studies 2015-2016

Explore the plurality of Jewish Civilisations!

The Paideia One Year Jewish Studies Programme offers a unique international experience during eight months in Stockholm with the possibility of a 120 ECTS Master in Jewish Civilisations at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg. Grants for tuition and living expenses are available.

Application deadline is January 15.

For more information visit www.paideia-eu.org.

Copenhagen Family Shabbat at Shir Hatzafon with Rabbi Sandra Kviat



Rabbi Sandra Kviat leading Shir Hatzafon Family Shabbat service

Erev Shabbat on 14 November was a big success at Shir Hatzafon, Progressive Judaism in Denmark. Rabbi Sandra Kviat with help from 'Shabbosaurus' engaged over 20 very young children and their parents in an untraditional service that included captivating songs and stories. Hot homemade soups (chicken and vegetable) added to the enjoyment.



WUPJ Calendar

- January 8-15, 2015 - Israel
[The Roswell Seminar for Social Justice](#)
- February 5-15, 2015 - Israel
[Beutel Seminar](#)
- May 13-16, 2015 - Rio de Janeiro
[Connections 2015, WUPJ 37th Biennial Conference](#)
- July 2-12, 2015 - Israel
[Bergman Seminar for Jewish Educators](#)
- October 7-22, 2015 - Israel and Poland
[Israel - Poland Mission](#)

The Roswell Seminar for Social Justice

The Social Justice Seminar, scheduled for January 8-15, is an intensive 10-day programme run in cooperation with the Israel Religious Action Center of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism in which participants explore issues of religion and state in Israel, as well as socioeconomic issues, and engage in social action projects.

The seminar delves into the basis of the Jewish concern for a just society, then goes out into the streets of Jerusalem and Israel to turn that vision into a reality. Seminar participants will wrestle with the issues of religion and state, and debate what it means to be a Jewish country and a democracy at the same time. They will learn about the often hidden plight of the poor, the hungry and the homeless, going beyond the statistics to encounter the real people involved.

The seminar will offer creative ways to make a continuing difference while in Israel and back at home. Participants will meet and work together on social action projects with the staff and volunteers of the Israel Religious Action Center and other social service organisations.

For more information Contact the Saltz Education Center at saltz@wupj.org.il.



CONNECTIONS 2015

The World Union for Progressive Judaism's (WUPJ) worldwide celebration of our movement taking place May 13-16 in Rio de Janeiro, is pleased to announce that Rabbi Aaron Panken, Ph.D., President of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), will be delivering the keynote address at the biennial conference.



Rabbi Aaron Panken

[Read more.](#)

[Here is a link](#) to our latest Connections 2015-related article.

The Beutel Seminar 2015

Jewish Leadership Begins with Jewish Learning: The Beutel Seminar, scheduled for February 5 - 15, 2015, is a prestigious ten-day seminar in Jerusalem run by the [Anita Saltz International Education Center](#). The seminar offers the opportunity to connect with other Progressive Jewish leaders from around the world and address critical issues facing our communities like engaging young adults, balancing innovation and tradition and more.



Interactive learning at the Beutel Seminar

Using Israel as our classroom, we will also explore ancient texts and history; discuss current political and social issues; explore spiritual pathways and concepts of Jewish leadership - all within a Progressive Jewish context. *There are still a few spaces available for this year's Beutel Seminar.* For more information contact the [Saltz Education Center](#).

Torah from around the World

Every week, WUPJ emails *Torah from around the World*, a commentary on the Parashah (Torah portion) of the week by a rabbi from one of its congregations. To subscribe, please click [here](#).



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IMPJ Newsletter

Click on [this link](#) for the newsletter of the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism.