



# European Union for Progressive Judaism

February 2015 Newsletter

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## Unity and resilience in Copenhagen

The outpouring of support and condolences for the Jewish communities in Denmark has been gratifying and parallels the extremely positive responses received by French Jewry last month. Equally reassuring has been the almost universal condemnation of the murders of two innocent Danish citizens, one a volunteer Jewish security guard and the other a film-maker.

As part of the Jewish crisis response team in Copenhagen, I have experienced first hand the extraordinary cooperation and professionalism of the many participants who have volunteered their time and expertise to restore full functioning to all segments of Jewish society in Denmark within 48 hours. On Sunday morning after the fatal shooting at the orthodox synagogue, all Jewish institutions in Copenhagen were closed and under heavy police protection. Gratefully, guarantees of indefinitely continuing police protection have been repeatedly given. The synagogue and the community center behind it, The Jewish House, began functioning Monday, and regular services were restored by Tuesday morning. At a debriefing on Monday morning the leaders, teachers and staff of Carolineskolen, the Jewish school in Copenhagen, were primarily concerned to reassure and care for their pupils and families, and were unanimous in supporting the decision to reopen the school the next day. At the debriefing of the large

[continued on page 3](#)

## Register now for the EUPJ General Assembly in Geneva on 22 March

This year's EUPJ General Assembly is 22 March in Geneva, hosted by Communauté Israelite Libérale de Genève, GIL. GIL is offering a full weekend of religious, social and cultural activities for participants, starting with Shabbat services on Friday evening, 20 March. A major highlight will be a talk by Rabbi Daniel Freeland, President of the WUPJ, preceding our General Assembly on Sunday afternoon.

[Click here](#) for the full programme and to register.



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

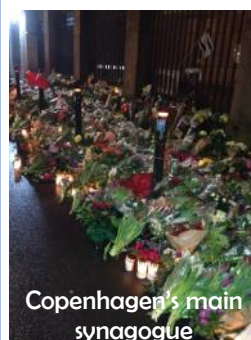
## My beloved Copenhagen – how could this happen to you?

The outpourings of grief and sorrow on social media are only matched by the growing mountain of flowers outside the main synagogue in Copenhagen. The sense of loss is immense. People's reactions vary, as can be expected, and yet there's a strong sense



**Rabbi Sandra Kviat**

of the need to stand together.



At the gathering on Monday night to honour both the slain Jewish security guard Dan Uzan and the first victim, film-maker Finn Nørgaard, there was a gentle silence among the thousands of people in the synagogue. Many were crying. There were some questions, and a few readings, but the communities just wanted to be together in their grief.

As up to 40,000 people then walked through the dark streets of the capital to the site of the first shooting with torches lighting the way, the outpouring of support from the surrounding society was tangible.

As my sister said: "There's a real feeling of warmth and recognition, which is incredibly comforting." And as for the voices who suggest leaving the country for Israel, the answer has firmly been that we are Danes and we are not going anywhere.

The haze of shock is slowly lifting and other voices are beginning to be heard; some are angry, some fearful, others push a political agenda, a few are dogmatic and many are calling for calm and staying level-headed.

As one friend said: "It's a relief the rest of society now understands that we have a problem; it's a general one for Danish society and a specific one for Jews, and people want to do something constructive about it. The problem is very complex, but the only way forward is to completely get rid of the 'us and them': it's WE, Danes of all persuasions, we are very diverse, and that is OK. Let's not focus on what might happen, but on what we want to happen." And right now that means going ahead with planned events such as the upcoming Limmud day, and to live our lives as normally as possible - despite the fears.

**Rabbi Sandra Kviat**

Danish-born Sandra Kviat is a rabbi of Crouch End Chavurah, London

## EUPJ Honorary Officers and Staff 2014

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Arthur Buchman [newsletter@eupj.org](mailto:newsletter@eupj.org)



## 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](http://www.nlpstrust.org.uk)) where you can access information about the Trust and the grant application form.

### Letters to the Editor

I just finished reading the January 2015 issue of the EUPJ Newsletter. What a wonderful publication! My congratulations to Arthur Buchman and the contributors of articles for enhancing the breadth of coverage of EUPJ activities, permitting those of us in other regions to bask in the glory of Progressive Judaism's growth. I am particularly impressed with the reports from newer and smaller communities, and I delight in seeing references to, and pictures of, rabbis and volunteers with whom I had personal contact in my more active years in the WUPJ. I hope to see many of them and make new friends in Rio in May.

**Austin Beutel**

Thank you, Arthur. This number is varied and interesting. Thanks for your efforts and hard work.

**Aida Oceransky, Kehila Beit Emunah, Spain**

Visit the EUPJ website at [www.eupj.org](http://www.eupj.org).

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

Read & download EUPJ Newsletter archives in English and French [here](#).

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](#)



**Shir Hatzafon, Copenhagen**



*Happy Purim  
Purim Sameach*



## 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](mailto:communityconnections@eupj.org) and visit our website [here](#).

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[www.fpje.org.uk](http://www.fpje.org.uk)





**Editor's Message, continued from page 1**

volunteer Jewish security guard team on Wednesday night that included members from neighbouring Sweden, the term closing ranks was made to describe the mutual caring and determination of these young men and women. At the Thursday night debriefing of over 60 adults and children from the Bat Mitzvah party being protected by the slain guard, the highest priority was to continue to live as Jews and non-Jews alike and together - and in

**Arthur Buchman**

Denmark. As a participant in all these events, I am in awe of the ability to absorb the shock and bounce back displayed by everyone I saw.

Shir Hatzafon, Progressive Judaism in Denmark, has played a highly significant role in these events. The other two guards on duty the night of the shooting were members of Shir Hatzafon, and they have continued to serve with their fellow volunteers in these past days. Although participating as a psychologist all week, I am also Vice Chairperson of Shir Hatzafon. Other Shir Hatzafon board members were in the situation room on Sunday after the crisis began. The leaders and members of the orthodox and progressive communities in Denmark now know each other more personally and positively than ever before. The good will and ease of working together we experienced can only lead to more and better cooperation from now on.

Comparisons with 1939 and calls to make aliyah are predictable initial reactions to every traumatic anti-Semitic event in Europe. But just as the alarmingly wide range of emotional reactions returns to normal levels after a shock, so the natural resilience and unity of the Jewish people are already visible in the Danish Jews.

**Arthur Buchman, Editor****About this February issue**

This February edition of the EUPJ Newsletter is somewhat different due to your editor's deep involvement as part of the team responding to the shootings in Copenhagen. Mainly, this issue is a bit smaller than usual, and I apologise for omitting important items that there was no time to translate or edit or use in full length. Some announcements from last month are repeated verbatim, and hopefully, many pictures are worth thousands of words. We aim to have a more typical issue next month. - Ed.

**Assistant editor needed**

As this newsletter grows, and as other obligations increase upon your editor, the EUPJ Newsletter needs editorial assistance. The primary requirements are that you have the time, are comfortable with short deadlines and have expertise in English with attention to detail. Experience in layout, facility in French and/or German are plusses.

Please write to [newsletter@eupj.org](mailto:newsletter@eupj.org) and you will receive an enthusiastic reply. - Ed.

**Riding for Reform in Israel**

Due to many requests, registration for the Ride4Reform will continue until a week before the ride. Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to take part in an unforgettable experience!

All the information about the ride and registration can be found at [www.riding4reform.org](http://www.riding4reform.org). Contact us with any question you may have at [hadas@reform.org.il](mailto:hadas@reform.org.il).

We will hit the road on Sunday, April 26 and end our ride at the sea of Galilee on Thursday, April 30

The EUPJ asks all those interested to respond directly to the IMPJ but also to cc Michael Reik, EUPJ Vice-Chairman at [jhgroupt21@btinternet.com](mailto:jhgroupt21@btinternet.com). Michael is chair of the EUPJ Israel Committee and wants to coordinate individual involvement with community representation between the EUPJ and IMPJ.

**Apply now for 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.

For more information visit [www.paideia-eu.org](http://www.paideia-eu.org).

**Safe bulk emailing with Bcc**

'If the shul is burning, save the mailing list first.' This ancient wisdom, attributed to an unknown Jewish sage, indicates how precious your community's mailing list is. **Never** (or never again) put all the email addresses in To or Cc. Every recipient can see all of them, and you have no control of who forwards the message - thereby exposing your mailing list to people never intended to see it. You also risk receiving spam or annoying everyone when somebody hits 'Reply all'.

If you're sending a message to several people and want to hide each recipient's email address, use the Bcc (blind carbon copy) feature. When you're composing a message, just click Bcc in the top right corner of your compose window and enter the email addresses that you don't want recipients to see. If your email program does not show Bcc, read how to use this essential safety feature [here](#) and [here](#).

## United Kingdom

### Liberal rabbis offer reassurance in wake of Paris attacks

Liberal Judaism's rabbis have featured extensively in the media over the last week, commenting during a difficult time for Jews in the UK and Europe. Chief executive Rabbi Danny Rich was interviewed by Channel 4 News, speaking out against a proposal to allow proprietors of synagogues, kosher shops and Jewish property to be allowed to carry guns.

Danny said: "Terrorists rely on stoking up fears and want nothing more than a society in which we are prone to shooting each other. [Click here](#) to read the full story.

Danny was also interviewed on ITV's Good Morning Britain and you can see the full piece by [clicking here](#). Rabbi Leah Jordan also appeared on ITV News last Friday; whilst there is not a full clip of her interview, you can see a [taster on this page](#)

### Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

The February edition of [Lulav](#), is now published.

Important upcoming events, with more details inside, are our AGM on 1 March and our Purim Feast on 3 March. All events for the next few months, with full venue details linked to maps, are listed in our Diary.

### RSY-Netzer

What Will You Do This Summer? Come on RSY-Netzer Shemesh! See [RSY-Netzer's video](#)

### When We Talk About...Grief

Montagu Centre, Sunday 1 March, 11am - 4pm

Booking essential at [a.jacobi@liberaljudaism.org](mailto:a.jacobi@liberaljudaism.org)

Three sessions: How We Grieve, Spiritual Care of the Dying, Supporting the Bereaved in Your Community  
With counsellor Kim Leech, Rabbi Alexandra Wright and family therapist Irene Bard.

### Nottingham Liberal has 50th

The civic service to mark the official opening of the Nottingham Liberal Synagogue 50th Anniversary Year took place on 31 January. Over 170 members and guests attended, including many rabbis. Read the full story [here](#).

Read further about Nottingham's rescued Torah scroll [here](#).



L-R: Nottingham Liberal Synagogue president Peter Strauss, NLS Rabbi Tanya Sakhnovich and Professor Karrar Khan

### Statement following the attacks in Copenhagen, Denmark

It is with both sadness and a sense of outrage that we received the news of the murderous attacks on a cultural centre and the Orthodox Jewish Community of Copenhagen.

As in the case of the recent Paris atrocity, the perpetrators of this violence sought both to close down discussions about freedom of expression and inflict a grievous wound on the local Jewish community.

Liberal Judaism is proud to employ Rabbi Sandra Kviat - the first Danish-born Progressive Rabbi - as Education Director. Rabbi Kviat has close links with her home community Shir Hatzafon, the Progressive Jewish Community in Denmark. We are in touch with its leadership who are in turn working with the local Orthodox Community to ensure the safety of Jewish people in Copenhagen.

Our horror does not minimise our commitment to the value of free speech (even when we do not always like its results) and neither will we retreat from efforts to create good communal relations and a decent society in Europe. As we have said and will continue to say, the best response to closed minds is open doors.

**Rabbi Danny Rich**  
Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism



### Sunday 1 March, Shirat Ha-am (Song of the People)

**A Day of Jewish Poetry and Jewish Poets**

Booking essential, admission £12, family £30, includes lunch and tea. Tickets: [here](#)

The Liberal Jewish Synagogue, London

### Tzelem launched at LBC

Tzelem, The Rabbinic Call for Social and Economic Justice, is a new organisation that Leo Baeck College Rabbinic Student Robyn Ashworth-Steen has set up with help from other LBC students. It is a cross communal group, with representatives from Liberal Judaism, the Movement for Reform Judaism, the United Synagogue and the Spanish and Portuguese. The launch took place in the Speakers Room at the House of Commons. LBC Principal, Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris and LBC Dean, Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh attended together with rabbinic students Robyn Ashworth-Steen, Naomi Goldman, Danny Newman and Daniel Lichman.



### Holocaust Memorial Day message

Holocaust Memorial Day, 27 January, is a civic day of remembrance of the Holocaust and other genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. This is made all the more significant this year as we mark 70 years since the liberation of Auschwitz. As a community we already have the Jewish day of remembrance, Yom HaShoah, which this year falls on 15 April. But how important it is, that the society in which we live also takes this opportunity to remember, commemorate and educate. Last month I was privileged to lead prayers at an event at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office marking Holocaust Memorial Day and honouring the "Righteous Among the Nations", people who saved Jewish lives, defying the hatred, hostility and widespread indifference towards Jews during the Holocaust. We live in a country where the government, media and civil society place enormous value on Holocaust Memorial Day observance.

This year's theme for Holocaust Memorial Day is 'keep the memory alive'. To me, keeping the memory alive means that we must not only remember; we must also act. Remembrance alone is not enough; we must educate, and crucially, must fight prejudice and intolerance.

Genocide begins with the denial of the humanity of the other. We must never accept the dehumanisation of others through racism, bigotry or sheer indifference. It is our duty to challenge it at every opportunity; all the more so when it occurs within our own communities.



Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner

### Holocaust Memorial Day 2015



Each year on 27 January the world marks Holocaust Memorial Day. It had special significance this year, marking the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Find out [here](#) about the events and UK broadcasts which took place dedicated to 'Keeping the Memory Alive', the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day this year.

### 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



### News from the Beit Din

Rabbi Dr Jonthan Romain of Maidenhead Synagogue has appointed as the Chair of the Standing Committee of the Beit Din of the Movement for Reform Judaism. The Beit Din, whose Convenor is Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick, is Reform Judaism's religious court, dealing with issues including questions of Jewish status, divorce and conversion.



Rabbi Dr Jonthan Romain

[Read more](#)

### Golden Jubilee at Bromley



The Civic Service marking the end of Bromley Reform Synagogue's Golden Jubilee celebrations was held on 24 January. Standing at the centre of the photograph with Synagogue Chair Joanna Koenigsberg are the Mayor and Mayoress of Bromley. Also present were Bob Neill MP, Robert Weiner, Chair of MRJ, members of the local clergy, Rabbis Tony Hammond and David and Helen Freeman, and representatives of the local Orthodox synagogue. [Read more](#)

### Muslim joins Bradford Synagogue Council

At a time when both the Jewish and Muslim communities are reeling from the impact of the horrific attacks in Paris, the positive and supportive relationship between Bradford's Jews and Muslims has grown another step closer.

[Read more](#)



Synagogue Chair Rudi Leavor and Jani Rashid

### Kayitz Netzer is 16 - 26 August

If you are, or someone you know is, in year 12 don't miss out on this unique opportunity to visit Eastern Europe. This year Kayitz Netzer trip will take 10 days to explore Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and Vienna. [Find out more here.](#)

## French Jewish Community's new reality discussed in WUPJ webinar

On January 25 nearly 100 people from around the world tuned into a timely discussion about the state of French Jewry following the recent terrorist acts in Paris, as well the escalating anti-Semitic rhetoric being heard from extremists across France.



Saltz Center webinar discusses the fate of France's Jews.

Rabbi Steve Burnstein, Director of the [Anita Saltz International Education Center](#) of the WUPJ, moderated this conversation with leaders of France's Progressive Jewish community regarding the difficult issues that our brothers and sisters must now address:

- Can France's Jews continue to live lives as Jews, going to synagogues, Jewish restaurants and events?
- How should French Jews cooperate with the authorities to develop the appropriate security measures to keep the community safe?
- Should the Jewish population heed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's call to leave France and immigrate to Israel, or is this surrendering to terrorism?
- Can relations between Jewish and Muslim communities in France be strengthened, despite the escalating tensions?

Rabbi Burnstein spoke with Stéphane Beder, president of the Federation of French-Speaking Liberal Jews, a vice-chairman of the European Union for Progressive Judaism, and a member of the World Union for Progressive Judaism's executive board and Rabbi Tom Cohen, from EUPJ/WUPJ-affiliated congregation [Kehilat Geshet](#) in Paris.

Listen to French WUPJ leaders talk about their community's new realities [now](#).

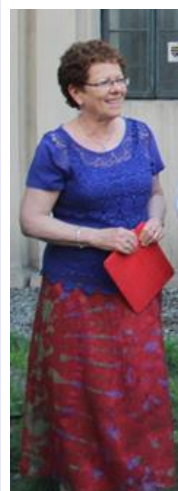


**Read more French news next month.**

## EUPJ Newsletter en français

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

## Beit Warszawa events



Zivah Nativ

On Friday 27 February Beit Warszawa will welcome Professor Ilana Rosen from Ben Gurion University in Israel. During Kabbalat Shabbat, she will talk about the weekly portion (Tetzave) and refer in her sermon to the issue of current Israeli identity.

We are getting ready for the holiday of Purim. On Wednesday 4 March at 6 pm we invite you to Beit Warszawa for a Purim Evening! The programme includes singing Purim songs, a treat of traditional hamantaschen cookies, and a Purimshpiel – a play depicting the story in the Book of Esther. -

Just before Purim, on Sunday 1 March at 5 pm, we encourage you to participate in a workshop on preparing and baking hamantaschen,

traditional Purim cookies. The workshop will be led by Zivah Nativ at Beit Warszawa. If you wish to join Zivah, please register via e-mail at [office@beit.org.pl](mailto:office@beit.org.pl).

## Beit Krakow musical midrash ABIYA during Tu B'Shevat Seder 5775



Tu B'Shevat at Beit Krakow with Rabbi Tanya Segal

Musical midrash "ABIYA", created during at the previous Midrash Lab Project, was presented again this year at Tu B'Shevat Seder.

During our presentation we recalled the previous editions and presented our plans for the upcoming year. The in-depth systematic educational process embedded in ML3 aimed to build familiarity with one of fundamental Jewish texts - Aseret HaDibrot (The Ten Commandments), while inspiring a creative interaction with it. Participants had an opportunity to engage actively with the text and creatively express their contemporary interpretation. As a result five artistic midrashim were born.

[www.beitkrakow.pl](http://www.beitkrakow.pl)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Beit-Kraków](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Beit-Kraków)



## The second edition of MahaNetzer



MahaNetzer last year

The communities of the Federation of Liberal Judaism are planning a real "summer-camp" in the liberal Jewish spirit "EiZeh Kef"! Dates: 6 to 19 July with a crazy 14 July. We will have 60 children aged between seven and 17 divided into three groups. The location is in the beautiful country of Côte d'Or, a village called Baigneux-les Juifs, site of a Roman bath where a Jewish community was present from the 13th to the 15th centuries.



## Migwan – Liberal Jewish Community in Basel

Tu B'Shvat - the new year of the trees: One year after the inauguration of our new facilities we celebrated this holiday on 7 February together with official Liberal Jewish representatives as well as loyal partner organisations and authorities. The Tu b'Shvat seder took place in the early evening hours. And included a morning service with Kiddush followed by an afternoon shiur.

In 2014 Migwan was officially recognised as «Liberal Jewish Community Basel» and member community of the Liberal Swiss Jewish Platform, «Plattform der Liberalen Juden der Schweiz» (PLJS) <http://www.liberaljews.ch/de/home>, as well as the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ). We were pleased to welcome official representatives from both networks as our guests at the Tu b'Shvat celebration.

In the year 2015, Migwan will expand the existing programme with more shiurim and offering more religious, culture social events. We invite everybody to contribute and share your vision and suggestions. Please contact us with your ideas and needs!

Our traditional and much popular "potlucks" on Friday and Kiddush on Saturday will be organised in a new way. We all share the responsibility. For each event one to two members (or one family) will be responsible for organising and preparing one Shabbat. Your personal ideas are very welcome! Please sign up at Migwan's bulletin board.

**Peter Jossi, Migwan president**  
[www.migwan.ch](http://www.migwan.ch), [info@migwan.ch](mailto:info@migwan.ch)

## Singapore Community unites to support & strengthen French Jews



One People: UHC members including president Stefanie Green (third from left) and Rabbi Nathan Alfred (right).

In order to demonstrate their solidarity with the Jews of France in the aftermath of the terrible attacks of January 2015, members of the [United Hebrew Congregation Singapore](#) (UHC) raised approximately \$2200 USD for the [MJLF Surmelin Synagogue](#) in Paris. Both the UHC and MJLF are affiliated with the World Union of Progressive Judaism.

These funds were raised in order to support the additional security costs now being faced by MJLF Surmelin, as by many other Liberal synagogues in Europe. It is hoped that further communities will follow the UHC's lead and decide to help other vulnerable Progressive, Liberal and Reform congregations across Europe.

UHC President Stefanie Green explains: "Although we are many miles away from the recent incidents in Paris, it has shaken us all to the core. We are a community made up of many nationalities and are naturally in solidarity with all Jews globally. The United Hebrew Congregation Singapore is reaching out to MJLF community to let them know we are here, half way across the world, supporting them with our donations, thoughts and continued solidarity."

Newly installed spiritual leader of UCH, Rabbi Nathan Alfred, added "We may be far away, but our members come from around the world, and we are with the Parisian Jewish community in thought and in deed. As Jews, we are responsible for one another, from Asia to Europe, in Israel and throughout the world."

For further details about this initiative, please contact UHC President [Stefanie Green](#).

## MJLF trip to Israel in March

The MJLF (Liberal Jewish Movement of France) offers a wonderful trip to Israel, Monday 16 March to Monday 23 March. This voyage is aimed both at those who already know Israel and those who will go there the first time. All will discover exceptional sites, often lesser known. [Here is the detailed brochure](#) of this trip.

Jacqueline Doljansky, MJLF administrator, is at your disposal for additional information.



## Beth Hillel's 50th



On Sunday 18 January the Communauté Israélite Libérale de Belgique (CILB) - Synagogue Beth Hillel kicked off its jubilee year. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the European and Belgian Jewish community and by guests from the political and diplomatic arenas. During this inaugural session the attendees were addressed by many speakers: the Board of Beth Hillel, the Chairman of the CCOJB (the federal Belgian Jewish organisation), the heads of the European and French speaking liberal Jewish associations, and our rabbi Marc Neiger among others.

## The power of laughter, meaning in the celebration of Purim

What is Purim? Yes it is a variation on the theme of many Jewish holidays "They tried to kill us. We were saved. Thank God! Let's eat." (To read a synopsis of the Purim story, click [here](#).) But the story of Queen Esther, Mordechai, King Achashverosh and Haman is much deeper and more meaningful than just that.



When we arrive at Purim, the last holiday of the Jewish year, what are we supposed to do? Laugh! Have a feast, share with the poor, give gifts, celebrate. We are supposed to be so joyous that we "can no longer tell the difference between Mordechai (the good guy) and Haman (the bad guy)". One of the marks of someone who is fully grown up is the ability to good naturedly, constructively and joyfully laugh at their preconceptions and assumptions. When you are self-confident and have a strong enough sense of self, you can risk questioning and exposing yourself. Purim is a reminder that sometimes we have to re-examine things, to check that what we think is good really is good - and that the bad truly is bad. When we turn something on its head, challenge our stereotypes and assumptions with laughter we can sometimes see other possibilities, other ways of being or doing.

So laugh and enjoy together. Challenge yourself and our governments to re-examine their assumptions, to find different solutions and to work with us citizens to create a better future. It's Purim, everything is possible.

**Rabbi Ira Goldberg**  
International Jewish Center of Belgium



## 20 years of Beth Shalom Munich

Beth Shalom will celebrate its 20th anniversary with a festive event on Sunday March 22 at 5pm in the Hubert-Burda-Saal of the Israelitische Kultus-gemeinde Munich (St.-Jakobsplatz). Together with the congregation's friends, as well as representatives from government, religious communities and Munich citizens, we will be looking at how we have brought Progressive Judaism back to the center of Munich. We will also celebrate the evening with music from the klezmer band, Boris Rosenthal & Friends, and a kosher buffet.

It is not only a joyous occasion for us, but also a very significant event for the greater Jewish community of Munich. We will be celebrating in the heart of Munich's city centre at the auditorium of the IKG, Munich's orthodox run community. We have come a long way in making Progressive Judaism an accepted and well-recognised movement among Germany Jewry. Offering a wide spectrum of Jewish life in Munich and Germany has been - and is still our goal.

With a current membership of around 400, we are proud of our progress and our continued growth. Our Rabbi of almost nine years, Rabbi Tom Kucera and our Cantor, Nikola David, who just completed his first year with us, have enhanced our congregations' religious life and have helped us attract many new members and guests. The board and other volunteers in the community continue to do much of the work to run Beth Shalom's active schedule and we are thankful for all the good people who have given so much of themselves. In addition we thank all of our friends from the EUPJ who have supported us over the years and we look forward to the future together and to your next visit to Munich! **Gigi Hoehn**

## Hamelin news

The congregation's New Year Reception was held on Sunday, January 4th. The evening was enjoyed by one and all, everyone helping in the organisation or preparation, the setting up, the rehearsals and musical programme or the cleaning up afterwards. It was a fun-filled evening, ushering in the year 2015 from our members for our members.

Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy and his wife, Natascha, visited our congregation for the first time in January. Many members were excited to meet Rabbi Lyskovoy. He taught and led services, and this time the accent was on Russian. Members sat on the edge of their seats during his sermon. Afterwards one member was overheard to say, "I'm so impressed with him, I'm coming again tomorrow morning!" What a compliment!

**Rachel Dohme, The Jewish Community of Hamelin**

## 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](#).



## Hungary

### Battling for Progressive recognition, Budapest's Jewish communities meet with German chancellor



**Bet Orim Hosts a Summit: (l-r) President of Progressive Congregation Sim Shalom Gergely Guba; President of Reform Congregation Bet Orim Gabor Kalman; German Chancellor Angela Merkel; President of the Federation of Jewish Congregations in Hungary Andras Heisler; Rabbi of Chabad Community Shlomo Koves.**

On Monday, February 2, German Chancellor Angela Merkel paid a short visit to Budapest that included a historic meeting with representatives of all the Jewish denominations in Hungary. Merkel's visit was a milestone in the Progressive movement's ongoing struggle for official recognition in Hungary.

### Sim Shalom Budapest News

On the second Shabbat of January, a very meaningful event took place here; the double Bat Mitzvah of the Miklos twins, Lili and Hajni. It was meaningful because it marked a major commitment to Judaism by two extremely able young women. But it was especially meaningful because it was the first B'nai Mitzvah in our congregation where the whole life cycle of the family took place within the congregation.

Ili and Gabor Miklos met in Sim Shalom about 15 years ago. Though it's true they married in the US because Gabor's work took him there, the girls were raised in Budapest after the family returned, they were educated in the Sim Shalom Talmud Torah, trained by Rabbi Kati Kelemen for their ceremony, and the ceremony took place in our synagogue. It was very moving when the parents spoke about all this family history after their daughters delivered two very thoughtful drashot. Their younger sister, Vera, read the Torah portions in Hungarian. It was an all-family event! And finally it was meaningful because it was another first for the congregation; the two girls were twinned with two Bar Mitzvah boys in West London Synagogue, marking a new relationship between the two congregations.

Two weeks later, there were somewhat unusual services again. This time, it was because they were led by one of our own members, Armin Langer, who is in his second year of rabbinical training at Abraham Geiger College in Potsdam, where Progressive rabbis

for the continent have been trained for the past few years. What a big change from the environment for Judaism 70 or 80 years ago! Armin led both services, delivered a short sermon, beautifully chanted the Torah and showed that he is well along to a mastering of the techniques of leading the congregation. He has a very pleasant voice and an easy and informal manner, which makes his services a pleasure to attend and participate in. Armin comes once a month to lead services under Rabbi Kelemen's supervision as part of his rabbinical training.



**The Bat Mitzvah of Lili and Hanji Miklos with Rabbi Kati Kelemen at Sim Shalom, Budapest**

Turning now to the local and regional politics, Chancellor Angela Merkel was in Budapest on Monday 2 February for most of the day. She had been invited to receive an honorary degree from one of the Hungarian universities. It was not at all unexpected that she took advantage of the trip to speak with the Hungarian Prime Minister, Victor Orban, about differences in national policy between the two countries, including alignments with the Eastern and Western great powers.

What was completely unexpected was that she decided to spend 25% of her time here in a meeting with the leaders of the Hungarian Jewish community. And it was a sign that, at least in the German Embassy, Progressive Judaism is recognised as a legitimate movement. Our president was invited to the Jewish leadership meeting with Merkel. What was unpleasant was that when asked by Merkel if they would support the Progressive congregations regaining their government recognition, both the Neolog and Chabad representatives said "No, they would not". Their stated reason was that Progressive Judaism is not authentic Judaism. Whereupon Chancellor Merkel gave them a lecture on the need to follow Germany's lead in having a Jewish umbrella organisation including all the various Jewish branches, with such controversies about authenticity confined to inside the organisation.

**Jess Weil**



## Holocaust Remembrance in Andalucia



### Holocaust Remembrance Day

We have the pleasure of once again sharing some news with you from Andalucia. A big thank you to our friends in "Sefarad Cádiz" for organising a commemoration in conjunction with the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. Several members of Bet Januka received the honour of participating in this event and lit candles in remembrance of Shoah victims. Much appreciation goes out as well to all those who participated in order to ensure the memory of those victims, as well as trying to ensure that these acts of genocide are not repeated.

The commemoration was accompanied by the internationally known classical pianist Josep Colom, the violoncellist Alvaro Campos, and Professor Graciela Kohan Starcman, university expert on the Shoah. The event was held at Auditorium of the Royal Professional Conservatory of Music in Cádiz. Here are links to Bet Januká newsletters #5, 6, & 7.

**Deborah Ríos Rey, Bet Januká de Andalucia**

## Beit Emunah in Oviedo and the Shoah



**Congregation Beit Emunah pays tribute to the victims of the Shoah, concluding with El Male Rachamim to recall the memory of the victims and renew our commitment to NEVER FORGET.**



**850 students and 45 teachers of Asturias High School I in Oviedo City Auditorium to learn about the Shoah.**

Thanks to **Aida Oceransky, Kehilah Beit Emunah**  
[www.sefarado-oviedo.org](http://www.sefarado-oviedo.org)

## Madrid Reform Javurah Tu B'Shvat Seder



### Tu B'Shvat in Madrid

The Reform Javurah of Madrid celebrated a very special Tu B'Shvat Seder where 30 people, children and adults, shared Jewish values about nature. We were inspired by a recently established tradition where two people take responsibility to plant a small tree, taking care of it during an annual cycle, encouraging Jewish ecological values at home, and writing a diary about developments between one Tu B'Shvat and another.

This year, Livnot U'Lehibanot sent us very beautiful and inspiring Tu B'shvat materials. We prepared a seder plate with plenty of fruits from Eretz Israel, and guided by thought-provoking texts, everyone found new insights inspired by our sages. As this is a year of Shmitah, we also collected money for the maintenance of trees in Israel.

## Bet Shalom shining from the heart of Barcelona

In this difficult time for Judaism in Europe we most keep our light shining! That's why I'm glad to share with you our news from December.

The kids were the protagonists in our Chanukah celebration, allowing us to remember that the light and endurance of Jewish traditions depend on them.

Eight days of *sufganiyot*, music, candles, laughs, presents and joy: this is what Chanukah looked like at the Bet Shalom community. Each day we met to celebrate the light during this wintertime, because it is our tradition to remember.

Most of the days we got together in the synagogue. On the third day, we shared with all the communities in Barcelona a public event in an important square of the city. On the fifth day of Chanukah, Bet Shalom welcomed its members and guests for a very festive evening. There was a chanukiah workshop for kids and many crafts activities to make decorations for everyone's home.

It was a time for families and friends to feel and enjoy the warmth of Bet Shalom's people amidst this winter.

To know more about future activities, festivities and to support Jewish life in Barcelona, visit our website:

[www.betshalom.cat](http://www.betshalom.cat).

**Natalia Acuña**

[We regret omitting this story last month, and are glad to remind us all of its message in February. - Ed.]



### Chanukah in Bet Shalom, Barcelona



### Beit Hillel in Rome



**Rabbis Laura Janner-Klausner and  
Danny Rich at Beth Hillel, Rome**

On February 21 there was a rabbinical lecture to mark the opening of the new Progressive community Beth Hillel in Rome, "Women and Judaism". Rabbi Danny Rich was there on holiday there and so both Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner and he spoke, which was really a delight

### Jews and Homosexuality in Rome

On Sunday January 18th Beth Hillel Roma organised a conference with the theme of "Jews and Homosexuality" with many Italian and foreign guest speakers such as writers, university professors, researchers and psychologists. Our rabbi, Fabian Sborovsky, was also present to present the Progressive view on the subject. The conference was attended by almost 100 people, among which were some young people and a rabbi from the Orthodox community. The event was organized by Marco Fiammelli, a member of our board.



**Rabbi Fabian  
Sborovsky**

### A Joyous February at Beth Shalom

Many members and guests joined us for Shabbat morning services on Saturday, February 14 at 10:30 am at the Hotel de la Ville here in Milan. Although it was the day of love, for Beth Shalom it was a special day to welcome back Rabbi Leigh Lerner and his wife Loren returning to our community after the High Holidays. In addition, we had a baby naming ceremony for long-time members of Beth Shalom. A double Happy Mitzvah. Kiddush followed the service.

### LJG Netzer student trip to Berlin



**Dutch Jewish young adults at the airport**

For many years, the progressive community in the Netherlands has led an annual weekend to another city in Europe for its 12-16 year old youngsters. This successful project helps attract youngsters and strengthens their connection to the community. Due to the excellent results of this project, we decided to open a new tradition to students from the community who are 18-23 years old.

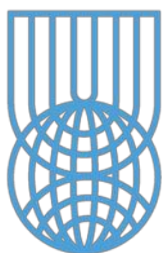
Between 29 January and 1 February we had our first student weekend which took place in Berlin. 21 people participated in the trip – 19 students from all over the Netherlands and two leaders, Hadassa Schrijver and Yuval Ben Horin. A week before the trip we held a preparation meeting to get to know each other more. During the Berlin trip we explored the Jewish life that was and still happening in Berlin by visiting the Jewish museum, by having a three hour Jewish tour through out the city and by meeting young adults from the local community.

We were invited gladly to a Friday dinner organised by young adults from Berlin. We were around 50 people from the Netherlands and Berlin who were sharing and learning about each other, how each one expressed his/her Judaism and connection to the Jewish community. On Saturday we had a Mahammad in the morning about Tu Bishvat and Havdalah. Another big part of the trip was to learn more about Berlin through history, culture and current life. On our last evening we finished the schedule with a panoramic view of all Berlin from the TV tower. The trip was very successful. The students enjoyed their time and we definitely succeeded in creating a stronger and more united group.

We believe that this age group is very important in establishing the continuity of the youth programme. They comprise the generation which is supposed to "take control" and lead the way. Hopefully in the near future we will be able to see more involvement from these participants in our organisations and in our communities. We believe that by making more possibilities for them, they will be eager to take part and contribute by themselves.

**Yuval Ben-Horin**  
Youth leader Netherlands – Sjlichah Jewish Agency

WORLD  
UNION FOR  
PROGRESSIVE  
JUDAISM



האיגוד  
העולמי  
ליהדות  
מתקדמת

## Changing Minds: July's Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators now open for registration

Every year, the Bergman Seminar turns Israel into a giant classroom for Progressive Jewish Educators from across the globe. This 10-day professional development seminar, based in Jerusalem, is carefully crafted to provide maximum impact on the work of formal and informal Jewish educators. This year's Bergman Seminar, being held from July 2 to 12, will incorporate art, culture, spirituality, liturgy, Hebrew, history, politics, text study, Jewish values, pedagogy and more.

Together, the various components of the seminar will address the critical challenges facing the Jewish people; encounter creative projects addressing these challenges and encourage participants to develop their own initiatives.

Designing and implementing the Bergman Seminar is the [Saltz International Education Center's faculty](#), which includes some of the most accomplished scholars and educators in the world.

While this programme is highly regarded for its calibre of speakers and educational content, the magic of the seminar is the diversity of its participants. Last year's seminar attracted exceptional Jewish educators from South Africa, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Argentina, Israel, Australia, Panama, France and the United States.



One Bergman Seminar alum sums up the experience nicely: "Although I had been to Israel several times this was the experience that allowed me to put all the puzzling pieces together. There was tremendous attention to depth, detail and knowledge - Israel's history and society is so complex - previously I felt like an outsider peeking over a Jerusalem stone wall into a mystical world - now I feel a part of this country and can relate to its challenges and accomplishments as if it is part of my own identity."

Sign up for the [Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators](#) today! Tell educators in your community about this unique opportunity.

## WUPJ Calendar

**March 22-25** - Israel

[Pursue Justice: Seminar for Legal Professionals](#)

**May 13-16** - Rio de Janeiro

[Connections 2015, WUPJ 37th Biennial Conference](#)

**May 28-June 7** - Israel

[The Israel Study Kallah](#),

**July 2-12** - Israel

[Bergman Seminar for Jewish Educators](#)

**October 7-22** - Israel and Poland

[Israel - Poland Mission](#)



## CONNECTIONS 2015

To secure your place at the event that's written on the calendars of Progressive Jewish people around the world, [click here](#) to visit the CONNECTIONS 2015 website.

Taking place May 13-16 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the WUPJ's 37th International Convention will bring members of our far-flung family together to learn about the inspiring vision of our movement's future via a wide variety of educational and entertaining sessions that will touch on the hot button issues affecting Reform, Progressive and Liberal Jews everywhere.

**Ready for Rio? Register on line [here!](#)**



## 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.