



European Union for Progressive Judaism

September 2015 Newsletter

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“A Day of Great Joy and Gratitude”

Four rabbis ordained and one cantor invested in Bielefeld, Germany



Rabbis Natalia Verzhbovska, Eli Reich, Alexander Grodensky and Sonja Pilz ask for God's blessings

The city of Bielefeld hosted its first ordination of rabbis as well as the investiture of one cantor on August 31, with the ceremony held at the Beit Tikva Synagogue. President Irith Michelsohn takes pride in her state-of-the-art synagogue and Jewish centre which is home of a dynamic 300-member community, mainly made up of immigrants from the former Soviet Union. “To us, this is the most important day since we dedicated our synagogue in 2008,” she explained.

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Leo Baeck College Rabbinic Ordination



Rabbis Adam Frankenberg, Emily Jurman and Deborah Kahn-Harris

Leo Baeck College held its annual ordination ceremony on Sunday 5th July. The service, at which two new rabbis from the College were ordained, was held for the first time at Southgate Progressive Synagogue and witnessed by a packed congregation. The congregation's rabbi, Yuval Keren, welcomed the many attendees and expressed his delight at being able to host the event.

The two new rabbis are Rabbi Adam Frankenberg and Rabbi Emily Jurman. Many family members of both

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New Year Message

The year just concluding has been memorable. Some of the events, including the atrocities in Paris and Copenhagen, will be remembered for the wrong reasons. They remind us, as though our memory needs it, that no matter how much we feel at home here in Europe there is a tiny minority of people who think otherwise. Despite the calls by Netanyahu for us European Jews to ‘come home’ to ‘safe Israel’, the overwhelming majority of us will not obey. We feel Europe is our home and have no plans to pack our bags.

There have been many happy occasions, and these are on the ones on which I prefer to dwell. If you read the last 12 months of the EUPJ newsletter, which of course you can do online, you will be reminded of the variety and quality of events in our many communities. My first act of repentance on Yom Kippur will be to apologise to those congregations and countries not mentioned in the following random sampling: the first Bar Mitzvah at Beth Hillel Rome, the 50th anniversary year of Beth Hillel Brussels, the ordination of rabbis and cantors at our seminaries, the publication of the first post-Second World War siddur in Polish and Hebrew, the summer camp held in France, the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of UpJ in Germany and the first-ever meeting of all six of our communities in Spain. I could go on for many more pages but this gives you a flavour.

What of the coming year? A committee chaired by EUPJ honorary secretary John Cohen is hard at work organising the EUPJ biennial conference to be held in London April 14-17. You will have noticed advance notice for this event, which is marking both the 90th anniversary of the foundation of WUPJ in London in 1926 and 60 years since Leo Baeck College came into existence. Please keep an eye on our website because in the near future you will be able to register for what should prove to be an exciting and interesting event.

It only remains for me, on behalf of the EUPJ Management Committee, to wish each and every one of you a sweet, peaceful and fulfilling year. May 5776 be a year when Progressive Judaism continues to thrive on European soil.

**Miriam Kramer
Chairman, EUPJ**



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"A picture is worth 1000 words!"

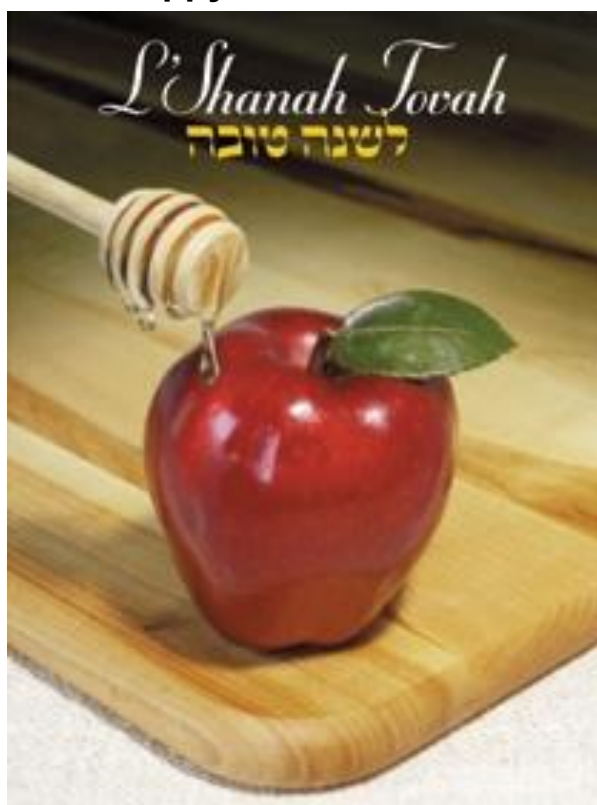
Welcome to the September issue of our EUPJ Newsletter. Due to the overlapping travel and holiday schedules of your chairman, administrator and editor, this summer has been free of newsletters, but we are back in full swing.

If you are reading this, it means you have an interest in the content of this publication, and so here is a simple request: **send pictures!** Take photos of your community events with your camera, smart phone or tablet and then email them right away to newsletter@eupj.org. The author of the title quotation is unknown, but we will credit the photographer if you want. If you are having a guest rabbi, take his or her picture. Whether your synagogue event is unique or ordinary, either way our readers want to see pictures of them. By way of example, in this issue there are photos of gatherings large and small, ordinations, Bar Mitzvahs, rabbis and student rabbis, community leaders and more. You don't have to crop or photoshop the pictures, we'll do that for you - just shoot and mail. The results will show up in these pages.

Thank you in advance for enriching the EUPJ Newsletter.

Arthur Buchman
Editor

Happy New Year 5776



Visit the EUPJ website at www.eupj.org.

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Synagogues everywhere

Progressive congregations and Shabbat services can be found nearly everywhere during your travels. Click on a blue link to find a synagogue near your destination.

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MJLF Paris

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www.fpje.org.uk





Building bridges in our own community and with other faiths and the wider community is the backdrop against which we are planning an exciting 2016 EUPJ LONDON BIENNIAL CONFERENCE.

Join friends, colleagues and Progressive Jews from across the world to learn together, pray together and to be part of a truly inspiring four days in London.

- The opening ceremony will be held at **Guildhall**, one of Britain's most iconic and beautiful buildings in the heart of the City of London.
- We will experience the joy of being one connected community as we enjoy Kabbalat Shabbat in the welcoming sanctuary of **West London Synagogue** and on Shabbat morning we will join together for the service and a lunch-and-learn at the **Liberal Jewish Synagogue**.
- The conference will include celebrating **60 years** of Leo Baeck College and **90 years** of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. We would love you to celebrate these special milestones with us.
- As well as opportunities to debate, learn and come together in song and prayer, there will be time to experience the sights and sounds of London and its people.

**BOOKING OPENS EARLY OCTOBER 2015 WITH AN
EARLY BIRD OFFER.**

UK-Israel Shared Strategic Challenges Conference



UK-Israel conference panelists

As vice-chairman of EUPJ I was invited to attend the above conference at the House of Commons, Portcullis House on June 22nd.

The conference was set up to address many of the current issues of the day. There were a number of in-depth interviews of a number of Israeli Politicians, from Sivan Shalom, the deputy prime minister, to Isaac Herzog the present leader of the Israeli Labour Party, and opposition leader, to Yair Lapid, the leader of Yesh Atid, through to Ron Proser, permanent Head of Israel's Mission to the United Nations.

All through the day there were many panel discussions, covering (1) the negotiations with Iran on Nuclear Weapons; (2) Responding to Radicalisation. Can the genie be put back in the bottle? (3) Responding to the growth of Anti-Semitism, Is the future of European Jewry under threat? (4) How do we respond to the threat of ISIL, following the collapse of Arab States? (5) Has the door been closed upon the possibility of a Two State Solution between Israel and the Palestinian Territories?

The conference started with comments from the departing Israeli Ambassador Daniel Taub, explaining the very many problems experienced by Israeli representatives in the UK (BDS, Anti-Israel university student bodies) but heartened by many new initiatives with the UK government.

Next spoke Tobias Elwood, Under Secretary of State for the Foreign Office, who confirmed bi-lateral trade had doubled to £5n in the past 10 years whilst confirming that no UK university had taken up the BDS vote made by the National Union of Students which he deplored.

Silvan Shalom made clear that the present Israeli government will only sit down with the PA without preconditions and will accept no agreement without negotiation. He also gave his view that the territories do not belong to the Palestinians and that only by an act of the Israeli Parliament could the land be exchanged as part of a Peace Agreement.

Isaac Herzog made clear that in his view a number of the comments made by Netanyahu are not acceptable by the leader of a national state. His view is that the BDS campaign will only start to go away if new initiatives come forward from the Israeli Government.

Yair Lapid came directly into politics because he wishes to see and be involved with a Two State Solution. He does not see how Israel can continue with having 3.5 million Arabs under its control. My personal view is that he may well become a future Israeli Prime Minister

Ron Proser explained his day-to-day routine at the United Nations. He said Israel is continuously criticised, but unofficially he has such good relations with ambassadors from so many other countries. For example India, with whom Israel has fantastic trading agreements, always vote against Israel whatever the issue. However what is especially interesting is that with Arab nations now openly sniping at each other Israel has many discussions with other Arab countries.

I have merely provided above a short synopsis of the information gleaned and would be happy to provide more details if requested.

Michael Reik
Vice-Chairman, EUPJ

Leslie Bergman appointed honorary senator of Abraham Geiger College



L-R: Rabbi Walter Homolka, Leslie Bergman, Rabbi Walter Jacob

Bielefeld, 30th August. During a concert in the Bielefeld synagogue the president of EUPJ, Leslie Bergman, has been awarded a senatorship of the Abraham Geiger College to mark his lifelong dedication to Jewish life and his many achievements for European Jewry in general and the Abraham Geiger College in particular. The President of the Abraham Geiger College, Rabbi Prof Dr Walter Jacob: "we have known each other for more than 50 years when you studied in Pittsburgh. I am proud how you have spent your life to make Judaism meaningful to yourself and so many others." Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, president of Liberal Judaism UK and also senator of the college, was in attendance. Leslie Bergman's speech was titled 'Ledor Vador in the 21st Century'. [Read it here.](#)

Into the heavens with the Union

On 24 July I flew on a British Airways Airbus A-321 identified as 'G- EUPJ'! "Lo baShamayim Hi"?

Rabbi Walter Rothschild

LBC ordination

continued from page 1

ordinands were present at the service, including Rabbi Frankenberg's cousin, the Hollywood actress Jane Seymour. Rabbi Frankenberg was presented by Rabbis Elli Tikvah-Sarah and Charley Baginsky, and Rabbi Jurman by Dr Keith Kahn-Harris and Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith. Each was ordained by their childhood rabbi, Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton for Adam Frankenberg and Rabbi Dr Larry Englander for Emily Jurman.

The ordination service was conducted by Rabbis Aaron Goldstein and Richard Jacobi and Dr Jeremy Schonfield. The address to the ordinands was given by Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh, the College's Dean. The opening and concluding prayers were delivered by the College Principal, Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris. Music for the service was provided by Rabbi Mark Solomon.

The ordinands were presented with special tallitot in the College colours, handmade for them in Guatemala through the Mayaworks charity, based in Chicago.

Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris said "Leo Baeck College is very proud of this year's ordinands, each of whom has achieved the highest standards of academic and vocational work demanded by this important role in the community. They each bring their own unique and special character to interpret how they are going to carry this out in the wider world in what promises to be trajectories we will all follow with the utmost interest – we wish them well."

Anti-Semitism message from MRJ

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism, responds to Community Security Trust statistics on anti-Semitism.

"Britain cares what happens to Jews, and Jews care what happens to Britain. The CST report shows that the increase in the number of Jews logging anti-Semitic incidents is because of an enduring trust we will be listened to. I am relieved that it is not because of a rise in the number of incidents themselves.

Jews have a history that gives us good reason to be fearful. However, I would urge us to focus more on trust than on fear, as this will enable us to continue our role as active, appreciated, contributors to mainstream British society."

New collaborative partner for Leo Baeck College

Following an intensive process which included financial scrutiny, institutional approval, and a daylong validation event we are delighted



to announce that Middlesex University has agreed, subject to minor corrections, to validate the College's four Jewish Studies awards. They were so impressed by what they read and saw that they agreed to approve the validation for six years! This is an outstanding result and a first for the College.

Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris
Principal, Leo Baeck College

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Biblical Hebrew: Beginner and Intermediate
Dr Alinda Damsma

The Sound of Torah and Prayer
Dr Annette Boeckler

Who is a Jew? Jewish Identities
Dr Laliv Glenman

Martin Buber's: 'Eclipse of God', and its contemporary relevance
Rabbi Dr Judith Rosen-Berry
(Lectures in honour of Rabbi Sheila Shulman z"l)

Shoah through film: The Impact of WWII on Jewish Children and Families
Dr Joanna B Michlic

Maimonides' Radical Judaism: An enduring intellectual heritage
Rabbi Mark L Solomon

Reading between the lines: A literary approach to Jonah and Ruth
Rabbi Professor Jonathan Magonet
Reading between the lines: A literary approach to Jonah and Ruth
Dr Keith Kahn-Harris

'Jews don't do art.....' - or do they?
Rabbi Colin Eimer

ABOUT US

The Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus follows in the footsteps of the Berlin Lehrhaus established in 1920 by Franz Rosenzweig. Leo Baeck College's outstanding faculty teach subjects about which they are passionate and deeply knowledgeable.

The Lehrhaus marks an exciting time in the development and growth of adult Jewish learning for 21st Century Jews.

ENROL NOW

LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE

All courses are held at Leo Baeck College on week-day evenings

More information from

www.lbc.ac.uk

lehrhaus@lbc.ac.uk

LJY-Netzer Shnatties come home

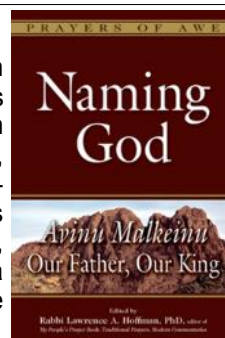
The participants on Shnat Netzer, LJY-Netzer's gap year programme in Israel for 18-year-olds, have returned home. The 2014/15 cohort – which had four participants from four different Liberal Jewish communities – spent eight months exploring Israel's diverse geographical landscape, learning Hebrew, studying Zionism, living as part of an ideological community, training to become leaders and having lots and lots of fun.

They spent one month on Kibbutz Lotan, an ecological community in the beautiful Negev desert, four months volunteering on local community projects and four months in Jerusalem undertaking intensive study on a huge range of subjects.

Now they are home, the Shnatties are bringing their new skills and experience to Machaneh Kadimah summer camp, where they will be youth leaders.

Naming God

This new book has 40 articles on Avinu Malkeinu with top names from America, plus, from Europe: Jonathan Magonet, Annette Boeckler, Paul Freedman, Andrew Goldstein, Charles Middleburgh, Tony Bayfield, Shoshana Boyd Gelfand. Not a bad number from our side of the pond. **Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein**



EUPJ cooperates with members of MRJ in aid of charity



Bake Day at Jewish Care, Deborah Grabiner at right
Photo by Adam Stone

Above you will find pictures from Jewish Care where I represented EUPJ, together with Debra Bright and Adam Stone of Hendon Reform Synagogue and Gilly Shulman of the MRJ at a voluntary Bake Day in aid of Jewish Care on 1st July. We made challot, marble cake and biscuits. The recipes and demonstrations were provided by the famous Jewish Cookbook writer Denise Phillips. A number of the residents from the care home enjoyed a fun filled morning watching and participating in the baking. The volunteers helped staff assist some of the residents with lunch and later helped decorate the dining room for tea where other volunteers joined us with their cakes. Tea and samples of all the cakes were shared out to the residents and together with two members of the local Conservative party office awarded a trophy for the best cake. It was a very successful and enjoyable day.

Deborah Grabiner

Edinburgh news

The [July](#) and [August](#) issues of our newsletter, *Lulav*, are now published. I particularly recommend the August article about Marianne Lazlo's contribution to the Gathering the Voices project. Please also read Stew Green's news of a new interfaith activity in September. This month we are off on our travels to Dundee.

Norman Crane, Chair, Sukkat Shalom
The Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community



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



Reform rabbis open new possibilities for patrilineal Jews

People with a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother will be granted Jewish status without the need for a full conversion, the Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK has announced.

The new proposals mean individuals who live a Jewish life but are only patrilineally Jewish will be confirmed as Jewish through an "individual process". Rabbis would then take decisions on a case-by-case basis confirming Jewish status.

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism, said of the proposed new methods: "We are enabling more people to claim their Judaism with a process that has integrity."

Rabbi Paul Freedman, Chair of the Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK said: "We are proud to offer these new ways of welcoming people to our communities, just as we were proud to lead on equal marriage and on calling women to the bimah. The Assembly has stayed true to our core values, treasuring both Jewish tradition and Judaism's ability to evolve in response to the contemporary world, as being inclusive and egalitarian."

Robert Weiner, Chair of Reform Judaism, said: "I welcome the result of our rabbis' deliberations and look forward to discussing how we can implement them in our communities."

RSY-Netzer's bumper summer



RSY-Netzer's summer went off with a bang in 5775, we had over 1000 people involved with the movement having a great time! [Read more here.](#)

Tash Shaw

New chairs for Rabbinic Conference

Rabbis Alexandra Wright and Richard Jacobi are the new co-chairs of Liberal Judaism's Rabbinic Conference - where rabbis meet on a monthly basis to support each other and to forge religious and spiritual messages to the movement and beyond. Click the link to learn about their backgrounds, goals and beliefs.

[Click here.](#)



Rabbis Alexandra Wright & Richard Jacobi

Beth Shalom Milan Bar Mitzvah



On July 4 Jacob (Jake) Isaiah Lebovich, son of the late Joe Lebovich and of Barbara Boothby was called to the Torah at Beth Shalom by Rabbi Michael Schwartz who traveled from Jerusalem. The story of Jake's Bar Mitzvah is a special one as his naming ceremony was held at Beth Shalom on November 30, 2002 when Beth Shalom was also an infant, having just been founded. We have both grown together but Jake went off with his parents to live in Portland, Oregon and then to Bellingham, Washington.

Jake's Aunt Anna lives in Milan and she suggested that they celebrate his Bar Mitzvah in Milan as so many of their relatives live in other parts of Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Israel. It is truly an international family. Jake was the most prepared Bar Mitzvah boy that we have ever had. He did much more than was required and his interest, passion and knowledge made it a truly unforgettable Shabbat. It would not surprise us if he became a Progressive Rabbi. His mother, a Jew by choice, is very dedicated and passionate. They live a genuine Jewish life in their home which gives the best of Jewish values and ethics to Jake. He is a kind, considerate special person. We are proud that Jake began his life with us and that he will continue to make his mother and his father's family proud of his accomplishments.

Carole Ross



On August 30 at 9:30 am on the lakefront of Meina, Lev Chadash, the first synagogue of the Progressive Italian movement, gathered to remember the first massacre of Jews in the Second World War on Italian soil - in the coastal town of Meina. The victims will be remembered with the laying down of many "stumble stones" by the artist Gunter Deming. As of now five hundred thousand "stumbling stones" have been installed in Europe, making this the largest monument in Europe to memorialise the Shoah.

Geiger student at Beth Hillel Roma

The end of summer holiday this year will coincide with the arrival of the Jewish New Year.

Beth Hillel Roma has the pleasure to invite you to the Grand Hotel Gianicolo, Via delle Mure Gianicolensi 107, for the arrival of the year 5776 and for Yom Kippur, both events officiated by Lior Bar-Ami of the Abraham Geiger College of Berlin. We would like to inform you that after the religious service of September 13th, there will be a Seder for Rosh Hashanah in the Roof Garden of the Grand Hotel Gianicolo, which offers a spectacular view of the city of Rome.



Student rabbi
Lior Bar-Ami

Mazal Tov to Max Coen, the first Bar Mitzvah of Beit Hillel Rome



Ricardo Coen, Max Coen, Nancy Walters, Sam Coen

Over Shabbat Pinchas, July 10-11, history was made in Rome when Max Coen became the first Bar Mitzvah of Beit Hillel in that city. Max is the grandson of Franca, Beit Hillel's President and Giorgio Coen, and the son of Nancy Walters and Riccardo Coen. Rabbi Joel Oseran, WUPJ Vice President, International Development, who figured prominently in the establishment of Beit Hillel, was invited by the Coen family to officiate at the ceremony.

According to Rabbi Oseran, "Max Coen's Bar Mitzvah is another important milestone occasion in the growth of Beit Hillel congregation. We look forward to many more B'nai Mitzvah celebrations in the congregation which is the first and only liberal Jewish community in Rome."

In March 2014, Beit Hillel was established. The European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ) welcomed Beit Hillel as an official member of the organisation in early 2015.

Hungary, Czech Republic

Sim Shalom Congregation News



From June and August newsletters

At last there is some good news to report! In the ongoing struggle with the Hungarian Government, we have, with the support of the EUPJ, achieved partial financial recompense which will help our short term problems. We continue to take the matter further through the courts.



Student rabbi Armin Langer



Rabbi David Ruderman

Further good news, we had a great Shavuot celebration. It started with a service in our own premises lead by our own Armin Langer, now a rabbinical student at the Abraham Geiger College in Berlin. Rabbi Kati Kelemen played a major role in the Shavuot all-night study session at the Budapest JCC for all segments of the Jewish community. She gave a widely-acclaimed session on the Torah and Freedom. And at the Schacharit service the next morning our two most recent Bat Mitzvah girls, twins Lili and Hajni Miklos, read the Ten Commandments from the Torah, followed by a brilliant shiur given by Rabbi Professor David Ruderman, a visiting scholar from the US.

There was one big event on July 11, as part of the Gay Pride Week programming. For the past three years, the three Progressive Jewish communities have joined together to hold a Saturday morning service the day of the Budapest Gay Pride Parade. As usual, it was held in the Jewish Community Centre at Balint House. Adam Schoenberger from the Conservative havurah led the service, and Rabbi Kati Kelemen of Sim Shalom gave the sermon, while Rabbi Raj from Bet Orim sent a message since he was back in the US for a while. There were quite a few attendees who were not from any of the congregations, just there for the Pride event. The march crossed over the Danube on one of the main bridges, and it all went off very joyously and peacefully.

Jess Weil
Treasurer

Three congregations visit Kolin



Members of three Progressive congregations in Kolin

In early June members of three Progressive congregations spent a weekend in Kolin, Czech Republic. Northwood & Pinner and South London Liberal Synagogues were joined by Shir Hadash from Los Gatos, California. All three have a Westminster Czech Memorial Torah from Kolin, and an actual Kolin Torah was brought over from Arizona by the leader of a Reform Jewish Scout troop who regularly use the scroll.

The weekend had been arranged to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the return of the few survivors from Terezin and other Nazi camps. It was marked by the dedication of Stolperstein to the town's cantor and wife and then a walk around the 23 Stolperstein already installed in the town centre. The importance of these memorials is increased by the fact that they are manufactured by students in the town's technical high school. In addition an exhibition was unveiled of the work of students in three other schools who had been researching the fate of Jewish children from their schools who been murdered in the Shoah. Also a large choir from one school presented a concert of Hebrew, Yiddish and Czech songs.

There are no Jews living in the town, but the three visiting rabbis (Andrew and Aaron Goldstein from NLPS and Melanie Aron from Los Gatos) led emotional Shabbat services with a packed synagogue, their members being joined by local dignitaries and members of the two Progressive communities from Prague. The Torah was read by two of the grandsons of the late Hana Grenfield, one of the survivors of Kolin. Seventeen members of her family had travelled from Israel to join the commemoration.

In August Kolin will be visited by a youth group from a Reform congregation in Chicago and Rabbi Aaron Goldstein will return in October with the annual Kabbalat Torah group from Northwood & Pinner. Kolin must be the most visited "Czech Torah Town" and has much to offer the tourist to Prague: it is less than an hour away by train.

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein
President, Liberal Judaism UK

Francophone Progressive gathering in Brussels

On 13, 14 and 15 November the third meeting of Francophone Liberal Judaism will be held in Brussels in partnership with the World Union for Progressive Judaism, the Liberal Belgian Israelite Community, Beth Hillel, the Federation of Liberal Judaism and the European Union for Progressive Judaism.

Downloads: [Flyer](#) · [Programme](#) · [Hotel reservation](#)

Kehilat Gesher Paris update

Looking to lead a more fulfilling life? We just may have a few ideas!

Rosh Hashanah is only a few days away! We at Kehilat Gesher are busy getting our new Talmud Torah program and adult education classes off and running for the coming year -- and, of course, High Holy Days' preparations are in full force. Our Tishri services, with Rabbi Tom Cohen and Cantor Assaf Levitin, will be held in rented facilities in the 16th arrondissement. [Check online here](#) for further information and join us for the holidays.



L-R: Cantor Assaf Levitin and Rabbi Tom Cohen

Jewish Tradition suggests that amidst all the routine tasks which we must accomplish that we take the time to use each day of this month of Elul as a moment of spiritual preparation. Needless to say, that task is easier said than done! But helping each other out - caught as we are between our daily juggling act of modern living and its ever growing demands, and the haven and empowerment of our Jewish Tradition and its search for meaning - is part of the raison d'être of the community of Kehilat Gesher.

**Shanah Tovah,
Rabbi Tom Cohen**

New book by Rabbi Pauline Bebe

**Sieze the Wonderful in the Moment
A philosophy for everyday life**

The frenetic pace of our society leaves little room for questions about the meaning of life. Inspired by ancient and contemporary texts of Jewish wisdom, Rabbi Pauline Bebe offers a philosophy of existence, both spiritual and practical, to live life fully, not as a dream. With finesse and clarity she develops the grand themes of existence: happiness, freedom, work, laughter, love, science, forgiveness, indifference, boredom. This is not a conventional book, as these subjects lead the reader to think for himself. Far from ready-made answers, without dogmatism, this universal message that combines tradition and modernity is addressed to all, believers and non-believers, who aspire to a meaningful life.



ULIF COPERNIC
Union Libérale Israélite
de France

Club Krav Maga of ULIF

On Wednesday, September 2, Krav Maga courses resumed with Eric Roux, 3rd Dan and state licensed trainer. ULIF's Krav Maga Club is now in its fifth year. Come sign up to have fun practicing this discipline and self-defense technique, and gain control with assurance and helpful moves that allow you to react calmly in an aggressive environment. Our students are from beginners to advanced, come singly or with friends or family, and train in the convivial atmosphere of Copernic.



KRAV MAGA

Registration: bgranat@ulif.org. We meet every Wednesday from 5:20 p.m. to 6:40 p.m., except Jewish, civil and school holidays. Annual fees include insurance and a license to FFK, the French Federation of Karate and Associated Disciplines.

Open Door Day at Keren Or!

To introduce you to our new premises, we have organised an Open Door Day on Sunday, September 13 beginning at 10am, at 15 Rue Jules Vallès, in Villeurbanne. We will serve you breakfast, present the year's programme and, of course, we'll take a tour of our great new facilities!

At the same time, we will resume our Talmud Torah and introduce the course and the teaching staff.



KEREN OR
synagogue libérale de lyon

MJLF Shabbaton

MJLF (Liberal Jewish Movement of France) is organising a full Shabbaton from 25 to 27 September. This Shabbat weekend takes place at the Carmelites, in Avon near Fontainebleau; This is where the movie "Goodbye Children" was filmed by Louis Malle, based on a true story. Hidden children were denounced and deported along with the Prior, Father Jacques, and a Kaddish will be said in their memory. This is an opportunity for you to experience Shabbat in community and get to know the members of MJLF! See the full programme [here](#). Registration at robertbleines@sfr.fr.



From the President: End of a year of change

We are coming to the end of another year. It has been a year of change: a new rabbi and a switch of school sessions to (mostly) Saturdays alongside services. Both have reinforced the vitality of IJC.

[Read more here.](#)

From the Rabbi: Looking back, looking forwards

Thank you all for an extraordinary first six months with the IJC. While it has been a point of change and transition, it has also been incredibly fruitful and for me personally, extremely rewarding. Again and again, the IJC family has demonstrated its warmth and inclusivity.

[Read more here.](#)



Stephen Brummel



Rabbi Ira Goldberg

Shir Hatzafoon supports Pride Parade



Happy Shir Hatzafoon members in Copenhagen Pride

It has become a great tradition that we Jews party through the city streets during Copenhagen Pride. Israeli music, Yoav's great kippot and the colourful rainbow flag with the Star of David all show the great diversity and acceptance found among Jews in Denmark. Again this year there was great support from the spectators at the parade. There was dancing, singing and cheering from the side-lines, and in several cases people simply connected to our music and dance and walked with us to Town Hall Square. We are very grateful to Shir Hatzafoon for helping us to participate in Copenhagen Pride. The support of Shir Hatzafoon's members and financing from the board allows us not only to be a part of the event, but to make it one of the most festive and colourful aspects of Pride.

[Lars Jozefowicz](#)

Torah Talmud in Holland



Havdalah with Rabbi Menno ten Brink at the Dutch Progressive Torah Talmud

Last June, almost 100 Talmud Torah children aged 7-13 attended the annual Talmud Torah weekend, a joint machanei of all Dutch Progressive Jewish Congregations. This year, the central theme was *The Dutch Jewish Caribbean*. The children learned about the history, culture, religious life and other aspects of the Jewish presence in this special part of the Dutch kingdom at the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Teachers, parents and of course the children themselves made this weekend a great experience for everyone and a wonderful close of the school season.

[Gaby Schrijver](#)

Principal Talmud Torah IJC Utrecht

Anat Hoffman at Levisson Institute



Anat Hoffman and Rabbi Menno ten Brink

Anat Hoffman, director of IRAC, Israel Religious Action Center, visited Holland from 14-16 July. She opened the first David Lilienthal Lecture in Amsterdam. When Rabbi David Lilienthal in 2013 retired as dean of the Levisson Institute (the rabbinical seminary in Amsterdam) and went on aliyah, he received the David Lilienthal Fund as a present. This fund organises the annual David Lilienthal Lectures. David and Gun Lilienthal came from Israel to be present.

Anat Hoffman gave three talks in Holland, in Amsterdam, in The Hague and in Utrecht. All of them were in synagogues of the Dutch Progressive Jewish Community in these cities. She also had a women's lunch, met politicians and gave interviews.

It was the first time in eight years that Anat was in Holland, and this time she had the opportunity to reach a larger audience.

28 August a very special day at Beit Warszawa

Beit Warszawa held a meet-the-author session with Sabina Baral and her book *Zapiski z Wygnania* (Notes from Exile) on Friday August 28. *Zapiski z Wygnania* is a moving story of a dual journey from Poland - geographical and emotional, through cities and continents. Sabina Baral is an only child of two survivors, forced to leave Poland in 1968. Dr Halina Postek hosted the meeting.



Sabina Baral

Shabbat of August 28

was also a welcoming evening for our new Rabbi, Boris Dolin. We are extremely happy that Rabbi Boris is joining us at Beit Warszawa and Beit Polska. We are convinced that his knowledge, experience and positive energy will make our community stronger!

During the evening service on Friday 28 August we also welcomed to the Jewish people four new converts who were recently interviewed and accepted by the Beit Din (Rabbinic Court) in Bratislava. This was a celebration of Jewish life in Poland!

Rabbi Boris Dolin's Beit Warszawa welcome message:

It is an honour to return to the Beit Warszawa community and to serve as your new rabbi!

I have already met many of you, and look forward to getting to know more of you over the next few months. My family and I moved to Warsaw from Eugene, Oregon where I worked as a congregational rabbi and Jewish educator. My wife Sarah will be teaching English at a nearby bilingual school, and our three children Elijah, Ezra and Nehama will be attending school and learning Polish along with us.

We are all excited for this incredible opportunity to be a part of your unique and growing community.

I will be setting up informal meetings over the next few months to get to know you and to provide a way for community members to share thoughts and ideas about how we can work together to help Beit Warszawa and plan for its future.



Rabbi Boris Dolin

Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow

The 25th Festival of Jewish Culture, rich in artistic, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, educational and social content took place in June and July. Our special thanks go to the Galicia Jewish Museum and their staff for their professionalism and amazing help and support.

Twice during the festival (June 26 and July 3) we were taken and enchanted by Musical Kabbalat Shabbat service, which as every year was led by Rabbi Tanya Segal together with the Mojše Band. And as every year it drew numerous guests – this time over 500! While the younger participants were dancing and the older praying in a sombre manner, we were once more reassured that this way of welcoming the Shabbat Queen is festival-appropriate. And soon Musical Shabbat will be available on CD.

On the evening of June 27th, Vera Gran danced for us and sharpened our artistic senses to transfer us over to Cafe Del Arte, operating from within the Warsaw Ghetto. The *Lonely Tango of Vera Gran*, performed in the Galicia Jewish Museum, was created by the Midrash Theatre, the first post-war Jewish Theatre company in Krakow, initiated and working under the direction of Rabbi



Segal, educated as theatre director and as rabbi.

During the Festival we also showed an artistic encounter of text and image "Dibrot". Created in the technique of the Midrash Lab, the exhibition is a Polish-Canadian collaboration between local painter Aga Nowak and writer Jonathan Garfinkel. The installation is a modern commentary on the Ten Commandments.

We had also the privilege of experiencing the joy and tears of Shelley Capozzi, an American-born woman of Polish roots, who through a symbolic ceremony of an adult Bat Mitzvah, could connect to the circle of generations. It was a first adult Bat Mitzvah in Krakow. And we would like to take this opportunity to say once again Mazal Tov! And to thank Mr Wojciech Ornat and the Krakow Jewish Community for making the space of the High Synagogue available for this event.

Chair of our board, Magda Rubinfeld Koralewska, also represented Beit Krakow during the meeting of Jewish organisations convened by the Museum of History of Polish Jews, which took place in Warsaw prior to the Festival on June 24th. The director of the Museum presented the plans and activities of the museums and participants discussed their impressions about existing cooperation and suggestions for the future. It was a first such meeting and at Beit Krakow we greatly appreciate such an initiative. One of the results of the meeting was a proposal to create a council of Jewish organisations cooperating with the museum on communication and other projects.

Rabbi Tanya Segal

www.beitkrakow.pl

A new Talmud Torah in Lausanne



Children's Talmud Torah in Lausanne

In spring 2013, two parents from the GIL Geneva who live in Lausanne which is 60 km away, asked our rabbi François Garaï and director of education, Emilie Sommer Meyer, if we could organise a Talmud Torah class there. We started with eight children with one meeting per month in one of the families' living rooms. Since then, our Talmud Torah in Lausanne has not stopped growing.

This past school year we had 23 children from five to ten, attending our classes twice a month in a school in the centre of city where we rent two classrooms. Two teachers from the Talmud Torah in Geneva came to give the class.

This year, we also introduced events for the whole family such as two Shabbat services and dinners in Lausanne, two classes for adults given by Rabbi Garaï and rented a bus for everyone to come together celebrate Purim at the GIL. Several kids from Lausanne also took part in our Shabbaton and in our Machanei.

We ended the year with a lovely reunion in Lausanne in June with songs, pictures, a multitask-game for children and adults on the programme studied this year and of course a potluck lunch. Lausanne is at the same time close to and far from Geneva so we are very happy to reach these families and to participate in their children's Jewish education.

GIL member wins two medals

Jari Hanhimaki, 16 years old and a member of the GIL in Geneva represented Switzerland in tennis this summer at the 2015 Maccabi games in Berlin. It was a significant event that took place at the original 1936 Olympic stadium. A total of 2300 Jewish athletes from all over the world participated. Jari won a silver medal for tennis singles and a bronze medal for tennis doubles.



Jari Hanhimaki

Migwan news

Joint foundations and sustainable future relations:

As part of the European Day of Jewish Culture Migwan was host of an exchange between clerics of the three Abrahamic traditions with Bea Wyler (Rabbi, Migwan), Tabitha Walther (Reverend, Reformed Church, Münchenstein), Bekim Alimi (Imam, Mosque Wil, St Gallen).



Rabbi Bea Wyler



Imam Bekim Alimi

The Role of Women's Leadership in Faith Communities. Marking 80 Years of Women in the Rabbinate International Conference in Potsdam & Berlin, Nov 17 – 19

This fall, Abraham Geiger College and the School of Jewish Theology at the University of Potsdam will mark the 80th anniversary of Rabbi Regina Jonas' ordination with an international conference, "The Role of Women's Leadership in Faith Communities." More than 40 presenters from Europe, Israel and the United States will explore the impact of women in the rabbinate and the ministry, discuss issues of leadership and authority, women's religious scholarship and gender (in) equality today.

Sign up for an exciting conference! We will upload information concerning the conference hotel, conference venues and programme updates [here](#).

For further assistance, please contact Mr Hartmut Bomhoff at bomhoff@geiger-edu.de.



Rabbi Regina Jonas

Germany

A day of great joy and gratitude

from page 1



Rabbi Walter Jacob investing Amnon Seelig as cantor

Two state governors were in attendance: Hannelore Kraft, the Premier of North Rhine Westphalia, greeted the approximately 350 invited guests, including members of parliament, the board of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, representatives of the General Rabbinical Conference of Germany, senior clergy, and leadership of Jewish communities from all over Europe, including Poland and Russia. "This is a day of great joy and gratitude," she said, welcoming the first woman rabbi of Westphalia, Kiev born Natalia Verzhbovska. In his speech on behalf of the Leo Baeck Foundation, Bodo Ramelow, Premier of the Free State of Thuringia, assured the five graduates that they would continue to "belong to us".

While Natalia Vershebovska will serve three progressive congregations in Westphalia, her colleague Alexander Grodensky, will take a pulpit in Esch-sur-Alzette, the second-biggest city in Luxembourg. Rabbi Sonja Keren Pilz, who just earned her PhD, is in New York City now for post-doc studies, while Rabbi Eli Reich will join the faculty of Potsdam's School of Jewish Theology.

The ordination was conducted by Rabbi Walter Jacob, of Pittsburgh, the President of Abraham Geiger College. He also invested Munich born cantor Amnon Seelig who grew up in Israel. "The singing at the concert and the ceremony was quite superb," marvelled Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, who represented UK's Liberal Judaism. Three great supporters of Abraham Geiger College - faculty member Bettina Schwarz MA, EUPJ President Leslie Bergman and Hebrew Bible scholar Professor Rüdiger Liwak - were duly honoured as senators.

"Fifteen years ago, hardly anyone could have imagined that rabbis trained in Germany, of all places, would be working in neighbouring countries in Europe and beyond," said the Vice President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Abraham Lehrer, in his speech.

Abraham Geiger College was founded in 1999 and ordained its first class in 2006. Since then, its students and its more than 30 graduates have enriched the life of Jewish communities throughout Europe, in Israel, South Africa, and the United States.

Hartmut G Bomhoff

Read the UpJ newsletter

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

NB: The link to the English translation of the UpJ Newsletter is ready at www.liberale-juden.de. To open it, click on Newsletterarchiv next to the white 'suche' textbox, then on the englischer Sprach link.

-Editor

Hamelin News



Sofer Neil Yerman with Hamelin Jewish students

Throughout the summer we have held services and offered our members the opportunity to gather together to sing, pray, reflect and study. We have enjoyed the visits from Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy, Rabbi Irit Shillor and Dr Ulrike Offenbergl. Each of these spiritual leaders offers something new, and we are fortunate to be so well served.

As readers know, our congregation is richly sown with a variety of musicians. The summer harvest of concerts was especially bountiful. Beginning with the duo of Faina Pelts and Larissa Bellgardt, followed by an afternoon serenade performed by students from the Viktoria Luise Gymnasium and ending with the ensemble of Valerij Fridman, Svetlana Bantshukova, Wladimir and Nadya Pesok, one can rightly say "music was in the air." Thank you one and all!

Our congregation also enjoyed a trip to Hildesheim and spent the day with members and guests of the Society of Christians and Jews, expertly guided through the historic city of Hildesheim.

Sofer Neil Yerman of New York visited us again as Scholar in Residence this summer. His work on restoring our Torah and making final improvements on the newly acquired Torah, which will be inaugurated by Rabbi Irit Shillor at our October Simchat Torah services, is a permanent loan from our president, Rachel Dohme. Members and guests, including a very excited group of students looked over the shoulder of Sofer Yerman as he worked, which made his visit an even more special occasion than it already was.

Read our full [Summer](#) and [September](#) newsletters.

Rachel Dohme

Germany

UpJ awarded corporate status

We had a extremely successful annual conference in July, with a wide-ranging programme. It was followed by a summer break, but now we are back to normal and our families and communities are getting ready for the High Holidays. They are the theme of this newsletter.

We will be continuing our work with particular intensity in the coming year, since, as you may have gathered from media reports, at the end of June the cabinet of the state of North Rhine-Westfalia awarded the Union the legal status of a corporation under public law as the organisation which represents all the progressive communities in Germany. We are very happy at this decision, which comes after many years of negotiations, and we are proud that our work and our efforts to overcome the many hurdles on the way have been recognised.

We are driven by the desire to re-establish liberal Judaism in the country in which it was originally conceived and to link up to the tradition which came from Germany and which has found recognition throughout the world, growing to become the largest movement within religious Judaism. That applies to the Union as well as to the individual communities, at whatever stage of their development they may be.

We are currently waiting for the completion of the process of recognition of our corporate rights, and we will be informing you regularly in this newsletter and elsewhere about the developments which will become open to us.

Sonja Guentner
Chair, UpJ

Geiger College plans future



Abraham Geiger College planning retreat

Between 23 and 25 June, the Abraham Geiger College Germany held its first retreat to plan for the future of the institution. Rabbinic and cantorial students got together with faculty, staff and leadership of the rabbinical seminary to discuss essentials for the immediate future and a vision for the next couple of years. The topic was: how to move on from a community of learning to a spiritual centre of progressive Judaism in Europe.

The Rector, Rabbi Walter Homolka, remarked: "In preparation for this retreat we worked with anonymous surveys. I was impressed about the comment of one employee in his/her questionnaire that working for the College is the most meaningful and happy job during his/her lifetime so far. This underlines my intention to create a participatory environment where students and faculty are supported to grow in wisdom and character."

Mazal Tov!

On July 10, Rabbi Prof Walter Homolka PhD, PhD DHL, Rector of Abraham Geiger College, graduated from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David with a second PhD, having written a study on the relevance of recent Jewish Jesus research in a post-colonial context.

Rabbi Homolka's thesis was that Jews studied Jesus as a historical figure from the 19th century on as a means to gain civil equality in a society dominated by Christianity.

According to Rabbi Homolka, "My work is about Jewish persistence and equality during this period.

Pioneers such as Abraham Geiger and Leo Baeck fought to be a part of the intellectual dialogue in the Christian-dominated societies of their times. When their voices were not heard, they made sure to develop sounder arguments."

Rabbi Homolka's first PhD is from King's College London, earned in 1992.



Doctor, Doctor: Rabbi
Professor Walter Homolka

Havdalah in Munich



Waiting for sunset in Munich

On July 18th Beth Shalom provided a novelty in Munich. For the first time our Havdalah took place outdoors in the middle of the city of Munich. As part of our 20th anniversary jubilee Beth Shalom was asked to arrange an evening at the Culture Beach by the Father Rhine Fountain. A lot of our members gathered in glorious weather and with festive feeling by the shore, accompanied by our rabbi and cantor to conclude Shabbat exactly at 22:07. Approximately 250 members and guests listened attentively to the ritual, whose atmosphere was prepared by a concert with the Israeli songwriter Elad Jacob. It was a most successful evening, which demonstrated once again how Beth Shalom and Progressive Judaism are thriving. Thanks to Rabbi Tom Kucera and Cantor Nikola David and the Urbanauts!

High Holy Days at ATID Barcelona

Rosh Hashanah services will be conducted by our ritual leader Moriah Ferrús. Everyone is welcome to stay for a Rosh Hashanah dinner after the service.

For Yom Kippur we will be honoured with the presence of Chazzan Álvaro Navarro who will come from Argentina to join ATID's ritual committee.



Moriah Ferrús

ATID's majané



Netzer Barcelona's Majané Midbar

After nine days in Netzer Barcelona's "Majané Midbar" summer camp, we felt like there's no other place we would rather be. We have had all types of experiences and emotions day after day as we learned about our Judaism and personal identity. From ages six to 20 we woke up every morning with a whole exciting and new day awaiting us. We celebrated being part of our youth movement during Yom Netzer where we got on a cardboard airplane and visited all the countries where Netzer is. Field trips, our official Olympics "Bobolimpiadas", and night peulot on Israel's history were only a small part of everything we shared together. Each age group learned about our three pillars: past and legacy as Progressive Jews, what our Zionism means, and the way we live our Tikun Olam, repairing the world together.

For Shabbat on June 19th we had the pleasure and honour of hosting at our service a group of students from Lehrhaus Judaica, Adult School for Jewish Studies of San Francisco, California. After the service we shared an Oneg Shabbat dinner. This was an amazing opportunity to spend Shabbat with Jewish people from other side of the world and to expand our circle of friends. Thanks to Ariel Goldstein and Dominique Tomasov for making it possible!

In memory of Christians killed by Islamist terrorism

Jews have been persecuted, humiliated, deported, tortured and murdered in different situations throughout history.

Judaism is a religion that has sustained and widespread ethical and moral values that persist in the West. Due to misunderstanding, greed, envy and political or social reasons we were forced historically to restart our lives in hostile environments in foreign territories in which we have to adapt.

Therefore we can not remain indifferent to the barbarism unleashed by the self-proclaimed Islamic State against Christians who live in both the Middle East and Africa, in all territories in which this horde of savages imposes their law.

On July 1st we gathered in Oviedo's busiest landmark to raise our voice, giving our support to those Christian victims who are being persecuted. We also asked for a determined and forceful government action against these terrorist groups who are imposing their beliefs on the basis of panic and death.

Act against Islamist terrorism remains as a challenge to our conscience.

Let us raise our voices and make governments react and help these poor souls who do not deserve such suffering.

Aida Oceransky

Kehila Beit Emunah, Asturias, Spain

www.sefarad-asturias.org

Or Chadash Vienna turns 25



In celebration of the 25th anniversary, the liberal Jewish community of Or Chadash in Vienna invites you to attend the festivities on 1 November at 4:00 pm in the Jewish community space, Robertgasse 2.

Our Motto: *"Learning from our journey, growing toward the future".*

A reception with sparkling wine concludes the celebration. Further information will follow with a festive invitation. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact us at info@orchadasch.at.

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JUDAISM



האיגוד
העולמי
ליהדות
מתקדמת

Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators



Bergman Seminar 2015

I am still glowing after this summer's amazing Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators. To spend ten days working with this passionate and talented group of educators from Argentina, Brazil, England, France, Germany, India, Poland, Spain and the United States was a wonderful gift.

Based on the feedback from our 15 participants I am confident the experience will resonate for years to come. One group member commented: "the programme touched my body, heart and soul...and changed me as a person and an educator."

This seminar is a major step toward better enabling Progressive Jewish educators around the world to gain new tools, experiences, knowledge and partners. The Bergman Seminar touches not only the programme participants, but also their students, colleagues and congregations. The impact is truly exponential!

Rabbi Steve Burnstein, Director
Anita Saltz International 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

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WUPJ Calendar

October 7-22 - Israel and Poland

[Israel - Poland Mission](#)

November 8-12 -

[WUPJ's Southern Jewish Civil Rights Experience](#)

April 14-17, 2016 - London

[EUPJ Biennial Conference](#)

Register now for WUPJ's Southern Jewish Civil Rights Experience November 8-12



Immediately following the URJ Biennial in Orlando, the World Union for Progressive Judaism invites you to join the highly anticipated Southern Jewish Civil Rights Experience. In cooperation with the Union for Reform Judaism and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC) is proud to present this special mission.

[Read more and register here.](#)

