



European Union for Progressive Judaism

February 2016 Newsletter

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From the Chairman

There are now only about two months until EUPJ's first-ever conference in London. On pages 3 & 4 in this newsletter are more details about the terrific programme being planned, and I hope to see our friends from many countries together in this cosmopolitan city. If you have not already registered please do so swiftly.

Your EUPJ Management Committee is involved in other matters in addition to the Conference. For example in November Leslie Bergman and EUPJ Rabbinic Advisor Rabbi Reuven Bar Ephraim spent a weekend in Iberia - in Spain to have discussions with our communities there and in Portugal to meet a possible new member of EUPJ. Last month I travelled to Esch-sur-Alzette in Luxembourg for the installation of Rabbi Alexander Grodzensky. Both Leslie and I are involved with initiatives in Hungary and the Czech Republic which could result in Progressive Judaism growing in both countries. One of our vice-chairmen, Michael Reik, is deeply involved with the Domim project underwritten by the Israeli government which seeks to establish links between Israeli congregations and communities in the Diaspora. Our other vice-chairman, Stéphane Beder, is at the centre of the formation of a national French Progressive assembly. These activities are only a few examples of the work in which we engage.

Miriam Kramer



Western Wall to have egalitarian space



Anat Hoffman of Women of the Wall & IRAC at the Kotel

On 31 January 2016 history was made. The Israeli government agreed to give unprecedented recognition to Progressive, Reform and Conservative Judaism at one of Judaism's holiest places, the Western Wall (Kotel). For decades, Israel has given full religious authority at the Kotel to Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Judaism. That is about to change. The Reform Movement, the Conservative Movement, Women of the Wall, and the Jewish Federations negotiated a deal that was just publicly announced and approved.

The decision will create a permanent and official, fully egalitarian space at the Kotel, a space where men and women will be able to pray together without gender barriers; where women will be able to read from the Torah and wear prayer shawls; and where families will be able to celebrate bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies and other events together.

The new, egalitarian section of the Western Wall will be officially registered in Israel's Law of Holy Sites. Access to the new section will be from the main public plaza. Visitors to the Kotel will now be able to decide whether they want to go to the gender-segregated Orthodox section, or to the section where men and women can pray together in the spirit of Progressive Judaism.

Read the full Jerusalem Post story [here](#).

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Register now

**14-17 April
in London**

[Click here](#) and see pages 3 & 4 for more information.

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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: [Europe](#) — [Worldwide](#)



Beth Hillel, Brussels

An international blog - from Chicago, Madrid and Copenhagen

Most if not all of our EUPJ congregations get visitors passing through for a Jewish holiday or a Shabbat. I have written in this newsletter about my very positive experiences visiting both Beit Krakow and Atid in Barcelona. In Copenhagen at Shir Hatzafon, we have had tourists from cruise ships, people on an airport stopover, business travellers, parents visiting their children who are studying at a Danish university or who are working in Denmark, synagogue tour groups, the occasional 'wandering Jew', etc.

On Friday February 5, Shir Hatzafon welcomed two college women to our Kabbalat Shabbat service and potluck buffet with our newly contracted Rabbi Sandra Kviat (see page 10), and while we enjoyed meeting and being with them, they likewise enjoyed encountering us. One was Hannah Schlacter, a student at the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign who is spending a semester in Madrid and has become involved with the EUPJ Reform Community there (see page 7). She wrote about her experience so beautifully that with her permission I share it with all of you [here](#).

Hannah writes about finding *ruach*, spirit, and I invite you to read her blog about a living Progressive Judaism.

Arthur Buchman, Editor

Letters

Dear Arthur, I would like to thank you for the beautiful article you wrote about my first visit to Atid. It was very nice meeting you and your wife. I hope you both had a great time in Spain. L'shalom,

Haim Casas, Student Rabbi

Abraham Fund statement

The Abraham Fund Initiatives is a not-for-profit organisation working since 1989 to promote coexistence and equality among Israel's Jewish and Arab-Palestinian citizens.



The Abraham Fund denounces the recent disparaging remarks, made by Israeli public figures, against the Reform movement and other Progressive Jewish movements. If there is any hope of creating a more just, peaceful and inclusive society in Israel, it is thanks to the fact that millions of Progressive Jews around the world are still interested and engaged with Israel and its challenges. The Abraham Fund's vision, of almost 30 years, of fostering a shared society and citizenship between Jews and Arabs in Israel, has relied on the voice and support of Progressive and Liberal Jews from around the world. We hope that the undermining remarks will in no way deter members of these communities from remaining committed to bringing their values to Israeli society; theirs is a defining voice in our social discourse.

Amnon Be'eri-Sulitzanu
Co-Chief Executive Officer

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EUPJ BIENNIAL CONFERENCE



WILL YOU BE THERE TO BE INVOLVED AND INSPIRED?

THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER, [click here](#).

In less than 60 days Progressive Jews from Europe and around the world will gather in London for the first ever EUPJ Biennial Conference to be held here. We expect that this will be the best attended and most diversely represented EUPJ Conference, with over 260 delegates from 23 countries having already registered to attend. Those attending include the rabbinic and lay leadership from our communities and movements as well as educators and teachers, those wanting to experience and learn and many young adults and student rabbis.

This conference will be a unique opportunity to study with, learn from, sing and pray with, and chat to friends and fellow Progressive Jews from around the world. The theme of "Building Bridges" is the perfect opportunity to experience the diversity of our ideas and practices, whilst being aware that all are firmly rooted in our traditions.

In keeping with this ideal, the programme is filled with a diverse selection of workshops and sessions. As well as interesting discussions, there will be sessions that celebrate our communities, that will give you ideas to take home with you and things to think about that will undoubtedly inspire you.



PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

THE POLITICS OF CITIES AND THEIR JEWISH VOICES - Hear from leaders in Berlin, London, Paris and Jerusalem about how being a Jewish voice in a dynamic, culturally diverse city is both a challenge and a way to genuinely build bridges.

SALTZ WORKSHOP on strategic planning in communities led by Rabbi Steve Burnstein.

Sessions that focus on **YOUNG ADULTS** and their engagement outside the boundaries of community.

ISRAEL is at the heart of our programme. We will be joined by Anat Hoffman and Prof. Fania Oz Salzburger as well as representatives from ARZENU, IRAC and the IMPJ. We will be covering Jewish identity, city politics and racism in Israel and we will be looking at models for European communities to engage with Progressive communities in Israel and how to build informed and lasting relationships.

ISSUES THAT MATTER – anti-Semitism, interfaith relationships and demographic shifts in Jewish communities around the world are on the agenda. Dr Jonathan Boyd from the Institute for Jewish Policy Research will look at the facts and figures that speak to these issues, with thoughtful responses from our communities as to how we are responding to them.

Join us for the **opening ceremony** Thursday April 14 and experience the splendour of London's historic Guildhall.



EUPJ BIENNIAL CONFERENCE



Rabbi Danny Rich and Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner (rabbinic heads of the Liberal and Reform Movements in the UK) will set out **a vision for building a dynamic and inspiring Progressive Judaism in Europe** and how we might use this as a basis for building wider, stronger bridges within our community, with other faith communities and beyond.



KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE
WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE
followed by dinner nearby

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE
LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE
followed by Lunch 'n Learn
sessions and opportunities to
experience London

SHABBAT AFTERNOON TOUR OPTIONS:

A private tour to Westminster Synagogue and the Czech Scrolls



Museum - which tells the story of a small but remarkable episode in the history of European Jewry. In 1942 a plan was devised to bring the religious treasures from the deserted provincial communities of Bohemia and Moravia to the comparative safety of Prague. There are 1800 scrolls of which 1564 came to Westminster Synagogue in 1964.

Victoria & Albert Museum - visit the world's leading museum of art and design and take a tour of their Judaica collection with Curator Louise Hoffman. Then you can explore the many galleries of design, fashion, jewellery, ceramics, medieval & renaissance, sculpture, theatre & performance and more.



A private tour to the National Portrait Gallery - join prize-winning guide and author, Rachel Kolsky, for this fascinating tour profiling portraits and artists through which you discover members of the Jewish community who became representative British subjects in the fields of politics, finance, industry and culture.



London in a Nutshell! / London by Coach



From the comfort of your luxury coach with a professional London's blue badge guide, sit back and enjoy an afternoon touring London seeing iconic sites, past and present.



The importance of **TRAINING 21st CENTURY RABBIS** will be discussed and debated by the heads of the key seminaries in the Progressive Jewish World, Rabbis Aaron Panken, Walter Homolka and Deborah Kahn-Harris.



ABRAHAM
GEIGER
KOLLEG
בית המדרש
אברהם גייגר

JOIN US IN LONDON FROM 14 -17 APRIL 2016.

Be a part of Building Bridges and help to build a stronger Progressive Judaism in Europe.

Tu B'Shvat Seder in Utrecht



Our community, LJGU, was founded in 1993, fulfilling the wish of those living in the centre of the Netherlands to attend services close their home. A tiny space was rented from the YWCA for improvised services, which included carrying the Torah scroll through the streets of Utrecht, from its storage at a community member's home to shul. Today, we are the proud tenants of a proper synagogue located at the former Jewish orphanage in Utrecht, which was left abandoned after World War II. Through chance and decisive action we can now proudly call it OUR PLACE.

On January 30 we held a short Shabbat service and afterwards the Tu B'Shvat Seder in the happy presence of some 50 members and kids. The Seder was led by Gaby and Mischa Schrijver as they did the same a few days earlier in our sister community in the east of Holland. Their dedication and enthusiasm brought one of our members to spontaneously sing about her love for Israel. LJGU's got talent!

It's a well-known Jewish tradition to create an abundant choice of food on the table. But the amount and diversity of fruits and our delicacies presented at this seder added another dimension to this celebration.

Lev Chadash in Milan Shoah memorial event



On January 26, Lev Chadash, along with other Jewish, resistance and survivor organisations, participated in a Shoah memorial tribute at the Sala Expo. Lev Chadash President Carlo Riva was one of the principal speakers.

Central Synagogue comes to Milan



L-R: Beth Shalom President Carey Bernitz, Milan Jewish Community Co-President Milo Hasbani, Rabbi Angela Buchdahl, Gabriel Buchdahl, Rabbi Leigh Lerner

Thirty members of the confirmation class of New York's Central Synagogue, led by the congregation's Senior Rabbi, Angela Buchdahl, visited Milan the weekend of February 12-14. It was a truly memorable experience for both them and Milan's Beth Shalom.

We began with a traditional Shabbat dinner for the class attended by Beth Shalom's Board and its visiting rabbi, Leigh Lerner and his wife Loren. The most moving part of the weekend was our Shabbat morning service with both Rabbi Lerner and Rabbi Buchdahl, who led the Congregation in chanting the Shabbat morning prayers in her remarkable voice.

For the first time in Italy, the co-president of the Milan Jewish Community, Milo Hasbani was called to the Torah for a joint aliyah with Beth Shalom's President, Carey Bernitz. The hall was overflowing with more than 100 worshipers, a record for our congregation. [Click here](#) for Rabbi Buchdahl's D'var Torah.

A special interlude was a dialogue with seven of Beth Shalom's younger members and Central Synagogue's confirmation class. The New Yorkers were surprised at both how difficult it is to be a Jew in Milan in an almost completely non-Jewish country and how much dedication is required by the Beth Shalom congregation to develop a progressive movement that faces determined opposition by the Orthodox community.

On Sunday morning, David Ross, Honorary President, and his wife Carol accompanied the group to the Memoriale della Shoah, built on Binario 21, the train track where Milanese Jews were put into cattle cars and taken to Auschwitz in 1943. They were welcomed by Roberto Jarach, Vice President of the Shoah Memoriale and Vice President of UCEI, the governing body of Italian Jewish communities. The students were visibly moved by going into the actual cattle cars which were used to transport Jews to the death camps. Rabbi Buchdahl led the group in a special Kaddish. They then left to visit Venice and its Ghetto, which this year is commemorating 500 years since its original establishment.

Not all was study and prayers. The group fell in love with Italian gelato and even made a special stop after dinner on Saturday evening at one of Milan's trendy gelato shops.

Carol and David Ross

Belgium, Luxembourg

News from Beth Hillel, Brussels

2015 was for Beth Hillel, Brussels a year of celebrations for its 50th anniversary. 2016 has started in a more quiet way, but celebrations and new initiatives are still at the heart of our congregation.

On Sunday January 24 we held our Tu B'Shvat Seder, an opportunity for everyone to find his/her way back to nature and to the various fruits that are eaten during this festive gathering.

Our Rabbi, Marc Neiger, has started giving monthly lectures on Jewish themes and on more general and secular themes, but from a Jewish Progressive perspective. The first subject was "Procreation and contraception in Judaism". With the current spread of the Zika virus, the issue is coming more acutely in focus. The next subject will be "Halakha and Haggadah".

At the end of February we will have a new celebration around Tehima, the "kabbalistic yoga", with Frank Lalou and Tina Bosi.



Frank Lalou & Tina Bosi

If you plan to come to Brussels and want to attend our Shabbat services, please remember to inform our secretary in advance at secretariat@beth-hillel.org or at +32 2 332 2528.

See you soon in Brussels or in London for the EUPJ Biennial Conference.

Mazal tov in Esch



Esch installs its rabbi: L-R, front: Irith Michelsohn, UpJ Executive Director; Miriam Kramer, EUPJ Chairman; Rabbi Edward van Voolen, Abraham Geiger College; Rabbi Nils Ederberg. Rear: Sonia Guentner, UpJ President; Rabbi Alexander Grodensky, Rabbi Gesa Ederberg

Human Rights Shabbat in Esch

This year Chanukah celebrations at the Liberal Jewish Community of Luxembourg in Esch-sur-Alzette were enriched by a special Human Rights Shabbat, marking the annual International Human Rights Day on December 10. The date was originally chosen to commemorate the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the first global enunciation of human rights, on December 10 1948.

The idea to devote a Shabbat to the Jewish reflection on human rights comes from T'ruah, The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights. The Human Rights Shabbat which was started in 2007 was celebrated in nearly 200 congregations in North America and Europe in 2015. On that special Shabbat communities come together to discuss contemporary human rights struggles and to celebrate the opportunities for cross-fertilisation between universal human rights and Jewish ethical values.

This year, our Human Rights Shabbat coincided with Chanukah and focused on how human rights are a source of light in our world. After Rabbi Alexander Grodensky's sermon on human rights as a messianic project, we gathered for a podium discussion on the current refugee crisis and its implications for Luxembourg.

The two panelists Corinne Cahen, Luxembourg's minister of integration (Democratic Party) and Vera Spautz, mayor of Esch-sur-Alzette (Labour Party) shared their thoughts and experience on the topic with the congregation. Corinne Cahen is not only responsible for the integration of refugees on the national level, she is also Jewish and as such the first Jew in the Luxembourg government ever. The vivid discussion was moderated by the prominent Luxembourg journalist Laurent Moyse.



Jewish Learning Encounters at IJC

On Wednesday February 3 from 7-9 pm many participants enjoyed a great discussion. Our topics can include Bnai Mitzvah, weddings and divorce, new rituals for big events during adult years from 13 years and up, for example: graduation, getting/losing a job, buying a home, retirement and more. The course was held in central Brussels where the rest of the series will take place. Entrance fee is 5 Euros at the door to cover expenses. Also available are 5 course (25 Euros) and 10 course (50 Euros) cards.

For information about the continuation of these discussions, please contact info@ijc.be.

Rabbi Ira Goldberg



Tu B'Shvat Seder in Madrid



Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz (standing, left) leading the Tu B'Shvat Seder in Madrid

Our rabbi, Stephen Berkowitz, led the Reform Javurah of Madrid in a meaningful and participative Tu B'Shvat Seder for 35 children and adults, inspiring in us a respect for nature and an understanding of the cycle of trees which has a close link to the human cycle. For the Seder, the table was set with fruits, wines, and seven species of Israeli treats. We ate, we sang, and we continued to be inspired by our community tradition of people taking care of our small tree during an annual cycle. This year the honour passed into the hands of a young woman who is a new member. Also we collected funds for collaborating with KKL.

Rabbi Berkowitz will continue visiting our Kehillah while establishing local contact with the Madrid civil society. We feel that our community is growing and moving forward into increasing Progressive Jewish activity in Madrid.

Yael Cobano

News from Netzer Barcelona

In late January, various institutional events commemorating the victims of the Holocaust took place in the Jewish community of Barcelona. Along with Atid (The Progressive Congregation Netzer BCN is active in) our Netzer Barcelona representatives participated in the central event at the Parliament of Catalonia.

Netzer Bogrim said that as a movement, it is very important to fight and make sure those heinous and inhuman acts that happened in the past will never be forgotten, and that it is our top priority to lead by example, *Dugma Ishit*, in order to prevent this from happening again in the future. It is our duty to continue and educate our Chanichim about our history because in a certain way, today we are all the voices of those who could never tell their story.

Adding to that, we are concerned about the growing anti-Semitism in Catalonia, Spain and Europe. During our visit, we received an encouraging and optimistic message from the political leaders of Catalonia: they will do everything they can to make sure that history won't repeat itself and Jews will feel safe everywhere they go.

Holocaust Day in Barcelona



Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz reading his address at the Catalan Parliament in Catalan

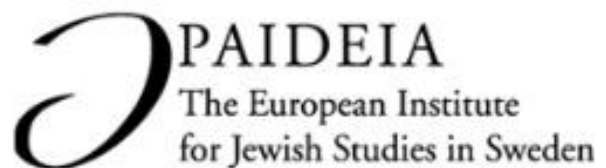
Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz is the first Progressive rabbi to address the Catalanian Parliament for Holocaust Day.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Catalan government organised a Holocaust Commemoration. The ceremony took place inside the Catalanian Parliament in Barcelona on January 27 and included leaders of the Jewish community of Catalonia as well as representatives of various associations: Spanish republican deportees, Roma, LGBT, Jehovah's Witnesses and the handicapped.

Some of the officials who participated were: President of the Generalitat of Catalonia Carles Puigdemont i Casamajo, President of the Parliament of Catalonia Carme Forcadell i Lluís, and Barcelona Mayor Ada Colau.

Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz currently serves the Bet Shalom community in Barcelona and the Javura Reformista in Madrid, and he spoke on behalf of the Jewish community of Catalonia.

[Here is a video](#) of his speech in Catalan.



Apply to Paideia! Fellowships in Jewish Studies 2016-2017

Paideia - The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden is a non-denominational academic framework that was established in 2000 with funding from the Swedish government. Dedicated to the revival of Jewish culture in Europe, Paideia educates leaders for Europe - academics, artists and community activists - towards fluency in the Jewish textual sources that have served as the wellsprings of Jewish civilisation. The Paideia One Year Jewish Studies Programme offers a unique international Jewish studies experience during eight months in Stockholm with the possibility of a Master in Jewish Civilisations. Grants for tuition and living expenses are available. **Deadline March 1.**

For more information visit www.paideia-eu.org

Hungary, Poland

Sim Shalom Congregation News



Tu B'Shvat Seder at Sim Shalom, Budapest

The fourth weekend in January was a big weekend in Sim Shalom. On Friday and Saturday, our services were led in a very spiritual Hasidic type of ritual by Ariel Pollak, a rabbinic student intern from Abraham Geiger College in Berlin. Most of this service was in Hebrew and was chanted or sung with some very beautiful tunes - and Ariel has a fine voice. Then on Sunday evening we had our Kabbalistic Tu B'Shvat Seder, as we've done now for many years. One eats 20 or more varieties of fruits and nuts and drinks four glasses of wine during the service, meanwhile listening to various spoken and sung selections from Jewish literature. It's a very enjoyable holiday, and you can see our celebration in the photo.

We're now in the middle of a vigorous search for a new synagogue. This is a very stressful time for all the Board members of Sim Shalom as they juggle various uncertainties and deadlines.

The third piece of news this month is more positive. The Hungarian government had sent a rebuttal to our request that the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) finally decide in our favour that we are entitled to a very large sum of money as damages for the loss of a share of the property restituted to the greater Jewish community after WWII. The government's argument against our claim had some serious logical and factual flaws, and we have just sent to ECHR our response that points out these flaws. It's a good sign that our request for a ECHR decision is moving forward, because we sorely need that money. If we had it now, we could probably buy our current premises and be saved from having to move.

But who ever said that life has to be so simple?

Jess Weil

Visit our website [here](#).

Beit Warszawa events

On Friday evening February 5 at Beit Warszawa we had a special concert, "The Magic of the Chassidic World" with Marcin Król (violin) and Neal Brostoff (piano). Marcin Król graduated from music academies in Krakow and Köln. Neal Brostoff is from California and since 2011 he has taught Jewish and Israeli music history at UCLA. He has also served as music director for synagogues in Los Angeles for 35 years.



Marcin Król

For February 12 and 13, Beit Warszawa was happy to host Rabbi Joel Rembaum, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Beth Am in Los Angeles, a congregation he served for 25 years. He previously served as Dean and Professor of History at the American Jewish University in Los Angeles. Rabbi Rembaum has published numerous scholarly articles in the field of Medieval Jewish History. Rabbi Joel taught two wonderful classes during his stay at Beit Warszawa: How Jewish Law Evolves, A Case Study - The Amidah and Created in the Image of God: New Insights into an Ancient Tradition.



Rabbi Joel Rembaum

Beit Polska update

[Jewish Renewal in Poland](#) is doing [remarkable work](#) in developing Jewish life in Poland. Despite many challenges, our rabbi, [Boris Dolin](#), and our teachers and [lay cantors](#) are educating young people who recently discovered their Jewish roots. [Friends of Jewish Renewal in Poland](#), the World Union for Progressive Judaism ([WUPJ](#)), and many individuals support our work. Today [Beit Polska](#) numbers [three synagogues](#)



Rabbi Boris Dolin

with a fourth slated to begin operation in Warsaw in March. Six additional groups throughout Poland are waiting for the funds to develop their community. This year we published, to great acclaim our new [Siddur](#). Dozens of people regularised their Jewish status through our rigorous programme that includes classes and eventually [formal conversion](#). Learn about all of our dynamic major initiatives here in the [Omnibus – Future Directions](#).

Switzerland

Lausanne's first Shacharit service



Rabbi François Garaï leads the first ever progressive Saturday morning service in Lausanne

The GIL (the Liberal Jewish Community of Geneva) has organised the first liberal Jewish Shabbat morning service in Lausanne with more than 100 adults and 20 children.

In March 2013, at the request of a few Jewish families living in Lausanne (60 km from Geneva), a Talmud Torah class was started in Lausanne by the GIL Geneva. Today, there are 29 children attending, divided into three classes. Then in 2014 and 2015 we added Shabbat dinners in Lausanne. Many Lausanne parents and children came to GIL Geneva for the holidays and activities.

On January 9 about a 100 adults and 20 children, members and non-members of the GIL, met in Lausanne in joyful fervour for an egalitarian Shabbat morning service led by Rabbi François Garaï. Some among them have been dreaming to see this happen for decades, including the daughter and the grandson of founders of the GIL 46 years ago. A former GIL bar mitzvah with his wife and son said "without the GIL, I certainly would not be Jewish today". The GIL liturgy and songs filled the room (a church parish hall, the only place that could be found for that event). Following a lavish Kiddush there was a presentation and a rich and intense social exchange. Everyone was overwhelmed.

Other activities are already planned, and this may lead, with God's help and with the dedication of some members who identify with liberal Judaism, to the establishment of a liberal Jewish entity in Lausanne.

Migwan thanks volunteers & donors

The Kiddush after services needs volunteers. See information and a new list on our bulletin board.

In addition, our community received the following donations in 2015: bread knife for challah, candle holder & candles for Havdalah and Shabbat, cashbox, dough & water colours for the children's programme, compost container, donation-box, fruit plate, Kiddush glasses, menorah, raffle prizes, piggy bank, soup bowls, and cutlery.

We would like to thank all our volunteers and donors for their personal commitment.

An evening with Dr Eva Schloss

The GIL in Geneva was honoured as part of the new cultural events programme for English speaking members and friends to spend a moving evening listening to the story of survival and loss of Eva's family and her memories of her childhood friend and stepsister Anne Frank. Eva also shared with us the stories behind her many books including one about the beautiful artwork by her brother who did not survive. Eva impressed us all with her energy, her optimism and her ability to go beyond the horrors of the war to forge a new path in today's world. Her warmth and humour also came through as she answered the many questions from the audience of all ages. We wish Eva well as she continues her crucial role of informing and educating future generations.



Dr Eva Schloss



An attentive audience at the GIL for Dr Eva Schloss

Migwan news

Cantor Daniel Kempin will lead Migwan's first ever Singing Workshop on Sunday March 13, 10:30 am - 5:00 pm.

Daniel Kempin (born in 1964) is cantor of the egalitarian minyan in Frankfurt am Main. Two of his Yiddish CDs have won the German recording critics prize.



Cantor Daniel Kempin

As a teacher, Kempin has the ability to work with participants with completely different levels of experience and knowledge of Yiddish and Hebrew music. He builds the participants into a homogeneous group, a terrific experience for everyone.

Cost (including lunch): 25,- CHF, students: 12,- CHF. Please register at roger.dreyfus@bluewin.ch, deadline February 28.

The book by Gabriel Heim, "I do not want blueberry pie, I just want to get out," which has already been presented in Migwan with an impressive reading, has now undergone a staging, which will be performed on February 29 and March 6 at [Philosophicum](#) in Basel. The first performances are part of an entire week on the subject of search and emigration stories in Basel during the Holocaust.

United Kingdom

Liberal Judaism welcomes first Scandinavian member synagogue



L-R: SH VP Arthur Buchman, LJ President Simon Benscher, SH Chair Adrienne Mannov, SH VP Carsten Skov, SH Treasurer Arne Kviat, Rabbi Danny Rich, Rabbi Sandra Kviat

Shir Hatzafon, Progressive Judaism in Denmark – 'The Song of the North' – has become the first Scandinavian member of Liberal Judaism, increasing the movement's number of members to 42 communities in five countries.

Started informally in 1998, Shir Hatzafon was officially recognised by the Danish government in 2004. Today it has 120 members meeting one weekend a month for services and activities in Copenhagen.

They are led by Rabbi Tirzah Ben-David from Israel and Rabbi Sandra Kviat, who became the first ever female Scandinavian rabbi when she was ordained at the Leo Baeck College in London in 2011. Sandra shares her time between Shir Hatzafon and Crouch End Chavurah, as well as being part of Liberal Judaism's Outreach Team.

Shir Hatzafon's chair, Adrienne Mannov, addressed Liberal Judaism's Council on January 26 saying, "We are delighted to become part of this wonderful family of progressive Judaism." And she wrote in the EUPJ Annual report that "We are happy to be able to supplement our ongoing positive membership with EUPJ with that of Liberal Judaism and firmly believe that with these two strong organizations at our backs, Progressive Judaism has a bright future in Scandinavia."

The community's membership was approved unanimously, with Shir Hatzafon becoming the seventh new community to join LJ in the last decade, underlining the movement's status as the UK's fastest growing mainstream Jewish tradition.

Welcoming the movement's newest members, Liberal Judaism's chief executive Rabbi Danny Rich said: "The values that we share in common as a movement, of equality, inclusivity and egalitarianism are not restricted to British Jewry. Indeed, they are evidence of Judaism's ability to continue to grow and thrive by ensuring our relevance to modern world."

This is as true in Denmark as it is here in Britain and we are proud, therefore, to be able to say 'velkommen (welcome)' to our newest member.

Kaufman Annual Dinner

May 25, Montcalm Hotel, London

RSVP: dinner2016@lbc.ac.uk



Defending the Faiths, part two

Four key leaders, including the President of the Board of Deputies Jonathan Arkush, spoke to Mosaic Reform in Harrow on January 10 about major problems faced by the Jewish community. Here is the photo we had no space for last month,



L-R: Fiyaz Mughal OBE, Faith Matters Founder and Director; Harry Grant, Mosaic Community Chairman; Michael Reik, EUPJ Vice Chairman; Mark Gardner, Community Security Trust Director of Communications; Jonathan Arkush, Board of Deputies of British Jews President; Metropolitan Police Chief Inspector Alison Darke

London services in French

Following the part-time appointment of a French rabbi, Liberal Jewish Synagogue in St. John's Wood has begun tri-lingual services in Hebrew, French and English on some Friday evenings as of 29 January.

"We will be offering a home-from-home spiritual base for French progressive Jews in London," said a spokeswoman. "The sermons will be in French, given by Rabbi René Pfertzel, who also serves the progressive Jewish community in Lyon, France."



Rabbi René Pfertzel

Senior minister Rabbi Alexandra Wright said: "We wish to extend a warm welcome to all those of the French-speaking Jewish community, living in or visiting London, to these new services as well as to all our other services and event. We look forward to seeing them at the LJS." [Read more...](#)

Click the logos for news of UK movements



LEHRHAUS Home of Adult Jewish Learning

Welcome to Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus 2015-16: Home of Adult Jewish Learning
2014-15 saw the launch of the Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus. It is the College's new programme in Adult Jewish Learning taught by members of the College faculty. Due to the success of the first year, we are delighted to invite you to sign up to the Spring 2016 programme. We are sure that the richness, variety and quality of the courses will inspire and enthuse you.

The programme for Spring 2016 is below. Download it [here](#). Click [here](#) for more details or visit www.lbc.ac.uk. Email lehrhaus@lbc.ac.uk to enrol today.

18 session courses

Biblical Hebrew: Beginner Level (autumn & spring semesters) - Dr Alinda Damsma

Biblical Hebrew: Intermediate Level (autumn & spring semesters) - Dr Alinda Damsma

8 session courses

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

Who is a Jew? Jewish Identities in 'Mishna', 'Tosefta' and 'Talmud' - Dr Laliv Clenman

The Sound of Prayer: Learn Traditional Jewish Prayer Chants - Dr Annette Boeckler

4 session course

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

Appointment of Rabbinic Coordinator to Alliance for Progressive Judaism

The Alliance for Progressive Judaism, a partnership of Reform and Liberal Judaism, has appointed Rabbi Charley Baginsky as its part-time coordinator whose remit is to develop projects that the two movements will work on jointly to advance Progressive Judaism, its principles and ethos in the UK.



Rabbi Charley Baginsky

The Reform and Liberal Movements work together in a number of areas including, but not limited to, education, chaplaincy and the Leo Baeck College as well as both the European and World Unions of Progressive Judaism.

To deepen the activity of the Alliance, Rabbi Baginsky will be fostering a number of new projects, one of which will be the establishment of an Israel Desk, the focus of which will be education, engagement with our members, the coordination of Reform and Liberal messages and work with the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism and our many partners in Israel.

Menorah's choral extravaganza



Ruti Worrall leading the Menorah Choir

Three hundred Christians, Jews and Hindus joined their voices in a rousing finale of 'Oseh Shalom' and 'Amazing Grace' at the third multi-faith Choral Extravaganza held at Menorah Synagogue on Saturday January 30, as Gita Conn explains [here](#).

Exciting events coming up with RSY-Netzer and Jeneration



The community event we've all been waiting for, Purim Spiel is on March 11-13, when several community teams from around the country will compete with their own version of the Purim tale. Also this Purim RSY-Netzer senior leaders will be joining Jeneration students on a three day trip to Vienna. Year 9s and 10s from Reform communities around the country are visiting Amsterdam from March 25-28.

Application forms for Israel Tour, a three and a half week tour for year 11s, are flying in. The tour will run from July 13 – August 7, whilst Shemesh, our summer camps run from July 29 – August 11. We have a separate camp for each age group in years 5-10 and places are filling up fast! Day Camp for 5-11-year-olds will also run this summer in several locations. We are also running a 10 day tour around Europe for our year 12's, Kayitz Netzer, where they'll visit three countries making new friends and learning about these countries today and in the past.

All of these events are still accepting sign ups so do please be in touch with the [RSY-Netzer office](#) or your community to find out more information.

Rabbi Stephen Fuchs in Germany

This past fall we had a meaningful and productive ten weeks in Germany where I spoke at several churches and was guest rabbi for the Days of Awe and Simchat Torah in Bad Segeberg. Vickie and I taught at eight different high schools about the exhibit, created by Pastor Ursula Sieg, concerning the travels of Vickie's 94-year old mother from Breslau where she was born to Barcelona, to Switzerland, to NYC, to LA and finally to San Francisco where she lives today and where Vickie grew up. It is a wonderful exhibit and a wonderful way to teach about the Shoah to high school students. I also gave a number of talks about my book, the German translation of which has been very gratifyingly received and reviewed.



Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

One of the emotional highlights of the trip is described [here](#) for the readers of the EUPJ newsletter.

Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

LJG Hamelin news



Shalom Choir of LJG Hamelin

LJG Hamelin enjoyed the first two Shabbat weekend visits this year and our Tu B'Shvat Seder with Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy. Our Russian-speaking members were definitely at an advantage, enjoying the philosophical and spiritual depth of his words and thoughts. Naturally, translation was available for German-speakers.

Polina Pelts' project, "Aktion Mensch," offered members and friends a concert of Jewish music from our choir "Shalom" under the direction of Petr Chrastina. It was gratifying to see how our traditional and liturgical melodies drew so many into the sanctuary.

It's hard to believe, but we celebrate our fifth year in our beautiful synagogue. This is a day for rejoicing and of course, our rabbi, Irit Shillor, will be with us for special Shabbat services to celebrate the miracle.

Read our full newsletter [here](#).

Rachel Dohme

Read the UpJ newsletter

UpJ (Union progressiver Juden in Deutschland, the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany), publishes a newsletter in German, Russian and English. You can subscribe to it at www.liberale-juden.de and download it [here](#).

Introduction to Abraham Geiger College - our new video in English

We have a new video to get to know us [here](#). Hope you like it.

Rabbi Dr Walter Homolka

Ljudmila Budnikov awarded Order of Merit

On January 15 Ljudmila Budnikov, Vice President of the State Association of Jewish Communities in Schleswig-Holstein, was awarded the Bundesverdienstkreuz – the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany – by Robert Habeck, the Governor of the State Schleswig-Holstein. The order - Germany's only federal decoration – was awarded on behalf of the German Federal President, Joachim Gauck, to honour Budnikov's commitment to the rebuilding of Jewish communities and Jewish life in the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Budnikov emigrated from Belarus and was among the founding members of the Jewish congregation of Bad Segeberg as well as the state association of Jewish congregations of Schleswig-Holstein.

She is co-chairwoman of the National Association of Jewish Congregations and was involved in the founding of Jewish communities in Kiel, Ahrensburg, Elmshorn, and Pinneberg.

One of her personal commitments was and is the religious education of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Her activities bring her to nearly every community in Schleswig-Holstein, including Bad Segeberg, Pinneberg, Elmshorn, Ahrensburg, Kiel and any other place to which immigrants are assigned by the state government. Ljudmila is also a volunteer in the inter-religious kindergarden "Sidonie-Werner-Kinderhaus e.V." in Bad Segeberg.

Finally, she is married, with two children and works at the federal youth welfare service in Bad Segeberg.

Wolfgang Seibert



Ludmila Budnikov



Voices of Peace: MJLF inter-faith initiative

In response to the terrible events of January and November 2015, a Paris progressive community *Mouvement Liberal Juif de France (MJLF)* is launching an inter-faith initiative to reaffirm the French Republic's core values and promote mutual acceptance and understanding within French society. On March 22 *Voices of Peace* will be a round table conference, an official award and a musical ceremony for 1000 guests at the Paris City Hall.



Paris City Hall

Speakers will include high profile representatives of all major religions, including Anouar Kbicech (President, French Council for Muslim Religion), Haim Korsia (Chief Rabbi of Paris) and Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur (MJLF) as well as freemasons, secularists and leading figures from government and civil society, including the Mayor of Paris, Ms Anne Hidalgo. Rabbi Yann Boissière and MJLF are leading the project.

Voices of Peace springs from three main ideas: 1) Despite longstanding reticence in secular France, religious and spiritual traditions must now be heard in the search for social peace and "living together". 2) Religious and spiritual leaders can contribute creatively to public policy debates on current economic and social issues. 3) Extending dialogue to all currents of religious and non-religious thought can strengthen mutual understanding between society's multiple parts and reinforce the bedrock secular framework ("laicity") of the French Republic.



Rabbi Yann
Boissière

To maintain momentum after the March 22 event, an association has been created to reaffirm the legitimacy of religious voices in public debate and to promote ongoing dialogue with politicians, intellectuals, teachers, lawyers, researchers, artists and others. Action on the ground by private enterprise, educators and citizens will be promoted with special attention to young people and the provinces. A dedicated website will capture substantive content, including conference materials, interviews, press articles and videos.

More information: www.lesvoixdelapaix.fr

Cookie minyan and Seder in Paris

Cookie minyan, Kehilat Gesher's family Shabbat service is back! We started up again on Saturday February 13 from 11:20am - 12:20pm. Everyone brought along a lacto-vegetarian potluck meal to share after the service (and catch up with the regular minyan). Some brought along a small snack for the soldiers who are protecting us, as a small thank you.



Tu B'Shvat Seder at Kehillat Gesher, Paris

Chazanit Sofia Falkovitch concert

Oh to have been at this wonderful concert! Ed.



Interfaith peace initiative in Lyon

28 FEVRIER 2016
dès 10H15

La Mosquée Othmane en partenariat avec
les mosquées Errahma de Villeurbanne,
Essalem de Lyon 3 et El Mouhsinine de Meyzieu,
Keren Or Synagogue libérale de Lyon,
l'église Anglicane de Lyon et les paroisses catholiques
de Villeurbanne vous présentent :

La 9ème Journée Culturelle
Au Centre Culturel de Villeurbanne
234, cours Emile ZOLA - Métro FLACHET

Agissons ensemble pour la PAIX

ANIMATIONS ENFANTS
avec une chorale interreligieuse

GRAND JEU QUIZZ
(Dis moi qui tu es ?)

TABLE RONDE avec
l'imam Azzedine GACI
le rabbin René PFERTZEL
le père Christian DELORME

DIVERTISSEMENT HUMORISTES
One Two Men show
(Amine et Rachid) **Nouveau spectacle**

5€ adulte
3€ enfant
plus 1 euro
pour le 4ème
personnage

Garderie et restauration
sur place

villeurbanne
EDITIONS TAWHID

POUR CONTACTER LA MOSQUÉE OTHMANE :
51 rue Octavie 69100 Villeurbanne - Contact au 06 43 98 72 56 ou au 06 32 98 82 80
Mosquée Othmane Officiel @OthmaneMosquee

Keren Or will join with two mosques and Protestant and Catholic churches for a day which includes an interreligious children's choir, a quiz, comedy and a round table discussion with Rabbi René Pfertzel, an imam and a priest. The theme is: Let Us Act Together for Peace, and the event will be held in the Cultural Centre of Villeurbanne on Sunday February 28, starting at 10:15 in the morning.

AJTM trip to Israel May 8 to 15



AJTM offers its members a trip to Israel from May 8 to 15, where we will discover Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. This will be a trip with a warm and friendly community. For this event to take place we need 30 participants to offer an affordable price for the greatest number. All details of the trip will be announced soon, but you can contact Aurélien who is the coordinator. Subject to change, the price is 1250 Euros, which includes flights, transfers, accommodation and tours.

ULIF recent musical events

Two really exceptional musical events recently took place at ULIF-Copernic:

A concert, "The Jewish Pavarotti & Friends" took place in our synagogue on January 27, featuring Alberto Mizrahi, a cantor from Chicago, Sofia Falkovitch, the first female cantor ordained in Europe, l'Ensemble Choral Copernic (direction Itai Daniel), Alissa Zoubritski, piano and Nicole Wiener, organ. The concert was sold out 10 days ahead (never seen before!) and was an incredible success

A piano recital by top level Jewish pianist Laure Favre-Kahn, a Chopin specialist, who delivered a beautiful programme around the theme of dance, including of course quite a few Chopin pieces, but also works by Mozart, Bizet, Granados, Piazzolla and the late French Jewish composer Olivier Greif (1950-2000).



Laure Favre-Kahn

I really think that only few synagogues in Europe offer this type of musical activity. A third concert has just taken place on February 17: [A tribute to Olivier Greif and Dimitri Shostakovich.](#)

Bruno Fraitag
ULIF Vice-President

Tu B'Shvat at Keren Or, Lyon



From small acorns great oaks grow – or the equivalent, concerning the famous carob tree.

For Tu B'Shvat 5776, at Keren Or, we went from explaining the festival to the traditional blessings and tastings. We followed up with a round the table reading and discussion of two texts (one comparing human life to the elements and development of a tree, the other, the speech given in the Knesset at the first Tu B'Shvat of the modern State of Israel).

This year we planted the seed of the celebration of this festival in our new premises. For next year, we're inviting our Talmud Torah kids to plant a sapling in our garden. 'Bashana habaa baguina shelanu!'

Celia Naval

WORLD
UNION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
JUDAISM



האיגוד
העולמי
ליהדות
מתקדמת

Sign Up for the Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators



Bergman Seminar students on a study tour

The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) invites you to join our upcoming Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators taking place in Israel July 14-24 designed to enhance your school and community educators. Implementing the Bergman Seminar is the [Saltz International Education Center's faculty](#) which includes some of the most accomplished Jewish scholars and educators in the world.

[Read more...](#)



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. Please click [here](#) to subscribe.

Subscribe to WUPJnews

[Sign up for WUPJnews](#) to receive on-going updates about our communities around the world.

Like WUPJ on [Facebook](#).

IMPJ Newsletter

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

WUPJ 2016 Calendar

April 7-14 Berlin and London

[WUPJ Travel Tour](#)

April 14-17 London

[EUPJ Biennial Conference](#)

May 19-25 Jerusalem

[Roswell Seminar for Social Justice](#)

The Kotel belongs to everyone!

The World Union for Progressive Judaism celebrates the remarkable news from Jerusalem that the Israeli government will officially support the creation of an expanded egalitarian prayer space at the Kotel. The WUPJ owes a great debt of appreciation to Anat Hoffman and Rabbis Rick Jacobs and Gilad Kariv. They deserve our admiration and praise for their tenacity in advancing our cause - and succeeding beyond our imagination. Yasher Koach to them all. Please read the news stories from [JPost](#) and [Haaretz](#) and enjoy the 'nachas' of this joyous giant step towards full equality in Israel.

Rabbi Daniel Frelander, President, WUPJ
Carole Sterling, Chair, WUPJ

Berlin to London Tour...

A tour led by Rabbi Daniel Frelander, April 7-14 Join us as we celebrate 90 years of the WUPJ! Established in London in 1926, the WUPJ held its first international convention just two years later in Berlin. Come follow in the footsteps of history. Together we will explore the World Union's past, present and future! We invite you to then join the [Biennial Conference of the EUPJ](#), European Union for Progressive Judaism in London (April 14-17). [Click here for more details & to book online](#)

Welcoming our new Marketing and Communications Director

Please join us in welcoming Ziva Haller Rubenstein to the World Union staff and family as our new Marketing and Communications Director, based in our Jerusalem headquarters. An experienced marketing professional for nonprofit and for profit organisations in the US and Israel, Ziva is also an active – and proud – member of the YOZMA Reform community in Modiin, Israel where she lives with her husband and three children.



Ziva Haller Rubenstein

We invite you to reach out to Ziva by [email](#) or through our [Facebook page](#), to share news items, updates and issues from your community that you would like others to know about.