



European Union for Progressive Judaism

September 2016 Newsletter

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President's Report

On behalf of Chairman Miriam Kramer, the Management Committee and Executive Board of the European Union for Progressive Judaism it gives me great pleasure to send you our greetings and best wishes for 5777. After the turmoil of last year, terrorist attacks in so many countries, wars, famine and the displacement of millions of refugees worldwide as well as the momentous "Brexit" referendum of the UK, breaking away from the European Union and the rise of minority and extremist parties across Europe, I wish all of us a healthy, calm and, above all, a very peaceful 5777.



Gordon Smith

At a time when there is a mass movement of hundreds of thousands of refugees across Europe I am reminded of the powerful sayings of Elie Wiesel z'l, and I quote: "We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant." We are commanded to love the stranger as ourselves. As crimes against humanity occur regularly across the globe we cannot sit idly by taking no action. As Elie Wiesel z'l, also said, the greatest crime is not murder, it is indifference and I quote again: "The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference." We also join our brothers and sisters in Eretz Israel in wishing them Shana Tova and remembering the age old prayer "that peace may reign on its borders and tranquillity in its homes. May the spirit of friendship and understanding remove all fears and heal all wounds"

I am aware that both the EUPJ and the WUPJ are in the process of reviewing their strategic plans and focusing on their priorities for the next few years. May I therefore encourage everyone to attend "Connections 2017", the next WUPJ convention in

Jerusalem, which is co-chaired by our Vice Chair Sonja Guentner, on May 17–20 in order to participate fully and get involved in all that is happening in the Progressive world and not remain indifferent or uninvolved.

Once again, on behalf of all on the EUPJ leadership, I wish everyone a sweet, happy and peaceful New Year.

Gordon Smith, President



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The European Beit Din

The Beit Din, Judaism's religious court, does vital work in welcoming people to Judaism and supporting others through sensitive matters such as questions of Jewish status, adoption and divorce. Welcoming, compassionate and inclusive, the Beit Din is based at the Sternberg Centre in London and combines modernity with Jewish tradition.



Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick

But did you know that Progressive Judaism runs

a European Beit Din, supporting member communities of the European Union for Progressive Judaism?

In the last year alone, we welcomed people to Jewish life from Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain. Some of the candidates come to the Beit Din in London but we have also facilitated conversions at courts in Barcelona, Bratislava, Florence, Kraków and Warsaw. Many of them have Jewish roots and are now finding their way back and embracing their Jewish heritage.

As a snapshot of this work, last year the Beit Din spent two days in Florence welcoming 33 candidates from Italy and Spain. On this occasion, the candidates, who had all undertaken a demanding course of study, came from communities in Calabria, Florence, Milan, Sardinia and Rome with one coming all the way from the Progressive community in Valencia.

The standard of knowledge and commitment was extremely high. We heard stories of grandmothers lighting candles every Friday night in the basement and a mother-in-law beckoning the young couple into the garden on the day of their wedding so she could put a canopy over them and bless them. And of course, none of that generation understood where these family customs had originated. The group from Rome were so excited that at the end of the day, they spilled out onto the street singing and dancing.

It is always a privilege to be part of this enormously important and moving time in the lives of candidates, and it is an honour to be able to contribute in a wider sense to the wellbeing of Progressive Jewish life in Europe.

Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick

See the EUPJ website: www.eupj.org.

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

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

Send us your feedback [here](#).

Letters

I wanted to say how much I (and I know members of our congregation) enjoy the newsletter when it comes out. It is indeed a credit to you and Art that it all comes together again regularly and in such a professional way.

I was very much taken by your call for more congregations to respond. I know that we do from time to time when we have something (like a special mini-Limmud day coming up in August) but I feel almost guilty when we, as a small congregation, are yet again in the newsletter and other congregations are not. But I now understand that they simply do not send things in! It has heartened me to keep sending items in and to make our congregation known within the EUPJ.

Wilhelmina Hein

Board Clerk, LJC Twente, The Netherlands

EUPJ website update

EUPJ's website has been hacked into twice recently and was temporarily closed by Google to resolve the issue. We apologise to any visitor to our website who may have been involuntarily redirected. We are monitoring EUPJ's site closely together with the webhost, and we are making every effort to ensure complete security.

Deborah Grabiner, Administrator

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





Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild to lead High Holidays at Beit Warszawa

A few words of introduction from Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild who will be celebrating High Holidays with us at Beit Warszawa

My name is Sylvia Rothschild. After studying psychology and working as a psychiatric social worker, I trained at the Leo Baeck College in London and was ordained there in 1987. I became the rabbi of Bromley and District Reform Synagogue in Kent and ministered there full time for 16 years.

Following this, with my friend and colleague Rabbi Sybil Sheridan, we successfully pioneered the role of rabbinic job-share in the Wimbledon Synagogue for almost 12 years. I am currently taking a break from being the minister of a community, taking time to research and write what will hopefully become a Jewish companion to dealing with bereavements, and continuing my long time love and work in creating new liturgies for life cycle events.

I am married, with three children. The family will be joining me on Rosh Hashanah in our visit to the Beit Warszawa community.

I blog at rabbisylviarothschild.com



Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild

Shir Hatzaon supports Copenhagen Pride Festival



Shir Hatzaon, Progressive Judaism in Denmark, was solidly represented at this year's Copenhagen Pride Festival. L-R: Jesper Yoel Andersen, a friend, Lars Jozefowicz Varming & Karen Nielsen. As in previous years, Shir Hatzaon's Board voted funds to support this event.

Sabbath Celebration in Zielona Gora



Lay Cantor Miriam Klimova at Zielona Gora

Beit Polska is proud to support a new group emerging in Zielona Gora, Poland. We are very glad to report that despite the summer holidays the community event was well attended. Zielona Gora (Green Mountain) is in the western region of Poland. The community has begun to train its future prayer leaders at the Lay cantors programme conducted by Beit Polska under the direction of Hazzan Michael Stein. There are currently three communities with synagogues within Beit Polska - Beit Warszawa, Beit Trojmiasto, and Beit Konstancin. A fourth synagogue, Beit Centrum, has applied for membership in the Polish Progressive Jewish organisation.

There are another four communities in development in Lodz, Poznan, Wroclaw and Zielona Gora.



Hania from the lay cantor's programme and her daughter Diana organised the Shabbat celebration in Zielona Gora. Thanks to both of them for efforts.

Netherlands

LJG Rotterdam news

The Reform Jewish congregation of Rotterdam (LJG Rotterdam) is a small congregation of 120 families. Reform Judaism in the Netherlands found much of its inspiration through the influx of German Jews in the thirties of the last century, the Frank family for instance. Although much has changed, we still cherish that tradition. Our shul is in the north of Rotterdam, we have regular services where we try to blend a traditional European Reform atmosphere with a modern, open outlook.



Krav Maga workshop for teens at LJG Rotterdam

On Shabbat September 10 we had a festive “Yom Iyyun”. After a somewhat shortened service, we had a programme of learning centring around the High Holidays. We created a choice of activities for different age groups and fields of interest.

For our kids, this Shabbat was the “official” start of this year’s Talmud Tora. Our teens were invited to try to get sound out of a shofar and for a workshop on Krav Maga. One of our members who studies art history and Hebrew told us about medieval Machzorim. There was a workshop on the Yizkor service, a philosophical presentation on Teshuva, a workshop on Yiddish poetry and an improvised choir. We invited an Islamic scholar to join us in our shul for an open discussion on the meaning and experience of fasting in Islam and Judaism.



Yom Iyyun at LJG Rotterdam

Around 80 people participated and I am happy to say that most of the activities were led by members of our shul, showing the strength of our kehilla.

Rabbi Albert Ringer

LJG Twente news



LJG Twente annual workshop 2016

The LJG Twente held its annual workshop day on August 21 on a farm belonging to one of the members in the region. The day was attended by a large group of members and their friends, and this year celebrated Jewish music. Chazzanit Jalda Rebling from Berlin led the group in exploring the history of liturgical music, and how to be creative with nussach. The day finished with the presentation by Bob Blok of a book of songs which can be sung in synagogue and on other occasions, and those remaining joyfully “practised” various songs with the accompaniment of a small group of musicians.



Chazzanit Jalda Rebling

There was also plenty of opportunity to catch up over a wonderful shared lunch, and coffee moments throughout the day.

**Wilhelmina Hein, Board Clerk
LJG Twente, The Netherlands**

LJG Amsterdam Freudian event

‘The unconscious and dreams’

Sunday, October 30 - 14:00-17:00

Presentation on Freud by Sandra Geller, literary critic and Freud scholar. Concert ‘To dream away’, entertainers Anouk Dorfmann and Peter Hoogeboom.

Coffee / tea and of course delicious kasekuchen.

Admission €20 to IBAN: NL04 ABNA

0468 042 172 t.n.v. LJG Amsterdam o.v.v. with your name and

Freud. Pick up your tickets upon arrival.



ZONDAGMIDDAG 30 OKTOBER

Sigmund Freud

‘Het onbewuste en dromen’

Presentatie over Freud door

Sandra Geller

literatuurwetenschapper en Freud-kenner

Concert ‘Om weg te dromen’

door kleinkunstenaars Anouk Dorfmann

en Peter Hoogeboom.

Van 14.00 uur - 17.00 uur

zaal open vanaf 13.30 uur

In de Liberaal Joodse Gemeente Amsterdam,

Zuidelijke Wandeling 41

Met koffie/thee en natuurlijk heerlijke

‘Kasekuchen’



High Holidays at Beth Hillel Roma

Beth Hillel Rome is now preparing to welcome with joy the new year, which we hope will bring peace and serenity in a world plagued by too many tragedies.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur will be celebrated, as in the past, at Grand Hotel Gianicolo, with our Rabbi Joel Oseran, who will lead the religious services. We warmly invite all our old and new friends to celebrate with us the start of 5777 with an atmosphere of great hospitality that has always distinguished us.



Rabbi Joel Oseran leading services at Beth Hillel Roma

The activities of our community, which does not receive any government grant, are self-financed through membership fees and voluntary contributions.

We ask all those who are not enrolled in Beth Hillel as members or associates and who will be attending the functions of Rosh Hashanah to contribute to the expenses. Please note: your reservation at the Seder and dinner of Rosh Hashanah will automatically include the contribution required for the religious functions. Thanks in advance!



Beth Shalom Milan news

On September 16 we had a great way to get together after the summer holidays. We were happy to have Dr Massimo Gronich, our member Frederico's father, as guest speaker. Dr Gronich spoke to us about recent developments in the Middle East. We had a pot luck dinner and all enjoyed the evening greatly.

On October 7 at 7:30, Rabbi Donald Goor and Cantor Evan Kent will talk about the High Holy Days, explaining the importance of both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.



Paideia Celebration Conference

Paideia, the European Institute for Jewish Studies, hosts a conference September 25–26 in Stockholm in celebration of 15 Years of Building a European Intellectual-Activist Community with 500 alumni in 40 countries, moving to our new home, inauguration of a new Paideia institution, Paideia Folkhögskola, and the installation of our new director, Professor Fania Oz-Salzberger.

The conference is titled "Bayit", Home, a subject appropriate to our new premises, and will deal with the theoretical, political, and textual complexities of this seemingly simple notion. The two day conference will include panel discussions, textual study, a reception in the presence of ambassadors to welcome the 16th class of Paideia, inauguration of the new premises and presentations by Professor Moshe Halbertal, Konstanty Gebert, Göran Rosenberg, Professor Fania Oz-Salzberger, and Founding Director Barbara Spectre.

Please join us for this very joyous and important occasion in the life of Paideia and in the reclaimed life of Jewish culture in Europe, in which Paideia is playing such a vital role.

Register [here](#).

For more information: <http://www.paideia-eu.org/>

Partners for the Conference are: Sweden's Foreign Ministry, Uppsala University, the Jewish Chronicle, the Jewish Community of Stockholm, and Kista Folkhögskola.



A token of friendship

Christians make donation to the LJGH Hamburg Progressive community.

Rabbi Moshe Navon and Provost Karl-Heinrich Melzer celebrated Shabbat together on July 31. The Hamburg-West/Südholstein parish is donating €3,000 to the Hamburg Liberal Jewish community for the planting of the community's new plot in Hamburg's Ohlsdorf cemetery. The community has also received €1,000 from the Heilig-Geist-Gemeinde Pinneberg for its social work.

Provost Karl-Heinrich Melzer wore a kippah and smiled warmly at the faces of the congregants of the LJGH Hamburg Reform community. Where a faithful congregation of 20 or so usually gather for Kabbalat Shabbat, the service of song to welcome the Jewish Sabbath, there were 50 guests here this night. "How we deal with death reveals how we cherish life," the Provost said.



"Hineh, ma tov", accompanied by Pastor Dorothea Pape, Daniel Lachmann, Galina Jarkova and Hamburg State Rabbi Moshe Navon

A socially active Christian, Ursula Büttner, heard about the donations drive, which was making slow headway among the North German Jewish community. Büttner is a frequent guest of the community. She celebrates Shabbat here on Fridays and attends services at her own church community in Halstenbek on Sundays. "I was warmly welcomed here, right from the start," she said. Ursula Büttner is a historian and researcher of the Shoah as well as vice-president of the Hamburg-West/Südholstein parish synod. She wrote a letter to the Hamburg provosts and formulated the idea for the gift from the Evangelical church, calling the donation a sign of reconciliation and peace.

With its own plot in the cemetery, the way the Progressive community sees itself has changed. "These are donations for the living and for the dead," said Hamburg State Rabbi Moshe Navon. "A cemetery is a house of eternal memory."

The LJGH has existed since 1994. It has 300 members, along with another 200 in its Circle of Friends, which comprises those who identify with the community, including Christians and people who are aware of having Jewish roots in their family. The community describes itself as "progressive, modern, open".

**Story (condensed) and photo by Catharina Volkert
Originally published in Evangelische Zeitung July 31.**

Budapest: Congratulations Bet Orim!



At Bet Orim life has taken a joyous turn. First, following a great Seder, we continue our very successful Fun Kabbalat Shabbat programmes on the last Friday of each month. Flora Polnauer, our new musical cantor contributes to these services much fun, dynamism and happiness through wonderful singing, a magnetic personality and lots of smiles.



Entertainment at Bet Orim, Budapest

Secondly, on May 26 we celebrated our 10th anniversary and Lag B'Omer with a superb benefit event. With record attendance and definitely record takings of ticket sales and donations of Ft600,000 (about £1,500 or Euro1,900) this was our most successful benefit event ever. This money is an important contribution to our budget and huge thanks go to our actor, singer, performer friends who year after year give their time and art freely to produce a happy evening with very high quality entertainment. Thanks and recognition to Dr Tamas Grof of the Bet Orim Board, who worked tirelessly at marketing, ticket sales, administration of the event and follow-up communication as well as to Ms Sara Magyar who designed a superb poster for this evening. The excellent artistic director of the event was Robert Garai, a Bet Orim member who is an actor and theatre director. Just one worry: how to surpass this next year?

Germany

The Smiths visit AGK

Gordon Smith, President of the EUPJ, and his wife Judy had the pleasure of visiting Abraham Geiger College in Berlin on August 8 and 9. They were given a detailed tour and overview by rector Rabbi Dr Walter Homolka and staff of both the College and The School of Jewish Theology, as well as their relationship with the various partner organisations. Gordon was impressed that 70% of rabbinic graduates of the college are employed by WUPJ communities. Gordon and Judy also had the opportunity to visit Potsdam and the new university campus where The School of Jewish Theology and Abraham Geiger College will be based as of winter 2019. There is no doubt that this will become a major centre of Jewish learning in Europe.



L-R: Gordon and Judy Smith, Rabbi Dr Walter Homolka

Meetings included Rabbi Jonah Sievers, CEO of the General Rabbinical Assembly of Germany, and Rabbi Drs Edward van Voolen, Director of Congregational Proficiency at Abraham Geiger College. Rabbi van Voolen explained his perspective of the importance of the placement of graduates in stable and viable communities across Europe and further afield.

LJG Hamelin news

Dr Ulrike Offenberg will lead our High Holy Day

services and we look forward to welcoming her to the Bimah. Dr Offenberg will soon finish her rabbinical studies at HUC in Jerusalem and will receive her Smicha (ordination) in November. We look forward to all her German, English,



Dr Ulrike Offenberg

Hebrew and Russian High Holy Day services, engaging study sessions and meaningful sermons - a perfect match for our congregation! Members who need transportation assistance attending services should please contact the synagogue office.

In December of this year, as our beloved Rabbi Irit Shillor retires, she will induct Dr Offenberg as our new rabbi.

Rachel Dohme

Read much more in our [September newsletter](#).

21st Annual Conference of the Union of Progressive Jews of Germany



UPJ President Sonja Guentner addresses the conference

The 21st annual conference of the UPJ was held July 28–31. Fascinating and informative workshops and seminars were offered by leaders and teachers from Germany and around the world. Moving services in Hebrew, German and Russian were also celebrated.

The participants and presenters came from our national and international congregations, striving to learn from one another, exchange ideas and celebrate Judaism together. A special children's conference, organised by Debbie Tal-Ruettger, was offered again this year. LJG Hamelin member Borys Utchitel wrote the following:

"My experience at the conference was emotionally powerful. I enjoyed the beautiful and moving services led by our movement's rabbis and cantors. I also enjoyed a variety of workshops and seminars. The outing to the History Museum was an added plus. I felt enriched by the three days as I experienced my Progressive Judaism in all its facets through ample discussions, beautiful liturgy and the opportunity to share information with members from other congregations."

Thanks to Rachel Dohme for this report.

-Editor

Shanah Tovah!



European Day of Jewish Culture at Migwan: The multilingual Jewish community, Sunday September 4

How do liberal Jewish communities face multilingualism, change or challenge? Within the liberal Jewish world multilingualism is a natural phenomenon which in our community has brought some challenges and changes during the last ten years. Our religious education, our services and cultural events have been adapted to these conditions and circumstances. These religious and social interests continue to motivate multilingual communications.

Multilingualism can be viewed from two angles. First, it challenges the community, on the other hand, it represents a number of advantages. One difficulty with multilingualism is the path that leads to it. To learn a second or third language costs much time and devotion. The changes and challenges of multilingualism of a liberal Jewish community demand commitment and knowledge.

During the evening we discussed the right to diversity with a place for families, young adults, ex-pats, mixed couples and same-sex couples. Multilingualism and its different forms of communication were particularly looked at from the perspective of leadership of the community and also from teachers' and students' points of view.

Nora Refaël, lawyer and expert on migration and diversity, led the discussion with Rabbi Bea Wyler; Ben Rosenbaum, author and former board member of Migwan; and Yossi Herzka, teen member of the Migwan community.



Atid celebrates The Night of Religions



On September 17 for the of The Night of Religions programme organized by Audir, Atid opened our doors to all those interested in knowing a little about Judaism in Barcelona. We had a fine turn out.

Jewish Network of Spain



A Sefardic Journey. A guided tour of Jewish Córdoba on September 5 led by Haim Casas in his last year of rabbinical training: Hebrew synagogue inscriptions at the Archaeological Museum of Córdoba. A real treat to celebrate the XVII European Day of Jewish Culture.



Recital at GIL

On Monday September 19, Communauté Juive Libérale de Genève (GIL) presented From Handel to Gershwin, a recital by Adriana Hodary, opera singer and Julio Wernicke at the piano. The programme offered songs and arias from opera, oratorio and

musicals: Dido and Aeneas, The Phantom of the Opera, West Side Story, Cats, Porgy and Bess, works by Barber, Bernstein, Britten, Copland, Loewe, Purcell, Tosti and Lloyd Webber. This wonderful programme was preceded by a delicious communal dinner.



Adriana Hodary





Two special Beth Hillel events

New Téhima cycle



"The Hebrew Sacred Alphabet" - Symbolic letters and Téhima with Natasha Simmonds. A new round of six Téhima sessions began on September 17 for a limited number of participants. More information [here](#).

Women of the Wall Shabbat



On Saturday November 26 at 10:30 Beth Hillel will show its support for "Women of the Kotel" by organising a Shacharit service led by the women of our community in conjunction with many other communities around the world. Join the call for Women of the Wall (WOW)! All women of the community are welcome on the tevah (bimah) to celebrate together. The service will be followed by a Kiddush and a Shabbat oneg.

High Holy Days at Kehilat Gesher



Cantor Sofia Falkovitch

This year, we are honoured to have as our cantor Sofia Falkovitch, the first woman trained and ordained as a cantor in Europe. Once again, we will be gathering in Paris' 16th arrondissement (Métro Rue de la Pompe or Trocadéro) to celebrate High Holy Days with Rabbi Tom Cohen, our visiting cantor and the amazing KG Choir. Please note that holiday services will NOT be at KG but at a location in the 16th arrondissement (address with reservation). To reserve your seats, please click [here](#).

IJC Leuven is now Ohel Yachdav



Shabbat on the Roof at Ohel Yachdav in Leuven

While Ohel Yachdav now functions independently, IJC remains its community of reference especially for major festivals, adult education/conversion programmes, Hebrew School etc. Ohel Yachdav events are open to everyone from IJC and will be shared in the IJC calendar. If you want to be included in the Facebook group (and be invited to events) please contact ohelyachdav@gmail.com.

We will continue our monthly Kabbalat Shabbat services (including ma'ariv when we have a minyan), candle lighting, kiddush and Shabbat dinner and add occasional havdalah services with dinner at people's homes where we would explore alternative tefillah. We also expressed an interest in marking as many festivals as possible – especially the smaller ones – with study, tefillah and, of course, food.

We welcomed more than 20 people to a IJC-Leuven/ Ohel Yachdav 'Shabbat on the Roof' event in late July, and our first Ohel Yachdav event was at a member's home in late August. Come and join us!

IJC member hosts radio show



International Jewish Center Brussels member Daniel Kogut will start hosting a weekly broadcast of Brazilian music on Radio Judaica on Tuesdays at 8pm. Called 'Soirées Brésiliennes', the first show aired on August 30. A native of Rio de Janeiro - but with dual Belgian/Brazilian nationality - Daniel says: "I wanted to contribute to the Jewish community here in some way, so I contacted Radio Judaica and proposed a show on Brazilian music. They liked the idea and that was pretty much it!"

Daniel is an engineer with an MBA from Leuven who is currently following an International Masters in European Studies. His grandparents fled Europe before WWII and settled in Brazil.

So tune in to Radio Judaica on 90.2 FM Tuesdays at 8pm! [Read more](#)

Netzer and TaMaR France bring first French Progressive Taglit (Birthright) group to Israel



The first Progressive French-speaking birthright trip at the new egalitarian section of the Wall in Jerusalem

It was a reunion of sorts at Beit Shmuel-Merkaz Shimshon as the first Progressive Taglit group from France came to visit, tour and stay at the headquarters of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) in Jerusalem. Group leaders Etienne Kerber and Oren Giorno, who also initiated this unique birthright partnership, are both graduates of Saltz Leadership seminars, Etienne having attended the Bergman Jewish Educators Seminar in 2012, and Oren a graduate of the Beutel Leadership Seminar in 2014.

The eight-day tour dove deep into issues and experiences with the Progressive movement in Israel, including tours and meetings with founding congregations of the Israel Movement for Reform & Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), activities with Netzer – Noar Telem summer camps, and a session with Shai Pinto, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the WUPJ, to understand why Progressive Judaism in Israel is so important and how the World Union represents the interests of so many from its headquarters in Jerusalem. Questions from participants explored topics such as the acceptance of Progressive Judaism in Israel, what the Kotel controversy is really about, and how young adult Progressive Jews can stay connected and actively involved with Israel from their home countries.

Founders of the inaugural trip are also leaders of Netzer and TaMaR – the World Union's youth and young adult engagement platforms – in France, and directors of youth activities in French congregations, including Kehillat Gesher and the Mouvement Juif Libéral de France (MJLF) both in Paris. Other participants, also in Netzer and TaMaR, hailed from Union Liberale Israelite de France, Communauté Juive Libérale d'Ile de France (both in Paris) and Nitsa au Centre Maayan (CJL), Strasbourg, Lyon and others.



Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur honoured



Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur speaking at the award ceremony with France's Minister of Education Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. Photo © Philippe Devernay

Please join the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) and European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ) in congratulating Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur on being awarded with the "Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Merite" by France's Ministry of Education. While serving as the Rabbi of the Mouvement Juif Libéral de France (MJLF) since 2008 the Parisian congregation has grown into a vibrant and dynamic community with activities and services for adults, youth and children that focus on progressive and cultural expressions of Judaism alongside a strong commitment to interfaith dialogue. MJLF celebrated the honour on September 2 with a musical Kabbalat Shabbat that was standing-room-only, and mezuzah-affixing ceremonies to bless the newly-refurbished sanctuary and acknowledge Rabbi Horvilleur's award.

Rabbi Horvilleur, or Madame le Rabbin as she is known, received the title along with her colleague Mr Abdenmour Bidar, an outspoken figure in the Muslim community who was one of the 41 Muslim leaders to sign a recent letter calling for fundamental reforms to create an "Islam de France" that is compatible with French values. Both religious leaders were honoured in the same ceremony, highlighting their rigorous and passionate efforts to foster mutual respect between Jews and Muslims in Paris and and "laïcité à la française", or "French secularism", which guarantees freedom of belief in France's secular society.

"I'm not denying there are emergent issues we need to deal with. But Jewish commitment needs to reach beyond. And we need Jewish creativity. That's what I'm trying to do," says Horvilleur.

For more about Rabbi Horvilleur's achievements and contribution to French Progressive Jewry, [read this profile article](#) in the Times of Israel.



A new Torah for AJTM

On Sunday September 25 AJTM will inaugurate a new Sefer Torah generously donated by Catherine Rémy in memory of her parents. This ceremony will take place at 19:00 in our Synagogue Beth Yaacov and will be followed by a seudah to which you are cordially invited. So that Catherine can organise this buffet, please sign up early by email to cath.remy@wanadoo.fr.



Amos Oz at Copernic



Amos Oz

On Saturday September 10 at 8:30pm there was a special meeting with Amos Oz. The Israeli poet, novelist and essayist presented his latest novel Judas (Gallimard). The evening was in partnership with the Lamartine Library. The €10 event was free for ULIF members and holders of a Lamartine loyalty card.

Interfaith Dialogue



On Monday September 12 at 8:30pm Copernic presented Jews and Christians in friendly dialogue. Learning about us through our texts - "Jacob to Haran, Genesis 29:1-12". The meeting was hosted by Father Michel Gueguen (Parish St-Honoré d'Eylau) and Rabbi Philip Haddad. The fascinating evening and refreshments were free.

Keren Or Lyon has a new Torah



Celia Naval lifts the new Keren Or Torah for hagba with a hand from Rabbi René Pfertzel

Keren Or have received a Sefer Torah, which was donated by the KAMII community in Chicago. This is the result of a matchmaking proposal that came to us from the EUPJ (European Union for Progressive Judaism) that Suzette Reiter-Slama and Celia Naval seized and followed up on with alacrity. This precious gift, of which we will take great care, also helped initiate warm relations with the members of KAMII which we hope to develop further in the future.

Keren Or Lyon values

In this month of Elul that lends itself to introspection, together we revisit two of the main values of Keren Or: sharing and hospitality.

How do we contribute so that new people crossing the threshold at Keren Or, our 'ray of light', feel comfortable and at home? Say "Shabbat Shalom" not only to 'regulars', but when you see new faces ask them if they have newly arrived, engage in conversation with people we do not usually talk with. We all remember the awkwardness of going to a place where we know nobody and the relief experienced when a person approaches us with a smile and a "hello" and draws us out. For some it takes a little effort, but think about what this means for the person that is welcomed. Keren Or is there to create these warm moments.

Pamela Vennin, Présidente



Keren Or Lyon student rabbi, Haim Casas led the Erev Shabbat service for children as well as the Shabbat morning adult service.

Reform Judaism launches major new initiatives at Chagigah



Chagigah 2016

Almost 250 people attended Chagigah, a weekend celebrating Reform Judaism from June 24-26 at Eastwood Hall near Nottingham.

Chagigah saw the launch of three major initiatives as part of Reform Judaism's commitment to strengthening communities and inspiring members. These initiatives are designed to benefit all communities, regardless of their size and geography. Reform Judaism will partner communities after Chagigah to continue their implementation and development.

The three initiatives focus on re-imagining leadership, tackling adult social care and empowering Jewish spiritual practice.

In her Shabbat morning address, Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner said: "These initiatives and the plan for their future stewardship were crafted by rabbis, Reform Judaism professionals, community welfare, education and development professionals and our lay people in collaborative partnerships. This partnership reflects who we are and should be as a national movement".

"We're being resolutely ambitious, transforming the map of Reform Judaism. It doesn't stop here. After Chagigah, we'll continue to embed the initiatives in our communities. We're completely committed to accompanying our communities and setting up support networks in the many varied ways they want to evolve and flourish".

As well as sessions on the initiatives, Chagigah featured inspiring speakers and educators offering learning opportunities for all ages and levels. There was also room for fun with quizzes, arts and crafts, music and dancing. A dedicated stream of sessions celebrated the 60th anniversary of Leo Baeck College, recognising the College's position at the heart of British Reform Judaism's engagement with Jewish texts and learning.

Chagigah closed with an emotional and unifying musical ceremony as participants looked forward to continuing their journeys together to the next Chagigah in 2018.

A selection of pictures can be found [here](#).

Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus 2016-17

Starts Tuesday 18 October. LBC once again offers their Lehrhaus programme. For the first time, there will be two live online courses. Courses include: "The Rise of King David - a literary reading of 1 Samuel", "Biblical Hebrew: Intermediate", "The lives of Holocaust survivors in films" and "The origins of Jewish mysticism". [Click here to see all the courses, prices, payment details and dates.](#) To sign up for a course please contact [Jarek Lodzinski](#).

Liberal Judaism Biennial July 1-3



Rabbi Lea Mülstein leads a session looking at Liberal Judaism Liturgy (top). Rabbis Pete Tobias, Charlie Baginsky and Andrew Goldstein read from the Torah (l) and the moving closing ceremony

Liberal Judaism's Biennial Weekend had more communities, more rabbis and more first-time attendees than ever before - as delegates looked to the future with confidence and communal spirit.

Rabbi Danny Rich said: The breadth and depth of this Biennial Weekend shows both Liberal Judaism's belief in itself and its willingness to explore uncharted areas and focus on keeping pace with modernity. [Read more here](#).

Sukkat Shalom in Edinburgh chooses Kol Nidre charities

Every year, we choose four charities to support. Usually we support two Scottish charities, one Jewish and one non-Jewish; one international development charity and one Israeli charity. This year, we're varying our usual policy so that we can prioritise organisations working with refugees and also to allow us to meet the request



for help from Edinburgh Interfaith Association who suffered a funding cut. The two Scottish charities selected are The Scottish Refugee Council and Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA). The international development charity is Médecins Sans Frontières. The fourth charity, which will be an Israeli charity, will be decided at the next council meeting at the beginning of September and the complete list will be circulated in a reminder email. Full information about all the charities will be given on Kol Nidre.

Click the logos for news of our UK movements



Rabbi's retirement gift is home for refugees



L-R: SLLS president Louise Freedman, Rabbi Janet Darley, chair Alice Alphandary

Rabbi Janet Darley is stepping away from her shul, but her work for those fleeing conflict will continue. A London synagogue is to convert part of its premises into a home for refugees as a leaving gift to its retiring rabbi. South London Liberal Synagogue (SLLS) announced plans for the project, expected to cost up to £50,000 project, in recognition of Rabbi Janet Darley's work in supporting newcomers to Britain. It is hoped that the conversion will enable a family of refugees to live there.

SLLS chair Alice Alphandary, who announced the plan at the end of a special Shabbat service in Janet's honour, said: "We are all so proud of the work Janet has been doing – alongside Citizens UK and other local faith groups – to both encourage the Government to allow more refugees into Britain, and then welcome them when they get here."

"We knew the best present we could give Janet was to mark her retirement with a project that continued this amazing social justice work."

Rabbi Darley, who has served South London Liberal Synagogue for seven years, was part of a Citizens UK team that won the Champions of the Year prize at the Women on the Move Awards.

Liberal rabbis take lead on refugees



Liberal Judaism's Rabbi Danny Rich (2nd from left) and the multi-faith delegation take a stand

Liberal rabbis have been at the forefront of a campaign to speed up the arrival of lone refugee children to the UK – visiting Calais, holding a memorial event at the Home Office and delivering a letter to the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd.

Liberal Judaism's senior rabbi, Rabbi Danny Rich, was part of the 20-person Citizens UK delegation of clergy to Calais last week, which also included Liberal Rabbis Pete Tobias, Janet Darley and Aaron Goldstein, as well as Reform and Masorti rabbis and Christian and Muslim clergy.

The group travelled primarily to present lists of unaccompanied refugee children who are eligible, under the Dublin III Regulation and Dubs Amendment, for resettlement in the United Kingdom. Danny, Janet and Rabbi Richard Jacobi then joined more than 100 faith leaders, council chiefs and celebrities for a memorial event for Aylan Kurdi – the young Syrian refugee boy whose death shook the world's conscience – outside the Home Office on Friday.

They urged the government to speed up the arrival of 178 refugee children, who have the right to come to the UK because of their close family links in the country, and a further 209 children eligible under the terms of the Dubs Amendment. All of these children are currently stuck in Calais.

The group, led by Danny (pictured above), then delivered a letter to the Home Secretary with the full list of the 387 children eligible to come to Britain and a request that Ms Rudd take immediate action.

The memorial event also included prayers, readings and speeches, and the laying of wreaths to remember all the refugee children who have died in the last 12 months.

Danny said: "Not a single child has yet entered the UK under the Dubs Amendment criteria."

"Liberal Judaism, working with Citizens UK, is therefore calling on the Home Office to immediately accept the children, now languishing in Calais, who are eligible to enter the UK."

"Judaism teaches that saving a human life is like saving the entire world. The Government must now immediately act accordingly."



Leo Baeck College
SIXTY YEARS
AT THE HEART OF PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

SAVE THE DATE

6th NOVEMBER 2016

Leo Baeck College 60th Anniversary
Service of celebration

Liberal Jewish Synagogue
St John's Wood, NW8 7HA

3pm Start – followed by Tea and Refreshments
RSVP: service2016@lbc.ac.uk

WORLD
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האיגוד
העולמי
ליהדות
מתקדמת

WUPJ 2017 Calendar

February 16-26

[Beutel Leadership Seminar](#), Jerusalem

May 13-17 - [Pursue Justice: Seminar for Legal Professionals](#), Jerusalem

May 15-21 - [CONNECTIONS 2017](#), WUPJ 38th Biennial Conference, Jerusalem

July 13-23 - [The Bergman Seminar for Jewish Educators](#), Jerusalem

Open Call: Beutel Leadership Seminar

The Beutel Leadership Seminar, run by the Saltz International Educational Center of the WUPJ, is opening its application process to nominations of congregational and community leaders to join its prestigious ten-day seminar in Jerusalem, February 16-26. Courses explore Jewish texts, current political and social issues across world Jewry and Israel, spiritual pathways and concepts of Jewish leadership and more, all within an interactive and experiential Progressive Jewish context.

To nominate leadership from your congregation or find out how the Beutel seminar will transform your community, [click here today](#).



Beutel Leadership Seminar workshop



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.

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IMPJ Newsletter

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May 17 - 20, 2017

Join us in Jerusalem!



Join us in Jerusalem: CONNECTIONS opens pre-registration for the May 17-20, 2017 Biennial

Mark your calendars! The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) is pleased to invite you to CONNECTIONS 2017 on May 17-20 in Jerusalem, Israel.

CONNECTIONS offers deep learning, meaningful leadership development, and engaging events that will inspire Progressive Jews from all facets of

communal life - leaders, educators, volunteers, activists, professionals, students, rabbis and more - with workshops, seminars, worship services, tours and much more. Pre-convention programmes begin as early as May 11.

[Read more...](#)



Pursuing Justice Seminar

Do you want to dive deeper into Israeli legislation, politics and social action? Our upcoming seminar, [Pursuing Justice](#), on May 13-17, is your backstage pass to the Knesset, Supreme Court and closed-door sessions with the leaders making headlines. [Click here](#) for information and to sign up.

Legal victory in South Africa

The South African Centre for Religious Equality & Diversity (SACRED) and our co-applicants in the Equality Court case against the South Africa Jewish Board of Deputies are delighted to announce that a settlement has been reached in the case concerning the exclusion of women from singing at the annual Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony in Cape Town. In the settlement, the SA Jewish Board of Deputies has agreed to end its ban on women singing at such a ceremony and has committed that future ceremonies will be restructured so as to include women singing.