



# European Union for Progressive Judaism

November~December 2016 Newsletter

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## President's Message

We have all lived through some tumultuous events in recent months. My new year's resolution (a little early, I know) is never to predict with any certainty future events. I, as many others did, confidently predicted that Jeremy Corbyn would never be elected leader of the UK Labour party, and that the UK would never vote in a referendum to leave the European Union and that, most certainly, Donald Trump



Gordon Smith

would never be elected the next President of the United States. Oh, how wrong I was!

But the people have spoken and we must all remember that, thankfully, all the countries within the European Union as well as Israel and the United States are democracies. I am reminded of the statement made by Winston Churchill that "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time." So let us be grateful that we still live in democracies and accept that sometimes decisions are taken through the ballot box with which some of us may not agree.

The EUPJ Executive Board meeting scheduled for December 4 in Lyon will discuss the EUPJ Strategic Plan 2017/18. The last time the EUPJ held a detailed strategic review was in 2012. The new Strategic Plan considers the considerable progress made in the last five years, and we think that in most countries Progressive Judaism is stronger than it was five years ago. We believe that the EUPJ has played a positive role in this achievement by direct initiatives, as a catalyst, and by providing international institutional legitimacy. However, we still have many challenges ahead including tasks begun but not yet completed, new initiatives and things that need to be fixed.

Our esteemed treasurer, David Pollak, will have to make a number of judgements of Solomon in order to juggle our somewhat meagre annual resources between all the deserving causes. We will also have to look at additional and different forms of fundraising to try to maximise our efforts in order to help our constituents achieve their worthy goals.

Gordon Smith, President

## Jewish religious rights prevail



A successful Progressive Jewish march at the Kotel

On Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, Tuesday November 2, the World Union represented global voices of Reform and Progressive Jews at the Kotel to march for Jewish religious rights.

"It was an exhilarating moment," reflected Rabbi Daniel H Freeland, President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ). "To march with more than a dozen Torah scrolls through security and towards the Wall," he continued, "and then to pass those scrolls to the Women of the Wall was an inspiring and reaffirming moment. This is why we work so hard - to bring together the global voices of Progressive Judaism to stand together for recognition and validation of all Jews of all streams of Judaism."

Read more from [Haaretz](#), [ARZA](#) and [JPost](#).

## Lyon weekend is fully booked

Many thanks to all who have registered for the EUPJ weekend and EUPJ Strategy Meeting and Executive Board in Lyon from December 2 to 4. The registration is now closed, and we look forward to seeing so many of you. [Deborah Grabiner, Administrator](#)

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## EUPJ Honorary Officers and Staff 2016

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## A new holiday

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of Mar-Cheshvan, we celebrated Diaspora Israel Day – a new holiday which marks the connections between Jewish congregations all around the world. See the original invitation [here](#).

Go to our website to download the festive holiday tractate in various languages at [www.DiasporasraelDay.org](http://www.DiasporasraelDay.org)



Chag Same'ach,  
Rabbi Nir Barkin and Smadar Bilik  
DOMIM-aLike

## And an old holiday



Happy Chanukah!

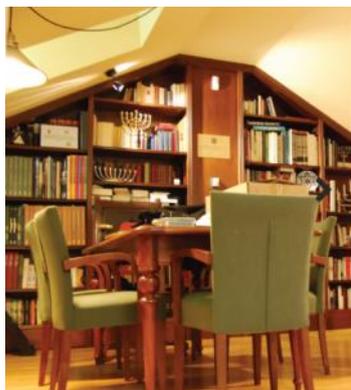
## EUPJ website update

EUPJ's website was hacked into in September and was temporarily closed by Google. We apologise for the inconvenience. Following this incident we accepted advice to withdraw the website effective immediately while we build and launch a brand new site for the spring of 2017.

[Deborah Grabiner, Administrator](#)

## 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](#)



Beit Emunah - Oviedo, Spain

## Letters

Greetings from Belgium and thanks again for a newsletter full of inspiring information on our communities across Europe.

[Brian Doyle](#)

## The EUPJ congratulates:

Mazal Tov to Leslie Bergman and Dee Lehane on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Benjamin on November 12.

Mazal Tov to Miriam and Stephen Kramer on the marriage of their son.

Please support  
Friends of Progressive  
Judaism in Israel and Europe.  
They support us.  
[www.fpjie.org.uk](http://www.fpjie.org.uk)



### Dutch Netzer group visits London



Dutch Netzer group at London Bridge

Our Netzer group in The Netherlands visited London from October 20-23. We visited the old Jewish district of Whitechapel, Bevis Marks synagogue and Golders Green, a North London district where many Jews live. We also received a warm welcoming reception at the sukkah and a Shabbat dinner at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in the neighbourhood of St John's Wood, that made us feel that we all belong to one family and one people, Am Echad.

During our stay we meet youth workers of the RSY Netzer and LJY youth movements and strengthened our relationship with Progressive Judaism in Europe. We of course visited tourist attractions, and we went to the award-winning musical The Lion King. The trip was an unforgettable experience for all of us!

We would like to thank EUPJ and the Jewish agency for helping make this trip happen.

**Tal Branitzky-Schramm**  
Youth leader Netherlands – Sjlichah Jewish Agency

### Beth Hillel Roma offers new conversion course

Beth Hillel Roma is pleased to inform you that registration is open for a new course of Conversion to Judaism in Italian conducted by Rabbi Leigh Lerner. We started on November 20 and will continue with lessons partly on Skype and partly in Rome.



Rabbi Leigh Lerner

**On Skype:** November 27, December 4 & 18, January 8.

**In Rome:** January 29, February 12 & 26, March 3 & 19, April 2 & 16. The dates of additional meetings will be communicated as soon as possible.

The course fee is €250.

Inquiries to [BethHillelRoma@gmail.com](mailto:BethHillelRoma@gmail.com) will be confirmed after interviews with community leaders from Beth Hillel and Rabbi Lerner.



### Beth Shalom Milan news

On Saturday November 26, Rabbi David Whiman once again conducted services at the Hotel de la Ville. His sermon, *Something to Die for* was extremely interesting. Fred Serra and his mother Gabriella kindly provided the Kiddush following services to celebrate their conversions which took place in London at the Beit Din last June.



### Referendum debate at Lev Chadash

Lev Chadash, Italian Association for Progressive Judaism, headquartered in Piazza Napoli 35, Milan held a fascinating debate on Thursday, November 24 at 21.00: *The reasons for Yes and the reasons for No with Daniel Pludwinski and Ivan Assael.*

[NB: A constitutional referendum will be held in Italy on Sunday December 4. Voters will be asked whether they approve of amending the Italian Constitution to reform the appointment and powers of the Parliament of Italy, as well as the partition of powers of State, Regions, and administrative entities. Read more [here](#). -Editor]



Daniel Pludwinski on Italian television

In the best Talmudic tradition, Messrs Pludwinski and Assael presented their different views and answered questions from the public, moderated by the president of Lev Chadash, Carlo Riva. Daniel Pludwinski, 40, is a company director and graduated in economic policy at Bocconi. He is a member of the Milan coordination for the Yes in the referendum. Ivan Assael, 43, is a labour law attorney, graduated from the University of Milan and supports the No.

**MIGWAN** מגוון

LIBERALE JÜDISCHE GEMEINDE  
LIBERAL JEWISH CONGREGATION  
BASEL

**5777 at Migwan**



**The Shofar being blown at Migwan by Suzan LeVine, US Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein**

The New Year has already brought us lovely moments and big changes. We celebrated wonderful Rosh Hoshanah and Yom Kippur services led by Rabbi Bea Wyler with the participation of many members followed by a wonderful Sukkot service and kiddush (twice) in Migwan's own Sukkah.

5777 brings challenges as well as opportunities, and one of those is that Rabbi Wyler is leaving us. We have been able to benefit from her wisdom, warmth, deep knowledge, wit, heart, and integrity for many years, but now she is retiring from active duty. Bea's last official service led was the November 4 Kabbalat Shabbat. Many came and celebrated Shabbat with her and marked this important occasion.



**Rabbi Bea Wyler**

Rabbi Wyler always had the goal of strengthening Migwan's capacity for lay led services and the rest of our services this year will be led by Migwan members, other local resources, and out-of-town guests. We will definitely need everyone's help in this next phase of Migwan's development.

We need volunteers to chant Torah portions, to deliver Divrei Torah, to lead participatory discussions on Friday nights, to help Bnei Mitzvah kids with preparing their Divrei Torah and Tikkun Olam projects, to help organise shiurim, and to help lead prayers during the service. If giving back to your Jewish community and taking some leadership in making sure Migwan continues to grow and flourish, appeal to you, please contact us and we will set you up with something you can do (or learn to do) well.

In December the board will be presenting a solution for 2017 for Migwan's rabbinical and religious needs, allowing us to continue to offer all the services you expect from Basel's Progressive Jewish congregation. We have a big and exciting year ahead of us, and we hope you'll all be a part of it!



**GIL live-streaming of services**

The Communauté Juive Libérale de Genève GIL is proud to join the on-line community of congregations around the world that are streaming their services live on the internet. The GIL is the only congregation in Switzerland to offer streaming and one of the first in continental Europe. The streaming initiative has been a great success with more than 125 views on-line during the Yom Kippur Neilah service in addition to the approximately 900 people attending at the GIL. Shabbat services are streamed each week. At this time, the streaming is open to members and their families and guests by password. In addition to many from Switzerland, we have had viewers from the USA, Hong Kong, France, Luxembourg as well as many other countries.



**Rabbi François Garai on camera at GIL**

To have access to our services, please send an email to [info@gil.ch](mailto:info@gil.ch) with your name and address and the name of the community with which you are associated.

Here is a letter from David Friedman, a GIL member. It is one of many expressions of appreciation received at GIL for our streaming service.

*"I'm not sure what our taxi driver told his family when he arrived home in the evening of Wednesday, October 12. That's because thanks to the GIL's live-streaming of its Yom Kippur services, our driver experienced what surely for him was a first. It was the sight of two girls and their teary-eyed, iPhone-clutching father, huddled together under a tallit in the back of his taxi, accompanied by the shofar blasts of our rabbi announcing the end of Neilah. Rather than having us miss a cherished tradition, by bringing in streaming the team at GIL ensured that 5777 started as it should. And for that we're grateful."*

**Mia, Olivia and David Friedman  
Lausanne, Switzerland**





### Events at Beit Warszawa

We invite you for a series of lectures led by Dr Halina Postek – *Next Step* every Friday at 6:00pm at Beit Warszawa Synagogue. Entrance is free and open to everyone. We began with November 18 – Evil and suffering, then November 25 – Death and the beyond.

In addition, we held an open lecture with Prof Hanna Zaremska, *History of the Jews from Abraham to King David*, on Saturday November 19 at 3:30pm.

On Friday November 18 we welcomed a special guest, Rabbi Harry Levin. Rabbi Levin was born in Brooklyn, lives in New Jersey and is also a psychotherapist. He has earned many awards for his work in human relations. Both of the rabbi's two children joined him in visiting Poland this trip. Rabbi Levin led the services together with Cantor Rivka Foremniak.



Rabbi Harry Levin

During the Shabbat service we welcomed members of the community who successfully completed the Beit Din in Krakow on November 14. On Sunday of the same weekend, Beit Warszawa hosted the Shatz Cantorial Course. Our services on November 25 and 26 were led by Cantor Avigail Geniusz. We are blessed to have so many Beit Warszawa members who are trained to conduct services, and in early December it will be Cantor Rivka Foremniak and Cantor Miriam Klimova who lead us. Read the latest Beit Warszawa newsletter [here](#).

### Progressive in Poland

Following last year's Holocaust Memorial Day seminars at Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue (the 15th annual week of seminars organised jointly with local the Orthodox synagogue for over 2000 secondary pupils) a number of educators said....we talk about Auschwitz but have never been. And so Rabbi Andrew and Sharon Goldstein arranged a week's tour to Poland. The group of 39 spent time in Warsaw visiting the remains of the ghetto, the Warsaw Uprising Museum and the new fabulous Polin Museum of Jewish History. In Krakow it was Schindler's Factory and the excellent Galicia Jewish Museum and, of course, a day in Auschwitz-Birkenau. But there were also meetings with Progressive communities in both cities.

The week started in Warsaw with a talk on the current situation for Polish Jews by Rabbi Gil Nativ at the newly opened Beit Centrum Progressive synagogue. The community provided an excellent meal and offer such hospitality to future groups visiting Poland. Rabbi Goldstein then had meetings with other Progressive leaders from Beit Polska.



Rabbi Gil Nativ addressing NPLS members in Warsaw

**And so on to Krakow.** After the gruelling day in Auschwitz-Birkenau the group had a welcoming and uplifting Kabbalat Shabbat with Beit Krakow in the Galicia Jewish Museum. A delicious Shabbat meal had been arranged and so the day concluded on a positive note. We began with the Shoah, but ended with thoughts of the revival of Judaism in Poland. Shabbat morning the Progressive service was held in the historic High Synagogue and to end the day, Havdalah in the Ariel Jewish style restaurant.



Rabbi Andrew Goldstein at services in Krakow

**Beit Din.** After the group returned home, Rabbi Goldstein stayed on to be joined by Rabbis Jackie Tabick and Walter Rothschild for a sitting of the European Beit Din. They interviewed and accepted six candidates from Warsaw and two from the developing Progressive community in Gdansk: eight very inspiring stories of why people wanted to embrace Judaism. Perhaps the most moving was of a man born in the Warsaw ghetto and smuggled out and given to a non-Jewish couple. The birth parents were murdered with the liquidation of the ghetto, but the child survived and his adopting parents always told him he was born Jewish. During the years of communism he never felt safe to tell his own children he was Jewish, and only now were conditions right for him to assert his Jewish heritage. So ended a week confronting the deep sadness of Polish Jewish history but also encouraged by the signs of renewal shown by the Progressive community.

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein

## Hungary

### Sim Shalom Budapest news

For Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we were lucky to have the services of our lay cantor of the past two years, Milan Andics. Starting from accompanying our previous cantor with a small drum, Milan has developed to such an extent that he decided to go to the professional cantorial program of Abraham Geiger College in Berlin. In the past few years, Sim Shalom has sent one cantorial and three rabbinical students there or to Leo Baeck College in London. These results are a real tribute to the atmosphere created in Sim Shalom by Rabbi Kati Kelemen.

Sukkot was celebrated in a Sukkah set up on the roof of Balint Haz, the JCC where we are now housed. Through the reed roof, one could see the stars, as required by tradition. And Simchat Torah was celebrated by dancing with all our Torahs, the big one we read from and a couple of small ones that are used in the classes for our small children.

During the latter half of October we also had three special Friday night services. The first was just before Sukkot, the first service with our new cantor, Flora Polnauer. She has studied at the cantorial programme in Berlin and is a professional singer in popular venues. She is also the daughter of a rabbi with a rich knowledge of Judaism.



Flora Polnauer

And Flora has a beautiful voice with a very spiritual style. We look forward to a year of many meaningful services and celebrations with her.

The next Kabbalat service was followed by a cultural programme led by a well-known film star and poet/philosopher, Geza Rohrig, who played the main character in the recently released movie "Saul's Son". It was a fascinating evening devoted to a discussion of his philosophical ideas.



Presentation of a hand painted silk Tallit to Rosalind Copisarow of West London Synagogue during WLS visit

The third special Shabbat evening was marked by the visit of 25 young people from three London Progressive synagogues. The educational director of one of the synagogues is Nick Young, a former wandering Jew who ended up in Budapest. Largely based on his heightened Jewish awareness after we sent him to a Jewish leadership training programme in Israel, Nick managed to land a job as educational director of a Reform synagogue in London. So he is also one of our success stories in the building up of Judaism in Europe. Anyway, we're very proud of him, and were so happy to see him again.

Jess Weil

### TaMaR European Continental Seminar 2016 in Budapest

#### Jewish Journeys in the Heart of Herzl's Home

Hailing from 12 countries across Europe including Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Latvia, the United States and Ireland, more than 35 young adults came together to participate in the TaMaR Jewish Journeys European Continental Seminar.

TaMaR, which stands for *Tnuat Magshimim Reformit*, is the young adult platform for engagement of [Netzer Olami](#), the global Reform Zionist youth movement of the [World Union for Progressive Judaism](#) (WUPJ).

Held this year in Budapest between October 20-23, the seminar explored the history of Zionism and the Jewish people through experiential activities: a dance class opened the seminar with a cultural historical overview, while a ghetto tour provided on-site opportunities for storytelling.



Kabbalat Shabbat at the TaMaR European Continental Seminar 2016 in Budapest

Kabbalat Shabbat service were conducted with one of the local Progressive communities and Shabbat morning services with the other. Over the course of the day six different study workshops kept participants networking and learning, and a Havdalah ceremony in the new Jewish community center closed Shabbat beautifully. On their last day participants met with the head of the Jewish community of Budapest and challenged him with hard questions regarding the acceptance and treatment of the Reform Jewish community by other local streams.

The seminar was organised by [Jung und Jüdisch](#), the official representative of TaMaR in Germany since 2004. As one participant reflected, "Wow, what a weekend this has been... it is so good to know that there is such a great, young, vibrant and active TaMaR community out there which isn't afraid to ask and also not afraid to listen - whether those issues affect them personally or not. It was amazing to see how much compassion people had for each other and the different Jewish journeys each goes through - not wanting the workshops to end and keeping on with our discussions during coffee breaks and through the evenings! I hope we will continue to keep our ears, eyes and hearts open to make our communities a place where everyone can feel equal and welcome. See you next year in Jerusalem!"

### Ohel Jacob Lisbon letter to the EUPJ



Ohel Jacob website screen shots

The great Rosh Hashanah with Rabbi Alona Lisista was our first as an EUPJ affiliated member, also the first with a rabbi since 1998 (as far as I know). I'm sure it was very important for all of us, and also for all of you, since it was you who provided the possibility to happen this way.

We are also sure that Rabbi Alona played a key role conveying to you our financial difficulties that otherwise you would not be aware of and therefore could never have helped us. So, I just can say: thank you, thank you, thank you!

You know that as the community treasurer I am in a position to have a greater sense of the value of your help, more than anyone else. I am of course talking about money and all the support that you have reinforced by paying all the expenses of Rabbi Alona.

Beyond that, I'm very happy to tell you that everybody was delighted with all that happened in the Ohel Jacob - the services of Rosh Hashanah, the Shacharit and the Tashlich. Everything was new!

We are all grateful for everything that you are doing on behalf of our congregation, and it is with all our gratitude that we wish you a Shana Tova!

Adriana Souza

### Rabbi Danny Rich at Shir Hatzafon

Shir Hatzafon, Progressive Judaism in Denmark, hosted Rabbi Danny Rich, senior rabbi of Liberal Judaism in the UK, during the first weekend in November. This letter from our Israeli/Danish congregant Gali Shabi Christophersen, whose two children were Bar and Bat Mitzvah on that weekend's Shabbat, tells it all.

Arthur Buchman



Rabbi Danny Rich (c) at Shir Hatzafon in Copenhagen with (l-r) Gali, Jonathan, Mika and Jan Christophersen after their joint Bar and Bat Mitzvah

It was a joy and honour to celebrate Jonathan's and Mika's Bar/Bat Mitzvah under the roof of Shir Hatzafon!

I'm proud and privileged. Thanks to all of you who joined our day in any kind of way (they were all fantastic). And a special thanks to my army of supporters that together helped build up our excitement to a cosmic level.

Jesper Yoel Andersen [former chairperson], it all started with you, my first connection to Shir Hatzafon. Then came Lina Attia [B'nei Mitzvah coordinator and board member] with her motherly, very experienced attitude, and Arne Kviat [former treasurer], our father figure. Finally, Birgitte Gadiel [B'nei Mitzvah teacher]

and Sandra Kviat [rabbi] made it all real! And along with your hard work, while keeping up with me, my many messages and my very particular requests, there was you, Lars Aaron Jozefowicz Varming [head of the synagogue committee and board member]. I think you are amazing.



Lars Jozefowicz

Thanks also to Rabbi Danny Rich for running the show. You are not only a leader, but also a very good entertainer!

Gali Shabi Christophersen

## Portugal and Spain, a report from Rabbi Alona Lisista

This year I divided my time between three different congregations, and in each one it was the first time that they held full services on the holiday for which I was there.

### Rosh Hashanah, Ohel Jacob, Lisbon

As the congregation keeps calling me "their" rabbi and asks for my mentoring on the regular basis, I have decided to lead them as a rabbi. Therefore, besides the preparations for the holidays I have supervised the new webpage design and advertising there and asked the Board to schedule a meeting and do some "homework" in order to start working on our vision and development plan.

Ohel Yaakov has been very lucky to have a supporter who is professional in website design and also has good English. The website created is really beautiful and informative. As a result of advertising activity we had about 50 people from more than six different countries, including guests from the reform congregations of Vienna, Edmonton, Rota (Spain), Israel and many from the USA. For the congregation that usually does not have a minyan for Kabbalat Shabbat, it was a huge achievement.

After Rosh Hashanah we had our first board meeting together. We have talked about our dreams and values and the challenges of Lisbon reality. We have decided to continue through the e-mails and Skype until my next visit, with the goal to create a congregational vision and build a plan of action.

### Yom Kippur, Beit Rambam, Seville

This was my first encounter with the congregation of Seville. The team has worked with me very efficiently regarding planning. They had not had a full service before, therefore we did not know how many people would show up - and their machzor for Yom Kippur did not include Shacharit and Musaf services. They had prepared about ten Orthodox Sephardic machzorim for the morning because nobody thought there would be a minyan. Surprisingly, we were between 20 to 35 people during all the services of the day.

Here too, there were some guests from the USA and Israel. I was surprised to discover that there were quite a few young adults from the USA who study in and around Seville in different academic programmes.

I led all the services, from Kol Nidrey to Neila, and my daughter and I read from the Torah. After Shacharit we had a text study for about an hour. For the Neila more families with young children came and I invited them to the bimah at different times to get them more involved in the service.

We all felt that Yom Kippur was very meaningful, and many people told me how much they learned and that they felt "inside" the service.

It seems to me that this positive experience could be an opening for more connections between Beit Rambam and the EUPJ.

## Kabbalat Shabbat and Simchat Torah, Madrid



Rabbi Alona Lisista in Madrid for Simchat Torah

This was my third time with the congregation of Madrid, therefore in terms of planning and expectations it was the easiest part of my trip.

Together with Yael Cobano we held services on Shabbat, and after the meal I led an activity about the ushpizin. We closed the evening with birkat hamazon. There were about 20 people in attendance.

We celebrated Simchat Torah with the new scroll the congregation got at the EUPJ Conference in London. The participants enjoyed singing and dancing a lot. In the beginning it was not really clear to them that we were actually going to dance with the Torah as it was their first time. But when they got the idea, it was really joyous.

My daughter and I scrolled the Torah from the end to Berishit. As we were just 15 participants including the kids, I invited everybody to come closer and showed them the beginnings of each of five books in the Torah and how the songs and laws are written differently. I brought the kids up to the bimah to so they were involved and could enjoy the service.

As main challenges I would stress the lack of Reform machzorim in Lisbon and Seville. The Orthodox Sephardic versions they have are not easily adapted. Beit Rambam in Seville has their own for Kol Nidrei, Mincha and Neila but it is full of mistakes, and not fully transliterated nor translated. The siddur for Simchat Torah in Madrid is a copy of one they use in Beit Shalom in Barcelona. Unfortunately it also contains many mistakes, and I hope Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz will improve it.

All in all, even though it was not easy to work with three different teams, travel the distances and speak two languages most of the time, it was rewarding and emotional for my family and myself to be with these congregations and to provide experiences that would not happen otherwise.

Rabbi Dr Alona Lisitsa

### Simchat Torah in Oviedo



Children participating in the service at Bet Emunah

### High Holidays in Atid



Havdalah after Yom Kippur at Atid, Barcelona

During the high holidays our days have been very intense and emotional with liturgy, dinners, reunions, reflection, balance and good wishes for this new year. On behalf of the Board of Directors of Atid, we want to thank everyone for your presence at all our events which have made us to experience incredible moments. We also want to extend special thanks to all who made it possible, from first to last. Thanks to Hazzan and lead singer Oscar Fleischer, Haïm Casas and Moriah Ferrús, as well as to Joan Oxford for her excellent interpretation and accompaniment. Thanks to workers and volunteers who with their enthusiasm, love, commitment and responsibility made this dream a reality by the community.

The huge success of these high holidays, both in attendance as well as in quality and warmth is due to all the people that are part of the community. Without you it would not be possible.

On Yom Kippur at the end of the Neilah, more than 300 people were able to come to see children and young people wielding their candles for Havdalah. This year we look forward to continuing our community's success.

Shana Tovah!  
Silvia Leida

President of the Jewish Community of Catalonia Atid



### URJ VP visits Bet Shalom



Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz reading from the Torah

Bet Shalom Barcelona was honoured by the presence of Jay Gellman, Vice President of Union for Reform Judaism (North America) at its Kiddush and Community Dinner on Friday, November 18 and a Shacharit service with reading the Torah by Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz the next day.

### Bet Januká leaders awarded in Rota



L-R: Deborah Ríos Rey, Abraham Haim, Ahuvah Gipson

On the night of November 23 the Cultural Association Yehuda HaLevi was acknowledged with the "Praise Old Jerusalem" medal which honours the four Sephardic synagogues in the Old City of Jerusalem. The association is presided over by Deborah Ríos Rey and Ahuvah Gipson, members of Congregation Bet Januká, in Rota, Spain.

The Cultural Association Yehuda HaLevi received this distinction for the intense work it has been doing since 2011 in promoting Jewish culture and traditions in Spain as well as spreading awareness of Spain's Jewish heritage.

The award was presented by Dr Abraham Haim, president of the Cultural Council of the Sephardic Community in Jerusalem on the occasion of his talk, "The Sephardic Community in Jerusalem celebrates 750 years: a historical-cultural panorama".

Deborah and Ahuvah  
Bet Januká, Spain

## Germany

### Beth Shalom Munich photos



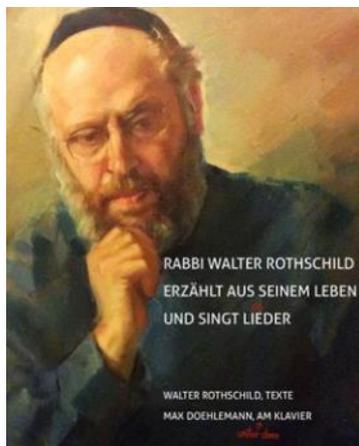
Simchat Torah at Beth Shalom Munich



Children on the Bimah with Rabbi Tom Kučera

### Cabaret available

For some months I have been performing a cabaret based on my life and career in a professional duo with Max Doehlemann, a well-known pianist and composer. We have performed and have bookings for various parts of Germany, but I'd be interested also in visiting other countries if this is relevant. Our current text is in German (could be interesting for Austria, Switzerland) but an English version is available. No problem! The songs are based on Franz Schubert, Gilbert & Sullivan, American folk, etc.



Rabbi Dr Walter Rothschild  
[www.max-doeleman.de](http://www.max-doeleman.de)  
[max\\_doeleman@web.de](mailto:max_doeleman@web.de)

### LJG Hamelin news

On December 2nd we will celebrate a very special Shabbat service. We will honour our rabbi of the last 15 years, Rabbi Irit Shillor, showering her with words of praise and thanks as she passes her pulpit on to Rabbi Dr Ulrike Offenberg.

Rabbi Shillor has helped guide and form our congregation for almost two decades. She came to us as a Leo Baeck College rabbinic student in 2001 and stayed on after her S'micha in 2002, making monthly visits from her home in England until today.

She has been a wise and just voice, helping individuals through joyous and trying times. She has made Judaism accessible to those who were estranged from it, instructed our young people, bringing them to Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and taught those who hungered for more knowledge, depth and understanding. She brought Jews by Choice into our fold and offered non-Jews an opportunity to learn about our religious beliefs and culture. Her calm advice and analytical method solved many a problem and aided solutions in the design and building of our synagogue.

We owe her so much and can never thank her enough for all she has done for this congregation. We are honored to bestow upon her the title of Rabbi Emeritus. We hope she will find time to visit us on occasion and know she will always have a special place for us in her heart as we have her in ours. With a tear and a smile we say L'hitraot Irit.

No door closes without a new one opening and so it is with us. On December 2nd we will welcome Rabbi Dr Ulrike Offenberg as Rabbi Shillor's spiritual successor. We are thrilled to have Rabbi Offenberg as our congregational rabbi.

She received S'micha with honours at her ordination at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem on November 17. We look forward to working with this young rabbi who brings a deep knowledge and strong religiosity to the pulpit. Her gentle and soft-spoken manner and ability to preach in German, English, Hebrew and Russian are added pluses.

As with any transition, some things will remain constant while others will be new. Our members and invited guests will rejoice together as our community, with steady footing, takes its next step into the future.

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



Rabbi Irit Shillor



Rabbi Dr Ulrike Offenberg



## Beth Hillel Brussels events

### Café Klatsch: Tuesday November 15



Café Klatstch is a convivial meeting for seniors (non-seniors are obviously welcome!), one Tuesday a month, with tea, coffee, cakes, sandwiches and especially the pleasure of a good discussion with friends, around the theme of the day presented

and animated by members of Beth Hillel, or by Café Klatscheurs.

### Tehima Cycle: Saturday November 19



Natacha Simmonds presented her third session of "Hebrew: Sacred Alphabet" The symbolism of letters and Tehima. Six sessions of Tehima, to dance letters, to breathe and seek harmony in a choreography that reconciles body and spirit.

More information is [here](#).

### Great themes of Judaism: Sunday November 20



Midrash: The notion of Chesed - grace, charity, mercy, goodness, benevolence...? Free for members. €10 for non-members.

### WOW service: Saturday November 26



Beth Hillel supports the "Women of the Kotel" by organising a Shacharit service run by the women of our community, as do many other Jewish communities around the world. Join the women's call to the Kotel! This month in Brussels it was at Beth Hillel on Saturday November 26.

All the women of the community are welcome on the tevah. The service was followed by a kiddush and a community Shabbat oneg.

### Shabbat leDor vaDor: Friday December 2 at 18:30.



Every first Friday of the month leDor vaDor is a friendly and family oriented musical service, with a siddur specially adapted for

children. This particularly popular service in the community has a somewhat special format: it starts earlier, in order to allow (and encourage) participants to do kiddush at home with family and/or friends.



## Appreciating the IJC

In October IJC began New Year 5777 in the warm glow of High Holiday services led by Rabbi Ira Goldberg and visiting Cantor Ido Ben-Gal. Our attendance level was higher than normal and more fervent, perhaps due to anxieties over the stormy weather now buffeting our society. This storm is not going away anytime soon.



Steven Brummel

But you - our members - can rely on the IJC to be a spiritual anchor in these times. Real life is not paradise but neither is it paradise lost. We all stand to support each other through thick and thin. With our rabbi taking a two month leave starting November 14, this principle holds and highlights the nature of the IJC Community. During Rabbi Ira's absence, the IJC will maintain all of its services and other activities.

Appreciate what we have all built together over the 13 years since the IJC started. I look forward to welcoming you to the IJC over the coming weeks and months.

Steven Brummel, IJC President

## Rosh Chodesh at IJC

Rosh Chodesh marks the new moon and the beginning of the new month on the Hebrew calendar. The month of Kislev begins Wednesday night, November 30, and later in the month we will celebrate Chanukah on the 25th of Kislev, a holiday whose central themes are bringing light into darkness and appreciating the miracles in our lives.



Many in our community are experiencing a season of darkness, whether on a personal, communal or geopolitical level. As we approach the darkest days of the year, we look to Jewish wisdom for inspiration on how to increase the light and discover the miracles.

When: Wednesday November 30 from 19:00-21:00

Location: centrally located in Brussels. Address provided after RSVP to [info@ijc.be](mailto:info@ijc.be)

What to bring: something to write with as well as an open mind and an open heart



## Events at Copernic



### Commemoration Concert

Sunday November 13

Kaddish: In Memory of the Victims of Terrorism

Introduction by Jean-François

Bensahel and the French Association of Victims of Terrorism.

Liturgical works, traditional Kaddish, Kaddish for string quartet and voice (François Meïmoun), Grand Kaddish for choir, tenor & piano 4 hands (Itaï Daniel) Chazan Armand Benhamou, Soloists, The Copernic Quartet, The Copernic Choral Ensemble. Direction: Itaï Daniel.

This was an extraordinary and moving concert.



### Meet Marek Halter

Tuesday November 29

*In the Beginning Was Woman*

Marek Halter presented his latest novel "Ève" (Ed. Robert Laffont). He was both provocative and humourous – and was very well received.

### Meeting with Father Desbois

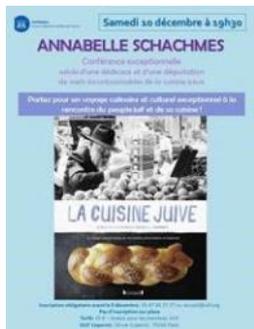
Wednesday December 7, 19:30

The Factory of Terrorists – Inside the Secrets of Daesh.

An exceptional lecture by Father Patrick Desbois, author of the book "La fabrique des terroristes - Dans les secrets de Daesh", written with Nastasie Costel (Ed. Fayard). The evening is sponsored jointly with the MJLF and the Librairie Lamartine.

Price: 10 €. Free to ULIF, MJLF & Lamartine members

Reservations: 01 47 04 37 27 and [accueil@ulif.org](mailto:accueil@ulif.org)



### Jewish Cuisine

Saturday December 10, 19:30

A presentation by Annabelle Schachmes, renowned author of this classic reference book with over 400 pages of recipes and photos. An exceptional culinary and cultural journey to meet the Jewish people and their cooking. The presentation will be followed by a tasting of exceptional dishes of Jewish

cuisine. Registration required by December 5 (no entry without prior registration). Price: 15 €, ULIF members: free.

Reservations: 01 47 04 37 27 and [accueil@ulif.org](mailto:accueil@ulif.org)

## Keren Or hosts EUPJ December 2-4

Keren Or in Lyon will be the heart of EUPJ activity during the first weekend in December. The event is not quite a convention nor a Shabbaton either, but something in between. Activities will include Shabbat services, dining together, a local tour and culminates in the EUPJ Executive Board meeting on Sunday.

The event is fully booked, and you can read all about it in our next newsletter which will be emailed January 12.

**Arthur Buchman, Editor**

## From the president of Keren Or

### A community on the move

The month of Tishri and its procession of festivals has concluded. Our community has been able to rejoice in being united as well as numerous to share these key moments of the Jewish year. We were more than 250 to listen to the sound of the shofar the evening of Yom Kippur. Forty children participated all Sunday morning at our Talmud Torah and in total we are 140 families within Keren Or.

Thanks to our new synagogue building, to the participation of all, and the work of the rabbinical team (Rabbi René Pfertzel, our dear students Daniela Touati and Haïm Casas), Judaism is taking its place in the region. Introspection, sharing, encounter, tradition, conviviality, everyone comes through the doors of our synagogue for reasons of their own.



**Pamela Vennin**



**A full house at Keren Or**

Also, since the beginning of the summer our Board has set an additional target: define our community as close as possible to its members. What are the main values of Keren Or and how they could be applied in everyday life? In order to answer these questions, seminars and working meetings have allowed us to move forward by laying a solid foundation.

However, Keren Or is above all our members' community. Their opinions, their viewpoints and experiences, are essential to this construction.

That is why we have appointed December 10 and 11 for an Open Door weekend in which together we will continue this reflection which will enable us to build a strong progressive and ethical Judaism in Rhône-Alpes.

**Pamela Vennin, Présidente**

## Celebrating Diaspora-Israel Day



Rabbi Tom Cohen makes a point at Diaspora Israel Day celebration at Kehilat Geshher

In the evening of November 7 Rabbi Tom Cohen led a group of enthusiasts in celebrating *Diaspora Israel Day*, a brand-new Jewish festival in the otherwise barren month *Mar-Heshvan*. In the cosy premises of Kehilat Geshher and under the auspices of *Arzenou France*, the reform movement's Zionist wing, we read prose and poetry, sang traditional songs, exchanged views and of course enjoyed a splendid *pot luck* meal with wines from France and Israel.

This new festival is the creation of Rabbi Nir Barkin, the Israeli Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ) and the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs, Jerusalem. The core idea is to celebrate the unity of the Jewish people across five continents and the strong ties that have bound us together over centuries of dispersal. The date was inspired by Rabbi Gamliel's Mishna recommendation that the timing of prayers for rain should allow Jewish pilgrims to return to Babylon without mishap after travelling to the second temple for *Sukkot*.

We worked our way joyfully through the colourful Haggadah, available [here](http://Domim-reform.org.il) from [Domim-reform.org.il](http://Domim-reform.org.il), translated into French by Jean-Francois Levy of MJLF, who joined the festivities along with members of various synagogues including Presidents Azoulay of Kehilat Geshher and Marc Konczaty of MJLF.

All agreed the experience should be repeated next year. A group has been formed to explore ways of introducing new elements from French experience – perhaps referring to Rashi's contributions to biblical exegesis (11<sup>th</sup> century) or to Rene Cassin who drafted the universal declaration of human rights while promoting Jewish education and Zionism.

## AJTM Choral Workshop

Our new Atelier Chorale started Sunday, November 13. You can still sign up. The next session is Sunday December 18 at 2 pm. The workshop is led by Rosy Farhat, choirmaster at the Shoah Memorial and is for singers experienced or not. The only requirement is dedication. We meet one Sunday per month, 50 € for the year.

Inquire on our website [here](http://www.mjlf.org).



## MJLF news



Kaitana: MJLF children at play

The High Holidays were celebrated in style for 1800 people all told at three sites: the *Beaugrenelle* and *Surmelin* synagogues plus the *Folies Bergeres Theatre* quite transformed for the occasion. A highlight was the special Aleph service for little ones who sat attentively in a circle, listening to rabbinical stories and singing along with encouraging parents and grand-parents just behind. *Taschlich* allowed us to pray by the River Seine and cast our sins to the fish while *Bateaux Mouches* passengers glided by, waving (or scratching their heads). *Sukkot* was celebrated with prayers and meals on the fourth floor and a study session under the *Sukkah*. To help parents look after their children aged 5-12 during the first week of school holidays, Kaitana Kef activities were organised October 24-28.

Courses are now back in full swing. Beyond the regular courses given by our three rabbis, ethics and the prophets is being taught by Rabbi Philipp Haddad of ULIF, while Rabbi Marc-Alain Ouaknin is conducting a seminar on Kabbalah. We also offer modern and biblical Hebrew, liturgy and cantillation, Torah commentaries on Saturday and Sunday morning - plus something new: Jewish art courses and Paris visits by art historian Ania Guini-Skljar.

**Robert Ley**  
International relations coordinator  
MJLF, Paris

## Fellowships in Jewish Studies 2017-2018 in Stockholm

Explore the plurality of Jewish Studies at Paideia. The Paideia One-Year Jewish Studies Programme offers a unique international Jewish studies experience during eight months in Stockholm with the possibility of completing a 120 ECTS Master in Jewish Civilisations at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien in Heidelberg, Germany. Scholarships are available towards tuition, accommodation and living costs. Application deadline is January 15. Apply [here](http://www.paideia-eu.org) or visit [www.paideia-eu.org](http://www.paideia-eu.org)

## United Kingdom

### Leo Baeck College celebrates 60 years of training Europe's rabbis



Students, faculty and leadership of Leo Baeck College

More than 200 people, including 43 rabbis and student rabbis spanning six decades, attended the 60th Anniversary Service of Celebration for the Leo Baeck College on November 6.

Leo Baeck College is a preeminent institution of Jewish scholarship and learning, based in Finchley, Barnet, that is the heart of the intellectual and spiritual life of the Progressive Jewish community. Almost every serving Liberal and Reform rabbi in the UK, and many abroad, trained at the College.

Taking place at The Liberal Jewish Synagogue, the moving event was attended by the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Barnet, Councillor Sury & Mrs Tara Khatri.

Rabbis taking part in the service included Leo Baeck College's first alumnus, Rabbi Lionel Blue OBE, 86, and today's current rabbinic students, who are aged from 26 upwards. The senior rabbis of Liberal Judaism and Reform Judaism – Rabbis Danny Rich and Laura Janner-Klausner – also attended.

The service was led by Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh, Dean of the College, with a special musical accompaniment by Student Rabbi Cantor Gershon Silins, Student Rabbi Hannah Kingston, and Student Rabbi Igor Zinkov.

The Principal of the College, Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris, gave an inspirational address recounting the history of the College and the importance of securing its future as the beating heart of Progressive Judaism in Europe.

She said: "Today we celebrate a legacy – 185 rabbis ordained and nearly 90 educators trained to undergraduate and MA degree level for our congregations. Rabbis for London and Brighton and Birmingham and Manchester and Kent and Surrey and Essex. Head teachers for Leeds and Edware and Geneva. Rabbis for Paris and Amsterdam and Berlin and Brussels and Kiev and Odessa and a community director for Minsk.

"Rabbis who have contributed to the national life of this country and countries around the world, none more so than one of our beloved first alumni, Rabbi Lionel Blue, who we are blessed to have with us at this service.

"The first European female rabbi ordained in 1975, Rabbi Dr Jacqueline Tabick. The first openly LGBTQI+ rabbis in Europe, Rabbi Elizabeth Sarah and Rabbi Shelia Shulman z"l, in 1989. The first MA programme in Jewish Education in Europe commencing in 1992. The first ever Danish female rabbi, Rabbi Sandra Kviat, in 2011.

"And in less a than year, God willing, the first ever Spanish born Progressive rabbi to help begin to heal the wounds of an altogether different, but no less potent rupture in Jewish history."

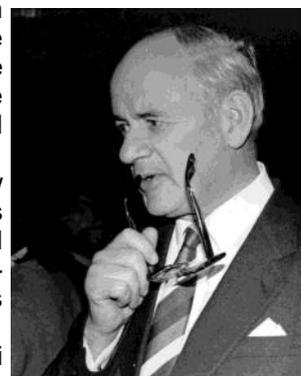
### Influencing others: 60 years of Leo Baeck College

With the whole of Progressive Judaism using this week, and indeed this year, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of Leo Baeck College (LBC), it perhaps is worth recalling aspects of the College – the Progressive Jewish education institute for training rabbis and teachers.

Above all, for me, is how the actions and comments made by teachers had a sometimes totally unintentional, but nevertheless positive, effect on others.

Indeed, it was Rabbi John Rayner (pictured) of blessed memory who said how influential the teachers themselves could be. In that context he was actually speaking of Michael Goulston, who had died tragically early, but John could have been talking about himself.

Read the full text by Rabbi Wallach [here](#).



Rabbi John Rayner

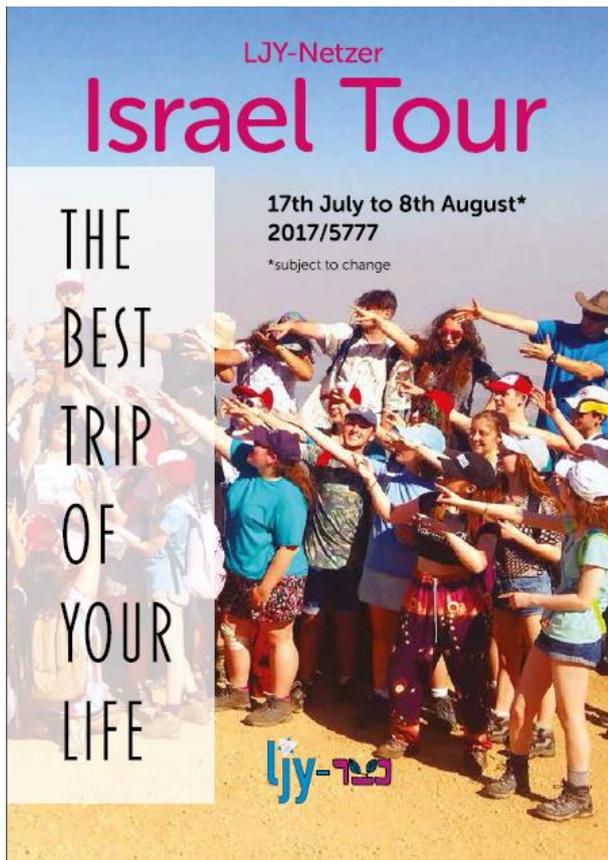
### Reform Judaism responds to extremist words of Rabbi Amar

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism, has responded to statements from Jerusalem Sephardic Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar calling homosexuality "an abomination" that is "punishable by death". Rabbi Janner-Klausner said: "I am horrified by Chief Rabbi Amar's words. They are a *chillul haShem*, a desecration of God's name and I call for his immediate resignation.

"His words do not represent an authentic Orthodox view and can only incite hatred and violence. Reform Judaism has an unswerving commitment to equality and we know that this is the view of the majority of Jews who will share my revulsion. We must challenge homophobia and transphobia wherever we encounter it; words of violence and hatred must never be allowed to become mainstream or acceptable".



Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner



[Click here](#) for more information.

### Rabbi Danny Rich becomes first Liberal Judaism leader to address the UK Board of Deputies



Rabbi Danny Rich addresses UK Board of Deputies

In the meeting on November 20 Rabbi Danny Rich highlighted the historical relationship between Liberal Judaism and the Board – key moments including the 1949 mass resignation of all the Deputies from Liberal synagogues over marriage recognition, but also the election of the first LJ VP to the Board in 2000. Danny re-iterated LJ’s commitment to the board before presenting the relationship between Isaac and Ishmael in this weeks Parashat contextualised against recent political events. He concluded that the mission of the modern Jew is *l’or goyim*: a light of nations – an agent of good fortune. Read the full story and Rabbi Rich’s address [here](#).

### Ten-year-old shofar blower answers Elstree shul’s SOS



Rabbi Pete Tobias and Tia Boulton

When The Liberal Synagogue Elstree’s regular shofar blower was unavailable, Rabbi Pete Tobias asked: “Is there a blower in the house? Everyone shook their heads and I thought we were in trouble.” But 10-year-old Tia Boulton stepped into the breach. A French horn player in the National Children’s Orchestra, Tia had badgered her parents to bring back a shofar from their Israel holiday last year. “She basically taught herself with a little help from YouTube and some pointers from a kind rabbi,” her mother, Ruth, explained.

Although keen to answer the shul’s SOS, she was “nervous and the committee at TLSE also had its reservations.” But all went well and “there were lots of comments along the lines of how special it was to see the tradition of blowing the shofar carried out by the next generation”.

Rabbi Tobias added: “I couldn’t believe a 10-year-old would be able to do something the rest of us couldn’t. But she was incredible and every blast was perfect.”

Tia said afterwards: “I felt very honoured to do such an important thing. On Rosh Hashanah I was shaking quite a lot. But Rabbi Pete gave me a big smile just before the first tekhiah, which helped.” So did her French horn training.

Now Tia hopes the shul will allow her to blow the shofar on future festivals. [The Jewish Chronicle](#)

### NLPS displays glass works

Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue held an exciting exhibit of stunning glass works by artist Eva Edery from November 2-12.



### Wandering Jews in Cambridge



**'Wandering Jews' on stage in Cambridge**

For Jewish communities, family stories are all about movement - fleeing persecution, seeking a better life. These are the experiences of many of whose descendants eventually moved to Cambridge. Members of Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue in Cambridge have been collecting these stories and putting them into a short play performed by the descendants of those wandering Jews.

Mike Levy, who wrote the play said: "Everyone has a story, but not everyone has a chance to turn their own family's tale into a scene in a play. Fewer still have the joy of seeing other people act out the doings, comings and goings of their own relatives. Thanks to a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we were able to collect true stories from the Jewish community in Cambridge and turn them into short scenes to be performed on stage.

"We are calling our play 'Wandering Jews' which seemed appropriate as the stories we gathered were about movement: sometimes voluntary where fathers, mothers, grandparents and cousins sought a better, or at least, a different life; sometimes enforced when Jews were ordered to leave their homes in times of persecution or war (or usually both).

'Wandering Jews' has been our project for over a year and tribute must be paid to our gallant and brave actors, many of whom had never before set foot on a theatrical stage. We hope that their own wandering will lead them soon to a life of plays and theatre."

### Mitzvah Day was November 27. Was your community involved?

News and photos will appear in the January newsletter. For now, go to [mitzvahday.org.uk](http://mitzvahday.org.uk).

Click the logos for news of our UK movements



### Rabbi Mark Solomon joins Church of Scotland's steering group on Zionism

Over the last 13 years the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has received four reports which have led to the Church rejecting Christian and Jewish Zionism both on contemporary political/social and on scriptural/theological grounds. The four reports were: *Theology of Land and Covenant*, 2003; *What Hope for the Middle East*, 2007; *Kairos Palestine: a moment of truth, offered as a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian Suffering*, 2009; *The Inheritance of Abraham? A Report on 'the promised land'*, 2013.



**Rabbi Mark Solomon**

*The Inheritance of Abraham* provoked a strong challenge from the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) and, after discussions with SCoJeC representatives, a revised version of the original report was issued.

The Church of Scotland has now established a "Joint Theological Initiative" to engage in discussions with the Jewish Community. Rabbi Mark Solomon will be one of the Jewish members of its steering group which is holding meetings over the next few months. We await its outcomes with interest.

Rabbi Mark Solomon is Senior Lecturer in Rabbinic Literature at Leo Baeck College, rabbi of the Edinburgh and Leicester Liberal Jewish communities, and Interfaith Consultant for Liberal Judaism.

### Peace vigil following arson attack on Central Mosque in Edinburgh



**Sukkat Shalom is prominent in Edinburgh peace vigil**

More than 200 people, including some members of Sukkat Shalom, the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community, gathered at a peace vigil to show their support for Edinburgh's Muslim community following an arson attack on the Central Mosque in September. Speakers included local politicians and members of the Muslim Women's Association of Edinburgh. Stew Green, Sukkat Shalom's representative on the Edinburgh Interfaith Association sent a letter of support from our community to Imam Yahya Barry.



**WUPJ 2017 Calendar**

- February 16-26 - Jerusalem  
[Beutel Leadership Seminar](#)
- May 13-17 - Jerusalem  
[Pursue Justice: Seminar for Legal Professionals](#)
- May 15-21 - Jerusalem [CONNECTIONS 2017](#)  
[WUPJ 38th Biennial Conference](#)
- July 13-23 - Jerusalem  
[The Bergman Seminar for Jewish Educators](#)

**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 participants 2015. Photo by Bety Dimant**



May 17 - 20, 2017

[Join us in Jerusalem!](#)



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

The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) is pleased to invite you to explore, experience and connect with global Reform Judaism.

CONNECTIONS 2017 is the international biennial conference of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) which brings together Reform, Progressive and Liberal

Jews from around the world for four days of workshops, lectures, prayer, gala events, site visits and more.

[Register here today.](#)

Read more about preconference programs [here](#).

Questions? [Start here](#).



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.

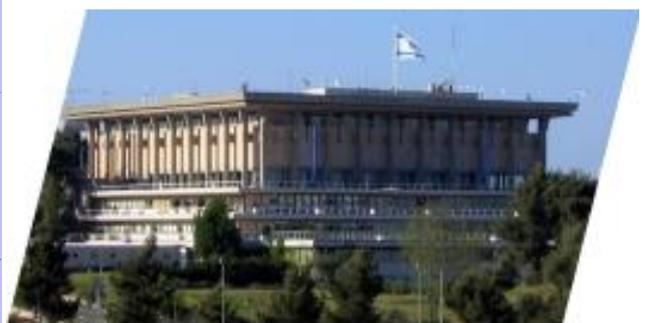
Like WUPJ on [Facebook](#).

**IMPJ Newsletter**

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

**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.



**The Knesset**