



European Union for Progressive Judaism

April 2017 Newsletter

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From the Chairman

It is finally spring and I hope you all had a good Pesach. Because of travel plans and the newsletter deadline I am writing this column during the last days of Passover. It is never inappropriate for us to think about freedom and obviously Pesach is the festival where it comes to the fore as we gather to tell the story of our departure from Egypt and subsequent evolution into a free people.



Miriam Kramer

We in the 21st century sometimes overlook the uncomfortable fact that despite our own freedoms there are many, in Europe and beyond, who do not have that luxury. The continuing issue with refugees and asylum seekers reminds us that we too were in that position; this is within living memory and I write as the daughter of refugees from Germany who made it to the United Kingdom in the 1930s.

Our own history, stretching back to the tyranny of Pharaoh, compels us to take a sympathetic and positive stance on the current situation around us. Many of our communities lead by example by opening their hearts and their doors to those who have arrived recently in Europe but there is still more to be done. Tikkun Olam is a sacred task which is about the environment, our fellow human beings and above all freedom.

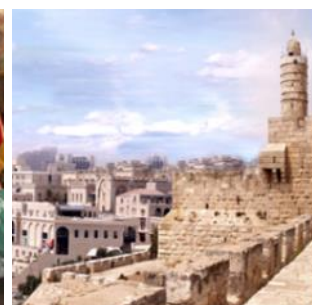
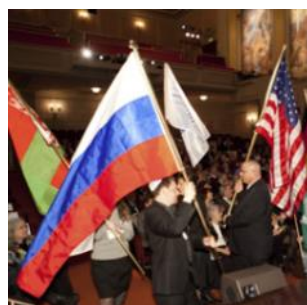
Another aspect of freedom is the right to practise one's religion in the way one chooses. In some EUPJ countries our congregations are not recognised by the national government as legitimate expressions of Judaism. This can lead to a financial disadvantage as well as other signs of disrespect. We have been engaged in legal battles on behalf of our constituents and in some cases have been successful. Where this has not yet happened we continue to fight. It is my fervent hope that the message of Pesach does not fade with the last mouthful of matzo.

In the last edition of our newsletter David Pollak revealed the date and place of the next EUPJ conference; in the unlikely case that you missed this information please put Prague and April 26-29 in your diaries. There are exciting developments and projects with which EUPJ is involved in that beautiful and historic city and our conference will highlight them.

And whilst I'm on the subject of conferences I look forward to seeing many of you next month in Jerusalem at Connections 2017.

Miriam Kramer

CONNECTIONS 2017
Join us in Jerusalem
Register for May 17-20 Biennial
Open Event Registration Available
Register today - limited space is available



CONNECTIONS 2017 is an international conference hosted by the **World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ)**. CONNECTIONS offers opportunities to learn, explore and engage in the diversity of our Progressive Jewish world. This year's focus, **Milestones & Innovation**, honours 200 years of Progressive Jewish history while exploring innovation in Jewish life and its impact on the future of our Jewish peoplehood.



More than 300 participants, from over 20 countries, have already signed up for this exciting four-day conference. If you haven't taken a look at our confirmed sessions and presenters, please visit our website and register today before registration closes! We will be unable to offer day passes for CONNECTIONS 2017 with the exception of the opening gala for which separate registration is now open!

[Register here for CONNECTIONS 2017 today.](#)

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Administrator

Deborah Grabiner, UK
administrator@eupj.org

Newsletter Editor

Arthur Buchman, Denmark
newsletter@eupj.org

Assistant Newsletter Editor

Sarah Sussman, Ireland



European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ) - 2017 Annual European Assembly Meeting



Dear Members of the European Union for Progressive Judaism, We hereby give you notice that the 2017 meeting of the EUPJ European Assembly will be held at Beit Shmuel, 6 Elihayu Shama Street, Jerusalem, Israel on Friday 19 May 2017 at 11.45 am, being during the Friday lunchtime break at the WUPJ 2017 Connections Conference. We hope that a delegate from your community will be able to attend and vote at the Assembly meeting.

The formal **Notice and Agenda for the Assembly Meeting is linked in this announcement**, and can be found by [clicking here](#), together with the following documents:

1. the minutes of the last meeting of the European Assembly in London in April 2016 (see Item 2 of the Agenda); [click here to read](#).
2. the Appointment as Constituent Delegate Form and the Form of Proxy (see Note 1 of the Agenda); [click here to read](#).
3. the proposed Deed of Amendment to the EUPJ Constitution, together with the Explanatory Memorandum and Amended Section 7 of the Constitution (see Item 7 of the Agenda). [click here to read](#).

Please note that a copy of the 2016 Annual Report of the EUPJ will be available on the EUPJ website from May 2017 and that a copy of the Notice and accompanying attachments are available on the [EUPJ website](#).

Please also note that delegates representing all EUPJ Members (both Constituent Members and Associate Members) are entitled and welcome to attend the European Assembly Meeting, but only delegates from Constituent Members are entitled to vote on the proposed resolutions.

If you have any matter to raise for consideration at the European Assembly under Item 11 "**Any other business**", then it would be helpful if you could let me know as soon as possible what it is as this will enable the Officers of EUPJ better to respond to the matter at the meeting.

Kind Regards,

John Cohen

Honorary Secretary – EUPJ

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](#)



CJL, Communauté Juive Libérale, Paris

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www.fpjie.org.uk



EUPJ website update

We have been working hard to build and launch a brand new EUPJ site for the spring of 2017 after being hacked into in September. Now we are delighted to share with you our Micro Site (www.eupj.org) pending the launch of the full (all bells and whistles) main site in a few months' time. Corrections of fact and comments for the full site may be emailed to Deborah Grabiner at administrator@eupj.org. We would love to receive exciting interesting photos relating to your community for use on the website. Please send these to Deborah with a caption too.

European Rabbinical Assembly first Kallah

Created during the last EUPJ Conference in London in April 2016, the European Union for Progressive Judaism Rabbinical Assembly (abbreviated as European Rabbinical Assembly or ERA) held its first Kallah on March 26 & 27 at Beth Hillel in Brussels at the invitation of Rabbi Marc Neiger, and at the European Parliament. Nearly 20 rabbis from all over Europe came to this gathering. Europe is understood in its large sense, from the Ural Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean. Rabbis from the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, Germany and Russia gathered for two days of study and meeting.



Rabbis Marc Neiger and Ruven Bar-Ephraim

On Sunday the 26th, we were hosted by Beth Hillel Brussels, and we had study sessions on various topics: Rabbi Reuven Bar-Ephraim from Zürich led a session on eating animals, and how kosher it is. Rabbi Ira Goldberg from Brussels taught us a piece from Talmud (Berkahot 17a-b) on the quality of



Rabbis Ira Goldberg and Deborah Kahn-Harris

leaders. Robin Sclafani, Director of CEJI (Centre for European Jewish Information), introduced us to the Jewish institutions present in Brussels on a European level and discussed advocacy skills. Rabbi Deborah Kahn-Harris, Principal of Leo Baeck College, introduced us to a new way of looking at Eicha, the book of Lamentations, through art and music.

On the second day, we were invited by the European Parliament to meet officials from the European Commission and European MPs. Katharina von Schnurbein, the European Commission's coordinator on combating anti-Semitism, introduced us to a programme called "Preventing & Combating anti-Semitism" run by the Commission. This is part of a larger European policy to combat all forms of

extremisms, defend minorities in Europe, and develop dialogue between faith and non-faith organisations. Three MEPs, who have interest in the same field and in promoting better relationships and a better understanding of Israel came to talk to us. [See below. - Editor]

In the morning, the ERA held its first AGM in the European Parliament. Our aim is to make a Progressive rabbinic voice heard throughout Europe and to promote the diversity of Jewish voices. We will also hold regular Kallot, and we want to introduce a support system for European rabbis. As for today, more than 60 rabbis have joined the ERA, and membership grows by the day.

The board elected by the AGM is as follows: Rabbi Ruven Bar Ephraim, Chair, Rabbi Marc Neiger, Secretary, Rabbi Celia Surget, Treasurer, Rabbi Menno ten Brink, Hon Secretary, and Rabbi René Pfertzel. Rabbi Charley Baginsky will be leading a response taskforce for press releases on current events.

Our next Kallah will be held during the 2018 EUPJ Conference in Prague (24-25 April).

Rabbi René Pfertzel

ERA rabbis visit European Parliament in Brussels



ERA members at the European Parliament

On March 27, a delegation from the European Rabbinical Assembly (ERA) visited the European Parliament in Brussels. ERA represents about 180 European Progressive rabbis. The delegation held discussions with members of Parliament, Frédérique Riess, Cecilia Wikström and Lopez Aquilar, and Katharina von Schnurbein, the coordinator of the European Commission on anti-Semitism. They assured the rabbis that the Commission had a high priority in combating anti-Semitism and countering the increasing number of anti-Semitic incidents. The ERA delegation, under the leadership of its President Rabbi Ruven Bar-Ephraim, was welcomed by the hosts as an important dialogue partner. The host representatives further commented that not all religious delegations visiting the EU in Brussels were non-discriminatory with respect to gender, race and national origin but this was self-evident for ERA. The EU representative also expressed appreciation of the active participation of Liberal/Progressive European rabbis in interreligious dialogue.

A new rabbi and a new era for Or Chadasch Vienna



Rabbis Lior Bar-Ami and Walter Rothschild

For 13 years, Rabbi Dr Walter Rothschild led the Jewish Liberal Community of Or Chadasch in Vienna as congregational rabbi. Once a month he came to Vienna for the weekend to hold services, Shiurim, Bar and Bat Mitzvah classes and conversion classes. Now he has placed these tasks in younger hands. On Sunday March 26, Rabbi Lior Bar-Ami was solemnly installed as the new congregational rabbi. Rabbi Bar-Ami will spend two full weeks a month in Vienna - the rest of the time he is leading the liberal congregation in Toulouse.

The installation ceremony was a strong symbol from the only non-Orthodox Jewish community in Austria. Among the 120 attendees, there were many community members and numerous prominent guests from Austria and abroad, including Rabbi Walter Homolka, Rector of Abraham Geiger College where Lior Bar-Ami was ordained; Talya Lador-Fesher, Ambassador of the State of Israel; Ariel Muzicant, Honorary President of the Vienna Jewish Community; Leslie Bergman, Honorary President of Or Chadasch; Miriam Kramer, EUPJ Chairman; representatives of several religious communities and Progressive European communities as well as Austrian politicians. Leslie Bergman welcomed the attendees and spoke about the role of the rabbi not only as a teacher but also as a community leader. Ariel Muzicant reported on his efforts to establish a unified Jewish community in Vienna where ultra-Orthodox synagogues as well as Or Chadasch will have their place. Ambassador Lador-Fesher related why she as a woman had found her religious home at the egalitarian services at Or Chadasch.

Rabbi Bar-Ami completed his rabbinical studies and a master's degree in Jewish theology in Potsdam in 2016. He is a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Conseil des Rabbins Libéraux, the umbrella organisation of French-speaking rabbis in Europe.

The installation ceremony took place in the context of a Mincha worship service in which the Torah scroll was symbolically passed to Rabbi Bar-Ami. The celebration was accompanied by a wonderful music programme and followed by a reception. **John Clark**

Royal visit to Austria



Or Chadasch member Gerda Frey with Prince Charles

Prince Charles and his wife the Duchess of Cornwall spent the final day of a nine-day tour of Europe in Vienna meeting British and Austrian survivors of Nazi persecution at the city's Jewish museum, the Jewish News of London reported.

Prince Charles, who spoke with Holocaust survivors in Austria, was indeed very charming. He listened, asked questions and spoke about his grandmother's role in saving Jewish lives during the Shoah. The royal couple sat down with a group of elderly men and women who shared their harrowing stories with them. During World War II, Princess Alice, the Duke of Edinburgh's mother and Charles's grandmother, sheltered a number of Jewish people when Greece was occupied.

Princess Alice, who is buried in Israel, was recognised by the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem as a Righteous Among the Nations, and was posthumously awarded the British Government's Hero of the Holocaust medal. In September 1943, the Cohen family, old acquaintances from the Greek town of Trikala, appealed to Princess Alice for refuge. She hid them in her palace until the Nazis withdrew in October 1944. During that time, the Nazis sent the vast majority of Greece's Jewish community to concentration camps.

Prince Charles told the group: "My father's mother took in a Jewish family during the war and hid them – she was amazing, my grandmother. She took them in during the Nazi occupation. She never told anybody, she didn't tell her family for many years. She's buried in Jerusalem."

Princess Alice's remains are interred at the picturesque Church of Saint Mary Magdalene above the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. Prince Charles said he visited the grave last September while attending the funeral of former Israeli president Shimon Peres.

Holocaust survivor Gerda Frei, 80, who had escaped Vienna with her mother and father to Hungary in 1938 and with them were hidden from the Nazis by a family in Budapest, had a chance to speak with Prince Charles at The Jewish Museum Vienna.

"The prince was very well informed about the Holocaust, and it is very important that they came here," she said after the chat.

Parts of this story came from JTA

Belgium

Pesach - reaching across time

Jews are commanded to celebrate Pesach each spring to remember the Exodus when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt over 3200 years ago. The Exodus is one of the defining moments of Jewish history and identity. The key way to observe this commandment is to tell the Pesach story at a Seder sitting around a dinner table with friends and family.



Steven Brummel

The Jewish disposition toward deep historical and philosophical thought is quite evident in this Seder ritual. The Seder however encourages more than a retelling of the Exodus story. It seeks to have each Jew experience the events portrayed as if he or she had been alive then, as if each had also been a slave and then was freed.

Although the Seder focuses on telling an old story, it also encourages thinking outside of time and space. When one participates in a Seder, he or she is not just celebrating with the persons at the table. One is joining Jews around the world celebrating this year and those who have celebrated the Seder through the generations. Time ceases to exist and one connects to many, many others. Whatever one's current circumstances or problems, the Seder is a place to immerse oneself in a much large and greater phenomenon. It underscores the great chain of being that is the Jewish People and Judaism. It gives hope even in desperate times as it marks an inter-generational solidarity.

Pesach began this year on Monday night April 10th. The IJC held a Community Seder led by Rabbi Ira Goldberg that first night at our regular location. Whether or not you attended [any Seder], I wish to remind you that for a moment time will have stood still and we will all have been united in spirit.

Steven Brummel, IJC President

A Dane in Brussels

European Purim Poem Song Contest 5777

New IJC member Martin Salamon added a great poetic twist to recent Purim celebrations with the 'European Purim Poem Song Contest 5777'. He has been writing Purim quizzes for his progressive community Shir Hatzafon in Copenhagen for some years, and happily for us brought his experience to IJC's festivities.

"We placed people in small groups and tasked each with writing a poem or song based on a story from the Purim story." Martin provided themes and



Martin Salamon

ideas for each group. They prepared and then performed to everyone present. Scoring was based on creativity and enthusiasm with higher scores if every group member participated in the performance. "People really took the effort seriously and it was not easy to choose a winner," said Martin.

Martin arrived in Brussels in January to take up a temporary post at BEUC, the European consumer organisation. In Denmark he works for the Danish Consumer Council.

"I wanted to pursue my Jewish life in Brussels and I found the IJC online and asked Danish friends here where to go. The IJC is very close to the kind of community I have back in Copenhagen. It is open-minded, flexible and has a diversity of membership which is amazing. I have been to services and really enjoyed them. I have been especially impressed by the way children are involved and engaged in IJC activities."

Martin's family have remained in Denmark for the short time he is based here. "As the Purim story says, the men of the house don't always decide where the women go..."

Martin's efforts added to what was clearly a great Purim event. Cushions, carpets, a tented ceiling, costumes, a turbaned rabbi and the aromas of Persia wafted from the kitchen to the sanctuary. The Persian Empire reached out to include a new province: Belgium!

Yom HaShoah 2017



Oil painting of Dossin barracks in WW2

The ceremony took place on Monday April 24, 27 Nissan 5777 at 18:00 at the Memorial to the Jewish Martyrs of Belgium in Anderlecht. Remembered were Malines, Drancy, Auschwitz, the 74th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto insurrection and the stop of the XX convoy. Yom HaShoah in Belgium included Radio Judaica (90.2 FM) broadcasting from April 23 at 12:15 until April 24 at 18:30 the reading of the names of Belgian Jews assassinated by the Nazis: 24,036 deported from the Dossin barracks, 5,593 deportees from Drancy and 245 resistance fighters.

The Beth Hillel Yom HaShoah Committee and several volunteers assisted with organising the commemoration.

Video conferences in Spain

CICLO VIDEOCONFERENCIAS



El significado de la espiritualidad judía a través de cuatro figuras bíblicas y su recepción en el arte occidental

Prof. Lic. Pablo Dreizik.
Universidad de Buenos Aires

EUPJ's Spanish communities have been conducting very successful and popular shared video broadcasts. A series of four Wednesday evenings with Professor Pablo Dreizik of the University of Buenos concludes on May 10. His topic, 'The meaning of Jewish spirituality through four biblical figures and their depiction in Western art' includes the Akedah of Isaac, Jacob wrestling with an angel, and Samson and Delilah on April 26. The final personage to be discussed is King Saul.



CLUB DE LECTURA

LAS SIETE CAJAS
Dory Sontheimer
CIRCE

Dory Sontheimer

An additional video presentation of the Club de Lectura took place Thursday April 27. The actual event took place at Bet Shalom in Barcelona and was broadcast on the net from there. The author Dory Sontheimer spoke of her book Las Siete Cajas (The Seven Boxes).



Bet Shalom
COMUNIDAD JUDÍA PROGRESISTA DE BARCELONA

COMUNIDAD JUDÍA REFORMISTA DE MADRID

BNEI ISRAEL
COMUNIDAD JUDÍA DE GALICIA

Bet Shalom
Comunidad Judía de Valencia

Joint observance in Barcelona



Ceremonia de conmemoración en recuerdo de las víctimas del Holocausto

YOM HASHOAH

Domingo 23 de Abril - 11:00h
Fossar de la Pedrera - Montjuic

ATID **CIB** **Bet Shalom**
COMUNIDAD JUDÍA PROGRESISTA DE BARCELONA

On Sunday April 23, there was a ceremony commemorating the victims of the Shoah in Barcelona. The event was organised by four Jewish groups including the EUPJ's Bet Shalom and ATID.

Bet Shalom children's Shabbat



kinder Shabbat

On Friday April 21 at 6:00 pm Bet Shalom in Barcelona held a kinder Shabbat programme. This was a Kabbalat Shabbat for children with songs, stories, guitar, activities and surprises.



Bet Januká



Bet Januká offers Hebrew course via video conference

Matatayahu Langer is teaching Hebrew for beginners for Bet Januká, The Jewish Community of Andalucia. The first course has been very successful and concludes on May 10. A second course begins on August 16 and concludes on December 13. Each class meets via video conference on Wednesdays from 20-21:00. The cost is €45. To enroll please pay into the account of Comunidad Judía Bet Januká de Andalucia, Banco Popular IBAN: ES14 0075 3039 1506 0083 6101. Gracias.

Spain, Hungary

Pesach at Kehila Bnei Israel in Galicia



Seder night at Kehila Bnei Israel in Galicia

On the evening of April 10 we celebrated Pesach (Passover), the festival of freedom for the Jewish people at the Bnei Israel Community in Galicia. The Haggadah was read and the traditional melodies were sung. We remembered that freedom and the return to our promised land (Eretz Israel) after centuries of oppression has been relived by our parents and grandparents less than six decades ago.

Pesach at Bet Shalom Barcelona



Pesach 2017 at Bet Shalom in Barcelona

Bet Shalom celebrated Pesach surrounded by families and friends from Barcelona and visitors from other countries. We were about 100 people! The Seder was beautifully led by our Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz and Maria with the support of two guitarists who accompanied our traditional songs. As a progressive Jewish community, we included in our Haggadah and on our Seder plate several references to the current crisis of immigrants and war refugees in the world, to the struggle of sexual minorities for equality and to the fight of the Women of the Wall to pray in peace in Jerusalem.

Bet Shalom also held a study session on Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs) with Rabbi Berkowitz as it is the tradition during Pesach, marking the beginning of the grain harvest and commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. As our dear friend Jaime Vándor (z"l) said: "Pesaj, noche alegre, agradecido recuerdo del éxodo..." (Pesach, cheerful night, grateful memory of the Exodus).

We all had a wonderful and memorable evening.



Sim Shalom Budapest news



Purim concert with Flora Polnauer and Davis Lamm at Sim Shalom in Budapest

Purim was very thoroughly celebrated in Sim Shalom this year with a Multi-Culti party, referring to Prime Minister Viktor Orban's anti-immigrant and anti-EU policies for Hungary. There were lots of kids in costumes, and everyone won a prize of some sort. Some of the adults also dressed up, and I did my part as a Hawaiian beach bum. We did our usual reading of the Megillah in many languages; English, Hebrew, Hungarian, Armenian, Yiddish, French, and a virtuoso performance by Gyuri Markus, who did it in German, Russian and Yiddish, all mixed together. The highlight of the evening was a concert of Hebrew and Yiddish songs by Flora Polnauer, accompanied by guitarist David Lamm. They also played some Israeli folk dance music which got the crowd up and dancing. Some very good food and some schnaps rounded out a very joyful evening.

See our wonderful [video here!](#)

On the next weekend, we held the second of the joint services with Bet Orim Congregation as part of the Budapest Project of West London Synagogue and EUPJ. This was the first time the services were held on the premises of the Milestone Academy, a private, elite secondary school with a number of Jewish students. Unfortunately, Rabbi Ariel Pollak was ill and could not come from Berlin. So the service was led by Cantor Polnauer with good attendance from both congregations as well as a number of people belonging to neither congregation. A good start.

We are very actively looking for premises of our own again which we can afford. A large flat has been located belonging to the local city government which would be quite satisfactory, though it would need a big renovation. Our Board is negotiating with the city about getting the space for a nominal rent, which we're told is a good possibility. If we get it, we plan to have a fundraising drive to pay for the renovations.

Jess Weil

Upcoming events at GIL

May 3: Course with Brigitte Sion

May 3, 10, 17,
and 24 + June 7
at 18:00

Restitution of
works of art
confiscated by
the Nazis: A
conclusion



May 5: Yom Ha'Atzmaut dinner

18:30: The Friday
evening Service
will be followed
by a Canadian
Shabbat dinner.
Bring a savoury
dish, a sweet
dish, and a
drink. There will



be dancing and singing with the participation of
children and adults.

May 29: A talk about Carl Lutz

18:45: Buffet, 15

CHF to participate

19:45: Talk - Carl
Lutz, the man
who saved 62,000
Hungarian Jews
from Eichmann's
claws in 1944.
(free event).



Register at for any or all events at info@gil.ch.

Events at Beit Warszawa

We wish to thank all the participants of our Passover celebrations for joining us at Beit Warszawa Synagogue, and we thank Maciej Kirschenbaum for leading our prayers.

On the weekend of April 28-29 our services at Beit Warszawa will be led by Rabbi Walter Rothschild from Berlin. Since his early student days he has been active in Jewish organisations and he is one of the few rabbis in Germany who was born and raised in a Progressive Jewish household. In 1984 he was ordained from Leo Baeck College and since 1998 has worked in Germany, Austria and other European countries. Rabbi Rothschild has written and published many books. He is also a poet and songwriter whose many songs are both serious and satirical.



Rabbi Dr Walter Rothschild

Pesach at Migwan in Basel

As in former years Michelle Giger invited guests to a Pesach Seder in Nuglar. We all improvised and had a pot luck meal. Everyone brought their Haggadot and something vegetarian to share for the Pesach meal.



A packed Danish house for Pesach



Roberta Harris leading Shir Hatzafon's 2017 Seder

Shir Hatzafon, The Progressive Jewish Community in Denmark, hosted 80 participants for this year's Passover Seder, our largest crowd in history. We had some new families with children and DIS students from Copenhagen University with their parents, plus of course many members of our community and their family members. The loud and lively journey out of slavery to freedom was valiantly led by Roberta Harris, a student rabbi from Leo Baeck College in London, who also led our April Shabbat service and presented a fascinating slide show about the history of Jerusalem for our Sunday morning Adult Study.

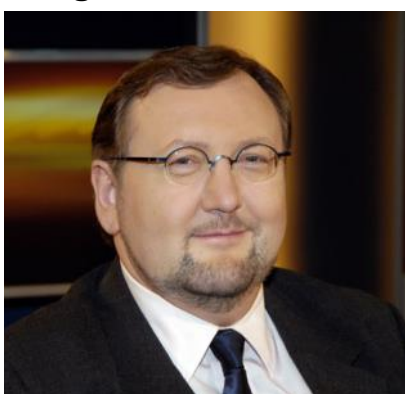
The delicious Seder meal was made in and schlepped from the kitchens of Lars Jozefowicz and Jesper Joel Andersen, who very capably directed the practical aspects of the Seder. They served us gefilte fish, matzo ball soup and two kinds of brisket, not to mention salmon for the non-carnivores – all home-made. Normally we have much food left over and after the Seder we deliver it to Mændenes Hjem, the men's homeless shelter on Istegade. But that night we consumed, and with great pleasure, almost every bit of food served.

Shir Hatzafon lived up to its name with some spirited singing, helped along by lively direction from Mimi Kviat. Many thanks go to all those who volunteered to serve on the Pesach All Stars team and made the evening flow so pleasantly for everyone. Next year, everyone should remember to book a place early, as we expect the room will sell out again.

Arthur Buchman

Passover message

On Passover eve, the Haggadah recounts the story of the Exodus and says, "Whoever is in need, let him come and conduct the Seder of Passover. This year we are here: next year in the land of Israel. This year we are slaves; next year we will be free people."



Rabbi Walter Homolka

Ever since the Middle Ages, the Seder evening ends with the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem." This wish is an expression of a yearning that has been preserved for more than two thousand years. And the yearning also has an eschatological element: according to Isaiah 22, at the "end of the earth" all people will go to Jerusalem to greet the Kingdom of Peace.

The Hebrew name for Egypt is Mizrayim, which can also mean "boundaries," "limits" or "restriction," while Yerushalayim means "City of Peace." The path to Jerusalem thus leads from the concrete to the abstract; from the profane to the holy.

Rabbi Prof Dr Walter Homolka

Abraham Geiger Award 2017 goes to Amos Oz

"We have much to talk about with the new generations of Germans." Amos Oz. Israel's foremost writer and intellectual Amos Oz is the recipient of the Abraham Geiger Award 2017. The ceremony will be held on May 25 in Berlin. This award recognises people who have made



Amos Oz

outstanding contributions with regard to pluralism and who have shown great commitment towards openness, courage, tolerance, and freedom of thought. The laudatory speech will be delivered by Dr Klaus Lederer, Senator for Culture and Europe of the State of Berlin.

March in Hamelin

Remembering and honouring Jewish women and in keeping with International Women's Day, we celebrated with a gala concert from and for our members. In keeping with our tradition, the men presented the women with a colourful spring blossom in honour of the day.



Purim 2017 at JGH Hamelin

Erev Purim followed a few days later, and once again our synagogue was filled with happy chatter and a festive air. Fanciful costumes, glittering masks and the sound of noise makers created a joyful cacophony. Rabbi Ulrike Seifert read from the Megillah Esther. Our Rabbi emerita, Irit Shillor, had donated the scroll several years ago. In addition to the Hebrew reading, members read aloud in German and Russian, allowing everyone to hear and understand. The theatrical talents of our children's group and rabbi were showcased in a Purimspiel, *Esther*.

The inter-religious women's group met for the first time in 2017 and there are to be three more meetings this year. Each will take place in a house of worship and each will offer a reading and discussion from that religion's writings. [Rachel Dohme](#) Read the full newsletter [here](#).



Egalitäre Jüdische Chawurah Gescher e.V.

Interfaith Weekend Seminar at Chavurah Gescher, Freiburg

Chavurah Gescher hosted this year's annual seminar entitled 'Mein Gott, dein Gott, kein Gott?', 'My God, Your God, No God?' from March 31 to April 2, attracting participants from England, France and Switzerland as well as Germany. Gescher's Rabbi Diane Tiferet Lakein led the Shabbat services and workshops on interfaith dialogue and ways to establish it.

In a panel discussion, representatives of the Abrahamic religions and an atheist position hotly debated whether religion is the root of all evil or the answer to all our problems. Without glossing over any of the challenges we face today, consensus was reached on key points, such as liberal values, the importance not only of open interfaith but also interdenominational dialogue, and education. Gescher presented their interfaith and intercultural BMF project for young people.

In addition to lively discussion, there was a drama improvisation workshop and a talk on an interfaith pilgrimage in Israel. The stimulating and enjoyable weekend drew to a close with a beautiful performance of Sephardic music.



From the Sacred to the Profane at Lev Chadash Milan

On Wednesday April 5 at 18:00, Lev Chadash presented *Dal Sacro al Profano*, A Collection of Jewish Lyrics by Filippo Zizzo and Stefania Rescaili.

The evening was hosted by psychologist Dr Rossana Ottolenghi and included songs from the book performed by soprano Lucia Libassi from the F Gaffurio Choir of the Milan Conservatory.

The cultural evening was a big success.



Dr Rossana Ottolenghi

Taglit-Birthright programme in Italy



I am pleased to inform you that applications for this summer's Taglit-Birthright programme are now open. This is the sixth year that we are involved in this scheme which is open to any participant between the ages of 18 and 26 with either a Jewish father or mother and who has never visited Israel.

Our inclusion and leadership in Taglit was a major breakthrough for de facto recognition by the Italian Jewish community that the Progressive Movement in Italy is a part of the larger Italian Jewish world. The trip this year will run from July 23-August 1. I urge you all to do as much as possible to inform your members of this opportunity and register quickly. It is an extremely worthwhile and wonderful programme which deserves our full support.

Applications should go directly to the Taglit website: www.taglit-birthright.com. If you have questions, please write to me at dr@sophisticateditaly.com or to gadlazarov@hotmail.com

David Ross
Beth Shalom Milano

Beth Shalom Milano news



Beth Shalom Milan Seder 2017

Beth Shalom's International Seder was led by Rabbi Donald Goor and Cantor Evan Kent. After many years, Beth Shalom decided to hold its Seder the first night, rather than the second. We were more than 70. In addition to our members we had guests from the USA, England, Israel and Turkey. We even had two infants in attendance. Rabbi Goor and Cantor Kent came from Israel to lead this unforgettable Seder.

Next month we have a triple Bar Mitzvah of three brothers and we will send photos.

On April 22 we celebrated a double simcha. Rabbi David Whiman returned from America to lead our first Shabbat service after Pesach, and we also celebrated an Aufruf for Ashley Racine and Matteo Fideli who will be married by Rabbi Whiman in June. Following services, Ashley and Matteo offered a light Kiddush. Many joined us on Saturday morning at 10:30am at Hotel de la Ville in via Hoepli to welcome Rabbi Whiman back to Milan and bless the soon-to-be-married couple.

Lev Chadash Seder led by Rabbi Walter Rothschild



Seder di Pesach
Seconda sera di Pesach
Martedì, 11 aprile 2017 - h 19:00

Causa grande affluenza il Seder si terrà
in via Porro Lambertenghi 28,
presso il Centro Culturale Metodista

Sarà con noi Rav Walter Rothschild
inglese trapiantato a Berlino,
Rabbino brillante e coinvolgente





Yom HaShoah 2017 in Lyon

To commemorate is neither to forget, nor to give oneself a good conscience.

On April 24 from 9:00 to 18:00 the CPJL - Circle of Liberal Jewish Thought of Lyon and Keren Or - the progressive synagogue in Lyon celebrated the International Day of Commemoration of the Shoah in partnership with Licra Rhône-Alpes at the Place des Terreaux. Licra stands for Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme, International League Against Racism. We had appealed for assistance for the commemorative uninterrupted reading of the names of the deported Jews of France and began with Convoy No 62, which left Drancy November 20, 1943.



Drawing of the arrival of children at Drancy

This day, marked by meditation, by remembrance, but even more by the solidarity with the victims of the Shoah, began with the lighting of candles symbolising the six million Jewish victims and the 22 concentration and extermination camps. The Ceremony of Remembrance in the presence of representatives of the Republic took place at 15:00. Throughout the day, it was possible to see the exhibition "Anti-Semitism from the Middle Ages until Today", which was guided by a team of Licra volunteers. This exhibition showed how the politics of genocide repeats itself (Armenia, Rwanda, Bosnia, the Yazidi). Attendees could speak with President of Keren Or Pamela Venin, President of Licra Rhône-Alpes Alain Blum, and/or Jean-Paul Rosner, a former hidden child from Lyon who for the past 15 years has served as a witness in regional schools.

Sarah Toledano-Klein

Travel to Catalonia with CPJL

Wednesday May 24 to Saturday May 27

CPJL, Keren Or's cultural branch offers: Girona and its Jewish Museum, Besalu and its mikvah, Jewish Barcelona, a Shabbat service and meal with the progressive community of Barcelona. Transportation is via car-pooling.

The price (including three nights in a double room, transport, visits) about €400

For accommodation just in Barcelona + transport and tours. about €180. Register with Paule Fort: tel. 06 64 03 97 33; email - fort.paule@bbox.fr.



ULIF News

Events at Copernic, Paris

April 19: Israeli Dance (Rikoudei Am)

Elliot Cohen led a course in Israeli dance.



April 20: Piano Concert

Adam Laloum (left) and David Kadouch gave a unique concert at the Copernic synagogue. These young pianists performed works by Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Schubert, and Igor Stravinsky.



May 21 at 18: Kol Nidre Concert

In 2009, the first Kol Nidre concert was given at Copernic with immense success. The inspiring power of the melody of the Kol Nidre now leads to a different type of concert, including two world premieres (Kol Nidre by Alexandre Tansman and Kol Nidre by Benoît Menuet) and two European ones (Kol Nidre Variations by Ben Zebelman and Kal Nidrei by Eyal Bitton). Also to be performed will be Kol Nidre compositions by Jean-François Zygel, Sid Robinovitch, Louis Aubert and Alberto Hemsí, Itai Daniel, Louis Lewandowski and a jazz improvisation by Denis Cuniot.



Performed by musicians of the Copernic Choral Ensemble under the direction of Itai Daniel.

Price: €30

Reduced Price:

€25 (members of ULIF, MJLF, CJL, Adath Shalom, Kehilat Gesher, IEMJ, students, Aleph card holders, under 15)

Reservations: 01 47 04 37 27 or online.



MJLF covers Paris east & west



The sanctuary at MJLF Surmelin

In the eastern part of Paris, a second community house bears the values of the MJLF. Called Surmelin after its street address, it was established to serve individuals and families who lived too far from MJLF Beaugrenelle, our long-standing home near the Eiffel Tower.

Led by Rabbi Dr Floriane Chinsky, at Surmelin young and old alike find themselves at home in this place of prayer, study, transmission and sharing. The MJLF organises participative sabbath and holiday services, text studies, a dynamic Talmud-Torah, monthly Shabbat meals, boasts a Surmelin Orchestra and a choir and offers many convivial cultural experiences.

Yom HaShoah in Paris



Facebook photo from Rabbi Tom Cohen

Book binding at Kehilat Gesher

Book Binding Workshop with Monique Hebant, a book binding expert, and Rabbi Tom Cohen. Monique will donate the book binding materials and will explain her art by introducing us to different restoration techniques plus binding, stitching and more. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to learn while binding a new Tanach for our youth and an annual edition of "La Passerelle".



Wednesday May 3 at 14:30 at Kehilat Gesher
Info & registration: nicole.g.subias@wanadoo.fr



2017 Paideia Project Incubator

The Project Incubator is a method-oriented 10-day summer programme focusing on acquiring the necessary tools and support structures for getting projects off the ground. It provides some eight hours of scheduled activities each day, cultural and social programming at night and four hours of individual tutoring time for each participant during the 10 days.

The first programme of its kind, it is still by far the leading scheme for supporting social innovation in Jewish Europe. Since its inception in 2006, over 220 individuals have participated, bringing over 180 projects for Jewish life and culture in Europe. Project Incubator gives participants the keys, the inspiration and the networks needed to convert their ideas into action. These projects have reached hundreds of thousands of individuals across Europe, and their managers are active in over 30 different countries. [Apply here.](#)

Three trips for Liberal Jewish Youths Don't be late, make your choice ... and especially register!

Under the aegis of the AJL (Assemblée du Judaïsme Libéral) three trips are being organised this year. These trips are open to all children of AJL's communities in France, Belgium, and Switzerland. AJL will be delighted to enable them to discover France and Israel.

July 4 – 27: CJL's super "MahaNetzer" for 6 – 17 year olds, wonderfully organised by Etienne Kerber. Contact her for further information at: +33 6 48 20 80 89.

July 11 – 25: The super trip to Israel for 14 – 17 year olds, organised by the MJLF (Oren Giorno). [Click here.](#)

August 1 – 11: The FREE TAGLIT trip for 18 – 26 year olds, jointly organised by the MJLF (Oren Giorno) and CJL (Etienne Kerber). [Click here.](#)



United Kingdom

First Interfaith Seder in Durham



Interfaith Seder in Durham

On Tuesday April 11 in the Waddington Street United Reformed Church social hall, Dr Bill Fleming officiated before a packed "mixed multitude" of 56 people to celebrate an Interfaith Jewish Passover for the first time in Durham. "We tell the story for each generation of the Exodus from Egypt and bring it right up to date each time. We tell the story especially for the children, and try to make it a fun night with lots of group singing for all."

Representatives from the Liberal Jewish communities of Durham and York, as well as several local churches, joined together to participate in an interfaith service and meal this year.

An Elder of the Waddington Street United Reformed Church, Mr Sandy Ogilvie, commented: "the prayers for freedom and peace for all peoples were absolutely in accord with our own beliefs and prayers."

Another member of the Waddington Street URC enthusiastically said "I have always wanted to attend a Jewish Passover meal. I'm so pleased to have had the opportunity."

Spokesperson for the Durham and North East Liberal Jewish Community, Hava Fleming, was enthusiastic about the opportunity to share a vital Jewish festival with their Christian friends in Durham. For further information about the Liberal Jewish community's activities, please contact their website [here](#).

The Barbed Lyre — Leaves from the Isle of Man

On Sunday April 2 the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, Ensemble Émigré and The Royal College of Music presented a programme of words and music that brought together the voices of German and Austrian composers who came to Britain seeking refuge from Nazi oppression and who were 'collared' by Churchill in the internment camps on the Isle of Man from 1940–41. The concert was preceded by a talk with Sue Lukes, a founder of the charity Music in Detention, and a performance by Lucky Moyo, formerly with Zimbabwean music & dance ensemble Black Umfolosi, who spoke about his experience as an immigrant to the UK. Read more [here](#).



Reform Judaism Musical Conference

We are delighted to open bookings for [Shirei Chagigah](#), our music conference on July 6-9.



Open to all! @Radlett Reform Synagogue
Whether you lead music or prayer in a synagogue, at a cheder, on camp, or are part of a choir, join us for community, singing, time out and an inspirational few days of beautiful music.

Leo Baeck College
SIXTY YEARS
AT THE HEART OF PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM



Leo Baeck College Librarian

A wonderful opportunity has arisen for the post of Librarian at Leo Baeck College to start in September 2017. This position is a unique chance for the right person to participate in the exciting developments planned for our exceptional library.

Salary: £30,000 to £35,000 dependent on experience and qualifications for this 0.8 to full time post with possible teaching opportunities. A job share would also be considered for suitably qualified candidates. Statutory and Jewish holidays with early closing on Friday.

For a full job description and application form see the *work for us* section of the LBC website (www.lbc.ac.uk) or contact Rhona Lesner on +44 (0)20 8349 5621 or rhona.lesner@lbc.ac.uk.

Completed applications, including a full CV and names of referees, should be sent to: Rhona Lesner, Leo Baeck College, the Sternberg Centre for Judaism, 80 East End Road, London N3 2SY

Rabbi Lionel Blue Memorial Service Monday May 8, 6:30-8pm

West London Synagogue will be hosting a memorial service to celebrate the life of Rabbi Lionel Blue OBE. The service will include tributes and the short film "Encounter with Rabbi Lionel Blue".
Cost: free.

RSVP required to
rsvp@rjuk.org



Rabbi Lionel Blue z"l

Liberal Judaism's Day of Celebration

LIBERAL JUDAISM'S DAY OF CELEBRATION



Sunday June 11, 2017 Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue

Every two years Liberal Judaism hosts a Day of Celebration when our communities come together to celebrate Liberal Judaism. The 2017 Day of Celebration will take place on **Sunday 11 June at Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue**.

Tickets are now available via [Eventbrite](#) or the [Liberal Judaism office](#).

The day will address the question **"Is Liberal Judaism Political Judaism?"** through a range of sessions and speakers including the Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Lords (Alf) Dubs and (Danny) Finkelstein, Board of Deputies' Chief Executive Gillian Merron and sociologist and writer David Hirsh.

Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin is Chaplain to both the Queen and the Speaker of the House of Commons. She will give the first keynote session of the day on 'The role of faith in leading opinion and action'.

Labour Peer Lord Dubs – known to so many members of Liberal Judaism for his incredible work with refugees – will deliver the second keynote address on the topic of 'kindness, being right and the power of empathy'.

Lord Finkelstein describes himself as "The Times political columnist, football columnist, Conservative member of the House of Lords and father of three but not necessarily in that order." He is a favourite at Liberal Judaism events, having previously given insightful and entertaining addresses at the 11th annual Council of Patrons' Dinner and the 2011 Day of Celebration.

Rabbi Rebecca Birk, who chairs the Day of Celebration organising committee, said: "The calibre of our speakers reflects the principle that Liberal Judaism has impact disproportionate to its size, and is the place people want to share their stories. That is certainly something to celebrate."

The day of will also see Liberal Judaism's rabbis leading sessions and discussions.



**Rabbi Rebecca Birk,
Day of Celebration Chair**

Day of Liberal Jewish Music June 10



NPLS choir

Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue (NPLS) are excited to invite you to a day to explore and share our Liberal Jewish Music, open to all LJ community members whether you are a singer, music leader, instrumentalist, or just interested to learn some songs.

After coffee and vocal warm ups, join a mass choir preparing for the morning Shabbat service. Following lunch there will be a choice of different workshops including: traditional LJ choral music, composition workshop, LJY-Netzer songs and chants, shul music accompaniment and much more.

This is a great chance to work with a wide range of our own homegrown LJ music leaders and to bring new ideas to the table.

We therefore hope you will make a weekend of it and attend both the Music Day and the Day of Celebration! If you are travelling from outside London, accommodation can be arranged with NPLS members. To request accommodation please email music@npls.org.uk.

Cost includes buffet lunch and refreshments through the day.

Civic reception for Edinburgh's Jewish Community



Norman Crane

On Wednesday March 1, Edinburgh's Lord Provost, the Rt Hon Donald Wilson, hosted a special reception to mark 200 years of organised Jewish life in Edinburgh. The event was extremely well attended with representatives from across all walks of Jewish life as well as members of many other faith and civic organisations. There were a number of meaningful contributions from the Jewish community.

Norman Crane gave an excellent short speech on behalf of Sukkat Shalom. The highlight of the evening was probably Hannah Holtschneider's wonderful verbal walk through the 200-year history (reproduced [here](#)). **Stew Green**

Progressive rabbis write to Prime Minister over Brexit



UK Prime Minister Theresa May

More than 50 Liberal and Reform Judaism rabbis have written to Prime Minister Theresa May asking her to always put human beings first in the conversations she will be having over Brexit.

The Progressive rabbis – who represent more than a third of British Jews – urged the Prime Minister and her European partners to recognise that the decisions they make will impact millions of lives. They also reaffirmed their own commitment to Britain and contribution to its life. The letter reads:

Dear Prime Minister,

We are all Rabbis serving Jewish communities around the United Kingdom. Most of us were born and educated in this country, and some of us came here as a matter of choice. We represent a large group of Jewish communities made up of Jews coming from various backgrounds, various countries of origin. In that respect, we do represent both the diversity within British society and within the European society. As Rabbis, we are loyal to the United Kingdom, its institutions, its values, and our congregants share the same British values as we all do. Some of us are citizens from another European country. We came here to study at the Leo Baeck College in Finchley, an institution that trains Rabbis and Jewish educators for this country and beyond. We have decided to stay in the United Kingdom for various reasons, and we are all happy with this choice. We love Britain, its culture, its language, its history, and its people, and we gladly contribute to its life.

As you have triggered article 50, which begins the process of exiting the European Union, we wanted to remind you and your government not to forget in the years ahead that you and your European partners will make decisions that will impact millions of people: EU citizens living in the United Kingdom, and UK citizens living in the EU. They all made amazing contributions to their host countries, and added to their grandeur.

“Above all, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it” (Proverbs 4:23). According to the Jewish tradition, a leader serves the needs of their followers by enhancing their capacity and empowering them. “One who is appointed over a community becomes the servant of this community” (Babylonian Talmud, Horayot 10a). We respectfully request that you bear in mind the human dimension of the current situation, and that you put human beings first in the conversation ahead.”

RJ creates new youth position

Reform Judaism has announced a ground-breaking new appointment setting a new precedent for young people’s mental health care in the Jewish community. The role has been funded by the generosity of a single donor and responds to the needs of our communities and our desire to provide a safe and inclusive environment for participants on our programmes for young people.



Mark Greenfield,
Reform Judaism’s first
Young People’s Mental
Health Welfare Officer

The Mental Health Welfare Officer’s role is to give training and advice to Reform communities. He will also create effective strategies for including young people with special needs – with a focus on mental health, child protection, training, policies and procedures – within RSY-Netzer youth movement events.

Mark Greenfield comes to Reform Judaism from JW3 where he has worked as Head of Community Programming. He was previously a family support worker in Hackney supporting young people through challenging family circumstances. He has a long history of close involvement with Reform Judaism, supporting summer camp participants as a Welfare Officer, leading on Israel Tour and playing percussion and leading alternative services at three Reform synagogues in London. He is also a member of the well-known Sephardi music project Los Desterrados.

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism said: “The establishment of this new role takes us to a new level of inclusion and our duty to care and safeguarding. Mark is an exceptional person who brings both mental health expertise and a youth movement background.

“We feel blessed to have received this donation and to have such a fabulous person to implement our mental health strategy in partnership with our existing team”.

Mark Greenfield said: “I am thrilled to be back at Reform Judaism focussing on mental health issues and raising awareness of this vital area of wellbeing. I will be working closely with all of our communities to help increase capacity through training and researching their particular needs as well as getting stuck in to Israel tour and summer camp preparation and training.”

**Click the logos for news
of our UK movements**



WORLD
UNION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
JUDAISM



האיגוד
העולמי
ליהדות
מתקדמת

WUPJ 2017 Calendar

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](#)

July 19-30 - Europe

[WUPJ/Netzer Summer Youth Camp Mission](#)

Creating Meaningful Connections: Bergman Seminar for Progressive Jewish Educators, July 13-23

Educating the educators is one of the Bergman Seminar's guiding principles. An intensive ten-day programme for Progressive Jewish Educators from around the world, the Bergman Seminar, led by the WUPJ's Anita Saltz International Education Center, combines classroom and text study with site visits and face-to-face encounters with individuals and educational projects that explore the multitude of Jewish narratives inside and outside of Israel. For more information, including the schedule and fees, [click here](#).



Bergman Seminar participants in Caesarea



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

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

WUPJ Saltz seminars in May

Learn about the legal issues challenging the Jewish state with these seminars



The Knesset

WUPJ Saltz Leadership Institute Pursue Justice Seminar for Legal Professionals

May 13-17: Spend five days meeting with leading politicians, judges, legislators, professors, attorneys and activists, each presenting a different facet of the prism that comprises Israel's national and international law. Tour Israel's Supreme Court and meet with justices; visit the Knesset and debate legislation with ministers. [Read more here](#).



Struggling for Religious Pluralism

WUPJ Saltz Leadership Institute & IRAC Religion and State Issues Seminar

May 16-17: WUPJ and Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC) invite you to spend two days delving into the multifaceted and challenging work that we care so much about: keeping Israel pluralistic, democratic and egalitarian in its public and private legislation. This seminar is open to all.

[Click here](#) for full information.