



# European Union for Progressive Judaism

October 2018 Newsletter

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## First Progressive *siddur* in Stockholm since 1877

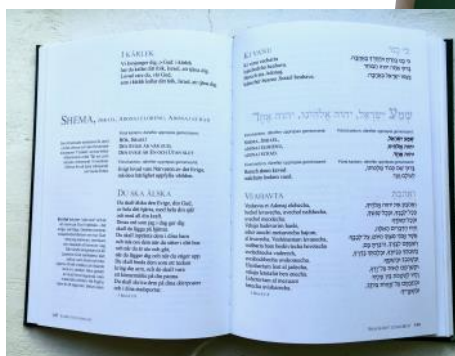
The Swedish Progressive Jewish community unveiled “*Siddur Kol Haneshama – Voice of the Soul*”, a new modern Progressive *siddur*, at a special Shabbaton in Stockholm at the beginning of October.

Nearly 60 people participated in this momentous occasion, which began with a musical Kabbalat Shabbat service. Eva Ekselius, editor of the new *siddur*, led the service, with Nathaniel Glasser and son Leon participating on violin, guitar and drums. Dr Rachel Berkson from the UK spoke about the intention behind the words of the *siddur*.

The evening culminated in an abundant pot-luck dinner.

The Shabbat morning services were fully inclusive and

included children of all ages. After a joint *Kiddush* with people from the Great Synagogue (Masorti/



Conservative), the official presentation of the new *siddur* took place.

Eva-Britt Henmark Lapidus, Chairman of Progressive Judaism in Stockholm (PJS), welcomed the guests to the magnificent Community Hall of the Stockholm Jewish Congregation where the Shabbaton took place.

Eva Ekselius described its structure and content. “Our ambition was to make the *siddur* an open gateway into Jewish tradition and worship and make it comprehensible also to newcomers,” she said.

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## Chairman's Message: Conscious communication

Dear friends. Have you heard phrases like “Communication is the issue” or “It always comes down to communication”?

It seems to me that they appear more and more frequently and in almost all contexts. More often than not, they have a similar undertone, which seems to indicate that whichever way one communicates, one simply cannot get it right.

The EUPJ is in a fortunate situation in this regard: I have not (yet?) heard such comments. But we have been thinking about communication long and hard for quite a while. Our communication with you, that is.

We feel very strongly that it is one of the EUPJ's tasks to connect Progressive



**“Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing.” – Rollo May**

Jews in Europe, and beyond, in every way we possibly can. For many years now, we have been able to offer a great newsletter tradition, thanks to the efforts and willingness of many to give generously of their time.

This edition demonstrates yet again the diversity of our movement in all our (at the moment) 17 countries of the EUPJ. We have also recently revamped our website and are going to add a series of new features and tools to it shortly. Last, but not least, we are going to add a social media presence to our portfolio. We simply

feel it is time.

And by now, you will have seen where I am going with this.

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## Sweden

### First Progressive siddur cont...

"In addition to the three parallel texts (Hebrew, transliteration and Swedish), on each double-page spread, you will find a fourth column with informative texts explaining the liturgy, different traditions and interpretations, historical context, about the author, and more."

Progressive Judaism in Stockholm is growing steadily; about 50-70 participants join services regularly, especially at the much-appreciated Kabbalat Shabbat service with musicians. The

Progressive *kehillah* plays an important role in the Jewish life of Stockholm as it welcomes mixed families, among others, and is the only way for a child to have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in families where only the father is Jewish.

With the new *siddur*, PJS hopes to make its presence in Sweden more visible and to establish the Progressive Movement as a vibrant alternative to the Orthodox and Conservative synagogues. –

Eva Ekselius



Eva Ekselius



Dr Rachel Berkson



Eva-Britt Henmark Lapidus

### Chairman's Message cont...

By announcing these developments, I am inviting all of you to help us take the right next steps.

Tell us what you think we should take into consideration during this process. Be in touch and share your favourite ways to receive news and information. Let us know everything you think we

need to have as input at this stage.

It is always about communication and we want to get it right. Help us help you! Please let us have your feedback by November 30.

We look forward to hearing from you.

– Sonja Guentner ([sonja.guentner@eupj.org](mailto:sonja.guentner@eupj.org))

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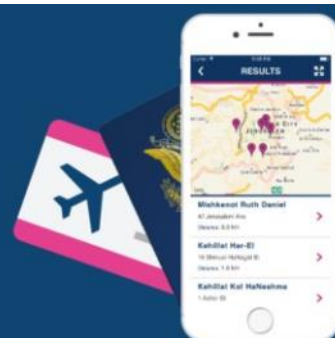
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## Editor's Note: My Jewish journey

In January 2006, I attended the Beutel Leadership Seminar in Israel. The seminar, which was then in its third year, was organised and run by the Anita Saltz International Education Center (now called the WUPJ Center for Leadership Development and Education), and we were based at its international headquarters in Jerusalem.

The Beutel Leadership Seminar's goal is to develop leaders from Progressive Reform communities throughout the world. There were 24 participants from 14 different countries, including Australia, New Zealand, India, Germany, France, the UK, the US, Costa Rica, Brazil, Poland, Spain, Israel and South Africa, from whence I originate.

The seminar focused on two areas – Leadership and Community – but included topics on Progressive Judaism and Israel. The 10-day seminar was very intensive and we were encouraged to attend every session. The programme was diverse and well-balanced.

It was about experiencing and learning about leadership and community through chavruta sessions and discussions, but mostly through tours and encounters.

The focus was to consider different types of communities and different models and styles of community leadership in various interesting and stimulating ways. The trip was exhausting, but exhilarating.

I had an amazing time in Israel getting to know many wonderful people from all over the world. But most importantly, the knowledge and insight I gained about Judaism, Israel and leadership was invaluable.

When I returned, I was put to work using the skills I'd learned in Israel. I became part of the management and marketing team for the South African Union for Progressive Judaism (SAUPJ)

and joined the Management Committee of Bet David in Johannesburg.

I was involved for more than two years before I made Aliyah. I thought my involvement was over, but I found myself drawn back in, this time with the WUPJ, working with Arzenu and writing the fortnightly newsletter.

When my non-WUPJ workload got too heavy,

I resigned and managed to stay on the outskirts for a few years. But it seems there's a magnet that keeps pulling me back in – a little over a year ago, Leslie Bergman and Miriam Kramer persuaded me to take over the EUPJ's monthly newsletter!

It seems that the trajectory of my life was definitely influenced by my attendance on the Beutel Leadership Seminar.

I'm not complaining – it has enabled me to have experiences I would never have had without it – and I'm certainly not the only one who was affected.

Sonja Guentner and I were roommates at the seminar that year and look where she finds herself. And it's quite interesting that we have come full circle and ended up working together. Other Europeans include Rachel Dohme, Irith Michelsohn and Yuval (Paul) Adam from Germany, Matt Thornfield from the UK, and Marek Jezowski from Poland, all of whom are still involved in the movement in one way or another.

Perhaps it's your turn now? The [2019 Beutel Seminar for Progressive Jewish Leadership](#) takes place from February 7-17. Participants must be recommended by their community (ie: rabbi, Jewish professional and/or local lay leader) for their dedication and commitment to their communities (past and future). Send a representative from your community or, if you would like to experience it yourself, approach your leadership. You won't regret it. – [Darryl Egnal \(newsletter@eupj.org\)](#)



## A newsletter for everyone

The EUPJ's monthly newsletter is YOUR newsletter. It is the best way for you to share your news with other communities within the EUPJ and to let the rest of the WUPJ communities around the world know what is happening in Europe.

While we try to cover events in all EUPJ communities in the cities and countries of our membership, it is impossible to do this without your help. If you have held an event in the six weeks prior to publication of our newsletter, please send us an

article with photos so we can share your story with our readers. If you have an upcoming event that you would like people to know about, let us know all the details so we can include them.

We have people helping us with translation from French, German, Italian and Spanish, so if you don't have any English-speakers to write for you, please send your contributions in a language with which you are comfortable.

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## EUPJ EU Office opening: Brussels November 9-11

The Brussels Shabbaton is going to be a weekend of celebration and commemoration, beginning on Shabbat evening, November 9, and running through to the open Executive Board meeting on Sunday November 11.

The highlight of the event will be the official opening of the EUPJ's European Union Office on Saturday evening, a celebration of the future of Progressive Judaism in the EU.

But the commemoration of the centennial

anniversary of Armistice Day in 1918 on November 11 as well as the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht (November 9/10, 1938) will ensure that we never forget the past.

If you haven't already registered, you have one more day to do so. Registration closes before

Shabbat on Friday October 26 so don't delay. We'd love you all to join us for a warm Jewish gathering with both the community of Beth Hillel and IJC



Brussels in the European capital. It will be a weekend you will never forget. [Register online now.](#)

If you miss the deadline and would like to add your name to a waiting list in case of cancellations, contact [Sonja Guentner](#) or [Deborah Grabiner](#).

**Booking deadline: Friday October 26**

### A newsletter for everyone cont...

And if your language is not included in the above, please ask for volunteers within your community to help with translation into English. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, we cannot produce the newsletter in other languages and we apologise for this.

The deadlines for content are included here. These dates are not written in stone. There is some flexibility for events happening after, but you will need to discuss these directly with the editor.

We want to share your stories and bring you a monthly newsletter that is fully representative of all our EUPJ communities. Please help us help you to do this. – [The Editorial Team](#)

### EUPJ Newsletter Deadlines: 2018/2019

MONTH	COPY/PHOTOS	PUBLISH
Nov/Dec	Wed 21/11/2018	Thu 06/12/2018
January	Wed 02/01/2019	Thu 17/01/2019
February	Wed 13/02/2019	Thu 28/02/2019

**Please note: These dates are subject to change.**

**PLEASE NOTE: While every effort is made to provide accurate information and correct spellings of names in this newsletter, sometimes gremlins step in and mistakes appear. This is not intentional and we apologise in advance if we have offended or upset anyone.**

## Who's who at the EUPJ?

### Honorary Life Presidents

Leslie Bergman  
Ruth Cohen  
Jeffery Rose

### President

Gordon Smith

### Vice-President

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein

### Chairman

Sonja Guentner

### Vice-Chairman: Governance

John Cohen

### Vice-Chairman: Finance

David Pollak

### Vice-Chairman: Israel & Twinning

Michael Reik

### Education and Interfaith

Rabbi Menno ten Brink

### EUPJ Rabbinic Assembly

Rabbi Dr René Pfertzel,  
Chairman

### European Beit Din

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein,  
Chairman  
Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick,  
Convener

### EUPJ's European Union Office

Bill (William) Echikson, Director



### Administrator

Deborah Grabiner  
[administrator@eupj.org](mailto:administrator@eupj.org)

### Newsletter Editor

Darryl Egnal, Israel  
[newsletter@eupj.org](mailto:newsletter@eupj.org)

## Revelatory moment in California

In August, I was on a holiday with my family in California. We spent some days in Los Angeles and on a Sunday, had brunch at a so-called 'farmer's market' in Santa Monica. This was extremely agreeable – a jazz band in the background and good, fresh, if 'over-described', food on the menu. Scrambled eggs on toast became a paragraph ("drizzled with thrice-filtered extra virgin olive oil from Puglia... etc"). But hey, we were in California and so I went to explore some of the stands which sold not only produce, but also all variety of exotic services ('Petticores' for dogs and cats).

I happened upon a stand of a local synagogue and picked up the brochure. The congregation was part of the Conservative Movement and in reading through the brochure, I got the impression of a community with a solid organisational structure, but also with a range of activities that included a good dose of what I will loosely describe as 'Havdalah on the beach' activities. Non-traditional, catering more to the individual than the community, some a little experimental-looking, catering to the young adult, Generation Z/ Millennials that are eschewing more traditional synagogue activities. An issue with which we are becoming very familiar.

In the brochure was a message from the Rabbi. He relates a parable.

*A devout rebbe walks to the local prayer house for morning prayers. Every morning his son dutifully follows him, a few paces back, not noticed by his father who walks head bowed, hands behind his back, 'praying that he can pray' until they get to the prayer house.*

*He notices his son generally once they are in the prayer house. One day, he observes his son to be absent, arriving a few minutes late. He says nothing, but this pattern repeats itself over several days. Finally the rebbe can't contain himself anymore and asks: "My son, why are you always late for morning prayers?"*

*"Because, my father, I first go to the forest to pray."*

*"Why must you go to the forest to pray? You can pray anywhere the Holy One, blessed be He, is everywhere where you are."*

*"Because, my father, I am not everywhere and I need to find the Holy One, blessed be He, where I am."*



**"Jewish continuity depends on a balance between the needs of the individual and the needs of the community." – Leslie Bergman**

At first, I thought nothing particular of this story. Rabbis need to write for their congregational newsletters – week in, week out! But then I had a 'Eureka moment'. Within this parable and the structure of this particular congregation, I found a clue to formulating an answer to something that has been on my mind for some time. And here it is.

There is a well known concept of Judaism being a struggle between that which is Particularistic, ie: specific to the Jewish religion (eg: the laws of Kashrut) and that which is Universalistic, ie: basic to the moral and ethical principles of Western civilisation (eg concern for the stranger).

I believe it unarguable that all streams of Judaism would agree that the Jewish people owes its continuity to the structures it has created over the centuries – congregations, schools, kindergartens, *cheders*, youth movements, summer camps,

hospitals, retirement homes – and the list goes on and on. A particular genius of the Jewish people. Nobody does this better than we do. But then, as we see in the parable, Jews have a need to find their religion, maybe, in a broader sense, their 'space' as individuals. The latter in contemporary times is manifesting itself strongly in a younger generation who tend more to individual expressions of Judaism and less towards Jewish life

organised around institutions (Charedi Jews may be the exception).

This issue is amplified by social media, which promotes virtual communities as opposed to physical communities. Throughout the Jewish world, we are grappling with this issue with all sorts of 'experiments', changes in the structure of congregations, the use of physical facilities and so forth. It seemed to me that the California congregation I referred to earlier had found a reasonable balance to this vexing issue, maybe partially consequent to the specific California environment.

And so, with great *chutzpah*, I frame another tenet of Judaism, in addition to, but not replacing, the 'Individualistic vs Universalistic' one.

"Jewish continuity depends on a balance between the needs of the individual and the needs of the community." – Leslie Bergman



### Memories, meaning and celebration

The month of September was filled with various activities hosted by Jewish communities throughout Europe. While most of them were related directly to the High Holy Days and the Chaggim, some were based on tradition and held in the spirit of the New Year, like visiting the cemetery.

Before Rosh Hashanah, members of the Jewish Community of Hamelin visited its two cemeteries as a community. They went from grave to grave and heard memories and stories of relatives and friends buried there, as well as survivors of the Shoah and Russian persecution during Stalin's rule.

Community members from Hamelin and guests from Bad Pyrmont gathered together for Erev Rosh Hashanah with Rabbi Dr Ulrike Offenberg in our synagogue. After the Rosh Hashanah morning services, we walked to the Hamel stream and held our *Tashlich* ceremony.

Rabbi Offenberg returned for Yom Kippur and took the congregation through a meaningful Day of



Atonement and the conclusion of the 10 Days of Repentance.

"*Ne'ilah* means closing the gates, and that means the gates of heaven," she said. "The gates will close... but hopefully something has opened up for us during these holidays."

During Sukkot, we welcomed guests from Bad Pyrmont and Hannover as Rabbi Offenberg reiterated the meaning of this festival. The Sukkah remained adorned for seven days and was visited by members and communities throughout the week, which culminated in our Simchat Torah festivities. – Rachel Dohme

### Historic Torah scroll celebrated in Prague

The much-talked-about Czech Torah scroll that found its way back to Prague earlier this year was used during High Holy Days services and the *chaggim* that followed for the first time in decades.

It was one of the many Czech Torah scrolls collected by the Nazis as they deported the Jews to concentration camps. They were found in the Czech Republic's city of Kolin after the war.

In April at the EUPJ Biennial Conference in Prague, Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, Rabbi Emeritus of the Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue, presented this Torah with an historic past to the Jewish Liberal Union (ZLU).

The scroll that was passed on to the Prague congregation had spent many decades in England and was returned to its homeland in a moving ceremony during the Shabbat morning service attended by WUPJ and EUPJ members from

around the world. This was the first Shabbat service at which the Torah was used.

The JTA published an article about the Torah scroll just before Yom Kippur. You can [read the article](#) to find out how this "new Torah scroll symbolises a Liberal Jewish revival in the Czech Republic". –

Photo: David Maxa



The Spanish Synagogue in which services were held during the EUPJ Biennial Conference

### Do not remain indifferent

Inclusion, conversation, freedom from all prejudices: these were the most important messages to the world from the Bet Orim Reform Jewish Congregation in Budapest during this year's High Holy Days. Serious and courageous ideas from that country of the European Union, where the current government does not respect the core values of democracy nor difference of race, people, religion and opinions.

On Erev Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Ferenc Raj welcomed members of Bet Orim and foreign guests from the United States and Israel. In his trilingual (Hungarian, English and Hebrew) teaching, he spoke about the most important values: unity and compassion. The peak of his message was taken from the *Book of Deuteronomy*: Do not remain indifferent.

Ferenc Jávor (Fegya), the leader of the Budapest Klezmer Band, presented an appropriate Jewish piano solo. Jávor was born in Munkács (Ukraine) and moved to Hungary during the Soviet era a few decades ago. His band has given concerts all over the world.

On Erev Yom Kippur, our rabbi emphasised that we, Jews, are one people who must accept, enjoy

and cherish the diversity of Jewish expression. He elaborated on the meaning of the chosen people: being Jewish is not just a privilege, but also a responsibility to work on *tikkun olam* (repairing the world).

A Sukkah was built in the garden of a congregational member and the Sukkot celebrations were attended by many families.

Simchat Torah was celebrated by dozens of Bet Orim members in the main hall of the Jewish Heritage Foundation of Hungary, with all the usual traditions making it a meaningful celebration – reading the last verses, rewinding of the Torah, starting from the beginning, and culminating in dancing and enthusiastic candy throwing. –

Ákos Fellner. Photos: Krisztina Csí-Komor



### A month of meaning and festivity

The Sim Shalom Congregation's tradition is to have a community dinner after the Erev Rosh Hashanah service, and that was no different this year.

Cantor Diana Senechal led a beautiful service with several new melodies, and the highlight was Rabbi Katalin Kelemen's sermon on the topic of 'Birth and Giving Birth'. Several foreign guests were present to help us celebrate. A study session was led by the Rabbi the next morning and our *Tashlich* ceremony on the banks of the Danube late on Monday afternoon was well attended and was a very spiritual occasion.

The Kol Nidre Service was also led by Cantor Senechal, and Rabbi Kelemen gave a sermon on 'Hope'. Services on Yom Kippur were followed by a traditional Break Fast at the end of the day.

Our Sukkot celebration was held in the rabbi's flat with a grapevine-covered trellis on the balcony forming a natural Sukkah under the stars.

And finally, Simchat Torah was celebrated in the social hall of our good Unitarian friends, since the JCC Budapest Balint House, with whom we share a building, had too many other programmes that evening and couldn't accommodate us.

The evening started with a Torah Dance, held early for the benefit of the young children, and the Blessing of the children under the 'tent-covering' of our largest *Tallit*.

This was followed by the reading of the end of the Torah, the death of Moses, and the beginning, *Bereshit*, to re-start the cycle of the Torah readings.

– Jess Weil



## High Holy Days & Chaggim

### Israel: An infinite ideal

With the High Holy Days so early this year, Rabbi Donald Goor and Cantor Evan Kent arrived in Milan from Jerusalem at the end of August to run services at Beth Shalom. Cantor Kent also officiated at the wedding of one of our members, Julie Blitzler on September 2.

This is the fourth year that they have come to lead our services for the High Holy Days. On September 7, we held a Kabbalat Shabbat service at our congregational residence to help set the mood for the upcoming holidays after the summer break.

In addition to registering our highest membership participation to date, our Rosh Hashanah, Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur services were also attended by many visitors who were in Milan for business or on vacation.

Rabbi Goor's sermon, entitled 'Zionism is an Infinite Ideal', was both thought-provoking and controversial. Living in Israel is not what he had expected. You can find out why in the news section of our [website](#). His sermon is available in both English and Italian. – **Carol Ross**



L-R: Cantor Evan Kent and Rabbi Donald Goor

### Highest High Holy Day attendance



L-R: Rabbi Joel Oseran and Cantor Louise Treitman

Rabbi Joel Oseran from Israel and Cantor Louise Treitman from Boston conducted Beth Hillel Rome's High Holy Days services, which were held at the Grand Hotel Gianicolo.

We had a very large turn-out at our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services by Beth Hillel members as well as many Italian and foreign visitors and Jewish students residing in Milan. This amazing turn-out helped us set a record for the highest attendance at our High Holy Day services ever!

The community Rosh Hashanah *seder* took place in the roof garden of the hotel overlooking Rome. More than 110 people joined us for this wonderful evening. At the centre of the dinner was a very lively table with more than 20 children, who were marvellously entertained by Cantor Treitman singing Rosh Hashanah songs.

The High Holy Days services followed the Roman *Nusach* (prayer rite) integrated with Ashkenazi and Libyan melodies.

At the end of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Services, everyone stood under a *Tallit* for the traditional *Birkat Cohanim* (Priestly Blessing) with Roman *Nusach*. A very emotional moment!

About 200 people attended Yom Kippur Services, which ended with a lovely vegetarian Break Fast. – **Fabio Benjamin Fantini**





## High Holy Days & Chaggim

### A tale of discovery

Earlier this year, while I was diarising our summer cruise dates, I realised that we would land in Lisbon the morning before Rosh Hashanah. I knew we had a Progressive/Reform *kehillah* there – Ohel Jakov – as I had had the pleasure of meeting some of the community members four years earlier.

So I contacted their passionate leader and champion – Adriana de Souza – and arranged for us to join them for dinner and a service on Erev Rosh Hashanah.

We were greeted with open arms and hearts by Adriana, her family and the smiling faces of some 20 members of this community.

Also present were other overseas visitors: a young secular Israeli couple travelling around Portugal; a couple from Santa Fe New Mexico (whose rabbi, Rabbi Neil Amswych, I had known in London); and a young Argentinian man and his American, Portuguese-speaking girlfriend.

At the end of the short service, we heard the sound of the *shofar*, blown with pride by one of the members of the congregation. We then ate, situated around a long table overflowing with home-made food, good conversation and sharing our stories.

Adriana asked me to say a few words of welcome. This proved to be very emotional for me: it was the first time in a long time that I had not been with my



Connecting with Ohel Jakov in Lisbon

immediate family in Australia or my cousins in Israel, but I was able, on behalf of the World Union, to express my joy at being able share this special day in our calendar with fellow Progressive Reform, and even secular Jews, who had come to celebrate together as an extended family. Read the full article [here](#). – [Phyllis Dorey](#)

If you're travelling and would like to attend services and a Shabbat meal, download the [WUPJ Find a Community](#) app and you'll have access to 900+ worldwide communities.

### Sharing the holidays

#### Tashlich by the Seine

MJLF Paris held its *Tashlich* ceremony on the banks of the Seine. It was a beautiful, warm afternoon. *Tashlich* means "to cast" and it refers to the custom of casting away our sins on the water. A group of about 50 people discussed the meaning of *Tashlich* and performed the *mitzvah* with Rabbis Yann Boissière (centre in white) and Delphine Horvilleur (with daughter in arms).

#### Youth celebrate Sukkot

Under the watchful eye of 'parent protectors' who volunteer to manage security – and much more -- for MJLF's Talmud Torah, students decorated the community Sukkah with fruit, vegetables and family photos. Teachers explained the Sukkot traditions and encouraged discussion of Sukkot values and



their significance for daily life. Responding to the theme of *Ushpizin* (guests), the children drew up lists of famous people and family members they wished to invite into the Sukkah. – [Robert Ley](#)



### An interfaith Rosh Hashanah at Mosaic Liberal



Mosaic Liberal Synagogue in Harrow welcomed guests from Wembley Central Masjid over Rosh Hashanah. The Jewish and Muslim communities joined together to celebrate the New Year with a special service led by Rabbi Dr Frank Dabba Smith.

"We have a long and good relationship with our friends at the Wembley Central Mosque that has included celebrating festivals together, collaborating on our shared concerns about hate crime, working with EcoPeace-Middle East and training police officers together," said Rabbi Dabba Smith.

"We also work closely with Christian communities and, especially, the Methodist Church. This includes taking a group of Methodists in October on a fact-finding pilgrimage to the Middle East where we will especially be concerned with water issues."

In his sermon, Rabbi Dabba Smith spoke about how, as a result of our anxieties and fears concerning the state of the world today, many people turn to a mythical past for inspiration instead of seeking to help others who are vulnerable in the present and having hope for the future.

### Seven new shofar blowers at Northwood & Pinner

Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue (NPLS) in Middlesex recruited seven young shofar blowers this Rosh Hashanah.

The youngsters, who were all trained by regular shofar blower Carole Kettle, showed off their skills at a special afternoon tea held at the synagogue.

"As our membership is much larger than our synagogue building's capacity, the Watford Coliseum is the only local venue big enough for our High Holy Days services," said Northwood's Rabbi Aaron Goldstein.

"The parking is not ideal and some of our more mature members find it difficult to come. Accessibility

is vital for us, so as well as live streaming our services we also held a Rosh Hashanah tea back at the synagogue in the afternoon," he said.

"We did not want the tea just to be for older or

infirm members; we wanted it to reflect who we are as a community. We were so delighted that young families also chose to enjoy the atmosphere and honey cake."

For a number of years, our shofar blower, Carole Kettle, has been teaching young members to blow the shofar and seven of them blew this Rosh Hashanah with Carole.

The tea really was an opportunity to enthuse our next generation."





### Jews visit Muslims after hate crime attack

Twenty leaders from Shir Hayim and the Willesden Minyan, two Progressive Jewish communities based in North-West London, visited the Al-Majlis Al Hussein Association, who suffered a hate crime attack on Yom Kippur in which three people were injured. This visit was intended as a gesture of solidarity and care as neighbours.

The Al-Majlis Al Hussein Association, a Shia community in Cricklewood, experience the attack on the evening of September 18, when the driver of a car drove into a crowd outside the Association's centre shouting Islamophobic abuse.

Two congregants from the community were hospitalised. The Metropolitan Police described the incident as an Islamophobic and racist hate crime.

The following day – Yom Kippur and the day of the eve of Ashura, a Muslim commemoration of the 10th day of the month of Muharram – Shir Hayim and the Willesden Minyan visited the association to share flowers and express their solidarity. The members were warmly received as they asked for the names of the injured for the Jewish prayer of healing.

"Brothers and sisters, thank you, it is very much appreciated," said Mustafa Al-Balaghi, a member of the Al-Hussaini Association. "I want you to know, we would have done the same for you. If you were attacked,

we would come to stand alongside you."

Rabbi Daniel Lichman said: "Our community was shocked by the news of this devastating hate crime, committed against a community who had gathered, like us, for religious practice on a sacred day. It was clear that we should reach out in solidarity, offering comfort in any way we could to our neighbours."

Read the full article [here](#).



### A Simchat Torah first for Kol Chai



An entire Torah was unrolled for the very first time at Kol Chai Hatch End Reform Community in Middlesex to celebrate Simchat Torah. Families watched their rescued 18th century Czech scroll being unrolled from beginning to end, held up by gloved members of the community, as it wound its way around the shul hall.

Summarising each section and with the children following her progress along the Torah, Rabbi Naomi Goldman said: "The Torah is a mirror, a journey we walk every year. This gave us a chance to engage with it physically – and walk through it in 10 minutes! It was a fun and multi-generational experience."



## Rabbi receives Global Hope Coalition award

**MJLF's Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur was chosen by the international foundation, Global Hope Coalition, as one of five 2018 "Heroes Against Extremism and Intolerance".**

The award was made by Ronald Lauder, President of the World Jewish Congress, on September 28, in the presence of heads of state and government in New York for the United Nations General Assembly.

Rabbi Horvilleur was the first rabbi to receive this global award. Nazi hunters, Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, were honoured in this way when these awards were first granted in 2016.

In presenting the award to Rabbi Horvilleur, Ronald Lauder spoke of her as a leading voice against hate, racism and anti-Semitism in Europe and a benevolent guide in troubled times.

For further information on the Global Hope Coalition, click [here](#). – **Robert Ley**

**L-R: Irina Bokova, former Director-General of UNESCO (Bulgaria), Ronald Lauder and Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur**



## Associations Day volunteers

Four enthusiastic volunteers represented the MJLF at the annual "Associations Day" hosted in the local Town Hall on September 15. The aim of the MJLF stand at the event was to give visitors a glimpse of MJLF and its multiple activities.

MJLF joined this event for the first time as one of 250 groups presenting their colours in an astonishing range of fields from family and youth to employment and commerce; solidarity and environment to religion, culture and leisure.

The day produced a good harvest of names and email addresses from people interested in following MJLF's activities more closely, participating in youth activities or joining those that read the names of Shoah victims every year at the Yom Hashoah memorial event. – **Robert Ley**



**In front of the town hall of Paris' 15th District**



**L-R: Danielle Cohen and Annie Cohen**



## Germany

### Religious educators attend Hamelin seminar

A group of 25 Christian teachers and a Muslim religious educator, Professor Dr Ursula Rudnick, visited Jewish Community of Hamelin's synagogue on September 4. Kirsten Rabe from the Loccum Institute for Religious Education had invited the delegates to participate in a session addressing "Jews in Lower Saxony". Rabbi Dr Ulrike Offenbergl designed a day seminar for the guests.

First, she introduced the Jewish community of Hamelin and talked about the challenges posed by the demographic development and the organisational structure of Jewish communities in Germany. Then she led a joint text study of the

weekly Torah reading, Nitzavim.

The afternoon offered a panel discussion on Judaism in religious education. Unfortunately, there are too few Jewish communities in Germany to make a visit to a synagogue part of the regular teaching programme, even though the panellists were convinced of the need for direct contact and visualisation.

We are proud to say that our synagogue offers the opportunity to learn about Judaism first-hand through synagogue tours, led by Rachel Dohme on an annual basis, to more than 50 school classes and church groups. – [Rachel Dohme](#)

## Italy

### Examining FIEP's progress



Delegates from the inaugural FIEP General Assembly in October 2017

The Italian Federation for Progressive Judaism (FIEP), launched on October 15 last year, is hosting a conference on November 4 in Florence at the Mediterraneo Grand Hotel from 10am to 5pm. It will be attended by congregations Beth Hillel, Beth Shalom, Lev Hadash and Shir Hadash, all members of the Federation (Federazione Italiana per l'Ebraismo Progressivo or FIEP), which was established in October last year.

The conference will examine the progress made towards the creation of a national co-ordinating structure for Progressive Judaism in Italy. Among the participants are Bruno di Porto, one of the founders

of the Italian Progressive Movement, and Mario Izcovich, JDC Director of Pan-European Programs, who is going to talk about "Community Building". There will also be a roundtable discussion with the organisations' Presidents.

Participants can also attend the Havdalah service and dinner arranged for the evening before (November 3, 7pm). Those who wish to do so can spend the night in the rooms of the Mediterraneo Grand Hotel. Reservations can be made via [email](#) or calling 055 660247.

For further information about the conference, please [email FIEP](#).



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They support us.**



### Bringing Jewish culture to the people

Or Chadasch, the Liberal Jewish Congregation in Zurich, was host to one of three exhibitions – the art of Valentin Lustig – held during the first-ever week of Jewish Culture in Zurich just before Rosh Hashanah.

The *Kulturstrudel*, launched by the Association for Jewish Culture and Science, was an enormous success and was attended by hundreds of people. Many of the events were sold out.

Or Chadasch had an opening event for one of the art exhibitions, which was open to the public during the week, and a closing event, attended by the artist.

Valentin Lustig is an artist and storyteller. The 10 paintings displayed at Or Chadasch evolved from Mussorgsky's famous piano compositions, "Pictures at an Exhibition".

About 50 people gathered to listen to his stories about the creation of his surreal-fantasy paintings. It was an interesting and informative event and the exhibition was well-attended and enjoyed by all.

The *Kulturstrudel* programme included the opening by States Councillor Daniel Jositsch, followed by a Klezmer concert; a tribute to Leonard Bernstein;



Valentin Lustig

events around Jewish food, Israeli folk dancing; Jewish fashion; and discussion topics.

The other exhibitions were "The Jewishness of Mr Bloom" at the Museum Strauhof and "Strange: What finds from the archive tell us about Swiss-Jewish history" in the Archive of Contemporary History.

### Declaration of Muslims and Jews in Switzerland

**Muslims and Jews from the Federation of Swiss Islamic Umbrella Organisations (FIDS), the Swiss Union of Jewish Communities (SIG) and the Platform of Swiss Liberal Jews (PLIS) came together recently to sign the "Declaration against Antisemitism, Islamophobia and Racism and in favour of Dialogue". This is their statement.**

"We, Jews and Muslims in Switzerland, call on society and in particular our communities, to condemn and combat Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and every form of racism. The aim is to create a climate of reciprocal respect and mutual esteem. This is the basis for genuine dialogue promoting religious peace between all people.

"In August 2014, the Islamic and Jewish umbrella organisations in Switzerland published a first joint declaration against violence and in favour of peace. As a result, dialogue platforms for Jews and Muslims were started. In May 2018, the first Dialogue Prize of the Swiss Jews was awarded at which, among other things, a rabbi and imam were honoured for their joint dialogue contribution. In a time when relations between Muslims and Jews are strained, this belief in dialogue is all the more significant. We take the positive reception of the Dialogue Prize as an opportunity to publish a second joint declaration.

"It is easy to emphasise what we have in common, but genuine dialogue must address what separates us. Mutual prejudices can lead to insecurity, hate and violence between Muslims and Jews as well. It is necessary to counter this decisively among Jews and Muslims and in the whole of society. Thus we condemn Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and every form of racism in particular within our own

communities. The practice and promotion of mutual dialogue is an important response to anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism and hate. This is why we need this dialogue.

"We call on Muslims and Jews and all people in this land to help us with the following:

- We want to combat decisively anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and racism.
- We want to accept and respect the other with his/her own opinion even if we are not always of the same opinion.
- We want to intensify our efforts to strengthen co-operation and mutual getting-to-know-each-other.
- We want to create a climate of reciprocal respect and mutual esteem for genuine dialogue.
- This is our duty as Jews, Muslims and citizens of this country."

For more information and queries:

[Swiss Union of Jewish Communities](#)

Email: [media@swissjews.ch](mailto:media@swissjews.ch)

[Platform of Swiss Liberal Jews](#)

Email: [office@liberaljews.ch](mailto:office@liberaljews.ch)

[Federation of Swiss Islamic Umbrella Organisations](#)

Email: [media@fids.ch](mailto:media@fids.ch)



### Jewish communities caring for refugees

**Progressive Jewish communities across Europe have pledged their support or refugees, especially child refugees, who land on European soil from war-torn countries. Some of these held Sanctuary Sukkot' events to show their commitment, two of which are mentioned here.**

Together with local UK government authorities (known as councils), many Jewish communities have agreed to help resettle refugees, with the councils promising to accept between three and five refugees a year into their communities for 10 years.

At a 'Sanctuary Sukkot' event held at Finchley Progressive Synagogue (FPS), Barnet council leader Richard Cornelius agreed that the borough will take three refugees each year over the next 10 years. Barnet was the first Conservative-led authority to say that it will take more child refugees if the national government provides the necessary funding.

The Finchley action forms part of a national campaign spearheaded by the refugee charity, Safe Passage. Marking 80 years since the Kindertransport rescue operations that brought 10,000 children to safety from Nazi Europe, the 'Our Turn' campaign calls on the UK government to honour this legacy by funding the resettlement of 10,000 child refugees over the next decade.

Leicester City Council is another community that has pledged to accept and support child refugees each year (at least five) for the next 10 years following the 'Sanctuary Sukkot' event at Leicester Progressive Jewish Congregation (LPJC).

Around 70 people attended LPJC, where Rabbi Mark Solomon was joined in the Sukkah by Reverend Tom Wilson of the St Philip's Centre and Imam Shafi Chowdhury of the City Retreat.

The keynote speakers were Ben Abeles – a 93-year-old Kindertransport survivor who became a world-renowned physicist – and a young female refugee from Sudan called Noor who spoke movingly about her recent experiences of conflict and displacement, and then finding a safe and welcoming home in Leicester. Other speakers included young community members Rachel Benn and Solomon Diamond who spoke about the refugees in their family.

According to Rabbi Solomon, Sukkot is about leaving safety and remembering our origins. "As Jews, we think back to our stories of ancient times –



Rabbi Rebecca Birk speaking at FPS's Sanctuary Sukkot event



L-R: Imam Shafi Chowdhury, Reverend Tom Wilson and Rabbi Mark Solomon

of fleeing from slavery and persecution – and yet finding in that a place of hope for the future. We think back 80 years when Jewish children and adults and other people fled persecution... thank God they found their Sukkah, their place of safety."

Read the full story about Finchley's event [here](#) and Leicester's event [here](#).

### New YAD Remembrance Day Tea Party

The 11th day of the 11th month marks exactly 100 years since the end of World War 1 and the Young Adult Division (YAD) of West London Synagogue will mark this historic occasion with a period style tea party. The event will take place at the synagogue on Sunday November 11 from 3-5pm.

Although the deadline to apply as a volunteer has passed (for certain volunteer tasks), if you are

interested in helping out, they may have a few spots left so get in touch with the organisers urgently.

One area in which volunteers may be needed is to join the team of bakers to produce 1914-1918 period cakes and bread according to special recipes (that will be provided).

Please contact [Kathryn](#) to join the Tea Party and [Tirza](#) to volunteer.

### The sounds of Peace Drums

**More than 100 Progressive Jews enjoyed a special performance by the Peace Drums Youth Band to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Israel's Leo Baeck Education Center. The concert was held at Alyth Synagogue in North London, a fitting venue as Rabbi Dr Leo Baeck was the shul's president from 1948 until 1956.**

Alyth's Rabbi Mark Goldsmith spoke of this shared connection and how both institutions have been able to ensure Rabbi Baeck's memory connects them to this day.

"Leo Baeck was a pioneer in building relationships between different faith groups in pre-war Germany. He would surely have been proud to know that the school, which bears his name, is a pioneer in the same work in Israel and is also connected to the synagogue, which he made his home community in London," Rabbi Goldsmith said.

The Leo Baeck Education Center, located in Haifa, is a beacon for Jewish values and an important part of the peace-building process. With nearly 2,700 students, a community centre, sports facilities and a vibrant Progressive synagogue, the egalitarian centre serves more than 35,000 people of all faiths and personal identities. Both Hebrew and Arabic are spoken across its campuses.

The Peace Drums Youth Band consists of 12 young

people from the Leo Baeck High School and the nearby Mar Elias High School, located in the Arab village of Ibillin.

According to Rabbi Goldstein, the Leo Baeck Education Center is a clear illustration of what Israeli society can look like. "If you ever lack hope, it provides such an injection. This concert was an incredible and very fitting way to celebrate 80 years of such a vital institution and I hope it will encourage people to visit Haifa and see this living investment in peace for themselves."

Read the [full article](#) to find out how members of the band felt about their shared experiences.

**Progressive Jewish rabbis with the Peace Drums Youth Band**



### A taste of Israel gap year

Ten young Liberal Jews took part in LJY-Netzer's Shnat Experience event, getting a flavour of what it's like to spend a gap year in Israel.

The group spent the day living, cooking and working together – as well as learning more about

the Shnat Netzer programme. They were also visited by past Shnatties, who spoke about their gap year experiences.

"From all pitching in to cook a delicious curry to talking about our Jewish values and inspirations, the day allowed our members to find out more about each other and the new-look Shnat Netzer programme," said Ellie Lawson, LJY-Netzer Movement Worker.

Shnat Netzer has been operating for more than 20 years and sees participants from all over the world taking part. It is run by Netzer Olami, the global youth movement for Progressive Jews.

The gap year helps young people discover their strengths, understand their Jewish values, make new friends of many nationalities, learn Hebrew and experience the many different sides of Israel.

There is still plenty of time to register interest and find out more, including at a Shnat information evening later in the year. [Email Ellie](#) for information.





## IRAC wins 1m NIS discrimination lawsuit

In a precedent-setting ruling against gender discrimination in Israel, Radio Kol Barama has been ordered by the Israeli court to pay one million

shekels (about \$280,000) in damages for excluding women from its broadcasting programmes.

Representing the Orthodox feminist group Kolech,

the [Israel Religious Action Center \(IRAC\)](#) successfully argued that ultra-Orthodox radio station, Radio Kol Barama, was practicing discrimination by not allowing female voices to be broadcast on air.

"It was the first class-action suit dealing with women's rights in Israel and one of the first dealing with discrimination in general," explained Orly Erez-Likhovski, Head of IRAC's legal department and the litigator in the case.

Orly was interviewed on *i24 News* about the class-action lawsuit. Listen to the interview [here](#). Read the full article in [The Times of Israel](#).



## WUPJ

### World Union Jewish Music Cruise

The WUPJ is organising a Jewish Music Cruise around the Iberian Peninsula that promises to be memorable in every way. Passengers will be able to share in Jewish fellowship and music from Sephardic to Ladino and beyond. During the tour, we will also celebrate our global movement and history with concerts and prayer services, as well as meetings with local Progressive Reform communities in Lisbon and Barcelona.

The cruise will take place next year from May 3-11 aboard Azamara Journey, a luxury cruise ship, which departs from Lisbon and travels to various places along the Iberian coastline, culminating in Barcelona.

The tour will be led by Rabbi Daniel Frelander, WUPJ President, and features Rabbi Joe Black, an inspiring singer/songwriter, concerts, sing-alongs, learning opportunities and more. There are also optional pre- and post-tours in Lisbon and



Barcelona. So don't miss this enriching travel opportunity! Find out more [here](#) and sign up!

## Education & Events

### Power, Privilege and Responsibility

Applications are now open for the inaugural Pardes Winter Learning Intensive on Power, Privilege and Responsibility for students and young professionals, which takes place from January 6-10 at [Pardes](#) in Jerusalem.

Join them as they delve into Biblical, Rabbinic and Modern Jewish conversations on power, class, gender, identity, language and more.

The programme is open to those from all Jewish backgrounds and learning levels. Applications close on November 15. Click [here](#) for more information.

Applicants can apply for the [Yesod Professional Development Fund](#) for tuition and flight support.



# Judaism in Dialogue with Popular Cultures

Was Superman Jewish? Why are Christmas and Chanukah so close? Is there a Klezmer tune behind that rap song?

Jewish communities have always been in dialogue with their surroundings. Jewish art, culture, and ideas have greatly influenced the non-Jewish world, and vice versa. How did that happen? What does that teach us about Jewish history and geography, and about Judaism in general?

Join [Moishe House](#) for a Jewish Learning and Leadership Retreat entitled, "Give and Take: Judaism in Dialogue with Popular Cultures", in Budapest from December 14-16 to find out more. You'll come back with new skills to bring Jewish insight into your everyday programming and secular insights into your Jewish programming.

Moishe House welcomes participants of

all Jewish movements and practices to attend our Jewish learning retreats. Moishe House Retreats are a place to learn how to be "youish" – Jewish in a way that makes sense for you! Click [here](#) to apply for the retreat.



## Limmud events coming up in Europe



Diverse, grassroots Jewish learning Limmud events will take place in Europe over the next few months.

[Limmud Berlin-Tag](#)  
(November 3-4),  
[Limmud Stockholm](#)  
(November 17-18),  
[Limmud Cologne- Tag](#)  
(December 16). And of course, [Limmud Festival 2018](#) in Birmingham (December 23-27).

For more information or to find out about next year's events, go to the [Limmud website](#).



## New challenges for European Jewry

The third Europe 2025 Summit of European Jewish leadership will take place in Prague from November 18-20. The summit will focus on discussing the emerging challenges and opportunities for European Jewry in the upcoming years, and the subsequent need for responsiveness in creative and constructive ways.

Topics include: Security and responsiveness; Resilience and Sustainability; Identifying Succession Leaders; Sources of Funding for Services; and Raising the Bar in Jewish Education.

The meeting is addressed to Jewish community leaders, directors of organisations and programmes from all denominations within Judaism.

Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.

