



European Union for Progressive Judaism

September 2017 Newsletter

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Chairman's message

We are now in Elul, the month preceding the holiest season of the Jewish year. It is a time for reflection, a time for reaching out and a time for new beginnings. On behalf of EUPJ's Management Committee I wish all our readers a happy, healthy, successful, Progressive and safe 5778. As is apparent this is a more dangerous world than we could imagine (see my colleague Leslie Bergman's column on this page) but we remain resolute that there is a future for us in Europe. Despite all the uncertainty and anger it is our firm belief that we will not again be hounded out of Europe.

In the paragraph above I mentioned new beginnings. This edition of the newsletter, very sadly, is the last one edited by Arthur Buchman. For more than a decade he has without fail produced an outstanding publication – often under challenging circumstances. Wherever I travel, and this also means beyond Europe, I receive many compliments on our newsletter. It has been a joy working with Arthur who remained unflappable even when receiving, for example, an email from me on publication day to say that there is a breaking story for the front page.

We are all in Arthur's debt and I am sure that we all wish him, and Irene, a long and happy retirement from his EUPJ duties. Arthur: thank you so much.



Arthur Buchman

Miriam Kramer

Editor's message

I thank Miriam for her extraordinarily kind words. Being EUPJ's newsletter editor has been a very meaningful part of my life and a great opportunity to contribute to a community I am grateful to be a part of - and which I will continue to serve as a member of the EUPJ Executive Committee. Arthur Buchman



"Is It Time?"

Last year I attended the closing session of a major annual event in the European Jewish calendar, the London Jewish Book Week. The closing session that year featured three well known figures of the European literary intellectual scene in debate – Is it time for Jews in Europe to once again pack their bags? They concluded not.



Leslie Bergman

Earlier this week I was in Berlin and went to an excellent but chilling exhibition, "Berlin 1937 – In the Shadow of Tomorrow". That it was "time" for German Jews in 1937 was abundantly obvious – perhaps with the benefit of hindsight. The institutions of state had turned against the Jews. Jewish life and property would be attacked, not protected. Those proud German citizens felt that despite open anti-Semitism, the country that their fathers had fought for in a world war that had ended a mere 20 years ago would not turn against them. The signs were glaring – but many had nowhere to go.

Dear friends, - it is again the time of year where we Jews change from refreshing mind and body during summer vacation to refreshing the soul during the High Holy Days. There are so many things to contemplate (dare I say some of them during the Yom Kippur afternoon service?). Are the Houston floods a message from the Eternal that global climate accords should be adhered to? Do we Jews have a special angle on a potentially looming nuclear disaster involving North Korea? Do Brexit and Trump signify a return to the inward-looking world of the nineteen thirties? – and we know what that brought. Is there any good news at all? Well actually there is, for example, major breakthroughs on the medical front and the start of the decline of polluting diesel engine.

It is difficult in light of repetitive Jihadist terror attacks

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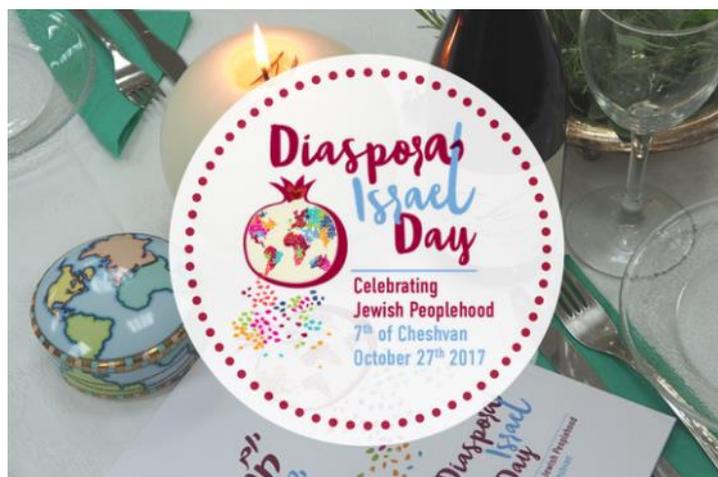
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**Diaspora Israel Day
Cheshvan 7 5778 - October 27 2017**



For thousands of years, Jews have lived around the world, scattered across five continents. Yet throughout all these years Jewish communities across the globe maintained a complex and rich dialogue, creating a unique thread that binds Jews living in different parts of the world.

On the upcoming 7th of Cheshvan, join us in celebrating the deep bond that connects Jewish communities around the world. For more information on how to mark Diaspora Israel Day in YOUR community visit our website - www.DiasporalsraelDay.org or download [the Diaspora Israel Day Tractate](#).

What does “shana tova” mean?

“Shana tova” means “Have a good year” or “Happy New Year” in Hebrew. A similar expression is L’shana tova umetukah, which means “for a good and sweet year.” “Gmar hatima tova” literally means “a good signing/sealing.” This is a traditional greeting during the days from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur, referring to the belief that on Rosh Hashanah our fates are written, or inscribed, in the Book of Life, and on Yom Kippur we are sealed in it.

Rabbis for High Holy Days

Are you a rabbi wanting to serve a community over the High Holy Days? Or are you a congregation which needs a rabbi over that period?

Through the good offices of WUPJ’s Rabbi Steve Burnstein we are inviting you to make contact so he can match rabbis and congregations. If you are a rabbi please indicate which languages you speak and if you are a community please let us know which languages are comprehensible to you.

We can make no promises but will try to make as many matches as we can. Rabbi Burnstein can be contacted at steve@wupj.org.il.

Synagogues everywhere

Progressive congregations and Shabbat services can be found nearly everywhere during your travels. Click on the link to find a synagogue in [Europe](#).



Dublin Jewish Progressive Congregation

Please support

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



Letters

I want to wish you well in the future and want to thank you for all the work you have done for the Newsletter. It’s always been such a pleasant experience working with you.

Wilhelmina Hein, LJG Twente – Netherlands

Registration is OPEN

[Click here](#)



REGENERATION
Building the Future
Thursday 26 - Sunday 29 April 2018

We are



Registration is easy and can be done in less than five minutes. A couple of months before the conference begins you can select workshop options, Shabbat afternoon tours, plenary sessions as well as other events.

Fees vary depending on what type of delegate you are, such as a young adult or student rabbi and when you register. The early bird fee runs until December 31 and the mid-rate to February 28.

Options are available for attending certain events for individuals who cannot attend the full conference.



Speakers and workshops: We shall shortly announce some truly captivating speakers and workshops which will reflect our conference theme of Building the Future. These will be of particular interest to new and established community members as well as aspiring leaders of the future.

Post-conference tours

Following the conference, we have some great tours lined up, including visits to Terezin, Kolin and Kutna Hora, Karlovy Vary and Plzen.



Kutna Hora



Plzen



Terezin



Karlovy Vary

Tour leader: Led by our very own Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, these daily tours will return to Prague each night where accommodation has been reserved at our conference hotel, the Marriott, at conference rates. These tours are offered at prices which cannot be beaten and will round off your Czech experience wonderfully. A separate flyer for these tours is under preparation.

Read more on the next page!

David Pollak

EUPJ Biennial Conference

Prague – a City of Dreams Regeneration 2018 - Building the Future EUPJ Biennial Conference in Prague



Registration is now open, so what are you waiting for? [Click here now.](#)

Our conference runs from:

Thursday April 26 to Sunday April 29 with post conference tours running through to May 1.

Registration rates for this conference will be:

- Early bird from September 1 to December 31
- Mid-rate rate from January 1 to February 28
- Standard rate from March 1 onwards

The fees will be as follows:

	£	€	\$
Early bird	320	400	420
Mid-rate	350	440	460
Standard	380	480	500
Young adults & student rabbis	160	200	210
Young leaders special	50	65	70

In keeping with the theme of our conference, **Regeneration - Building the Future**, we wish to



encourage as many young people as possible to attend. We shall be inviting all our delegates to sponsor young leaders, young adults and student rabbis when completing their registration form. We shall also be approaching communities, patrons, and supporters of the EUPJ and Progressive Judaism for contributions which will help everyone to attend Conference. As in the past, the Roswell Fund, which has enabled hundreds of individuals

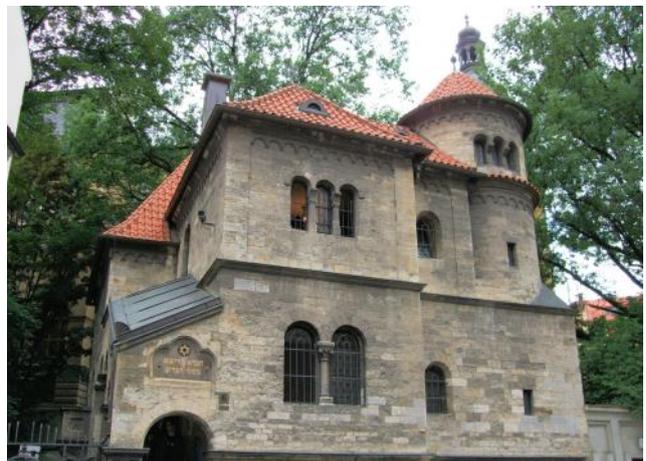
from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Spain and Italy to attend our conferences over the years, will again be offering grants of up to 85% of the early bird rate. However, those grants are limited and will not be available after December 31. And what's on offer? Apart from services, dinners, and an action-packed programme, filled with speakers and workshops that will go to the core of what is important to all of us, we shall be looking to the future of our movement and Progressive Judaism and to those people who will lead and shape that future.



Beautiful Prague will form the backdrop to our conference experience. There will be a selection of tours, both on foot and by coach, which will feature visits to Prague's rich heritage of historic buildings and Jewish and general places of interest. Furthermore, we shall be offering day tours to follow the conference from the 29th April to 1st May, which will take us out of Prague to places such as Terezin, Karlovy Vary, Kolin, Kutna Hora, Cesky Krumlov and Plzen. Details of these tours and costs are on the registration site.



We all hope that you and your friends and family will be able to share what promises to be an exciting, fulfilling and memorable experience in Prague next April. **David Pollak**



Belgium



Side by Side - IJC and Beth Hillel to co-locate

The two liberal communities of Brussels – IJC and Beth Hillel - are delighted to announce that they will co-locate under the same Beth Hillel roof as of January 1, 2018. The boards and rabbis of both communities will do their utmost to make this co-habitation attractive and mutually fulfilling. The 'Side by Side' services at Beth Hillel earlier this year were viewed very positively by the vast majority of IJC and Beth Hillel members.

Says IJC president Steve Brummel: "To be clear, this is not a merger. The IJC will share a location, but operate separately from Beth Hillel; but of course we look forward to important synergies in terms of community-building, sharing space and cooperating with each other."

Beth Hillel Chairman Gilbert Lederman is also enthusiastic. "Our 'co-habitation' will add momentum to the development of liberal and reform Judaism in Brussels and Belgium as a whole. We see IJC's arrival as a regenerating force which can only be beneficial for our members and families."

Each community is confident that this 'Side by Side' approach will give them the opportunity not only to continue to exist, but to truly flourish.



Leadership in unity
L-R: IJC president Steve Brummel,
EUPJ chairman Miriam Kramer,
Beth Hillel chairman Gilbert Lederman

IJC Brussels resumes services

We have held the first IJC services of the year after the summer. We have very much been looking forward to reconnecting with everyone at our 'Welcome Back' services. We have lots to celebrate.

Kabbalat Shabbat and Pot-Luck Dinner

Friday 8 September at 7:30 pm. Services were followed by a pot-luck dinner - with some singing when the spirit moved us. People brought food and drinks from their home countries to share. All were welcome!

Torah Breakfast Shacharit Morning Services

The theme was Redemption and the Messiah, what does Judaism believe? With Rabbi Ira Goldberg Saturday 9 September at 10:00 am. We celebrated two smachot this Shabbat! The birth of Benny Rozas son of Daniel and Margarita, brother of Nina and Eitan and the wedding of Alex Licht and Stefano D'Orilia. People brought desserts from their home countries for our festive Kiddush! Everyone shared the joy of these two wonderful events together.



Rabbi Ira Goldberg

Beth Hillel Brussels

Rabbi Abraham Dahan honoured



Beth Hillel Brussels president Gilbert Lederman, Rabbi Abraham Dohan, Beth Hillel's Rabbi Marc Neiger

After the Saturday morning service on September 2, Beth Hillel Brussels, The Liberal Jewish Community of Belgium, celebrated the 80th birthday of its founding rabbi, Abraham Dahan, with an Oneg Shabbat. Everyone was invited to attend to wish Happy Birthday to Rabbi Dohan and to bring something to eat after the Kiddush: savoury dishes (fish, vegetarian), cakes, beverages.

It was a wonderful turnout and a joyous occasion.



Beth Hillel Synagogue

Standing together in prayer: Bet Shalom in Barcelona responds

BetShalom
COMUNIDAD JUDÍA
PROGRESISTA DE BARCELONA



BARCELONA

Here at the Comunitat Jueva Bet Shalom we emphatically condemn the attacks which took place in the cities of Barcelona and Cambrils. During this painful time, our prayers are with the victims, with their families and friends, and our solidarity is with the citizens and the institutions that represent them.

Today [August 17] our hearts meet, we share your pain, your sorrow, your anger; we are in shock, a shock that has been felt before by the citizens of Madrid, London, Paris, New York, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Kabul, Bombay, Moscow, Ankara and Nairobi. As Progressive Jews, committed to repairing the world, committed to the Tikkun Olam, it is crucial for us to remember, to remind ourselves today more than ever of our commitment to peace, justice and democracy; to remember our rejection of all forms of violence, especially those which shield themselves with religion in order to commit murder and acts of unspeakable terror. Remembering this is the only path to victory.

We want to thank the kindness and solidarity we have been shown, especially from the World Union for Progressive Judaism, from the European Union for Progressive Judaism, from the Jewish communities in Spain, particularly those which are a part of the Union of Progressive Communities in Spain; from kehilot and Jewish institutions in Israel, Europe, the United States, Canada; from rabbis, friends and members of other religious traditions from around the world.

Barcelona is our city, many of our members were born in Barcelona or have chosen to live there and to cherish it. We are visited all year round by citizens from all over the world who come to get acquainted with this city and spend a Shabbat with us, a Shabbat of peace.

We wish that the peace of Shabbat should last long and reach the entire world, that it should give us strength and guide us.



Spontaneous memorial at Barcelona's Rambla

ATID at Barcelona memorial



Neomi Yehudai and Alan Waisman representing Atid at the Museu Marítim de Barcelona

After the attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils, our citizens responded with a cry full of emotion, courageously declaring: "We are not afraid" - a clamour arising from the conviction of a city that is loving and welcoming. On Shabbat August 26 we returned to the street. We did it in freedom and we declaimed peace. All citizens were invited to participate in the great demonstration that took place at 6 pm from the intersection with Paseo de Gracia to the Plaza de Catalunya. The demonstration aimed to restore Barcelona's tradition of rejecting violence and to call for peace. The Barcelona City Council had a strong civic role in the demonstration, and Atid encouraged signing up through the municipal website.

There was also a memorial event at the Museu Marítim de Barcelona that represented the diversity of our city.

Silvia Leida represented the Community Jueva Atid de Catalunya accompanied by Laura Kolesnicov, Community Director and Moriah Ferrús, Director of Education and Worship with a large number of members of the congregation.

This was an interreligious and interdenominational event where the participants were primarily young people of all religions, with the understanding that they are the future. Neomi Yehudai read a statement from the Torah and Alan Waisman participated in donating the wreath as representatives of the Jewish community of Barcelona.

Atid participated to express our condolences for the victims of this terrible attack as well as to mark our social and religious commitment to build a pluralistic society where such despicable acts do not happen again. This is our city, we are all Barcelona.



Open day at Beit Emuná synagogue

The Jewish community celebrated its "open day" on Sunday September 3 in the Beit Emuná synagogue, which is located in the Fontán area of Asturias. This initiative is part of the XVIII European Day of Jewish Culture organised by the European Association for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage (AEPJ). A total of 37 European Union countries simultaneously hosted the European Day of Jewish Culture.



Aida Oceranski in the Beit Emuná synagogue

In the case of Spain various activities were held in 27 cities. The Jewish community of Asturias carried out a cultural programme of exhibitions, conferences and guided tours showing Jewish heritage in Oviedo.

Cooking course in Madrid



Sarah Gardner (standing) teaching Madrid chefs

The Reform Jewish Community of Madrid has finished this August a cooking course "From Adafina to Schmaltz and Za'atar: the Jewish tradition through its world cuisines", taught by Sarah Gardner, a young American Reform woman. Not only has she offered different Jewish cuisines from around the world but she has added historical, religious and sociological background and answered questions about how and when some ingredients became related to the Jewish people through the centuries. Kugels, Ciallatta, Tutu from Curaçao, Keftes de prasa, Chelow-Polow from Iran, Gadjar Kari from India, Miser Wat from Ethiopia, we have tasted all these before being instructed how to cook them. Sarah Gardner, a 23-year-old Fulbright Scholar on the "Jewish Spanish Cuisine before the Expulsion", has been a driving force in the Madrid community. She has volunteered, co-led other activities and reinforced the spirit of informed choice within our Reform Jewish identity.

High Holidays at Atid



Rabbi Felipe Yafe

Moriah Ferrús

Rabbi Felipe Yafe from Argentina and Moriah Ferrús will lead High Holy Days services at Atid this year. Rabbi Yafe is a renowned biblical scholar and spiritual leader of congregation Bet Hillel in Buenos Aires. Moriah Ferrús is a Spanish writer and translator active in Atid. The programme and sign up are on our website: www.atid.es.

Eshkol Nevo live and by video

Author Eshkol Nevo presented his book *The invisible Destinies (Los Destinos Invisibles)* live in Barcelona at Bet Shalom and by video conference on September 13 at 19:30. This is part of the Club de Lectura series that is shared by five of our Spanish EUPJ communities. Sign up at info@cjm.es.



Netzer Barcelona Summer Camp 2017



Netzer Barcelona Summer Camp 2017

Netzer Barcelona's summer camp was amazing! We had about 35 chanichim, and we spent a fantastic time together! Peulot, T'fiot, Peulot Laila, birkat hamazon, Kabbalat Shabbat, a swimming pool, sports and competition, the defense of Netzer flag, and macropeulot were only a part of the amount of activities we did!

We had new leaders - they all worked well and gained a lot of experience. Rodrigo helped us a lot with the planning of the Machane and carrying it out. We learned much from him and also had a very good time with him! Also Daniel Norris from South Africa came to visit us and helped us a lot. He taught the Chanichim about Netzer South Africa and gave them a global view of how big Netzer is.

Netherlands

Netherlands communities join for Oneg Shabbat in Rotterdam



Kiddush in Rotterdam

More than 200 members from the 10 liberal communities in The Netherlands attended the annual Oneg Shabbat on June 10 in Rotterdam. In addition to the synagogue, a neighbouring Catholic school was used for both services and the diverse and interactive afternoon programme of speakers and workshops, all on the theme of L'dor Vador.

In the synagogue Rabbi Albert Ringer led a traditional service where the children from Hebrew classes led singing and each generation was given a mitzvah. In the school Rabbi Ira Goldberg led 'the service of the future' using a screen to highlight text and for interactive participation. Instead of a sermon, he circulated a well-known text by Khahil Gibran about family, and the congregation shared thoughts about its meaning. In the afternoon there were three separate programmes centred about the current and future position of Progressive Judaism with regard to subjects like education, emancipation, politics and culture. The speakers were Dutch experts with the additional input of the new Israeli ambassador, Aviv Shir-On, who spoke about his first impressions of the Dutch Jewish community and the position of Jews in Europe.

There were also three excursions for attendees who wanted to take advantage of visiting the city. For younger members Matty van Eldik spoke to a group of families about the animals which appear in the bible. The more active visitors took a bicycle ride through part of Jewish Rotterdam including the Holocaust Memorial at Loods 24 and the Jewish children's monument. At the same time, a group visited Verhalenhuis Belvedere where there are exhibitions and archives about demographic changes in Rotterdam including the Jewish community.

The Rotterdam organisers were blessed with beautiful summer weather which meant everyone could enjoy being outside during not only the excursions but also the delicious lunch and the farewell reception.

At the end of the day, attendees were given a book which included interviews with 30 members of all ages from the Rotterdam community. In this way attendees were given food for further thought about how Jewish heritage has continued until now and ideas about Progressive Judaism in the future.

LJG Twente's Musical Summer

The LJG Twente held its annual summer "Ierndag" on Sunday July 23 at a country property in the region. Some 30 members and friends enjoyed musical workshops directed by guest musician Alex Jacobovits, who lives in Berlin and is internationally known for his work as a xylophonist, having worked with many orchestras and appeared in films.



Xylophone session with Alex Jacobovits (I) Photo: Tina Castro

Attendees were treated to two workshops on the history of music, especially Jewish music, interspersed with stories and wonderful xylophone selections ranging from Bach through African music to klezmer and Kol Nidrei. "This really was a wonderful learning experience, where you were encouraged to actually 'feel' the music", said community president Bert Oude Engberink, and this was echoed by all present. A shared lunch, wonderful country surroundings and just a hint of rain between the sunshine, made this a perfect and typical Dutch summer day.

Wilhelmina Hein

LJG president honoured

In a special ceremony after a morning service celebration on August 19 in the old synagogue in Lochem, LJG Twente community president Bert Oude Engberink was honoured by King Willem-Alexander with a special decoration for his services within the Jewish and general community in the Netherlands.



Bert Oude Engberink (I) with the Mayor of Lochem, Sebastiaan van 't Erve

He was made Knight in the Order of Oranje-Nassau (not like an English knighthood but similar to perhaps an OBE). The decoration was pinned on by the Mayor of Lochem, Sebastiaan van 't Erve, who also attended the whole service and made a wonderful speech lauding Bert's work.

The congregation of more than 100 members and guests broke into applause with this wonderful surprise - the Board had had to keep silent about this honour so that it was news to almost everyone there.

Wilhelmina Hein, Board Clerk, LJG Twente

Italy, Denmark, Poland

Rabbi Jodie Siff at Beth Hillel Roma

On September 1 Rabbi Jodie Siff of the Reconstructionist North Shore Synagogue in Manhasset, New York visited Beth Hillel in Rome. This was a unique evening through which we learned similarities and differences between the Progressive and Reconstructionist movements. For the occasion we organised a dinner at the Grand Hotel Gianicolo.



Rabbi Jodie Siff

Shir Hatzafon in Copenhagen has a new chairperson

At the April board meeting of Shir Hatzafon, The Progressive Jewish Community in Denmark, which followed our Annual General Meeting, Lars Aaron Jozefowicz was appointed our new chairperson.



Lars Aaron Jozefowicz, new chairperson at Shir Hatzafon, Copenhagen

Everyone who attends our Shabbat services will know Lars. He does more than anyone to ensure that our services run smoothly by transporting large quantities

of kiddush wine and soft drinks on his bike from the shops, and he makes sure that we all help to move stuff around in the building. Lars has also worked very hard at building up a good and trusting relationship with our Unitarian hosts, Unitarernes Kirkesamfund.

An American Bar Mitzvah in Rome



Nathan Simon (r) and family

At Beth Hill Roma on July 29 at 10 o'clock in Via dei Salumi 51, Rabbi Joel Oseran officiated at Shacharit and Mussaf and the Bar Mitzvah of Nathan Simon, who belongs to a New Jersey Reform community in the USA.

Our large attendance made Nathan feel all our support and warmth. Though far from his homeland, Nathan found in our community a home and a place where he was embraced by all of us.



Beit Warszawa news

Even though we were in summer holiday season, all our Shabbat services were held regularly. We meet every Friday at 7:00 pm for Shabbat evening service and community dinner and every Saturday at 10:30 am for the morning prayers and lunch and learn afterwards.

We warmly invite you to join us!

We invite all interested to apply for the new edition of our Step by Step Course that will start in September. All the details are available on our website under *Conversion*.

For further information please contact Programme Coordinator: Dominika Zakrzewska by email at beit.polska@wp.pl.

Shabbat Candles Concert

On Friday July 28 at 6:45pm in Kościół Świętego Jana Chrzyciela i Świętego Bartłomieja Apostoła in Kazimierz Dolny, we experienced an incredible Shabbat atmosphere through a presentation of beautiful songs in Hebrew, psalms, poems and Shabbat stories. The star of the evening was Mike Stein, cantor from LA, Grammy award winner, participant of one of the editions of The Voice, who in his



Cantor Mike Stein

career has performed for four US presidents. Mike Stein – violin, guitar, voice; Marcin Król – violin, voice; with singers Alina Antoszevska, Rivka Foremniak, Hanna Gawrońska and Miriam Klimova. The evening was free of charge.

Migwan news

Slowly, the weeks of the long-awaited summer holidays are coming to an end. Wherever you have spent your most beautiful moments, may new strengths and vigour accompany you, as well as the curiosity about Migwan's upcoming activities in the second half of the year 2017.

The excursion to Konstanz "On Jewish history" in June, was a great success. All the participants listened intently to the Jewish history of this city, then exchanged some thoughts at a joint lunch and enjoyed the radiant sky above the lake.



In August our path led us to Austria. The Liberal Jewish Community Migwan and Verein Ofek offered a special exhibition on "The Female Side of God" at the Jewish Museum Hohenems. The theme: how can a single God be described as a male God, and at the same time be seen as male and female, be imageless and recreate himself as an image?

"The Female Side of God" poses many questions to the practice of male dominance, without giving any binding answers. It thus reflects a development that has been searching for alternative ways of religious practice for a hundred years - but also for secular forms of dealing with life in a world that has been characterised by these religious traditions and their contradictions. (Foreword by Hanno Loewy)

Migwan receives a Czech Sefer Torah

The [Memorial Scrolls Trust](#) in the UK has collected, repaired, and lent hundreds of Torah scrolls from the Czech Republic to Jewish communities to bring them back to life. On Sunday August 27 Migwan received such a scroll from JLG Or Chadash, Zurich. Migwan returned the Sefer Torah borrowed from Or Chadash and received at the same time from Or Chadash one of its Czech Torah Scrolls. We celebrated this event with speeches from representatives of both communities. Zurich's Rabbi Ruven Bar Efraim removed the old Sefer Torah from the ark and installed the new one. There was a musical contribution by Einat Kalitzky followed by a reception.



Rabbi Ruven Bar Efraim

Call for action in the Diaspora



A symposium held in August at the Jewish Liberal Congregation Or Chadasch, Zurich highlights the need for this discussion and points out the underlying potential for conflict therein.

Several important Israeli and Jewish anniversaries occur this year. This was the backdrop for our symposium titled "Israel and we Swiss Jews: potential conflict within the Jewish community". Tension inherent in the symposium were the ones within Israeli society, the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab conflicts, and the relationship between Israel and us Jews living in the Diaspora. Invited to discuss these topics were the Israeli historian Tom Segev; Jonathan Kreutner, General Secretary of the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities (SIG), the economist Roby Nathanson, CEO of MACRO, the Center for Political Economics in Israel; and Ehud Landau, Professor at the Institute for Chemistry, University of Applied Science Zurich (ETH) and board member of Or Chadasch..

In his welcome address Rabbi Ruven Bar Ephraim of Or Chadasch outlined the dilemma of the Jewish state to remain Jewish, democratic and still deal with the issue of the occupied territories with their vast majority of non-Jewish Arab residents.

For the audience it was of particular interest to hear that the majority of young Jewish Israelis are pessimistic while their Arab Israeli counterparts are as a whole very optimistic about their future within the state of Israel.

The discussion that followed was led by Reinhard Meier, former foreign correspondent of the newspaper Neue Zueriche Zeitung and illustrated the diverse and passionate relationships that we Swiss Jews have with Israel. **David Feder**

GIL events in Geneva

September 3 We celebrated the European Day of Jewish Culture on the theme of the Diaspora with a free programme "Israel-diaspora: solidarity and criticism" presented by Ilan Greissamer.
September 6 at 20:00 GIL's Choir performed.



September 11 18:45: buffet (CHF 15), 19:45 a talk by Rabbi François Garaï - Is the bible prone to violence? Entry was free.

Leo Baeck College
SIXTY YEARS
AT THE HEART OF PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM



Come study at Leo Baeck College

Leo Baeck College in London offers a part-time MA in Jewish Educational Leadership.

This course is for you if you currently hold a leadership role in Jewish education in your community or you are thinking of moving into a leadership role. If you want to widen your horizons about Jewish Education and keep up to date with changing trends, then read on!

This is a two-year part-time course which combines face to face intensive seminars and on-line learning. This will enable those who don't live in the UK to study with us.

The modules are varied and are designed to enhance your practice through personal and professional development. These include: Jewish educational leadership, developmental approaches to learning, skills in Jewish literacy, research methods and skills, the global context of Jewish education, issues in Jewish education and finally a dissertation.

This programme is validated by Middlesex University in London and you will receive a Middlesex award on successful completion.

We have set the fees for students from EUPJ communities at a very competitive price - £2,500 per annum. We also have some scholarships available for European students.

Applications are still open.

For more information about the programme please [go to this link](#): If you would like an informal chat please contact Dr Jo-Ann Myers, Director of Jewish Education, on: +44 (0)20 8349 5626 or jo-ann.myers@lbc.ac.uk.

Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus

We are delighted to bring you our courses for Autumn 2017 which includes two live on-line courses:

Modern Hebrew Ulpanim: All levels, weekday & evening options, different Ulpan teachers - 10 weeks
Biblical Hebrew: Advanced Level: with Roberta Harris Eckstein - 10 weeks

The "Philosophy" of the Kabbalah: with Rabbi Mark L. Solomon - 8 weeks

The Rise of King David, a literary reading of 1 Samuel: with Rabbi Professor Jonathan Magonet - 8 weeks

Jews and Photography: with Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith - 4 weeks

Judaism and the Sex Question: with Rabbi Dr René Pfoertzel - 4 weeks Live On-line

Zohar: Mystical Midrash? Early Novel?: with Rabbi Larry Tabick - 4 weeks Live On-line

As an incentive, all returning Lehrhaus students will enjoy a 10% discount on any course and a 20% discount if signing up for more than one course at the time of registration.

Please click on this link: www.lbc.ac.uk/lehrhaus for all information, or contact Jarek: lehrhaus@lbc.ac.uk.

Edinburgh Peace Walk



Peace Walk by Edinburgh Jewish Communities

Sukkat Shalom Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

The Peace Walk at the end of May this year was hosted by the Edinburgh Jewish communities. It was a huge success with both our Rabbi Mark Solomon and Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation's Rabbi David Rose involved as well as many attendees from both communities. In total, a record group of nearly 100 people participated, and all seemed to enjoy the excellent hospitality provided by the two communities at Salisbury Road where the walk terminated. Again we were blessed by good weather; it was even too hot for some of us. When we stopped at the Central Mosque we were supplied with bottles of water, even though it was Ramadan and no Muslims would be taking water. The afternoon was a huge success in all respects, not least in providing an excellent platform for us to showcase the Jewish Community.

Judge Rinder to speak at Service of Celebration

A special afternoon of celebration and reflection will take place at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St John's Wood, on Sunday 29 October to mark the 50th anniversary of the partial legalisation of male homosexuality in England and Wales. A Service of Celebration, led by Liberal and Reform Judaism rabbis, will be followed by a choice of learning and discussion sessions and, of course, a celebratory tea.



Robert Rinder

The guest speaker for the event is Robert Rinder, criminal law barrister and star of hit TV shows *Strictly Come Dancing* and *ITV's Judge Rinder*. He will discuss the legal process involved in this landmark decision and implications of the anniversary.

The afternoon is being jointly hosted by Leo Baeck College (LBC), the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group (JGLG), Keshet UK, Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism.

Tickets are free but you must register [here](#).

United Kingdom

Summer camps are over for 2017



450 young people have participated in RSY-Netzer Shemesh camps - we hope and expect they have

Reform Judaism news

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner shared her Thought for the Day on BBC Radio 4's Today programme. [Click here to listen to the broadcast.](#)

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain reflects on the recent controversy on gay rights and Judaism in [this piece for the Huffington Post](#) and considers the ethics of involvement in an online betting business for [the Jewish Chronicle's 'Rabbi, I have a problem' feature.](#)

Rabbi Josh Levy asserts that there's no such thing as "authentic" Judaism [in this piece in The Jewish Chronicle.](#)

Rabbi Maurice Michaels discusses mental health and shares his 'Rabbinic Thought' [on The Jewish Views podcast.](#)

Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers shared her Pause for Thought on BBC Radio 2. [Click here to listen at 52:40 into the broadcast.](#) She looks at the week's news on BBC Radio London's Inspirit programme - [listen at 1:34:30 into the broadcast.](#) And she takes a look at a problematic aspect of Torah [in this piece for the Progressive Judaism page of The Jewish News.](#)

Rabbi Mark Goldsmith also explores a challenging passage from the Torah in [his piece for the Progressive Judaism page of The Jewish News.](#)

Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild looks at the importance of accountability and transparency in the wake of the BBC gender pay gap row in another piece for [the Progressive Judaism page of The Jewish News.](#)

Rabbi Dr Barbara Borts was on [BBC Radio 4's Beyond Belief](#) on August 21 discussing sermons and participated in the Just Festival in Edinburgh on female religious leadership, also on 21 August.

[Newcastle Reform Synagogue](#) remembered those murdered in the Srebrenica massacre. [Maidenhead Synagogue](#) featured in a piece in The Times and [Radlett Reform Synagogue](#) in The Jewish Chronicle.

"The Wimbledon Synagogue is the most welcoming synagogue I have ever attended" says The Jewish Chronicle's 'secret shul-goer' [in this feature](#) and [find out more about Wimbledon's Community Cookbook here.](#)

Five communities have newly appointed rabbis following [last month's Leo Baeck College ordination.](#) Find out more about the rabbis joining [Finchley Reform Synagogue](#), [Manchester Reform Synagogue](#) and [North West Surrey Synagogue.](#)

Shirei Chagigah was outstanding



Shirei Chagigah 2017

Shirei Chagigah, Reform Judaism's biennial music conference was "an outstanding, joyful and practical celebration of music". Find out more about the weekend and see a selection of fantastic pictures taken by Giselle Brosnahan [here.](#) [Click here](#) to read a feature on Shirei Chagigah in The Jewish Chronicle by Susan Reuben.

Pride in London parade



Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner (centre, left of flag) at the Pride in London parade 2017

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner on the Pride in London parade: "As an ally of LGBTQ people I was over the moon to see joyful expressions of love and celebration. As we mark 50 years since the partial decriminalisation of male homosexuality in England and Wales, Pride in London was a glorious example of how far we have progressed but there is still much work to be done". [Read more in The Jewish News.](#)

Mazal Tov!



L-R: Rabbis Daniel Smith and Steven Katz

Mazal tov to [Edgware](#) and [Hendon Reform Synagogue](#) holding their first service since merging. [Read more](#) about Reform Judaism synagogues.

United Kingdom

Liberal Judaism statement

LJ Rabbinic Conference responds to the events in Charlottesville, USA, and Barcelona & Cambrils, Spain

Images of white supremacists marching in Charlottesville, Virginia, the murder of a young woman, and the atrocities committed in Barcelona and Cambrils in Spain, where 14 people have died and more than 100 hurt, some critically, remind us – as if we need reminding – that Europe remains vulnerable to terrorist cells, intent upon murder and wanton cruelty and that violence thrives in environments – micro or otherwise – which are permissive of prejudice and hatred.

We associate ourselves with the families of those who have died and share in the profound sorrow caused by the loss of life. Our prayers and thoughts are with them and with those who have been wounded, with those who tended the dying and injured, with the emergency services and the medical staff in Spain's hospitals.

Liberal Judaism recognises the need to counter vigorously all forms of bigotry, hatred and prejudice, to reject any kind of moral equivalence between those who actively embrace chauvinism and discrimination and those who protest against it. And we pledge ourselves to renewal of our outreach work with all communities, faiths, cultures in our own society in our search for equality, justice and peace.

Ruth reads from the Torah for the first time... aged 96



Ruth Shire (c) at Birmingham Progressive Synagogue

Birmingham Progressive Synagogue (BPS) member and Holocaust survivor Ruth Shire read from the Torah for the first time, at the age of 96, in front of a packed BPS sanctuary. In a moving D'var Torah Ruth explained how she had not had the chance to learn Hebrew growing up in Nazi Germany.

The service was led by Ruth's son and daughter-in-law, Rabbis Michael Shire and Marcia Plumb, along with Birmingham's Rabbi Dr Margaret Jacobi. Ruth's grandchildren read her a specially written blessing. [Click here to read more.](#)

Click the logos for more news of our UK movements



New Rabbinic Conference chair

Rabbi Aaron Goldstein is the new chair of Liberal Judaism's Rabbinic Conference, after being unanimously voted into the role by his peers. He succeeds previous co-chairs Rabbis Alexandra Wright and Richard Jacobi, and takes on the prestigious position once held by his father, and current Liberal Judaism president, Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein.



Rabbi Aaron Goldstein

Rabbinic Conference is where Liberal Judaism's rabbis meet on a monthly basis to discuss pressing issues, learn from and support each other and forge religious and spiritual messages.

LJY-Netzer Israel Tour breaks records



Liberal Judaism has sent its largest ever number of young people on Israel Tour.

Forty-nine teens from the Liberal youth movement LJY-Netzer, along with five leaders, landed in Israel on July 17. The group, aged 16 and 17, came from all over the UK. There were also international participants, with Liberal Jews based in Milan and LA joining the trip.

Liberal Judaism's director of youth, Rebecca Fetterman, said: "The numbers, which are up 50 per cent on last year, are a real tribute to our LJY-Netzer movement workers, who have spent the last year promoting Israel Tour in our communities and showing young people how it really is an inspirational and life-changing experience. It also proves the growing interest among young British Jews for a truly egalitarian and inclusive Israel Tour, that looks at all sides of the country."

WLS YAD events

West London Synagogue offers three great opportunities to be involved in the life of WLS as young adults.

Melton - interactive learning with Rabbi Neil Janes

Elul - Spiritual Reflections -

Find out what the month of Elul offers

Library Minyan - an alternative Shabbat service being developed by Jay Schlesinger and Rabbi Janes

And coming up - special Yad programs for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot YAD events next week!).



Open letter to French-speaking campers



Maha Netzer 2017 in France

Our camp is over, and I am exhausted! But before my family and I take off on a much-needed vacation (to sleep a lot), I wanted to take a moment to count our blessings in having you campers around. Actually, I don't have enough words to express my gratitude.

What really made an impact upon all of us who are working hard on the dream of this summer camp was that we really felt that we are a part of something bigger than just our own communities. We feel the support of a wider movement ready to use its resources and networks creatively, to aid our endeavours to create a strong and vibrant Progressive Jewish community for French-speaking Europe.

This year we were able to host around 130 campers plus another 30 or so staff and leaders. They came from all over our French and Swiss progressive synagogue constituents (and a few children from more Orthodox homes, as MahaNETZER gains the reputation of being THE place of joy and Jewish inspiration on the French scene).

The enthusiasm and the joy in living an open and dynamic Judaism could be seen in the eyes and laughter of the campers, in the grateful words and notes from the parents, and in the friendly post-camp banter of our leaders and specialists – as everyone is eagerly looking forward to next summer! That said, we indeed look forward to one of these coming summers having a visit, where you can see up front exactly to what you are contributing!

Toda raba for being our partners in this holy mission.

Rabbi Tom Cohen

ITONI, Keren Or's magazine

Discover Itoni #74! September-October 2017

Edition 74 of Itoni has just come out. Contents include: an editorial by Pamela Vennin, Mayim veMayim - Water and Sky by Daniela Touati, My experience of Judaism in London from my childhood to the present day by Celia Naval, plus the cultural programme for 2017-2018. And as always, cultural news and the times of future services. We hope you will enjoy reading it.

The print version is available at Keren Or. Download the latest edition [here](#).



MJLF stories

In Memory of Simone Veil

MJLF president Danielle Cohen issued a communique on July 3 paying homage to Simone Veil, and Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur said Kaddish with the Grand Rabbi of France, Haim Korsia. Rabbi Horvilleur also wrote an extensive [obituary](#), "Simone Veil, our 'mensch'" in the newspaper *Le Monde*. Simone Veil was a highly respected



Simone Veil z"l

Holocaust survivor and government

Minister who worked tirelessly for social justice and memory of the Shoah. She was a member of ULIF Copernic. She was honoured by France's President Macron at a major public ceremony and will be buried in the Pantheon, a rare honour.

Summer trip to Israel



MJLF youngsters visit Yozma in Modi'in

Oren Giorno, MJLF's youth activities manager, led a "Discover Israel" trip for 14-17-year-olds, connecting them to Jewish history and forging their identity. The youngsters explored the Negev, the Galilee and the Golan Heights, Masada and the Dead Sea as well as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv with a stop in Modi'in at Yozma, MJLF's sister community in the Domim programme. They discovered the magic of dawn walks and desert nights under the stars, camel rides and kayaking. The trip was under the auspices of the *Assemblée du Judaïsme Libéral (AJL)*, the umbrella organisation for Progressive Judaism in France. Read *MJLF Infos* magazine [here](#).

New book: In Praise of the Law

Prompted by the current controversy over secularism (laïcité), Rabbi Yann Boissière has published a new book, *In Praise of the Law (Éloge de la Loi)*.



Rabbi Yann Boissière and his book

Fourth francophone gathering of Liberal Judaism in Paris

From Friday November 24 starting at 14:00 until Sunday November 26 at 16:30

This gathering is now a biennial tradition: After Lyon, Toulouse and Brussels, the Parisian communities will host the fourth gathering of Liberal Judaism for a Shabbat filled with sharing, discussions and prayer. The rabbis and members of about 15 French, Belgian, Luxembourgian, and Swiss communities will meet to exchange and to reflect together on life, perspectives and the development of a Judaism incorporating tradition, citizenship, modernity and tolerance.

These meetings will put emphasis on workshops, seminars, services, discussions between the rabbis, community leaders, and the conference attendees. The topics to be discussed are those which animate the communities and their members. The central theme will be "To be happy Jew" in the difficult and frightening context of asking how can we fully and proudly live our Judaism within our nations.

The conviviality will be constant during these three days, which will offer moments of relaxation, joyous meals, music and particularly of getting together. [Read more here](#) (en français).

News from Keren Or, Lyon

This year ended with two moving blessings led by our rabbis René Pfertzel and Haim Casas on the occasion of the marriages of Brigitte and François and Sébastien and Lionel. Their unions bring us the image of a world of peace based on everyone's commitment. A great Mazel Tov to the newlyweds! May their shared love bring them joy and confidence.



Two weddings at Keren Or, Lyon
left: Brigitte and François, right: Sébastien and Lionel

Daniel Olivier led the last Kabbalat Shabbat service before the summer holidays on Friday July 21. The first service after the summer break was held on September 1, the Talmud Torah took place on Sunday September 3, and classes resumed on Sunday, September 10. The secretariat was closed from 28 July - 25 August inclusive.

I would like to thank all those who serve the collective cause to enable our community to grow. A special thanks to Lilith for her daily work and the warm welcome she brings to everyone.

Pamela Vennin
President



ULIF News

Clothing Collection

From August 28 to September 15 in partnership with MJLF, we are collecting clothing (for men, women and children) for the CASIP COJASOR



Foundation. All clothes are to be deposited at the Copernic synagogue in easy-to-open bags. More information at 01 47 04 37 27 or liensocial@ulif.org.

Interreligious Dialogue

Once a month starting Monday September 4 at 8.30 pm, Father Michel Guéguen of the parish of Saint Honoré d'Eylau and Rabbi Philippe Haddad of the Copernic Synagogue conduct free lectures to better understand the relations between Jews and Christians through the founding texts of the two religions. The first session's theme was "Balaam and his donkey".



Rabbi Philippe Haddad

Krav Maga Course

Began Wednesday 6 September, 5:20 to 6:45 pm. Krav Maga classes for young and old have resumed every Wednesday (except Jewish, school and public holidays) in the extension of the synagogue. The teaching is by certified 3rd Dan instructor Eric Roux, Information and sign-up at kravmaga@ulif.org.



AJTM Beth Yaakov, Paris news

For July we did not change anything! Services were celebrated as usual on Friday at 18: 30 and Saturday at 10:30. On Tuesday August 1 at 7 we held a Tisha b'Av service. We took our summer break from August 2-24.

On Friday August 25 we resumed our religious activities and celebrated Shabbat at 18:30 as usual. On Saturday September 9 at 9:30 before the 10:30 service Beth Yaakov held a breakfast study. And on Sunday September 10 at 10:00 there was a Talmud Torah breakfast for parents and children.



AJTM Beth Yaakov poster for Talmud Torah class

Hungary, Germany

Sim Shalom Budapest good news

There is lots of good news this month!

Our participation in the leadership training programme offered by the Joint Distribution Committee sponsored organisation Mozaik Hub is finally paying off. After going through exercises on how to build up our stakeholder connections and planning ways to strengthen our congregation to make it more self-sustaining financially, we have been awarded a grant to hire a person to do some of the actual spadework involved. The grant will pay for work in two areas: public relations and fund-raising. The grant is for one year and hopefully will be renewed. It also includes professional consultation in both these areas to help the new person get started.



Children painting rocks at Sim Shalom's booth during Budapest's Pozsonyi Picnic

On Sunday September 3 Sim Shalom had a very successful event at the annual street festival called Pozsonyi Picnic, held beside the Danube in the most Jewish section of Budapest. We sold Judaica imported from Israel by our president, Gergo Guba, and had tables full of people making handicrafts (silk and rock painting). Furthermore, Rabbi Kati Kelemen lectured on the Kabbalistic significance of the letter Aleph and its importance for the New Year. Lots of strollers stopped to ask about Sim Shalom and Progressive Judaism and many left their contact information to be informed about our fall and winter programmes.

The Methodist Church, owners of the youth club space we are using for our Friday night services, have offered us to also have our Saturday morning Torah Study and Torah services in the same place, as well as Wednesday evening adult education programmes. This will have the great advantage that everything will occur in one place, and we can store all the materials we use there. The space is big enough for the number of people who attend regularly, but not if we have many visitors. Just last week, a big group of Americans did not come to our Friday night services because we couldn't seat them all. So we continue to pursue vigorously the possibility of renting the big apartment owned by the local government, a slow process.

It looks probable that we will get the last three years' donations that we formerly got as a religious institution and that our name will be on the tax return for 2017. This will make us eligible for future donations directly from our supporters. We hope that it all actually happens.

Jess Weil, Treasurer

Mazal tov!



Mazal tov to Basma and Walter Blender, who were married this summer in LIG Bad Seeburg (where he is chairman) by Rabbi Edward van Voolen

New Sefer Torah for Beth Shalom, Munich

On Sunday September 24 Beth Shalom will inaugurate a new Sefer Torah in honour of Rabbi Tom Kučera on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of his rabbinate at Beth Shalom. The Torah scroll was written by Sofer Bernard Benarroch and its purchase was made possible by donations from numerous community members and friends of



Rabbi Tom Kučera

Beth Shalom as well as several organisations: Die Israelitische Kultusgemeinde of Munich and Upper Bavaria, the Archdiocese of Munich-Freising, the Evangelical Lutheran District in Munich, and the Circle of Friends in Support of Liberal Judaism in Munich.



Mantle for Beth Shalom's new Sefer Torah

From 14:00 to about 15:30, the donors will write the last letters in the scroll together with the Sofer. The completed Torah will be installed in the ark around 16:00 with a short service in the synagogue. All members and friends of Beth Shalom are cordially invited to this joyous event.

Please sign up [here](#) or, if you do not have an online registration, at office@beth-shalom.de or 089/76702711. And kindly

note that only a limited number of places are available.

Germany

Shoah granddaughter at Hamburg



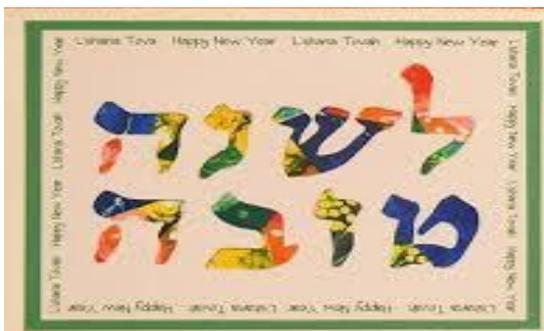
Rabbi Moshe Navon and Hannah Schwadron

Our services take place in a building which was used as the exercise hall of a Jewish school, Israelitische Töcherschule, until World War II. In June we were visited by Hannah Schwadron, a granddaughter of a former student of this school. Hannah is a dancer who lives in the USA. With her permission we quote part of her letter about her visit. **Dr Sabine Bielfeldt Öffentlichkeitsarbeit LJGH**

I am happy to think back to that lovely Saturday service and the chance to be with the congregants. In fact, last night I dreamt of going up to the Torah to make Aliyah, something that I haven't done for many years until I visited the Liberal Jewish community last month. Clearly, the strong feeling of joining you all there still resonates with me. To wrap myself in a tallit again and chant the blessings before and after the rabbi reading from the Torah was not only a very powerful reminder of the belonging built into Jewish tradition but also an opportunity to connect more deeply to the place where we gathered to pray; a site whose walls will forever remind me of my grandmother's childhood and my family story.

The chance to show the dance film *Klasse* was an opportunity to share a creative project that speaks for my experiences as a third-generation granddaughter of the Holocaust returning to Hamburg to connect with today's young students.

I cherished the conversations with Rabbi Moshe and Mrs Miriam Navon as well as the thoughtful responses from congregants who felt the impact of turning to young people to move us toward peace. Hannah Schwadron is Assistant Professor of Dance History at Florida State University in Tallahassee.



UpJ elects new board



UpJ Board: (l-r) Inna Shames, Dan Rattan, Deborah Tal-Rüttger, Rabbi Walter Homolka, Alexandra Khariakova

On July 30 in Bonn the 23rd general assembly of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany (UpJ, Union progressive Juden) elected a new board with Rabbi Dr Professor Walter Homolka as chairman. Rabbi Homolka (born in 1964) is rector of Abraham Geiger College and a professor of Jewish theology at the University of Potsdam. He also serves as an executive board member of WUPJ and a vice president of EUPJ.

Deborah Tal-Rüttger (Kassel) continued as deputy chair. Also elected were Inna Shames (Kiel), Alexandra Khariakova (Unna) and Dan Rattan (Munich). The Union was founded in 1997 and represents 26 communities with 5200 members.

LJGH Hamburg has honoured guests



L-R: Galina Jarkova, Ellen Georgy, Dr. Felix Epstein, Ekkehard Wysocki (SPD), Carola Veit, Gerhard Lein (SPD), Miriam Navon

Ms Carola Veit, president of the Hamburg Parliament, visited the Hamburg Liberal Jewish Community (LJGH) in June. During her visit, we discussed the origins of Reform Judaism 200 years ago in Hamburg and the possibilities for developing our community.

Rabbi Rothschild supports blacklisted rabbis

I am all for them! Check out [this link](#) to see why.

Shalom,

**Rabbi Dr Walter Rothschild
Berlin**

Germany

Torah mantels donation to Hamelin



New High Holiday Torah mantels for LJJ Hamelin

LJJ Hamelin has received a donation from Society of Christians and Jews in Lower Saxony.

We are honoured that members of this Hannover society, led by Professor Dr Ursula Rudnick, will visit Hamelin and our synagogue on Friday September 15. Hans-Georg Spangenberg will lead the group around the city, emphasising the pre-war achievements and loss of the Jewish community. The group will return to the synagogue for a conversation with Rabbi Ulrike Offenbergl and join us for Friday night services.

Professor Dr Rudnick and her organization have made a large donation to our community, funding the purchase of two white High Holiday Torah mantels. American textile artist Cheryl Lynch was chosen to create the Torah covers for us. The intricate and hand-made covers will be completed next year. A large poster of the Torah covers will be displayed for all to see. We thank Dr Rudnick and all the donors for this wonderful gift.

Rachel Dohme

Twenty-third annual conference of the Union of Progressive Jews of Germany

The 23rd annual conference of the UPJ was held July 27–30. Fascinating and informative workshops and seminars were offered by leaders and teachers from Germany and around the world.

Moving services in Hebrew, German and Russian were also celebrated. Our Polina Pelts was honored with a reading of the prayer for our congregations in Russian. The participants and presenters came from our national and international congregations, striving to learn from one another, exchange ideas and celebrate Judaism together.

Elections were held and a new national board was selected. Congratulations to the new board! (see article on page 18)

Rachel Dohme

LJJ Hamelin news

We met in our cool sanctuary during the hot summer months of July and August for Shabbat services, Torah study and discussion, welcomed visitors into our synagogue and enjoyed cultural programmes. We look forward to autumn services with our Rabbi Dr Ulrike Offenbergl in September as we ready ourselves for the High Holy Days.

“Aktion Mensch” helped us provide enjoyable and meaningful programmes for our seniors during the summer months. Besides musical programs, Polina Pelts organised a boat trip from Hamelin to Bodenwerder on the Weser River. Such an outing affords much time and organisational talent and we thank Polina and her assistants, Doroti and Valerij and especially Aktion Mensch.

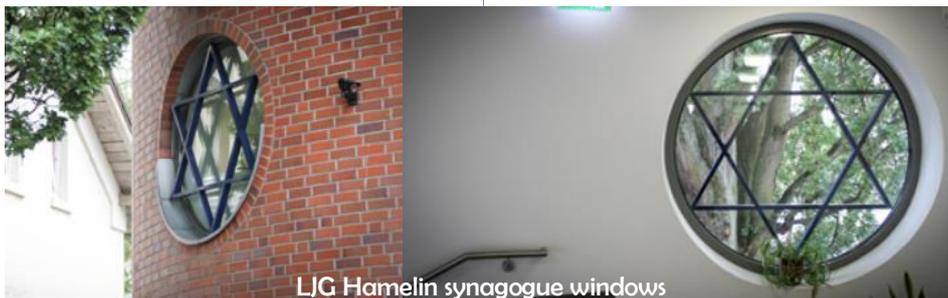
Here is an impression: Our excursion on the Weser River was wonderful. The weather was perfect and the sun shone on idyllic landscapes on shore. Grazing animals, green hillsides and lush fields formed the background to happy conversation and pleasant chatter among friends. We arrived in Bodenwerder, we walked from the pier into the Old City and enjoyed coffee and cake in a local café. The evening breeze accompanied us home, tired and happy.

Thank you Polina and Aktion Mensch!

Hameln celebrated a Cultural Festival in August. Our Israeli dance troupe “Chag Sameach” and our synagogue choir “Shalom” performed for large crowds. The local newspaper reported on the event and one bystander was quoted to say, “How wonderful to have a Jewish community in our town again!” We agree!

Rachel Dohme

Read the full newsletter [here](#).



LJJ Hamelin synagogue windows

“Is it time?”**continued from page 1**

in Europe not to ponder the “Is it time” question. Barcelona is raw in our memory – as was Nice this time last year. We suddenly face a new threat – being deliberately run over by a suicide vehicle. Less in our minds perhaps is that two days after Barcelona the first ever Jihadist terrorist attack occurred in Finland – two people were fatally knifed in Turku.

If you Google “Chief Rabbi of Barcelona” then you will find multiple references to the rabbi who urged Spanish Jews to leave en masse for Israel. (You will find nothing else on this individual other than that two years ago he paid a visit to the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem). I suspect that the rabbi is not particularly “chief” of anything in a city with a very modest but lively pluralistic Jewish community. Recall also that two years ago a well know French rabbi stated that “100% of French Jews are considering leaving France.” As early as 2004 the then Israeli Prime Minister urged French Jews to leave France for Israel. More recently the present Israeli Prime Minister urged the same, and even broadened this message to include all European Jews. Then the Israeli Defence Minister told French Jews that France is “not their country”.

I believe that the above utterances and urgings exhibit no degree of responsible concern for the future of European Jewry. Such concern would require a serious analysis of the situation. Rather they play to the hubris, publicity consciousness and political expediency of those responsible. In all cases the viewpoints were refuted by relevant national Jewish organisations.

Of course we cannot dismiss the Jihadist terrorist threat. Of course the Jihadists have a special hatred for Jews and Zionists (not that they distinguish) over and above the general target of western liberal values. What we have to assess on a continuous basis is whether this and other less physically dangerous threats to Jewish life in Europe, i.e. the “old fashioned” anti-Semitism of the right and its newer ugly cousin on the left, are at a level that we should close the book on two millennia of Jewish life in Europe, grant Hitler a posthumous victory and declare that the Diaspora effectively means the United States.

To arrive at a conclusion to the “Is it time” question involves asking questions we don’t like to ask – such as what is the statistical evidence that the physical threat to Jewish life today is higher in European countries than in Israel (internal and external security threat) or the United States (gun crime even if not specifically targeted as Jews). And at the next level – can Jews lead uninhibited lives practising their religion and maintaining Jewish values? Certainly they can in just about every country today where Jews live – which is not to say there are not isolated spots in given countries where Jews should not live.

And lastly – can I as a Progressive/Reform/Liberal Jew practice my “brand” of Judaism with equal rights to those of other Jews. Well – not in all European

countries (where the EUPJ is active in fighting financial discrimination and lack of state recognition) but with nowhere near the level of institutionalised discrimination as in Israel. To which our colleagues in Israel say with justification – come here and help change the situation because numbers count. But that’s not a free lunch – if you believe that a vital Diaspora Jewry is a critical component for the long term continuity of the Jewish people.

Meanwhile the reality is that Jewish life in Europe, and equally if not even more so Progressive Jewish life, is vibrant at the grass roots level. Not everywhere – but overwhelmingly so in places where Jews live. Not without sources for concern, but they are at a level of being managed. And if journalists continue to make the tiresome comparisons of “what it used to be” before the Shoah, then we say we look to the future while deeply honouring our past history and traditions, mourning that which we lost, with eternal “never again” vigilance, but intent on continuing to build a new European Jewry in which Progressive Judaism has its place.

With my best wishes to you, your families and your communities, Le Shana Tova and a meaningful fast.

Leslie Bergman

EUPJ Honorary Life President



Wilkenfeld International Women’s Leadership Seminar 2018

The Wilkenfeld International Women’s Seminar will be held at Beit Shmuel in Jerusalem May 29-31. It is sponsored by Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) and The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ).

We are seeking Reform/Progressive/Liberal Jewish women from around the world who are ready to increase their leadership skills. Prior to the seminar, each participant will propose a project for her home community and during the seminar, she will develop strategies and a specific action plan for this project. Please identify a woman in your community who could benefit from this leadership development opportunity, and encourage her to apply.

WRJ has scholarship funds available to help with both the registration cost and travel expenses.

For further information to apply please visit [here](#) or contact Jane Taves (jtaves3@gmail.com), a member of the WUPJ Executive Board and the chair for this seminar.



Experience Jerusalem from the home of Reform Judaism in Israel



Accommodation, courses, performances and more! Click [here](#) to reserve today!

Representing Global Progressive Judaism at the United Nations



On August 10 representatives from the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ), Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA), and ARZENU, the International Federation of Reform and Progressive Religious Zionists, met in person and virtually to discuss the global Progressive movement's efficacy at the United Nations in New York. [Read more.](#)



Every week, WUPJ emails *Torah from around the World*, a commentary on the Parashah (Torah portion) of the week by a rabbi from one of its congregations. Please click [here](#) to subscribe.

Subscribe to WUPJnews

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

IMPJ Statement on Charlottesville

“On behalf of the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), we want to express our deep sorrow and distress by the events which took place in Charlottesville. Together with you, we are shocked and horrified by the rise of antisemitism, racism and bigotry in America. We are committed to working with you and all of our Jewish sisters and brothers all across the United States in ridding these horrendous acts of hatred from our midst. Know that we stand with you in solidarity and are here to lend a helping hand.

“In these times of distress, we pray that we will know how to channel our anger not in the way of Amalek, but rather follow the ways of some of our greatest teachers and rabbis. In the spirit of Tisha b’Av, which we marked just two weeks ago, and further in the spirit of love of Tu b’Av, may we internalise the words of Rabbi Kook: “and if we were destroyed and our world was destroyed over blind hatred, may we rebuild and may our world be rebuilt by blind love.”
Yours in solidarity,

Gilad Kariv

Rabbi Gilad Kariv, IMPJ President and CEO

Reuven Marko

Reuven Marko, IMPJ Chairperson

IMPJ Newsletter

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



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