

Our Congregation



News and views from Belsize Square Synagogue

A CHALLENGE FOR UNITY AND ACCEPTANCE

Shalom Chaverim,

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks' book, *Not in God's Name*, is a masterpiece, an essential, brilliant and necessary dissertation which combines the best of Jewish ethics, theology and vision in one book. It is no surprise that Rabbi Sacks received, and well deserved, the prestigious Templeton Prize 2016 for his exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension.

The theology presented in Rabbi Sacks' book is the most perfect response to a world that has been plunged into interfaith conflict, due to the rise of religious and political extremism. And it is extremism, whether it be Islamic, Christian, Jewish or secular, which threatens to destroy us in its murderous agenda of bloodshed and intolerance.

Our very hope for coexistence and understanding of each other, especially in the area of interfaith dialogue, depends upon a new framework of religious vision that encompasses the "other", and Rabbi Sacks has mastered the religious response to terror and extremism.

"Us" Versus "Them"

Both religious and secular extremism in the past and today divides the world into a dualism that splits the world into an "us" versus "them" mentality. The "good guys" take on an ideological position that soon warps the human soul by justifying a contrived and diabolical need to destroy the "bad guys" and, as Rabbi Sacks demonstrates so lucidly in his book, allowing for the most violent and dastardly murderous activity.

This need to be rid of all ideological and

religious competitors characterised the Jewish Dead Sea Sect (from the 2nd century BCE to the 1st Century CE) whose religious stance divided the world into the "children of Light and Darkness".

The Christian crusaders separated the heathens who rejected Christianity from the pure faithful. Hitler and Stalin crushed the Jews and all their other ideological opponents as "evil ones" preventing the pure race or righteous ideology from victory. Today's Islamic fanatics have made cruel war against anyone who defies Islamic sharia law and the establishment of Islamic dominance.

Embracing the Other

However, true monotheism, as we read in Sacks' book, finds a way of encompassing us all in a family of nations. If we were only to read our Scriptural sources carefully, maintaining our unique religious callings while, at the same time, finding a theology that embraces the other due to an enlarged and appropriate understanding of monotheism – one God, one humanity – then the problems of terror, fanaticism and dualism would find no followers.

I am not an Orthodox rabbi but I have relied upon my brilliant teacher, Rabbi Sacks, for wisdom, Torah, insight and more. I, for one, marvel at the breadth and depth of Rabbi Sacks' knowledge and insight and believe that everyone should read his brilliant book.

However, there is one caveat to his *Not in God's Name* that needs to be addressed, and sooner rather than later.

While Rabbi Sacks has presented a coherent and necessary theological framework for

interfaith relations, in my view the time has come for a similar ideological and theological basis to improve "intra-faith" relations, i.e. the way Jews should look upon their fellow Jews. The intolerance that exists, the apartheid we have created in our own Jewish world, both in Israel and the Diaspora, are appalling and, unfortunately, getting worse.

There are constant spats regarding praying at the Western Wall, whether non-Orthodox rabbis should be granted the right to officiate at weddings, funerals or conversions, prohibitions on Orthodox rabbis from even stepping foot in Masorti, Reform or Liberal synagogues, let alone engage in classes, worship or dialogue with each other, in a dark side of Jewish life today that we too often ignore.

Unnecessary Division

In fact, we live with the absurdity that an Orthodox rabbi, even here in the UK, finds it easier to attend a church or mosque than to be present at a non-Orthodox synagogue or institution.

The time has come to rethink this preposterous and unnecessary division within our small Jewish world. The fighting and division weaken us at the very time when we need to stand united in the face of rising anti-Semitism, constant attacks against the state of Israel, and rampant assimilation and acculturation.

Not only are we, the Jewish people, weakened by such divisiveness. We appear as absurd, empty proponents of the kind of mutual respect for all that our world desperately needs at this time in history, unless we become determined to undo the walls we have erected to keep the other Jew out.

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CELEBRATE
68

WEDNESDAY 11 MAY

7.00 - 10:30pm, Belsize Square Synagogue

SOLD OUT

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Rabbi Altshuler's Challenge to Jonathan Sacks
Pictures of Purim and Choral Concert
Screening for Tay-Sachs Disease
Israel Dinner Charities
Tribute to a special chorister





PURIM PARTY PARADE

Clockwise from top right:

- Children taking part in the costume parade
- Hetty (aged 5) dressed as Olaf from Frozen
- Liam (aged 4) dressed as a clown
- Jeanie Horowitz with Saul Zur-Szpiro
- The Children's Choir sings the Purim story
- Emma Brookes, Mandy Brass, Graham Brown, Joe Brookes, Ira Gaberman - the adult version



Following the Wednesday evening Purim party, complete with costume parade, Megillah reading, children's and adults' performances and an ice cream buffet, our synagogue lunch on Thursday 24 March filled the Kiddush Room with a full table and age range of participants from 3 to 96. Rabbi Altshuler explained aspects of the holiday and Cantor Heller led the group in song. Food was served by a wonderful group of volunteers, organised by our Community Care Co-ordinator, Eve Herson. Everyone enjoyed the atmosphere, a newish member remarking on the warmth of the community and a 95-year-old leaving with tears in his eyes as he said: "The synagogue is my home".



TWO CHOIRS – SEVERAL LANGUAGES

On 10 April, the synagogue was full for a glorious concert of over 100 voices from England's Zemel Choir and Polyphonies Hebraiques de Strasbourg from France. Zemel is 60 years old, the PHS a mere 20, and they have been singing together for nine years. Their liturgical and popular repertoire was sung in English, Hebrew and Yiddish – but not French, though it would have been great to hear the French soloists in their native tongue. Belsize added its own contingent with conductor Ben Wolf, Cantor Heller, accompanist Mike Cayton and choristers Peter Strauss and Henny Levin.



WE NEED TO BE IN THE KNOW ABOUT JEWISH GENETIC DISEASES

Lauren Mattey reveals her family's ordeal as a Tay-Sachs carrier couple

I've found myself reassuring people over the years with the saying "What you don't know can't hurt you". However, following an ordeal that my family recently experienced, I don't think I'll ever utter those words again.

It wasn't until the late stages of my recent pregnancy with our first child that I became aware of a number of genetic diseases that are more common amongst the Jewish community. This was after a friend shared that she and her husband discovered they were both carriers of Canavan disease and very sadly had to terminate two pregnancies when tests revealed their unborn children had been affected.

Wanting to be on the safe side with future children in mind, my husband Richard and I decided to have genetic screening at the next possible opportunity and this happened to be shortly after our daughter was born.

Consequently, we discovered we were both carriers of Tay-Sachs disease, a genetic condition caused by a mutation that 1 in every 25 Ashkenazi Jews is a carrier of. If two carriers have a child together, there is a 1 in 4 chance their baby will inherit the disease which has no cure. Tragically, an affected child will develop normally for the first 3-6 months of life and then deteriorate into a vegetative state with infantile death occurring by the age of 4.

In a complete state of panic we had to urgently get our baby daughter, Lia, checked to see whether she had Tay-Sachs. At only 12 weeks of age she would have shown no symptoms at this point if she had inherited our genes. This was by far the most traumatic experience of our lives, rushing our little baby girl to Guy's Hospital, hearing her scream as the doctor tried several times to take her blood and then enduring an agonising 48 hour wait for the results to come back, knowing our lives were potentially on the brink of utter devastation. The thought of losing our beautiful baby girl in this way was unimaginable and I'm not quite sure how we managed to bring ourselves to the hospital to get the results once they were in.

Relief a million times over doesn't even come close to describing how we felt when we were told she would be OK. Miraculously, she had not inherited the



disease and for this we are eternally grateful. We were of course always going to cherish every second we had with our daughter, but now we will do so knowing that we have well and truly been blessed with a little miracle.

When it comes to family planning for the future, we now have the gift of knowledge. Due to the wonders of modern medicine and science, there are a number of options available to us that will ensure our future children are not born with Tay-Sachs. Our responsibility now is to make sure that no one else ever has to go through a similar experience, or worse.

Having discussed our ordeal with friends and family and shared our story on social media, the sheer amount of our peers who lack awareness of Jewish genetic diseases such as Tay-Sachs, Canavan, Familial Dysautonomia and Bloom Syndrome (to name a few) and haven't been screened to see if they are carriers, is sickening. It seems that Tay-Sachs was a "thing" that people knew about many years ago but, as generations have moved on, it's now thought to be something that just doesn't happen anymore. Well, people couldn't be more wrong. Surely the fact that genetic screening has identified two "carrier couples" within the same friendship group means that these abnormal genes are more common than we think and can be lurking within families for generations.

I feel very let down that I didn't know anything about these diseases until this point in my life. Both my husband and I had pre-marital meetings with our Rabbi and have been involved in Jewish youth movements and university J-Soc over the years. It seems that only those who are from

very religious communities or have attended Jewish schools have been made aware and offered screening. Everyone else seems to have just slipped through the net.

It also doesn't seem fair that in the USA and Israel, screening for Jewish genetic diseases is the done thing and awareness is extremely high. Our nonsensical system in the UK meant that, despite filling in my ethnicity on numerous forms during my pregnancy and giving birth at a North West London hospital, no medical professional flagged this up to me at any point. Instead, I was given blood tests for Sickle Cell disease – a blood disorder which is mainly prevalent amongst those of African and West Indian origin. What a waste of NHS money!

I know better than to dwell on the what-ifs of the past and I, of course, appreciate the fact that our situation had the most positive of outcomes truly possible. However, our experience clearly illustrates that changes need to be made in terms of increasing awareness of Jewish genetic diseases and aiming to ensure that screening is made accessible to all potential beneficiaries. This is something that I and an increasing handful of others feel driven to make happen, so watch this space.

In the meantime, I urge anyone reading this who is planning on having children to go and get screened well in advance of doing so. And if you're not planning on having children (or any more children) then please still talk to others about this story and encourage anyone for whom this information may be relevant to go and get screened. Details of future screenings can be found on the Jnetics website (www.jnetics.org) and Facebook page.

And I will certainly be replacing the saying "What you don't know can't hurt you" with a saying I now believe to be absolutely true: "Knowledge is power."

The next Jnetics screening will take place on Sunday 3 July at Ner Yisrael Synagogue, Christchurch Hall, The Crest, Hendon, NW4 2HY (off Brent Street, next to Hendon School). Numbers are limited by laboratory process capacity, so registration is essential.





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We must be one people, for the underlying principle of the Torah is the Oneness of God, and the correlation to that is the oneness of the people of Israel. The divisions among us lead to a disqualification of our ability to testify to the world regarding God's unity and the unity of nations and religions. As the Midrash tells us: "The Divine Presence does not dwell among a people with a divided heart." (*Numbers Rabbah 15:14*)

A Diverse People

This call for unity does not mean that we Jews need to be the same in our various approaches to Jewish life, law, ethics and tradition. We are a diverse people and that has always been a salient fact of Jewish history, whether it be Pharisees vs Sadducees, Rabbis Shammai vs Hillel, Ishmael vs Akiva, kabbalists (mystics) vs Maimonidean rational philosophers, or Mitnagdim (traditionalist opponents) vs Chasidim (thought illiterate revolutionaries when the movement arose in the 18th century).

These are all schisms which predate the differences that now exist in the Orthodox world (including Chasidim, Charedim, religious Zionists and anti-Zionists) and Masorti, Reform and Liberal Jews.

We Jews have never shared the same understanding of Jewish tradition and law. But as Rabbi Sacks so eloquently said at Jewish Book Week in February, we do, however, share the same fate despite our faith differences.

We are of a rabbinic tradition in which each *daf* or page of the Mishnah and Gemarah (together making up the Talmud) and Midrash (rabbinic literature expounding the Bible) reminds us that there are different voices on any subject. *Eilu v'eilu divrei Elohim chayim* – these views and those views are all part of a living God. To differ is divine.

We are continuously reminded by our sages that the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed not because there was no study of Torah or because of laxity in the observance of Jewish law. The rabbis taught that the cause of our destruction was *sinat chinam*, causeless hatred. The rabbis said that the sin of *sinat chinam* was equal to the three major transgressions of murder, idolatry and harlotry. (*Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Yevamot 62b*)

Rabbi Sacks so eloquently called for an

end to the political power of the Chief Rabbinate in Israel, stating that the existence of a highly politicised rabbinate in Israel has destroyed the moral and religious credibility of Judaism. The dislike for much of our beautiful Judaism among the masses of secular Israelis is an appalling legacy of their politicised rabbinate.

The fact is that with the onset of the Enlightenment, *Haskalah*, in the 18th century, Jews were divided as to the direction of Judaism, on the degree of acculturation, the meshing of the new values of modernity with the sacred values of our Jewish tradition.

There were Reformers, beginning with Moses Mendelssohn's disciples, followers of Immanuel Kant, who called for the dismantling of the authority of Jewish Law. The mid-19th century saw Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, whose neo-Orthodoxy called for integration into modern European society while freezing Jewish law as promulgated in the *Shulhan Aruch*, the definitive religious framework of Orthodoxy today.

A few decades earlier saw the birth of Wissenschaft Judentums, the "science of Judaism" the scholarly framework of what became the Conservative or Masorti movement, that called for a maintenance of the authority of Jewish law, accompanied by the understanding that Jewish law has always evolved and changed in accordance with circumstances at various stages in Jewish history.

Different responses to modernity, different outlooks on what constitutes Judaism and Jewish law. It has always been that way and we have to find a way of recognising the authenticity and the seriousness by which Jews of different paths approach their understanding of Judaism.

Healthy Whole

There has never been an "Orthodox" Judaism – that is, One Way, a "right" way of Judaism. We are a proud and diverse people, and each branch and stream contributes to the healthy whole of *klal Yisrael*, the community or congregation of Israel.

Getting stuck in the view that "we are the right way" and "you are the wrong way" will weaken us and dismantle our ability to teach our various approaches with passion. We must look with admiration on Orthodox Judaism's maintenance of Jewish tradition, the ability to flow against the stream of assimilation, preserving our yeshivot

and reverence for our sacred texts and *halachah* or way of doing things. But at the same time, we have to admire the creativity and advances made by Masorti, Reform and Liberal Jewish scholars and communities in their efforts to make Jewish life fit the patterns and mores of our contemporary society.

Jewish scholarship in Bible, rabbinics, history, literature and *halachah* has been enhanced by the contributions of my own teachers at the Jewish Theological Seminary, the heart of the Conservative, or Masorti, movement – luminaries such as Saul Lieberman, Louis Finkelstein, Ismar Schorsch, Mordechai Kaplan and Abraham Joshua Heschel.

Jewish Apartheid

The time has come for leadership to come from United Synagogue, led by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who knows very well that the tear in the fabric of Jewish collectiveness and unity is damaging us and our future. We must prevent our own extremists from hijacking our wonderful Judaism, so that we may build together a unity that will enhance the state of Israel and Jews everywhere in the world, destroy the scourge of anti-Semitism that has found new life around the world, and struggle together to create a Judaism, with different shades, that will enhance the great name of God and the Torah.

We live apart, we seldom speak to each other in our different *machanayim* (camps). We do not pray with each other and we do not meet each other enough. What is this Jewish apartheid doing to the next generation, our children, when they see their parents divided, when the rabbis of one camp will not enter the domain of another synagogue community?

I have been told that it is impossible but, yes, I am willing to dream and to challenge the way things are, because they are simply wrong. I invite Rabbi Sacks to come and speak to my synagogue, Belsize Square Synagogue, where he is respected and admired, and where his knowledge and Torah will be as revered as in any Orthodox synagogue.

We are all the brothers of Joseph and we will merit the greatest part of our future when we stop fighting, when we end the barriers and truly become *am echad*, one people, with diverse paths to Jewish law and Jewish genius.

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CELEBRATING ISRAEL

Allan Morgenthau Outlines our Special Charities

"Celebrate 68", our own community's celebration of Israel's Independence Day on 11 May, Yom Ha'atzmaut, at Belsize Square Synagogue, is a sell-out – with a waiting list!

While we are having fun dancing to the music of Shir, eating great food catered by Adam Nathan, and listening to our guest of honour, Lord (Daniel) Finkelstein in conversation with Rob Nothman, we will be supporting three Israeli charities with whom we have been long associated and whose values we can all identify with – the Jaffa Institute, Yemin Orde, and the Sports Centre for the Disabled.

You may think Israeli charities no longer need the help of the diaspora. Sadly, this is not so. A recent report from Israel's National Insurance Institute puts the country's level of poverty as the highest in the West, with about one in three children living in poverty.

All three charities have one thing in common – they are headed by dynamic leaders totally committed to the welfare of the people they are caring for. They are also committed to welcoming visitors from our synagogue, as they have done in the past, so that when you go to Israel you can see exactly what your support is achieving.

I have personally had the pleasure of being connected to the Jaffa Institute, Yemin Orde and the Sports Centre for

the Disabled for many years. I have spent a great deal of time, on numerous visits, really getting to know these charities from the inside and have watched them adapt to changing needs. I have never been disappointed.

I have witnessed **Yemin Orde** Children's Village absorbing Ethiopian children who couldn't read, write or use a knife and fork, grow into successful adults who joined the army, raised families and have become leaders in their chosen field. Currently, the greatest influx of child immigrants is from France, accounting for 25% of new arrivals. To my great surprise, I was told that this is the most challenging group of kids they have ever had, in terms of integrating them into the children's village.

At Yemin Orde we will support their Art Programme. Art offers a unique creative outlet, a means of expressing their feelings and visually laying out their personal experiences. This recognition helps to heal past suffering and repair the heart, creating an inner strength, which they urgently need.

The **Jaffa Institute**, headed by the charismatic Dr David Portowicz, helps Jews and Arabs alike through offering numerous programmes for the poor, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged. We are supporting the Jump Start Programme operated by the Jaffa Institute at four after-school learning centres: a Centre in the Jaffa Daled

neighbourhood (where the majority of children are Ethiopian immigrants), the Hatikva neighbourhood (specialising in special needs children) and centres in Jaffa's Neve Ofer neighbourhood and Bat Yam.

In total, there are 50-60 participants, with 10-15 teenagers participating from each Centre. Each teenager receives one-on-one and/or small group lessons twice a week, in the evenings after school. The extra help these classes give these kids can be life changing.

Finally we are supporting the **Sports Centre for the Disabled**. The UK chairman of this wonderful charity is Brian Harris who, as many of you will know, is a member of Belsize Square. For this, our third charity we are once again supporting the purchase of special wheelchairs which let people with all kinds of disability participate in sport.

Each chair has to be tailored to the need of the individual. Each wheelchair has the capability of opening up a world of sport to someone who would otherwise never know the pleasure of participating in team sport.

We really hope to see you on 11 May but, if you can't, please send a cheque payable to Belsize Square Synagogue, with a request to allocate your donation to the Celebrate 68 Israel Appeal. You can also specify which charity you want it to go towards.

Tom Rouncefield – An Appreciation

Members may remember Tom Rouncefield, a tenor in our choir for about a dozen years who was instrumental in executing the late Henry Kuttner's ambition to digitise our Synagogue's liturgical music. Tom sadly died on 19 March, aged 44.

Tom, who was born to a Cornish family, sang from childhood. He studied singing, winning scholarships at Wells Cathedral School and Magdalen College, Oxford. At City University, London, he formed new contacts and sang at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square.

But his longest association was with Belsize Square Synagogue. He was introduced by Mark Denza, tenor and our deputy organist, who had been asked by our then conductor, Ron

Rappaport, if he knew any good tenors.

At this time Tom was in his early 20s. He fell in love with the music of Sulzer and Lewandowski. He was the soloist for the *piyut* (liturgical poem), *V'ye'etayu* (And all shall come to serve you), in the Yom Kippur Musaf service in 2003 and 2004. His Church of England parents had taken him at 12 on pilgrimage to Israel and saw Jesus in a Jewish context. In his spiritual quest he read books by Jonathan Sacks.

His computer skills were seized upon by Henry Kuttner, a former conductor of our choir, to assist him in digitising our tattered paper scores, using Sibelius software. For Tom, editing our music was a profound experience and he became close to Henry and his family. Unfortunately, the depressive disorder

which started in his teens became increasingly severe and he had to step down around 2005. No treatment was effective and in the end, his mother said, his mental anguish caused him to take his own life. He had his kippah in his pocket when he died and she wanted members of the Belsize Square community to know this.

The choir, synagogue and Henry's family all paid tribute to Tom. At his funeral near Truro on 2 April, the service included recordings from the Belsize High Holyday Music CD, among them *Enosh* (Man is as grass) from our Mazkir memorial service.

As our long-serving soprano, Juanita Wise, wrote on behalf of the choir to Tom's parents: "To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die."





Dear Fellow Members

Mrs Klopstik und I were chosen to meat und greet on a few Fridays ago. Unfortunately Mrs K could not be there because she was visiting her older brother Wolfe. He lives in Bornmouse und recently underwent a serious accident where he tripped on his tallis und head buttered the rabbi on his artificial knee, knocking my brother-in-law unconcience und the rabbi unmobilised.

Anyway I had to do the greeting on my own. I was the day before again in Belsize Square, but once more under the roof of St Peters church in their Communication Hall. This time it was to hear the lesson from Shake Ach Met Ali Haneef on the extremities of Islam. He looked like the actor Schmule L Jacksohn und sounded like Borat Obama.

He explained about the difference between the Sunnies und the Cheers und that the Sunnies were inherited from the Wahnaabi tripe, the original Swords from Swordi Arabia. Und that these Wahnaabies were the bad ones who had misintrepid the true meaning from Islam. In Great Britain 80 pro cent from the Mosks are Sunny und led by Wahnaabi Imamas. He said that things were changing toward the better, but we could still be worried about the future. I left with alarming bells ringing in my ears.

Then there came the horrors from Belgium und Pakistan. It dozen give much hope that we can soon overcome the thread from ICES und the Talaban who ridiculise young mouslims und make them believe that by blowing themselves up in a crowd of innocent stand-buyers they will get an oyster pass to paradise.

Having now past by Purim we come towards Pesach which will be overcome by the time this kolumne is publicised und read. Anyway, in Abernein Mansions we have our own communal Seder. This year I am in charge of the hiding the



**Klopstick's
Komplaint**

Efficombmen. It will be Miss Neuhausen, the youngest inhabitant at 79, who has to find it. Last year she failed und gave up the search after half an hour und then non of us could remember where we did hidden it. Eventually the cleaning lady, Mrs O'Brighty, found it in crumps at the back of one of the sofas.

I also had the privilege of attending a wonderful concert in the synagogue sanitorium let by our own Sir Benjamin Dr Wolf who conducted the Zemel Quire. From Strasbourg we also had the delicious Alsation Quire, Polyphony Hebrews de Strasbourg conducted by Maestro Hector Sabo. The auditorium was full to overfloating und was introduced charmingly by Peter Pretzel who, judging from his shirt, had raced there straight from his rugby game. Between this extraordinary und beautiful harmoniums, we were treated to a special performance by The Three Tanners, our own Cantor Paul Heller und Cantorim Jonathan Blum und Robert Brody from the Polyphony und Zemel respectfully.

It was a great pity for me personally that Mrs K could not be there. With her doubted musical talent, she would have wanted to be included. She has already reached great 3 on the trombone und would have been a wonderful accomplishment to the pianist und organised genius, Michael Cayton, clarinato, Deborah Cooper und soprano soloists, Rebecca Lohnes und Ann Sadan, also respectfully as above menschioned.

Having been enchanted from familiar Judaical und Yiddish songs the concert almost ended with a melody of numbers from the musical Porky und Bess und two visions of Bei Mir Bis Du Schoen in Yiddish und Englisch. This evening has expired me to make more from my own vocal chorus und perhaps with the idea to finally come over my inert tone deafness.

With the best of intentions

Fritz Klopstick

(Continued from Page 4)

We are preparing for Passover, knowing that the path of freedom will require greater love, *ahavat Yisrael*, a respect for each other that we can then pass on to the rest of humanity, waiting for our own example of what it means to be a loving servant of God, with a love of all God's Creation and life.

And the same is true for non-Orthodox Jews toward Orthodox Jews and Judaism. The intolerance goes both ways. Our intolerance of our fellow Jew knows no ideological borders today.

Please accept this invitation, Rabbi Sacks, for God's sake, for our people's future, for our children and for the full fruition of your brilliant plea for oneness

among all peoples. Let us follow the advice of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, who taught us that only causeless love, *ahavat Yisrael*, may overcome the ruination of causeless hatred. It is no dream but a matter of our very Jewish future that we share together.

This is a version of the article published in the Jewish Chronicle on 1 April.

Scripture Readings

Candle Lighting	Date	Sidrah/Festival	Torah		Haftarah	
Friday 6 May Debra Shelemy	7 May Nisan 29	Acharei Mot	Leviticus	16:1-17:7 18:26-30	Ezekiel	22:1-19
Friday 13 May Susanna Freudenheim	14 May Iyar 6	K'doshim	Leviticus	19:1-37 20:25-27	Amos	9:7-15
Friday 20 May Madeleine Somer	21 May Iyar 13	Emor	Leviticus	21:1-22:16 24:21-23	Ezekiel	44:15-31
Friday 27 May Emma Kentridge	28 May Iyar 20	Behar	Leviticus	25:1-38 25:55-26:2	Jeremiah	32:6-27

Community News

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a cordial welcome to:

Etai Rosen
Lucia Salmon
Assaf Shalvi
Anna Usiskin

BAT MITZVAH

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Sam, son of Debra & Stephen Shelemy, who celebrates his Bar Mitzvah on 7 May
Susanna, daughter of Victoria & Adam Freudenheim, who celebrates her Bat Mitzvah on 14 May
Madeleine, daughter of Tamara & Bruce Somer, who celebrates her Bat Mitzvah on 21 May
Emma, daughter of Janet & Matthew Kentridge, who celebrates her Bat Mitzvah on 28 May

BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Mrs O Herman (85) on 12 May
Mr I Rynhold (87) on 16 May
Mr C Kissen (86) on 19 May
Mrs C Fraylich (89) on 25 May

STONE SETTING

The stonesetting for the late Fanny Marle will take place on Sunday 15 May at 2.30pm at Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery

BELSIZE BOOK CLUB

Tuesday 24 May at 8.00pm

We will read and discuss Ian McEwan's **The Children Act**

Please contact Paul Lindsay on 020 7435 5926
Or Dorothy White: dorothywhite99@gmail.com



Notice is hereby given that the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE
will be held in the Synagogue Hall, 51 Belsize Square, London, NW3 on Tuesday 7 JUNE 2016 at 8.00pm (to be followed by refreshments).

A G E N D A

1. Introduction and Report by the Chairmen
2. Financial Report
3. Appointment of Auditors
4. The election of Jackie Alexander as Chairman for a period of three years
5. Election of members to the Board
6. Discussion on Annual Reports
7. Any Other Business

Candidates for Election to the Board

John Abramson; *John Alexander; *Steven Bruck;
*Keith Conway; Suzanne Goldstein; Joe Hacker;
*Richard Pollins; *Hilary Solomon; *Jimmy Strauss;
*Dilys Tausz; *Justyn Trenner

* members of the present Board

Under clause 17(c) of the Constitution, every member of the Synagogue not being in arrears with more than one year's subscription shall be entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Voting is by secret ballot of those present at the AGM and entitled to vote.

The copy deadline for the next issue of *Our Congregation* is Friday 13 June

REGULAR SERVICES

Friday evenings at 6.45pm & Saturday mornings at 10.00am

Kikar Kids

Saturday 7 May and 4 June at 11.00am

Under-5s Service in the Crèche

5-9 year-olds Service in the Library

11.30am – Kids Kiddush

Often followed by a Pot Luck Lunch

Contact Frank Joseph on 020 7482 2555 to bring a dish

Religion School

Sunday mornings: 9.30am-12.30pm

Summer terms starts: 8 May

LOCAL LUNCHEON GROUPS

Still running and happy to welcome new members
Please let us know if you plan to attend

The NW3 and Wembley Group

Giacomo, 428 Finchley Road, NW2 2HY

1.00pm on Wednesdays 18 May & 22 June

Please phone Irene Strauss on 020 7435 3538

The Edgware Group

The Kitchen, 16-17 The Promenade, Hale Lane, HA8 7JZ

12.15pm on Tuesdays 17 May & 21 June

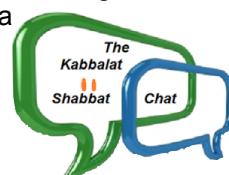
Please phone Inge Strauss on 020 8958 9414

Cantor Heller invites the B'nei Mitzvah Class to...

An Erev Shabbat opportunity to make Kiddush, sing Lecha Dodi and to learn the lessons of the Parsha

On the second Friday of each month
at 5.30pm in the Library
Refreshments provided

Next session: 13 May



SHAVUOT SERVICES & STUDY

1st Eve: Saturday 11 June at 6.45pm
followed at 8.00pm by TIKKUN LEYL SHABBAT (5 Shiurim)

1st Day: Sunday 12 June at 10.00am

2nd Eve: Sunday 12 June at 6.45pm

2nd Day: Monday 13 June at 10.00am

SHAVUOT OFFICE HOURS

The office will close at 2.00pm on Friday 10 June
and re-open Wednesday 15 June at 9.00am

Sunday Morning Adult Discussion Group

1 and 8 May - No session

15 May

10.00-12.00: Rabbi Altshuler on The Great Philosophers and the Jewish Response: Jeremy Bentham & Georg W.F. Hegel

12.00-12.30: Open forum discussion

22 May

10.00-12.30: Film and discussion on *About Elly*, a 2009 Iranian psychological drama directed by Asghar Farhadi (better known for *The Separation*). A young teacher disappears before being introduced to a potential suitor in North Iran.





A CRACKING SUCCESS

Congratulations to Ben Yass, who formed part of the five-man winning team from St. Paul's School scooping first place at the Weizmann Institute's Shalheveth Freier International Physics Tournament last month.



Participating teams were tasked with designing and building a safe which could be cracked only by solving two physics riddles. Each team had to be able to open their own safe in under five minutes but needed to keep their opponents stumped for at least 10 minutes.

As well as taking first place in the overall competition, Ben and his team-mates came in the top three in all of the sub-categories: most uncrackable safe, best safe crackers and most popular safe (peer vote amongst the teams).

Thirty school teams, all 17 and 18-year-olds, from around the world qualified through a national competition to participate in the final, which took place at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot on 5 and 6 April. The St. Paul's team secured their first place in the UK competition with their ingenious "Theme Park Safe". They were joined by another St. Paul's team, which came second in the UK competition, and the third team came from Dulwich College. Other countries sending teams included the USA, Israel, Canada, Romania, Slovenia, Panama and Angola.

With help from Weizmann UK, they successfully overcame the first, unofficial hurdle – getting through El Al security with a huge box containing wires, batteries, lasers, miscellaneous electronics and scraps of metal (the safe that the team had created). Once at the Weizmann Institute, where they were housed, they set up their creation – the "Theme Park Safe".

In this safe, there was a broken roller coaster and a captive ball bearing at its summit. In order to "free" the ball bearing and claim it as a prize, the roller coaster had to be fixed and the ball bearing released. The key to this (for those non-scientists, like this reporter, still completely in the dark) was to spin the entire safe and then use a "smart" wire to access a switch. No other team managed to figure out how to do this, while the "Theme Park" team successfully broke into several other teams' safes.

The winner's trophy was joyously received at the end of the competition, and Ben and his team-mates each received a set of wooden puzzles to further test their safe-cracking skills. Ben, who was Bar Mitzvah at Belsize, should not have too much difficulty with them. Science and maths teaching feature in his parents' and grandparents' professions. His older sister, Joanna, won a silver medal last year representing Britain in the European Maths Olympiad.

After two days crammed with creative tension, the team relaxed on their final day with a guided tour of some of Israel's historic sites. Summing it all up, Ben said: "We are delighted by the result. The hours and hours of hard work we put into this project have paid off."

"After winning the UK competition we were so looking forward to our visit to Israel, and it was amazing. Staying at the Weizmann Institute was inspirational, and visiting Jerusalem and Jaffa was incredible. We are very grateful to the Weizmann Institute for running this competition and to Weizmann UK for sponsoring our travel."

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Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm

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and Dilys Tausz - 020 7435 5996

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Chairman: Rabbi Stuart Altshuler

Joint Vice Chairs: Helen Grunberg - 020 8450 8533
Cantor Dr Paul Heller

COMMUNITY CARE CO-ORDINATOR & BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

Contact Eve Hersov on 020 7435 7129
or email eve@synagogue.org.uk
or call the Synagogue Office for a leaflet

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Evenings/weekends phone Calo's (Undertakers)
020 8958 2112

JUDAICA SHOP

Open during office hours and on Sunday morning during term time only

KIDDUSH

Rota enquiries to Jennifer Saul in the Synagogue Office
(not Thursdays or Fridays)

LIBRARY

Open Wednesdays 10am - 12 noon
At other times please check first with the office

CHEDER

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