

HIGHLight

Bromley Reform Synagogue newsletter



The Mayor of Lewisham (and BRS member) Damien Egan kindling the lights on the menorah at the Chanukah celebration at Lewisham Civic Centre in December

February 2020 - Shevat/Adar 5780

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PURIM 5780

Purim falls on 14 Adar, 5780 and we will be celebrating!

The entire community is invited to dress up and join the Cheder for hamantaschen and a **Purim Puppet Parade** on **Sunday, 8 March from 11.30 am to 12.30 pm** and

Come to the synagogue on **Erev Purim, Monday, 9 March** for the reading of the Megillah, with sound effects, in the sanctuary, preceded by a hot supper, wine, whiskey, soft drinks and more hamantaschen!

Food from 6.30 pm, service at 7.30pm

Fancy dress is encouraged at both celebrations, with prizes to be won.

We thus fulfil the traditions of Purim, which include festive meals, costumes, masquerades, plays, parodies and liquor. This year we would again like to combine the mitzvot of sending food gifts to friends and money to the poor by collecting items for local food banks. Whatever you attend over the festival, please bring gifts of food and toiletries* for us to donate!

* for items that are specially needed, please check out the website

<https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

Rabbi Recruitment:

Our job description and advert are live on the Reform Judaism website, who have also shared the post nationally and internationally.

The BRS Rabbi Recruitment Steering Group will provide updates to the community, particularly when shortlisted candidates are due to visit us.

If you have any questions please contact **Kieron Hyams** via the synagogue 020 8460 5460



View from the Board – Flora Spiegel writes:

Our Chair, Michelle, thought it would be nice to shake things up this month and offer a view from someone else on the Board at BRS. So I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as its newest member and give a few updates on the things we're looking forward to this month, as we trudge through the dark end of January and tell ourselves that Tu B'Shvat and then spring really will be coming soon!

A bit about me: I grew up near Washington DC and first came to the UK in 2001. Following a chance meeting with my future husband Tony in a pub shortly after arrival, I accidentally stayed in the UK for almost 20 years and now have two children, Ruthie (aged 4 and in the Gan), and Curtis (aged 9 and in Kittah Dalet). I joined the synagogue about five years ago to give my children a Jewish education, and was blown away by how welcome we were made to feel as an interfaith family. I joined the Board in October 2019 as a co-opted member to extend the interfaith work started by the Bromley 3 Faiths Group, for which I've been the BRS representative since 2018.

Here are a few things we're working on this month:

Rabbi recruitment: We're excited about finding a new rabbi to lead our community. The job advert has gone out via Reform Judaism (with a deadline of 14 February). Please let Kieron Hyams know if you're interested in being on the recruitment committee. We'd especially like more representation from Cheder parents and younger members.

Our synagogue garden: The synagogue garden and landscaping that was planted some 20 years ago quite literally needs to be tended by the next generation – it has now become so overgrown that the Board will be hiring a professional gardener to tackle the worst of the ivy and pruning as a one-off in the spring. After that we'll need to organise a new team of volunteers to take care of it. (Fellow Cheder parents, let's do this when it's a sunny Sunday morning and we're hanging around anyway!) Matthew de Lange has very kindly offered to advise us as 'Head Gardener' for this project.

Collections for local refugee families:
Thanks to all of you who have



generously contributed clothing, toys, food and toiletries over the past few months – first, in the donation drive that Danielle and I arranged for Mitzvah Day at the Cheder in November and, more recently, in response to a few ad-hoc requests on WhatsApp to address specific needs for some of the newly arrived families from Syria. The donated items have been distributed among eight families in Lewisham and Greenwich boroughs and there were some very happy children riding their new scooters last week! I'll continue to communicate specific requests when they come in. *See the box in column 3 for a list of items that are always useful for donation.*

Interfaith work at BRS: The requests for refugee support have come to us through the Bromley 3 Faiths Group and other communities in the group (including Al-Emaan Centre in Keston and St John's Church in Bromley) have also been collecting for the same group of families. We're now moving forward with a plan to support refugee families face-to-face by volunteering together as interfaith befrienders with Lewisham Refugee Welcome. I'll update you as these plans develop and will let you know how you can get involved if you're interested. Please also join us for our regular series of B3FG talks on common themes in the three Abrahamic faiths, which always feature fabulous cake. The next talk in the series will be Omar Taha speaking on 'Forgiveness in Islam' on 11 February at St John's Church, Park Road, Bromley, 7.15-9pm. If you'd like to learn more about the work of the Three Faiths Group, please speak to me or to Matthew, who is the other BRS representative.

Flora Spiegel
via the synagogue: 020 8460 5460

Items needed for donation to refugee families:

All items must be clean, intact and functional. *Please contact Flora at flora.spiegel@gmail.com if you have any questions about specific items for donation.*

Homewares:

Rugs and carpets, bedding, curtains tablets, smartphones, laptops, PCs (please ensure that memory has been wiped and factory settings restored), television sets, small electronics (e.g. hairdryers, radios, irons, toasters), vacuum cleaners, fridges and freezers, food processors, blenders, pots and pans, cutlery, plates and cups, deep fryers (for making falafel!), bicycles, scooters, gardening tools

Toiletries:

Toothpaste and toothbrushes, hand soap, shower gel, shampoo and conditioner, menstrual pads (**not** tampons), baby wipes, toilet paper

Food:

Staples: plain white flour, white sugar, vegetable oil, olive oil, coffee, tea, peanut butter, strawberry jam

Spices: ground cumin, ground coriander, black pepper, cardamom

Grains: bulgar wheat (this is the staple Syrian grain), short-grain white pudding rice (this is what they are used to), easy-cook American-style rice mixes (e.g. Uncle Ben's)

Legumes: dried or tinned chickpeas, dried orange lentils, dried yellow split peas

Dried fruit: apricots, dates, figs, raisins, shredded coconut, all nuts

Tinned foods: tuna in oil, tinned tomatoes, tomato paste

Sweets and biscuits of all kinds (please check that they do not contain lard or pork gelatine)



Young refugees receive music coaching at Trinity Laban

Cheder News

Yes, it's still winter, the days are dark and short (but getting lighter and longer) and there are always a couple of hours of fun at Cheder to look forward to every week!

1. The Purim term started for the teachers on 5 January, when we attended a useful training day run by Reform Judaism Education, where we got inspired, mingled with teachers from other Chederim and talked about how to make our Cheder the best it can be. The term started officially on 12 January, with the classes all eager to return to Cheder, learn and have fun with their friends.
2. Big congratulations go to all our Cheder children for raising £213 for **Jewish Child's Day** from our Tzedakah donations last term. Please keep sending in your spare change as this term, Kittah Chet/Zayin has chosen two charities for us to raise money for: **Roundabout Dramatherapy** and **Last Chance Animal Rescue**. Kittah Chet/Zayin gave an inspiring presentation about these charities during assembly on 19 January and we all agreed they are well worth our support.
3. **Tu B'Shvat** will be celebrated during Cheder on **Sunday, 9 February**. We will be teaching our children a blessing that they can say when eating fruit: *Baruch Ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam, Borei P'ri Ha'Etz* and we will be going on a **Tu B'Shvat Scavenger Hunt**, where we will learn Hebrew words for the trees in our synagogue garden and for those special fruits grown in Israel. Follow the clues and win a prize!
4. **Youth Club** will also be on Tu B'Shvat on **9 February** and then on **8 March**. For more information, contact **Rachael Ashmore**: rachael.freida.ashmore@gmail.com
5. Remember, **Cheder will be closed for half term for two weekends: Sundays 16 and 23 February**. Term will start again on Sunday 1 March, when everyone will be baking hamantaschen to prepare for Purim! Can you help by donating dough for your child's class to fill with jam? If so, please let the class teacher know.
6. We will be celebrating **Purim**

on **Sunday 8 March**, when our students and teachers will re-enact the story of the festival - parents will be invited to



stay and celebrate the story of Purim with us and dressing up by children and adults is positively encouraged. Come in your best, most creative, costume and there will be a prize for best-dressed student and best-dressed parent too!

7. **Advance notice of summer events:** on **Sunday 5 July**, we will be having a Cheder trip to the **Jewish Museum** in Camden. More details to follow, so please keep an eye out for emails and flyers that will be coming home in the coming weeks. **On Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 July, RSY-Netzer** will be running *Garinim* (day camps) at Bromley for 5-10 year olds. There will be activities such as drama, singing, cooking and science, plus crafts to suit younger kids and fun learning sessions. More information to follow.
8. Please check the **Security Rota** at the bottom of this page to see if we are expecting you to show up for security duty. It is really important that parents help out on the door when possible, so please contact **Katia Pisetzky** (pisetzky@gmail.com) or **Graham Harris** (grahamh4@aol.com) if there are any problems

That's it for this month!

L'Shalom,

Danielle, Cheder headteacher

Cheder Security Rota – Purim Term

Sundays	Name
February 2	Judy and David Taylor
February 9	Laurence Jones
February 16 and 23	Cheder Half Term
March 1	Harriet and Dan Posner

Social Centre News

Well, what a warm welcome we received - a hot drink and biscuits, familiar faces to greet us and the smiling faces of new people to meet and get to know.

A busy game of Rummikub was already in full swing while Scrabble and various other games were available but we chose to play a game of cards.

An optional and gentle exercise session, expertly led by Andreas, followed and was such good fun that it prompted me to make a mental note of some simple exercises I could/should do each morning at home - well, we shall see!

All this time a busy band of volunteers was beaver away in the Shul kitchen cooking us lunch and what a splendid meal was served to us and thoroughly enjoyed!

A huge "thank you" to all involved. We'll be joining you again very soon!

Sandy Clary

Events in April

Service Dates for Your Diary

PESACH: The first Seder night this year will be on **Wednesday, 8 April**. There will be a festival service at 10.30 am on the morning of **Thursday, 9 April** followed by the **Communal Seder** at 6.30 pm on that evening. Application forms will be circulated with *Highlight* - do book early to avoid disappointment!

Yom HaShoah will be marked on **Sunday 19 April** at a service for all the community. **John Posner** will lead the service and we will remember the Shoah with candle lighting and music from the BRS Klezmer Band.

We are delighted to invite the community to a **Musical Shabbat Evening Service** on **Friday 24 April**. A bring-and-share supper will start at 6 pm, with the service starting at 7 pm. We warmly invite families of all sizes and ages to come.

Israel and Us

I'm sure we all know that the Jewish religion is not just about the way we worship; it is a way of life. Moreover, our Jewish identity, though hard to define, relates to the fact we are a people. We call ourselves 'Jews' not 'the Children of Israel' or 'Israelites' and those of us who live in the diaspora cannot call ourselves Israelis. Yet the ancient land of Israel and the modern state of Israel are essential components of our Jewish identity. Will that always be so? Well, we don't know what the future holds but there is concern in America that many young Jews feel no affinity for the Israeli state, know little about it and certainly don't have the instinctive loyalty or express the support that has characterised the older generation. I suspect a similar change in attitude has occurred in the UK but perhaps there is less awareness of it.

Please don't misunderstand me, this is not a question of whether you are sympathetic to the Israeli prime minister or whether you are critical of the policies that have been pursued by the government of Israel in the last 25, 50 or more years, particularly with respect to the territories that Israel has occupied since the Six-Day War. No, this is about what part Israel, the Jewish state, plays in our own Jewish identity and what part will it play for the generations that follow. Do we or our children or grandchildren even have enough information on which to form an opinion or generate a feeling? If not, perhaps we should take the trouble to find out more.

There are many ways in which we can do this. For example, the organisation called '**Honest Reporting**' is running a week in Israel from **27 April to 4 May**, in which there will be meetings with journalists, briefings from experts about the security issues and the opportunity to meet Arab and Jewish Israelis as well as time to do the things that tourists usually do. For young adults (18 to 30), perhaps considering a gap year, **Masa Israel**

Journey <https://www.masaisrael.org> offers internships, during which there is an opportunity to work alongside and get to know Israelis in tech and other companies. Such experience is enormously valuable both for getting to know about Israel and also for the CV. For teenagers there are all sorts of programmes run by UJIA and Reform Judaism. Such trips have often been described by those who have experienced them as 'life-changing'.

I know that some of the programmes are expensive but there is financial assistance available from UJIA, Reform Judaism and indeed from our synagogue. The Board

of BRS is committed to helping all youngsters who need financial support. We believe every teenager in our community should receive assistance to benefit from at least one programme in Israel. In this way, we can ensure that the Israel can continue to play a critical part in our own Jewish identity and that of the next generations.

If you want to know more about programmes and can't find what you need on the web, please don't hesitate to contact me and we'll work on this together.

John Posner

via the synagogue: 020 8460 5460

The Knitters, Natterers and Stitchers Group

Have you ever wondered what the K&N group do? Well, we produce knitted goods for the Neo-Natal unit at Kings College Hospital for premature babies. The sister-in-charge tells us what they need and we set to work. We will knit almost anything from simple small blankets to cardigans, bootees, hats and mittens, and beautiful toys. And a couple of our members make amazing quilted incubator covers.

And do we natter? Yes, of course. And chatter too. And we have teas and coffees and cakes and biscuits.

We meet every three weeks or so at Park Court (Pauline Jeffree's home) and take over the lounge for 2 hours from 10am to 12pm. Many of the knitters do lots of knitting at home so they bring in loads and loads of finished pieces. When we have a huge bag full the nurses come and collect it all to take back to Kings.



Some of the items produced by the Knitters, Stitchers and Natterers

As you can see from the pictures above we knit hats in several sizes to keep the little ones' heads warm and as they have coloured tops, red for lots of visits from the nurses, yellow and green for the more robust babies and a complete cardigan set with teddy bears.

How about coming to join us? We could even help you to learn to knit. The following dates are already in the diary - 5 March, 16 April, 7 May and 4 June.

Sally Rosebery

(who hadn't knitted for 40 years!!)

The 999 Club

Shane Lask has sent us the following note:

Please can you alert anyone bringing in things for the 999 Club that currently they have a glut of clothes. The things they most need are for personal hygiene (deodorant, shaving kit, dental health, creams etc) and food/drink cartons, packs or tins with long use-by dates. However, they still need tea towels and hand towels, as well as new base layer underwear (pants, vests, possibly sturdy socks) and specifically joggers and hooded sweatshirts for the people at the shelter, as 999 run the night shelter all year now!



JMI - JEWISH MUSIC INSTITUTE presents

YALLAH

Judeo-Arabic Music Workshop and Conference

February 9th & 10th at SOAS - University of London

The Jewish Music Institute is excited to launch an innovative two-day Judeo-Arabic music workshop and conference in London. This programme, which is a first in the UK, brings together an international group of experts for a two-day extravaganza to celebrate the richness of Judeo-Arabic music with over 30 presenters, musicians and academics.

To book and for more information visit www.jmi.org.uk/event/yallah2020



Transforming Lives through Jewish Music

BRS Education Committee

Dates for your diary

Shabbat Study Session

Saturday, 1 February (designated Mental Health Shabbat)

led by **Student Rabbi Mati Kirschenbaum**

The session will follow the morning service and be preceded by a **Bring-and-Share Lunch**

Please contact **Barbara** for further details: a.bkurtz@talktalk.net

Introduction to Judaism

Classes will continue in the Sanctuary during Cheder, starting at 10 am.

Dates are now as follows:

Sundays, 9 February, 1, 15 and 29 March

Classes will be led by **John Posner**.

Please contact John for further details:

john.posner@talk21.com

There will be a small charge for non-members.

Contact the synagogue office to register your interest:

admin@bromleyshul.org.uk

Council of Christians and Jews South East London Branch

Jewish and Christian clergy in training will share their experiences and their expectations of ministry at the C CJ meeting in Dulwich on 4 February.

The Jewish participant will be student rabbi **Iris Ferreira**, who has joined Leo Baeck College and has degrees in Hebrew and Jewish studies gained in Paris and teaching experience both in synagogue settings and at Limmud France.

The Christian participant will be **Jules Soanes**, who started training for Ordained Ministry in the Church of England in 2018 and is studying at St Augustine's College of Theology. She grew up in Bristol before moving to London, where she trained and practised as a Criminal Defence Lawyer before specialising in Employment Law.

Tuesday, 4 February at 8 pm

Refreshments from 7.45 pm

at **St Stephen's Church, College Road, SE21**

(beside Sydenham Hill railway station)

Further details from **Stephen Weil** via the synagogue: 020 8460 5460

Reform Judaism Beit Din Residential Weekend

Nottingham, 27-29 March

Are you considering conversion, are in the process of converting, or have recently become Jewish?

Then join us for a residential weekend at Eastwood Hall Hotel, Nottingham forming networks with those following a similar path and facing similar issues.

We'll enjoy a complete Shabbat experience together in a warm, open environment for questions and discussions.

We will be led by **Rabbi Jackie Tabick**, Convenor of the Beit Din, Reform Judaism's religious court which deals with matters of conversion.

We'll stay at the Eastwood Hall Hotel near Nottingham, easily accessible from the M1. The cost will be £190 per person to include all meals (plus single room supplement of £50 where applicable). The cost for children sharing their parents' room is £55.

The event programme is suitable for over 12s. Please let us know if you wish to attend with children under this age.

For more info call Lynsey: **020 8349 5645**

Book online here: <https://tinyurl.com/BeitDinWeekend>

Social and Personal

BIRTH - A hearty mazal tov to Sam and Eva Oliver-Welsh on the arrival of Jasper Jingxuan on 10 December, a brother for Arthur. A mazal tov also to the proud grandmother, Susan Oliver-Edwards.



Sam and Eva Oliver-Welsh with new baby Jasper. In the background: big brother Arthur.

BEREAVEMENT - Sincere condolences to Sylvia Ezer on the sad loss of Jim, her partner of many years. We wish her a long life.

BAT MITZVAH - A hearty mazal tov to Sophie Taylor and her family on the occasion of her bat mitzvah, which she will be celebrating in the synagogue on Saturday, 8 February, Shabbat Beshallah.

GET WELL SOON - Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Julia Williams (daughter of Gloria and Ronnie Goldberg), who is currently recuperating at home following surgery to remove a brain tumour and preparing for a six-week course of radiotherapy/chemotherapy at the Royal Marsden starting very shortly.

Pauline Jeffree writes:

We are thinking of and wishing well to all Shul members, family and friends who are unwell or recovering from illness at this time. Please let the Caring Community know if we can help by leaving a message at the Synagogue office 020 8460 5460 or by e-mail at admin@bromleyshul.org.uk. Any request will be passed to me as Chair of Caring Community. I have a wonderful team, willing, waiting and wanting to help. We look forward to hearing from you.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: Mr and Mrs Steven and Debbie Lewis of Purley, Mrs Nicola Burgess of Orpington, mother of Dylan, Mr Roland Perrin of South Norwood, husband of Rachel and father of Farley.

A Chanukah at Limmud festival and RSY-Netzer's Course Hadracha



This Chanukah I was lucky enough to spend the holiday away at two fantastic locations:

Limmud festival 2019 and at

Whitemoor Lakes with RSY-Netzer's Course Hadracha.

Limmud is an enormous Jewish learning festival that happens every Chanukah, in which people from each of the Jewish communities come together for multi-denominational Jewish learning. Each day at Limmud activities and lectures take place, ranging from *'The history of Asian Jews'* to *'Gematria for beginners'* and from Latin dancing to *Beit Midrash* (Talmud) lessons and meditative sessions called *'Ein Od Milvado'*. All participants can come and go between these sessions as they like and go to restaurants and the bar in the evenings. For families there are programmes for kids and teenagers during the day and in the evenings there are family activities.

I participated in the adult Limmud and absolutely loved the programme. I met so many people, learned masses about subjects I'd never even heard of and I have taken away with me beautiful memories.

The day after Limmud festival was finished I was also able to participate in Course Hadracha by RSY-Netzer. It was the *Choref* (winter) event and I spent three days training to become a *madricha* (leader). I would wholeheartedly recommend both joining RSY-Netzer and visiting the Limmud festival at Chanukah!

Thank you to BRS for supporting me to enable me to go on these great programmes. I learned so much and I look forward to sharing what I have learnt with my Cheder class and the Youth Club.

Rachael Ashmore

The Book Group

The group's convenor, Judy Woolfe, writes:

We have only been going since last summer, but our book group is thriving. Discussions are always lively and, as you can imagine, we talk about all manner of things, from philosophy to family conflicts.

The next session is on **Thursday, 5 March** in the Library at 7.45 pm – with refreshments.

We shall be critically appraising **Isaac Bashevis Singer's** great novel *'Shadows on the Hudson'*, which is set in New York City after the Second World War and before the establishment of Israel. It follows the lives of a group of Jewish emigrés from Poland.

There are usually around 10 people at each session, so there is room for two or three more people to join the group.

Further information from

Judy Woolfe: via the synagogue: 020 8460 5460

SE10 and Beyond

SE10 and Beyond are meeting in Greenwich on **Thursday 6 February** from 7.30 pm for the rescheduled discussion titled *'Jews: Winners and Losers. Why the World's scapegoats win all the prizes'*, inspired by the book: *'Civilization: The West and the Rest'* by Niall Ferguson, which makes the point that there has been a disproportionate number of Jewish Nobel Prize winners, Oscar winners, Pulitzer Prize winners etc.

If you would like more details please email **Michelle** via the synagogue: 020 8460 5460.

As usual, there are a bring-and-share supper and good company. We would love to see you, member or non-member. Please do come along.

Michelle Brooks Evans

It's Good to Talk - Report of a meeting at Catford and Bromley Synagogue

Arguments over the causes and solutions to the 'Israel-Palestine conflict' have been raging for generations, often erupting into outright war; one of the two entrenched groups thinking of itself as oppressed and needing to resist and the other perceiving an existential threat from the other, against which it needs to defend itself. There are no easy answers but everyone can benefit from a greater understanding of the issues.

The Board of Deputies with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, working with the charity *Solutions Not Sides*, threw a spotlight on the issues at a multi-faith event at Catford & Bromley Synagogue late last year. This provided an opportunity to hear and question **Eran**, a Sabra, and **Dawoud**, a Palestinian, speaking under the 'Invest In Peace' umbrella.

Members of many communities were welcomed by Catford's chairman, **Joe Burchell**, and its minister, **Rev. David Rome**, who championed the role of visionaries in the struggle to make the world a better place, quoting the Victorian poet and philosopher **James Allen**, "Dreams are the seedlings of realities." **Father Steffan Mathias** from St Mary's Church, Lewisham, spoke of building trust between communities. 'Solutions Not Sides' director **Sharon Booth** explained that the charity usually works with teenagers, offering them the chance to listen to Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints at first hand and to debate the issues.

Eran's grandparents fought in the 1948 war and the world of his childhood was one of bus bombs, bomb shelters and gas masks, and a continual sense of fear. He served with the Israel Army Special Forces in the West Bank. He has lost friends and was involved in operations that traumatised him. On leaving the army, he studied political science at university and joined the Peace Now movement, where, for the first time, he met a Palestinian without holding a gun. Eran hopes to help to find a peaceful solution for the sake of future generations. "Conflict has been the soundtrack of our lives," he said, "and it is the responsibility of my generation not to pass on the conflict to our kids."

Dawoud was brought up in Ramallah in the West Bank and found life particularly difficult during the 2014 *Intifada*. He had the opportunity to study in Tel Aviv but

was denied a permit to live there, resulting in a regular five-hour commute. He spent as much time listening to Israeli opinions as to those of Palestinians, finding in many cases they were the same: while there were those whose views were based on emotion and preconception, the majority just wanted to put food on the table for their families and have a peaceful life. He believes that whenever peace is within touching distance extremists on one side or the other destroy the process.

Both wanted an end to violence, including air strikes, rocket attacks, incitement and street crime, and advocated the free movement of people. Dawoud pointed out that although the Palestinian negotiating position is comparatively weak, they need, among other things, an end to occupation and military law, control of their own water supply, statehood with their own currency and passports, free access to holy sites, an air or sea port to allow for travel, trade and tourism – which would increase productivity – an end to the Gaza blockade and removal of the separation barrier. Eran mentioned a safe homeland for Jewish people, but not at the expense of others; the resolution of economic issues, and no more tunnels.

There were many questions from the audience which the speakers answered in turn, such as: Is it possible for Israelis and Palestinians to understand each other's interests? What role can the internet play? Why have more of the surrounding countries not absorbed more Palestinian refugees? How might Palestinians remove leaders who are not interested in peace? How can the disparity in power between Israel and Palestinians be resolved?

In response, it was explained that Jordan had completely absorbed many refugees and given them full citizenship but Lebanon justified preventing Palestinian refugees from working and studying there on the grounds that they would eventually go home; it was in their interests not to assimilate but to retain refugee status therefore Lebanon was assisting them! Eran believed that that situation needed an international solution. On the disparity of power, Dawoud observed that the only power Palestinians have is the power to say no and they are learning to use it wisely. As to the tipping point for the Palestinian leadership, he thought it would be employment. He believes that they

need democratic elections as quickly as possible and mentioned that the last time they had an election, in 2006, there were no social media. He considers that it will be possible to use technology to awaken the silent majority and that Hamas will not be able to contain it.

The Mayor of Lewisham, **Damien Egan**, was among those who thanked *Solutions not Sides* for having brought Eran and Dawoud to address the meeting. The speakers had commented earlier on the diversity of the audience and Damien was proud to explain that that is "the Lewisham Way" – the borough fosters and celebrates diversity, tolerance and democracy and wants to be part of the solution. "There is a lot to be said," he said, "for empathy." **Rev. Peter Colwell**, Deputy General Secretary of CTBI, spoke of his admiration for the speakers, whose words he found fresh and encouraging, and thanked them for their integrity, passion and insights. The event was wound up by **Gillian Merron**, Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Report compiled, in an inter-shul collaboration, by Padi Shenton

Apologies for the late publication of this report, which had to be held over because of lack of space in our December issue.

Oneg Shabbat

The Education Committee is delighted to announce that **Prof Bernie Cohen** is joining us once again to



give us another of his much enjoyed talks. His title is *What were the Rabbis doing in the Garden or: Were the Sages the first Post-Structuralists?*

Intrigued, mystified? Then join us on **Friday, 27 March** following a shortened service starting at 7 pm. There will be drinks and nibbles provided for you to enjoy at the talk.

Further information in the March *Highlight*.

Three Ways of looking at Forgiveness

3 Faiths meeting of 14 January

Last month, the shul hosted a fascinating meeting of the Bromley 3 Faiths Group at which **Reverend Andrew McClellan** of St John's Church gave a talk on *Forgiveness in Christianity*. This followed a previous session on the Jewish view of forgiveness. A group of nearly 60 gathered despite atrocious weather and were riveted by Andrew's clear and passionate explanation of a topic that goes to the heart of Christianity. There were robust questions raised, particularly by the Jewish and Muslim members of the audience, who found some of the ideas extremely challenging.

The shul put on a great spread including a traditional Persian rice dish prepared by our Chair, Michelle, as well as gefilte fish balls and smoked salmon beignets.

So a very warm and lively evening was enjoyed by the large group, most of whom stayed on for a talk in the shul by John Posner explaining Judaism in 30 minutes!

The next meeting in the series will be at 7.15-9 pm on **Tuesday, 11 February** at St. John's Church, Park Road, Bromley, when **Dr. Omar Taha** will consider *Forgiveness in Islam*, while the final meeting will be at the same time on **Thursday 2 April** at the Al-Emaan Centre, Keston and will be a panel discussion on forgiveness.

Matthew de Lange

via the synagogue: 020 8460 5460

Tu B'Sh'vat "The New Year of the Trees"

15 Shevat in the Jewish calendar - Monday, February 10 this year - will be celebrated in the Cheder on the preceding day.

It marks the beginning of the season in which the earliest-blooming trees in the Land of Israel emerge from their winter sleep and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle.

We mark the day by eating fruit, particularly from the kinds that are singled out by the Torah in its praise of the bounty of the Holy Land: grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.



SERVICES

February 2020 – Shevat/Adar 5780

Erev Shabbat: please note: regular Friday evening services have been suspended except for special occasions.

Shabbat services at 10.30 am, unless otherwise stated

Saturday 1 February Mental Awareness Shabbat	Bo (7 Shevat) Service led by student rabbi Mati Kirschenbaum, study session with bring-and-share lunch after the service
Saturday 8 February	Beshallah (14 Shevat) Bat mitzvah of Sophie Taylor Service led by student rabbi Anna Posner
Monday 10 February	Tu B'Shvat
Saturday 15 February	Yitro (21 Shevat) Service led by Barbara Kurtz and Janet Burlem
Saturday 22 February	Mishpatim (28 Shevat) Service led by Judi Sheffrin
Wednesday 26 February	Rosh Chodesh Adar
Saturday 29 February	Terumah (4 Adar) Service led by Judy Koekoek, Scroll Reader: Larry Shall

JEWISH BOOK WEEK

29 February to 8 March

at Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1
with lunchtime events at JW3,
341-351 Finchley Road, London NW3



The book week's line-up ranges from acclaimed authors like Simon Schama, Howard Jacobson, Hannah Rothschild and Edmund de Waal to leading speakers and performers such as Julia Neuberger, A.C. Grayling, Claire Martin, Emma Barnett & Douglas Murray. We also look at the lives and careers of iconic individuals including George Gershwin, Albert Einstein, Eva Ibbotson, Bach, Karl Marx, Dorothy Parker, Primo Levi, Shakespeare & Elaine Feinstein

Go to jewishbookweek.com/upcoming-events/ to see the full list of events

Book tickets in person, online or by 'phone:
kingsplace.co.uk/jbw, 020 7520 1490;
jw3.org.uk/jewishbookweek, 020 7433 8988.

Dates for Your Diary

February

S	1	Bo - Mental Awareness Shabbat: Bring-and-share lunch and Shabbat study with student rabbi Mati Kirschenbaum after the service WIZO International Quiz@home
S	2	Jewish Book Week Family Day , 11am to 6.30 pm at Kings Place and St. Pancras
M	3	
T	4	CCJ meeting on training for the ministry, 8 pm at St. Stephen's Church Sydenham Hill
W	5	
Th	6	Beginners' Hebrew - 8 to 9.30 pm SE10 and Beyond - Book discussion in Greenwich
F	7	
S	8	Beshallah - Bat mitzvah of Sophie Taylor
S	9	Intro to Judaism - 10 am in the Shul Tu B'Shvat celebration in the Cheder Youth Club - 12.30 pm in the Shul
M	10	Tu B'Shvat
T	11	3 Faiths meeting on <i>Forgiveness in Islam</i> , 7.15 to 9.00 pm at St John's Ch., Bromley
W	12	Social Centre - 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul
Th	13	Beginners' Hebrew - 8 to 9.30 pm
F	14	
S	15	Yitro
S	16	Cheder Half Term
M	17	
T	18	
W	19	
Th	20	
F	21	
S	22	Mishpatim
S	23	Cheder Half Term
M	24	
T	25	
W	26	Rosh Chodesh Adar Social Centre - 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul
Th	27	Beginners' Hebrew - 8 to 9.30 pm
F	28	
S	29	Terumah Jewish Book Week begins at Kings Place, N1, 7 pm

March

S	1	Intro to Judaism - 10 am in the Shul
M	2	
T	3	
W	4	
Th	5	Knitters, Stitchers and Natterers , 10 am to 12 noon at Pauline's Book Group , 7.45 pm in the Library Beginners' Hebrew - 8 to 9.30 pm
F	6	
S	7	Zachor (Tetzaveh)
S	8	Purim celebration in the Cheder from 11.30 am Youth Club - 12.30 pm in the Shul Jewish Book Week ends
M	9	Erev Purim - Celebration in the Shul from 6.30 pm
T	10	PURIM
W	11	Social Centre - 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul - visit by Talia from Sadeh Farm
Th	12	Beginners' Hebrew - 8 to 9.30 pm
F	13	
S	14	Parah (Ki Tisa)
S	15	Intro to Judaism - 10 am in the Shul
M	16	
T	17	Synagogue AGM , 8 pm at the Shul
W	18	
Th	19	Beginners' Hebrew - 8 to 9.30 pm
F	20	
S	21	Ha-Chodesh (Vayakhel-Pekudei) Festive kiddush after the service to celebrate Hilda Lask's 90th birthday
S	22	
M	23	
T	24	
W	25	Social Centre - 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul
Th	26	Rosh Chodesh Nisan
F	27	Friday evening service at 7 pm followed by talk by Prof. Bernie Cohen Reform Judaism Beit Din Residential Weekend at Nottingham begins
S	28	Vayikra
S	29	Intro to Judaism - 10 am in the Shul
M	30	
T	31	



Seasonal cards, greetings for most occasions and many with no message. To pre-order a particular card/quantity please contact: judishef@aol.com

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