

March 2021 – Adar-Nisan 5781 www.bromleyshul.org.uk

CO-OPERATION AND INNOVATION, TRADITION AND TECHNOLOGY



Welcome to your ever-evolving HighLight – on which more opposite. This month, we celebrate Pesach, the big chance in the Jewish year for large family gatherings. While we discovered last year that it IS possible have a meaningful Seder online, who imagined we’d be doing it again in 5781?

What have we learned in the intervening year? Perhaps, like the Children of Israel, whose Exodus we mark at this season, we have discovered what extraordinary feats are possible if we stop hankering after the familiar, embrace new ways, and pool ideas and resources to find a path through our contemporary wilderness. Our oldest and youngest members have been doing just that, knitting and building to help others and demonstrating new ways of fulfilling our most ancient mitzvot; see pages 4 to 6 for details.

Talking of co-operating, innovating and pooling resources, our strength as a community surely lies not just in the dedication of many individuals but in the numerous bodies, large and small, of which it is composed. It’s not so much a patchwork or jigsaw as a Venn diagram, with explosions of creativity where diverse parts intersect. This issue shines a spotlight on two of those communal organisations, one more than 100 years old and the other a new branch of an existing one. Each is bringing real and virtual cheer, help and hope to others, here and in Israel. See how on pages 8-9.

There’s also information about how we plan to make this Pesach a truly communal event, news from the fantastic and diverse parts of our BRS ‘Venn diagram’, and a showcase for some amazing work by our youngest and oldest members, such as the knitted teddy bears above, and buildings on pages 4-5, that bring together tradition and technology as never before.

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HIGHLIGHT: the process of evolution continues!

With last year’s lockdown, HighLight became, essentially, online-only with a promise to keep the situation under review. That review has been ongoing for more than six months, and we are now working towards once again having a printed HighLight for every member who wants one. This will start with our Shavuot issue in May, and an interim online briefing will be shared in April should anything arise that cannot fit into eLight.

Fuller details will be revealed at the AGM (see below). As ever, do let us know what you think and whether you’d like to contribute:

comms@bromleyshul.org.uk

BRS AGM:

23 March, 8pm

Papers and Zoom details

can be found at:

<http://www.bromleyshul.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/AGM-2021-papers>

Appreciating the here-and-now as we await our freedom...

Thomas Nashe, an Elizabethan playwright and poet, is remembered for his lyrical description of the seasons. Nashe famously wrote:

*Spring, the sweet spring,
is the year's pleasant king,*

*Then blooms each thing,
then maids dance in a ring,*

*Cold doth not sting,
the pretty birds do sing:*

*Cuckoo, jug-jug,
pu-we, to witta-woo!*

*The fields breathe sweet,
the daisies kiss our feet,*

*Young lovers meet,
old wives a-sunning sit,*

*In every street these tunes
our ears do greet:*

*Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we,
to witta-woo!*

Spring, the sweet spring!

Early spring last year, we could hear the chirping of the birds in every street. Sadly, not because we were suddenly transported to the bucolic idyll described by Nashe, but because everyone stayed at home, making the streets so eerily quiet. Once a day we found some comfort during socially distanced walks and the weather was glorious. Looking at nature coming back to life, we could only hope that our civilisation would follow suit. Back then, we didn't have the promise of return to normality offered by the vaccine; neither did we have any idea how long this would take.

A year later, spring is again upon us with its promise of renewal. This time, it looks like the opening of first buds will be

matched by the re-emergence of our lives from their winter lockdown sleep. As I write these words in mid-February, more than 15 million Britons have received their first Covid jab, and the infection levels are decreasing. If this trend continues, March should bring some relaxation to lockdown rules, inching us forward towards much-longed-for freedom.

In March, we will also have the opportunity to celebrate our very own festival of freedom – Passover – which starts on the evening of 27 March. I know that, following last year's Zoom seders, many of you hoped for an in-person celebration this spring. Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely for communal mixing indoors to be allowed this month. Moreover, even if it were allowed, many of our members would not be able to attend as they still would be waiting for their vaccine. This is why our community has taken the decision to hold our Pesach celebrations online. These will include a communal Second Night Seder, festival services and Passover-themed study sessions. I am looking forward to 'seeing' you on Zoom now. And next year, in Highland Road!

At BRS, we are aware that, due to current restrictions, some of you might spend Passover on your own. We want you to know that you are not alone – your community is only a click or phone call away. Please let us know if you don't know who to spend your First Night Seder with; we have a number of families who would be delighted to have you at their (virtual) Seder table. Details from



chair@bromleyshul.org.uk

This Passover, we might not be fully free from our lockdown bondage. Nevertheless, I am sure that, at our communal* **Second Night Seder on March 28** and at our personal seders, we will find new ways to learn from the Exodus story. Just like the people of Israel in the Haggadah, we are on the cusp of liberation, full of hope yet anxious about the challenges ahead. I believe that Passover teaches us that no bondage lasts forever, that the journey out of Egypt - slow and full of sacrifices though it be - will ultimately lead to a new normal.

Passover is not just about freedom. After all, it's known as Chag HaAviv, the Spring Festival. Rooted in the time of nature's rebirth, it reminds us that we should find beauty in the here-and-now as we wait for our own liberation from lockdown. As the March days grow longer and warmer, I hope that soon we will, in Nashe's words, 'meet and a-sunning sit' with our family and friends (outdoors, of course!). Then, we will know that this long lockdown winter has finally come to an end.

I wish you all Pesach Sameach.

Rabbi Mati

rabbi@bromleyshul.org.uk

*<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82789083062> for Communal Seder

View from the Chair

Welcoming March with a spring in our step!

These days, my “View from the Chair” really is a view from my chair, as we have not been allowed to venture much further out. I hope March will bring us more freedoms and a gradual return to normality. However, as I do not have a crystal ball, we will just have to wait and see. What the past year has brought me is a huge increase in my step count. The only way I have been able to see anyone outside of a Zoom square on my laptop has been by going for a socially distanced walk with them.

Recently, my planned walk with Rabbi Mati, which we had scheduled for an hour, turned into just over two-and-a-half hours of walking around a National Trust park near his home. We talked about the highs and lows of lockdown and the traditions and future of BRS. Behind the scenes – or should I say via Zoom and YouTube – much has happened, and we have lots of plans for the future.

Last month, we said ‘see you soon’ and thank you to Barbara Kurtz, who has stepped down from her role as Chair of the Education Committee. This has now been taken over by Vicki Ashmore, and Barbara has taken over the helm of the Social Centre from Dianne Mathews. More recently, Pauline Jeffree has decided it is time to step down from being the Chair of the Caring Community. Our huge thanks go to all involved.

The Caring Community is not just for the elderly of our community, but for anyone who at some stage, might need that extra bit of loving care. I believe that the

Caring Community is going to be even more vital to everyone at BRS due to the huge strain of the past year. I would ask anyone who could help by making a phone call or sending a card to please let us know. Or if you need to talk, please just reach out – we are here. My email is at the bottom of the page.

As I write this, I have heard the Education Committee has big plans for the youth and young adults of the BRS community, so watch this space and look out for details in your weekly dose of e-Light. I believe they are going to start with an online Zoom event with a special speaker.

By the time you read this, you should all have received an email about the AGM on Tuesday 23rd March at 8pm via Zoom. This will contain the details of how to log on to the meeting and how to nominate someone to join the Board. The Board represents *you* so we encourage anyone who wants to get involved to please get in touch. All meetings are on Zoom and easily accessible. You do not need any past experience and if you want to know more, please just ask me.

I can’t quite believe we will have to spend Pesach as a community online again, but that is what we have had to plan. The Communal Seder that has traditionally been held on the second night of Pesach in the Garden Room in our synagogue will now be online and this time everyone is invited to join Rabbi Mati from the comfort of their own homes. For many, the idea of celebrating virtually, or with only your household, is anathema to



everything a Pesach seder represents. This year, things are different again, but meaning can be made virtually. This year’s Pesach, the celebration of our freedom and our traditional Seder can still bring us joy and bring us all closer together.

I wish you all *Chag Pesach sameach!* Happy Passover from me and my family to you and yours.

Michelle Brooks Evans
chair@bromleyshul.org.uk

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HOMESHUL NEWS & EDUCATION



Shalom L'Kulam

This month, as we move towards Pesach, we will explore the role prayers, good deeds and Tzedakah can play as modern replacements to the Temple sacrifices of ancient Israelites. We will be celebrating Rosh Chodesh Nisan on March 14 with a look at the blessing and the role of the moon, stars and sun in Judaism. This year, as we face another lockdown Seder, we will also be exploring how we might get our physical and mental chametz cleaned up and shaken down for this major festival, celebrating freedom at a time of restrictions.

NB: term ends on Sunday 28 March. We return on Sunday 18 April.

HomeShul will continue on Zoom from 10am until further notice. You can log on from 9.45am – in fact *it's best that you join us from then* so we don't have everyone trying to join at the same time. You can always log in at 9.45am, allow us to put you in your virtual classroom and then go and make a cup of tea, ready to begin at 10am.

- 1) It would be especially helpful at this time if you **join us with your child/children's names and classes when logging on to Zoom.**
- 2) **Please stay within earshot of your children while there are learning.** We can teach your children remotely, but we can't make sure they behave.
- 3) And remember to **check for an email from your teacher every Friday** before the Sunday of HomeShul. Occasionally, you may receive one even earlier if the teacher is asking you for things you may need time to collect for craft. Your regular Friday email will tell you about the theme of the week and will always have the Zoom link to HomeShul, which is the same every week.

After assembly each week, there's a **20-minute informal Drop-in and Drosh space** for HomeShul parents to chat with each other and catch up... If you have any more formal queries or questions though, email me at cheder@bromleyshul.org.uk or call me on 07505 950 795. I am available every Tuesday-Thursday and Sunday.

Our wonderful helper team, led by Joe Parks, is now helping out each week across the different classes



WE ARE BUILDING



HomeShul pupils have been considering how to build with heart, hands and minds

In the Talmud (Brakhot 64a) Rabbis Elazar and Hanina comment on a passage from Isaiah 54:13, "And all thy children shall be students of God, and all thy children will find peace." This encourages us to interpret children not as [banayich], but as builders [bonayich].

As HomeShul Head Teacher, I think it is such an inspiring and empowering idea to see our pupils as potential builders of our future community, those who will build upon our traditions. It moves us from a sole focus on things pupils need to know to be Jewish, to an approach that encourages us to focus upon ways to grow them Jewishly. Our talented teaching team works hard to inspire pupils and build upon their individual talents, encouraging them to share them with our BRS community.

If one goes back twenty years or even a decade ago, there was a tendency for Chedarim to present Torah studies as a travelogue, where we would ask pupils simply to confer with "the Elders" who went before them, rather than taking the trip themselves. This term, when our weekly theme turned to the Mishkan, or Tabernacle, HomeShul set pupils the challenge of building their own.

Pupils' contributions were highly creative, some taking many hours of research and planning; their designs brought to life different elements and aspects of the Mishkan. For some pupils,

Meditation, sharing space, study, ritual and community...

it took the form of a meditative space. For others, the Tabernacle design had to be a shared space, or have Torah reading at its heart, or symbolically suggest study, community contributions, or ritual. Some started with the furnishings, and others by finding the right wilderness setting in the video gaming Minecraft platform.

It takes many people to build a community and it takes all to make Shalom

Encouraging our pupils to build with their hearts, hands and minds requires us to draw out the relevance of Torah's timeless wisdoms to their present lives; we need to find ways of connecting their skills, encouraging reinterpretation, and devising creative projects that inspire our *bonayich* to go beyond the Zoom screen. It takes many people to build a community and it takes all to make Shalom.

Our wonderful contributors can be rightly proud of their efforts, some of which we shared in our closing Assembly just before half-term. There's so much potential among our children to build upon and encourage each week at *HomeShul*.



Pupils and their families built different versions of the Tabernacle, including this Minecraft creation by Bea Small

Youth Online Talks

The Education Committee is planning a new series of online talks aimed at the younger members of our community, aged 16 - 25. We'll be inviting people to speak on a broad range of topics that are facing today's young people, including the Israeli Palestinian conflict and facing anti-Semitism at university. If you know a person in this age group who might want to join us, please email youth@bromleyshul.org.uk.

One for Music Lovers

Another project coming up soon will be run in conjunction with the Religion and Ritual committee, aimed at music lovers of ALL ages. If you ever wanted to join the choir during the High Holydays but weren't sure you could learn all that music or attend all those rehearsals, have a look at Stephanie's article: "Your Choir Needs You!" on page 7.

Learning a Language in Lockdown

Did you know that BRS now offers online Hebrew tuition at three levels? New terms are starting soon at all three levels. These 10-week courses are taught by a native Israeli qualified Hebrew tutor, and fees are £120 for members, £130 non-members. Those interested in joining will need to have a short assessment to judge which class will benefit them most.

Interested? Any questions?

Please contact Joanna at keesabromley@googlemail.com

Editor's note: an unintended consequence of these classes is that members who had never met in "old normal" have created interest-group bubbles that bring an extra dimension to learning, language and lockdown.

Rabbi's Study Sessions

Join us at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81044309130>

10 March

**Words of Wisdom: Pirkei Avot
Where do we come from? Where are we heading?**

Find out by studying the third chapter of Pirkei Avot, the foundation of Jewish ethics.

17 March

A Job of Job

The Book of Job tries to answer the most difficult question of all: why do the righteous suffer? Interesting to study this during a global pandemic.

20 March

Lessons from Leviticus

During a close reading of parashat Vayikra, we will explore the main theological message of the book of Leviticus.

31 March

Song of Songs: steamy romance story or sublime theological allegory?

Song of Songs was believed by Rabbi Akiva to be the holiest text in the Bible. Others love(d) it for its unbridled eroticism. Is it a steamy romance, a sublime theological allegory, or both? Let's find out by exploring Song of Songs on Passover, when it is traditionally read.

Social and Personal

DEATH - We are very sad to report the death of **Roger Parks**, beloved husband of Judith French and father of Joe and Josh, to whom we extend our sincere condolences. We wish them all a long life. May Roger's memory be for a blessing, *Zichrono L'vracha*.

BEREAVEMENT - We are very sad to report the death of **Alan James Pearson**, the beloved father, although not by birth, of Danit Klibansky, to whom we send our heartfelt condolences and wish a long life. May Alan's memory be for a blessing, *Zichrono L'vracha*.

THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY:

Alan Stern would like to thank all at Bromley for their kind messages of support and good wishes following the recent passing of his mother. They were and are greatly appreciated at this difficult and sad time.

Judith French and her sons Joe and Josh Parks would like to thank the BRS community for the wonderful support they have received at the sad and difficult time following the death of Roger. They have been overwhelmed by everyone's kindness.

FOND FAREWELLS:

We are sorry to have to say farewell to our members **Sylvia Ezer** and **Joan Payne**, who are leaving our area and joining other congregations: Sylvia in North London and Joan in Brighton. We are sad to lose them but wish them well in their new homes.

Caring Community

Pauline Jeffree writes:

These times are particularly challenging for all of us. To any who are ill or recovering from being unwell we wish you well and assure you that you are in our thoughts. We would like to hear from you, have a chat and make sure you have all you need.

Tea Parties

It was so good to meet up with a few friends recently via Zoom over a cup of tea, piece of cake and a good chat, probably about everything! It was good to see new Shul members and friends joining us. We will let you know about our next virtual Tea Party - please join us! We are always pleased to see you and it is so good to be together.

More members than ever are Knitting, Nattering and Stitching and more local institutions and groups are benefiting!

We knitters, natterers and stitchers are welcoming new members almost by the minute, so if you think you can help please come with your knitting, sewing and cup of coffee via Zoom. The next meeting will be on **Monday, 1 March** from 10:30am to noon. The link will be sent in due course.

Our current projects include:

King's College Hospital:

At the moment all they want are 4-inch (10cm) knitted squares. Please knit two of the same. These are given alternately to babies and parents, to help with bonding.

Princess Royal University Hospital

The group decided to ask the Friends of the PRUH how we could help and support our local hospital, especially its Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU). I have had the pleasure of making contact with another Pauline, who does all the

liaison work and collecting of completed items for SCBU.

The SCBU needs small blankets 12"x12" (30cmx30cm). Specifically for our knitters to make: a cannula mitten. This is a mitten to go over a little one's hand, covering up any needle or cannula in situ.

Croydon University Hospital:

Sally is already supporting CUH by sewing incubator covers for their Special Care Baby Unit. Another of our groups supports the hospital by knitting and crocheting blankets and cardigans.

Link to Hope:

Some will recall **Karen**, who was Senior Sister at King's College Hospital Intensive Neonatal Care Unit. Karen supports the charity 'Link to Hope'. In early December shoeboxes full of knitted goodies are sent off around the world. These are some of the items needed: pencil cases, headbands, small lap blankets, knitted toys, knitted teddies.

Holding On and Letting Go: This charity distributes memory boxes when a baby has been lost. The needed items include: small blankets, small teddy, knitted hearts. Karen will collect all our knitted items.

Women's Institute, Maidstone

The Vice President of this WI branch has sent us patterns for: children's hats and gloves, a jack hat for adults and for the homeless and those who need food parcels, jumpers and scarves. Please let us know if you need a pattern(s) for any of these. When we knit for babies, we keep to double knitting baby wool.

For all Caring Community, Tea Party and Knitting/Stitching information please contact

Pauline at 020 8650 4860 or pauline.jeffree@btinternet.com

Your choir needs YOU!

A new venture for the BRS choir and community

The High Holy Days of 5782 may not be at the top of every member's priority list right now – Purim is just behind us and we will be in Pesach before the next issue of HighLight. Spring is just emerging and it is with reluctance that we think forward to the autumn. But some of us have been doing just that.

Last year, we were on Zoom; this year let us pray we will be together. This (mis)quotation from the more seasonal Passover Haggadah today refers to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: Reflecting on last year, we wondered: when we are back together, is there anything we would like to take into the future? One great success of the last year was surely the High Holy Day singing. In early February, your Board approved a plan to bring that experience home to the shul.

BRS is hugely fortunate in having had a dedicated and experienced choir leading our High Holy Day singing for many years. Last year, people from across the community came together to support the choir in beautiful on-line singing. For this year, we would like to achieve something similar in live services. Vicki Ashmore, who with husband Olly created the music for our online services, has come up with a plan to enable us to do this in person. Supported by a newly appointed musical director, Vicki's plan will take our music and create training tapes for us to learn our parts at home in our own time, so we are able to join the choir on the day.

We are invited to commit to any of the High Holy Day services, from just one to all five. There will be a couple of rehearsals to attend nearer the time, but most of the learning will be in your own time and space.

If you have always wanted to join the choir, but never had the courage, or perhaps the time, now is your chance! Please get in touch with Vicki, or with me – we are really excited about this and want you to be too. If you need convincing, pick up a copy of the BRS High Holy Day music CD and be inspired to be part of this new opportunity!

Stephanie Alberti, Senior Warden,
src@bromleyshul.org.uk

Vicki Ashmore, Chair of Education,
education@bromleyshul.org.uk

THE SOCIAL CENTRE

It was a lovely bright snow-filled day but we were all snug and warm sitting in front of our screens to meet up for another meeting, with thanks to Barbara Kurtz for organising the event.

It is always such a pleasure to see familiar and new faces. In fact, just to see people. At our February 10 meeting, we talked about how those who had joined our meeting were from widespread areas such as Israel, Essex, other parts of London and, of course, Bromley.

We were privileged to have **Clare Gilboa**, speaking from Israel and representing the charitable organisation "**Leket**" ("gleaning"). This references the book of Ruth, where the farmer, on harvesting, left some of the corn behind for the poor. Leket runs a food bank, which also delivers thousands of hot meals for the needy. I found it amusing

that a source of supply came by way of leftover buffet food from simchas. Fruit was sometimes collected from people's gardens, where there would be an excess of the citrus fruits that grow in Israel. Clare mentioned that, sadly, Israel has a poverty level of 21%. Because of Covid, the work of Leket had increased to include some unexpectedly impoverished people, such as an opera singer and a technology worker, plus some Bedouin, who were also in need. Clare told us of their having to help single parents and many people who had lost their jobs, including even some of the volunteers.

Maureen Pearlstone

*There is more about **Leket** on p12.*

FUTURE MEETINGS:

Pot Pourri, Pesach and Hidden Child's story

The Social Centre will meet on **Wednesday, 10 March**, when we will enjoy a "**pot pourri**" of topics.

Members are invited to bring along a joke, poem, book suggestion, holiday memory - whatever they fancy.

Wednesday, 24 March - "All things Pesach", when we will be joined by **Rabbi Mati** to talk about anything and everything to do with Pesach.

Wednesday, 7 April - This being the day before Yom Hashoah, we will be marking it with a video recording of the talk given by **Roosje Drukker** on her "**Story of a Hidden Child**" in wartime Holland, given to us in Shul two years ago.

All talks will begin at 3 pm and will end with exercises with Andreas (unless notified nearer the date). **Zoom link:**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83474313573>

New Member Profile: The Turner Hayward Family



Katie Turner has joined Bromley Reform Synagogue with her husband, Andrew Hayward, and their 7-year-old son Jacob, who attends the Cheder.

Katie grew up in New York, though she has lived in the UK on and off since 2005. As a child, she attended a Conservative (Masorti) Synagogue and a Jewish day school in New York. Though Katie hasn't been active in a Jewish community as an independent adult, Jacob, who is keen to learn Hebrew and more about his Jewish identity, encouraged the family to join a synagogue.

Jacob was born in the UK, but when he was 10 months old the family moved back to New York. Katie and Andrew wanted Jacob to get to know his great

grandparents, who were in their nineties. Jacob became very close to them and they taught him Yiddish. Katie, Andrew, and Jacob moved back to the UK in 2018, so Jacob could start school here. Katie's grandfather died on the first night of Hanukkah in 2019, at the age of 100. Her grandmother is still alive, looked after by her mother, who has now retired. Jacob maintains a close relationship with his NY family through Facetime (and travel, when it is feasible).

Katie has a doctorate in religion from King's College London, looking at Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple period, and their representation in Christian art and drama. Much of her subsequent scholarship has also focused on how Jewish lives have been shaped by Christianity, and how our visualisation of the Jews of antiquity has been formed (often inaccurately) by Christian tradition.

Before returning to university for her doctorate, Katie had worked in education in museums and heritage, including at the Science Museum, the V&A, Kew Palace and Osterley Park.

Katie, Andrew and Jacob have very much joined Bromley as a family. Though Andrew was brought up in a Protestant household, he left Christianity before he and Katie were married, and is very actively engaged in raising Jacob as a Jewish child. Jacob absolutely loves the Cheder and is thrilled to be part of Bromley Reform Synagogue.

WIZO is a very familiar name to many, but what does it do? Find out on page 9.

SPOTLIGHT ON... London, Kent & Surrey Jewish Historical Society

Who or what is this new kid on the South London Jewish block?

Rev. Cantor David Rome was moved to launch a local, virtual branch of the long-established Jewish Historical Society of England when he realised that, although we were sheltering in our homes and separated from friends and family, the difficult times through which we were living offered - thanks to technology - opportunities to come together virtually and to nurture new relationships. Hence, he launched a project that required nothing but an internet connection. Since last August, events have included a joyous celebration of the life and achievements of **Joe Loss**, who became the foremost band leader in the UK, introduced by his effervescent daughter, Jennifer Jankel, well known to music lovers as a driving force in JMI. This was a gem of an evening that saw **Lord Michael Grade** sharing some fascinating, funny, and nostalgic stories about his childhood and career; and a talk on "Jack Cohen, and 102 years of **Tesco**," focusing on the Whitechapel lad who started selling surplus groceries from a market stall. The supermarket that still bears part of his name celebrated its centenary in 2019 and he is still remembered for his catch phrase: "Pile it high and sell it cheap."

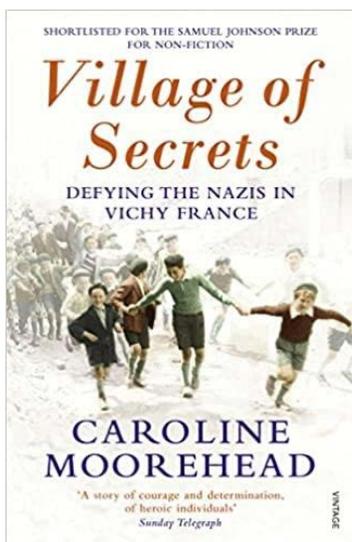
At the moment, distance is no object, so you might like to explore the JHSE website, which provides links to events at all its branches: <https://jhse.org>

BOOKS & BEYOND

Page Editor: Marilyn McKeever, marilynjmckeeper@icloud.com

Bromley Book Club

Our friendly, lively group meets again on Thursday, 11 March at 8.00pm.



We will be discussing Caroline Moorehead's remarkable book *Village of Secrets*. It tells the true story of how the inhabitants of a small area of the Massif Central in France saved thousands of Jewish people from being sent to the concentration camps, and really shows what can be done when people come together to oppose tyranny.

Come and join us on Zoom, using <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/169700693>. Please contact Judy Woolfe if you would like to join the group. New people and ideas are always welcome.

jwoolfe@ntlworld.com /
07989091066

JEWISH BOOK WEEK

This is all online this year. There are 70 events from 27 February into March. Full details at www.jewishbookweek.com.

Jewish Renaissance Magazine events

The Magazine presents two events in March:

The US author Riva Lehrer will be talking about her memoir '**Golem Girl**' on **Monday 8 March** at 6pm, and Shalom Auslander and Czech writer Irena Douskova will be joined by Leo Pavlat, Director of the Jewish Museum of Prague to conduct a **virtual tour of Prague on Sunday 21 March**, 7.30pm. Details: <https://www.jewishrenaissance.org.uk/events>.

KlezNorth 5-7 March

This annual festival of Klezmer takes place in the lovely village of Youlgrave in the Peak District and we will be able to view it online this year. There will be live music, interactive singing and talks about the history and culture of Klezmer. All the details are at www.kleznorth.org.uk

What have Bletchley Park, the Czech Scrolls, kosher chocolate and Thames River Police got in common?

They are among the many people, places and things visited, discussed or demonstrated by our local WIZO branch before Covid sent it scurrying, with the rest of us, online. But this is no agile kid, who's grown up with technology. As longstanding Chair Marilyn Burchell explains, WIZO was over 100 years old before any lockdowns began.

British WIZO (Women's International Zionist Federation) was formed in 1918 by Rebecca Sieff, Vera Weizmann and Romana Goodman. On an extended mission to Israel with their husbands, they were shocked by the poverty and hardship facing the young girls there, among many other problems. They decided to promote the welfare of Jewish women and children in Palestine, and the Jerusalem Baby Home came into being. This famous home developed into WIZO's Vocational High School in Jerusalem for teenagers who have severe emotional and behavioural problems. It is also a day care centre for children from 3 months to 4 years. WIZO provides youth and family centres, schools, youth villages, senior citizen care - help for any and every member of society across the length and breadth of Israel. For more on the history and current projects of this lively organisation, visit wizo.org.

Bromley WIZO Eretz has been in existence for more than 55 years. Its regular, well supported meetings and events, as well as Jewish Women's Week in May, raise thousands of pounds every year to help the citizens of Israel, and provided members with fun, friendship and inspiration.

Marilyn says: "We are still here on Zoom and preparing a new programme for this year. We would love to hear from anyone who feels they would like to join our group or could contribute a session on any topic, or music that would be of interest. Please contact marilynurchell@hotmail.com, 020 8658 4776 or Jean Garelick on genie.jeannie@btopenworld.com".

SERVICES

2021 Census – why is it important for Jews?

A request from the Institute for Jewish Policy Research

The UK Census on 21 March 2021 will include a question about religion with an option to respond 'Jewish.' While completion of the census form itself is compulsory, the religion question is the only one on it that is voluntary.

However, it is very important that Jews identify as such in the Census. The figures generated by ticking the "Jewish" box play an essential role in community planning on issues including elderly care, schooling, health, inclusion and combating antisemitism, while countless Jewish charities, synagogues, schools and other bodies across the country use them in a variety of ways to help them understand and cater for the needs of the Jewish population. Local and national authorities use the data to make decisions about services that address the needs of the Jewish community.

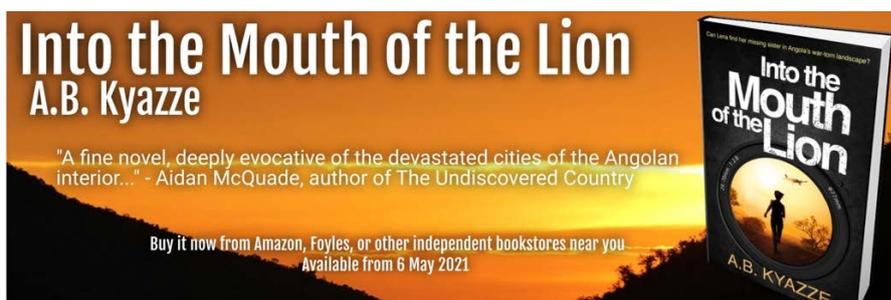
JPR knows that some are concerned about identifying themselves as Jewish in such an exercise. However, the details are anonymised and cannot identify or target individuals. In addition, some Jews prefer to identify themselves as Jewish by ethnicity rather than religion. There is an option on the census form that allows for that and they should feel free to do so. But it is by ticking the "Jewish" box in the religion question that their data can be most readily be used for community planning purposes. If you are concerned, you are encouraged to write to 2021census@jpr.org.uk.

Services March 2021 / Adar-Nisan 5781

Friday evening candle lightings will continue via Zoom at 7pm, unless otherwise indicated, at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/578441665>

Shabbat morning services will continue in an online/streamed format beginning at **10.30 am**. Please subscribe to BRS' YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/BromleyReformSynagogue/videos>
Please do not come to Highland Road

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| Friday March 5 Saturday March 6 | Shabbat Parah – 22 Adar Ki Tissa Exodus 34: 10-32, Numbers 19: 1-10, Ezekiel 36: 23-32 Led by Rabbi Mati with Stephanie, Marilyn, Hadassah and Barbara |
| Friday March 12 Saturday March 13 | Shabbat Ha-Chodesh – 29 Adar Vayakhel-Pekude Exodus 38: 1-28, Exodus 12: 1-11, 2 Kings 23:21-27, Led by Rabbi Mati with Tracy, Judi and Marilyn <i>Blessing for Nisan</i> |
| Friday March 19 Saturday March 20 | Shabbat Vayikrah – 7 Nisan Vayikrah Leviticus 5: 1-23, Isaiah 43:21 – 44:8 Led by Rabbi Mati with John, Andreas and Hadassah |
| Friday March 26 Saturday March 27 | Shabbat HaGadol – 14 Nisan Tsav Leviticus 8: 1-21, Malachi 3: 4-24, plus repeat v.23 Led by Rabbi Mati with Jon and Sally |
| Saturday March 27 Sunday March 28 | Pesach – First Seder – please enjoy your own Seder. If you would like to join with another family, or have room for a guest to join you (by Zoom), please contact chair@bromleyshul.org.uk . Second Seder – our Communal Seder will be led by Rabbi Mati on Sunday 28 March starting at 6.00pm . You can join him using: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82789083062 <i>Readings and leaders are correct at time of compilation</i> |



CALENDAR March-April 2021, Adar-Nisan-Iyar 5781

Please note that all services, meetings and events are taking place online until further notice.

Contact details may be found on the on the relevant pages and in each weekly e-Light.

| MARCH | |
|---------|--|
| Mon 1 | Knit, Natter and Stitch, 10.30am |
| Tue 2 | |
| Wed 3 | |
| Thur 4 | Hebrew 2, 7.30-8.30pm |
| Fri 5 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 6 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Sun 7 | HomeShul Cheder, 10am |
| Mon 8 | |
| Tue 9 | SE10 and Beyond, 7.30pm https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81181567337 |
| Wed 10 | Social Centre, 3pm Study Session, 7.30pm |
| Thur 11 | Hebrew 2, 7.30pm Book Club, 8.00pm |
| Fri 12 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 13 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Sun 14 | |
| Mon 15 | |
| Tue 16 | |
| Wed 17 | Study Session – Pirke Avot 7.30pm |
| Thur 18 | Hebrew 2, 7.30pm |
| Fri 19 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 20 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am Study Session 12.30pm |
| Sun 21 | HomeShul Cheder, 10am |
| Mon 22 | Hebrew 1, 6.30-7.30pm |
| Tue 23 | AGM 8.00pm |
| Wed 24 | Social Centre, 3pm |
| Thur 25 | |
| Fri 26 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 27 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am FIRST SEDER NIGHT |
| Sun 28 | <i>Clocks go forward</i> SECOND SEDER NIGHT – Communal Seder For link, see adjacent page |
| Mon 29 | |
| Tue 30 | |
| Wed 31 | Study Session, Song of Songs, 7.30pm |

| APRIL | |
|---------|---|
| Thur 1 | |
| Fri 2 | <i>Public Holiday</i> Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 3 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Sun 4 | |
| Mon 5 | |
| Tue 6 | |
| Wed 7 | Social Centre, 3pm Showing of talk to mark Yom HaShoah |
| Thur 8 | YOM HASHOAH |
| Fri 9 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 10 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Sun 11 | |
| Mon 12 | |
| Tue 13 | |
| Wed 14 | |
| Thur 15 | |
| Fri 16 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 17 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Sun 18 | HomeShul Cheder resumes |
| Mon 19 | |
| Tue 20 | |
| Wed 21 | Social Centre, 3pm |
| Thur 22 | |
| Fri 23 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Sat 24 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Sun 25 | |
| Mon 26 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| Tue 27 | Shabbat morning service, 10.30am |
| Wed 28 | |
| Thur 29 | |
| Fri 30 | Shabbat Candle-Lighting, 7pm |
| | |

BROMLEY REFORM SYNAGOGUE 28 Highland Road, BR1 4AD : 020-8460 5460 : www.bromleyshul.org.uk

Office: 9.30 am to 12.30 pm on Tue, Thur and Fri. Please email **Janet** at admin@bromleyshul.org.uk

Minister: Rabbi Mati Kirschenbaum (rabbi@bromleyshul.org.uk)

Chair: Michelle Brooks Evans (chair@bromleyshul.org.uk)

Vice Presidents:

Hadassah Britz, Ronnie Goldberg, Dianne Mathews, Sally Rosebery, Bob Symonds, David Zerihan.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY (in the event of a bereavement)

please contact Janet Posner (07841 373309) or Stephen Weil (07764 475209)

JEWISH FESTIVALS 5781-2021

PURIM

February 26

PESACH

First Seder, March 27

First Day, March 28

Second Seder, March 28

Seventh Day, April 3

COUNTING THE OMER

First Day, March 29

Lag B'Omer, April 30

Erev Shavuot 16 May

SHAVUOT, 17 May

TISHA B'AV 18 July

Erev ROSH HASHANAH

6 September

ROSH HASHANAH

7 September

KOL NIDRE

15 September

YOM KIPPUR

16 September

SUKKOT

September 21-

SIMCHAT TORAH

September 28

CHANUKAH

November 29

Contact your HighLight, e-Light and comms team

We are extremely grateful to our Chair, Rabbi, Cheder and Education people who supply so much information every month, but we welcome **NEW CONTRIBUTORS**. If you would like to submit or suggest an item, please email us at comms@bromleyshul.org.uk

Helping to feed the hungry in Israel and at home

The Social Centre's recent talk by Israeli charity **Leket** and a Purim tradition came together perfectly in February. Normally, at Purim, we make a "Mishloach Manot" collection of tinned and dried goods for **Bromley Food Bank** in order to fulfil the tradition of sending food parcels to friends and those in need. The box in the lobby overflows with goods and somebody with a large car has to volunteer to deliver these donations. This year, as we cannot bring or send physical goods, we asked members to make financial donations. It is not too late. Details can be found at <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/>.

Maureen's report on Leket explained, further, that... "They collect left-over food from hotels, supermarkets and restaurants and even take produce from farmers who have not been able to sell some of their food because of Covid creating a declining demand, plus rejected misshapen vegetables and fruit. Clare confirmed that all the food distributed was kosher.

Bringing together everyone from opera singer to technology worker

Because of Covid, the work of Leket had increased to include some unexpectedly impoverished people, such as an opera singer, a technology worker, plus some Bedouin, who were also in need. Clare told us of their having to help single parents and many people who had lost their jobs, including even some of the volunteers. The organisation is run by volunteers but it was mentioned that van drivers were paid as they were required regularly to collect and deliver food. We were shown a video of a group of *a capella* singers who had visited the Leket warehouse and amusingly performed "*I Get by With a Little Help from my Friends*".

Clare told us that Leket was part-funded by 2% from government, plus charitable donations coming from various parts of the world. The Bromley contribution, raised by our Kol Nidre appeal, amounted to £4,800 and was much appreciated. We were all very grateful to Clare for her informative talk.