

Our Congregation



News and views from Belsize Square Synagogue

OUR STRUGGLE FOR 5779

Shalom Chaverim,

Anti-Semitism surrounding Jeremy Corbyn in the UK, continued threats to Israel from Gaza's border with increased hostility to the State of Israel, the wild antics of President Donald Trump which, like them or not, are changing our world each day, and the failure to see light in the Brexit negotiations.

All this has us living with great uncertainty about the future, and then the usual blights on civilisation – disease, hunger, poverty, oppression, homelessness. It all adds up to the world we live in today. Yet we return to the shul to restore the seeds of our strength, resolve and faith, which enable us to combat the challenges of despair and anguish.

There are personal struggles as well. Some of us have lived through financial uncertainty this past year, loss of job and security, failed relationships and marriages, illness or death. No one ever said life would be easy and that is why we need a spiritual response to all these things that have weighed upon us during the past year. We all know that our Judaism and Jewish tradition are virtual treasure chests of wisdom and strength. Our people have been there

before and have always risen to new heights of strength. We will be calling upon ourselves to do the same.

During these *Yamim Noraim* (Days of Awe) ahead of us, I will be speaking on my usual themes: God (on first day Rosh Hashanah), Israel (on second day), Judaism and Jewish identity (on Kol Nidrei), existential truths (on Yom Kippur), life and death (at Mazkir/Yizkor) through the prism of people. Not all the individuals I will be speaking about are well known. Some are, some are known only by a few. But I hope that their stories will inspire us to rise to new heights and understanding of ourselves.

At Selichot on 1 September our shiur at 9.00pm, to which you are all invited prior to the service which starts at 10.00 pm, will explore how individuals, teachers, parents, relatives and friends have influenced our views of ourselves, our Jewish identities and life itself. So, think about which people through your years have inspired you the most and shaped your destiny, your thoughts, your lives, your faith.

A prayer for the *Yamim Noraim*:

May we hold lovingly in our thoughts and prayers this 5779, those who still suffer in this world from tyranny, who are subjugated to live in cruelty and injustice. Let us resolve to work every day towards the alleviation of suffering wherever we see it and experience it.

May we pursue the biblical prophets' vision of peace that implores us to live harmoniously with each other, to respect the differences of opinions and beliefs that exist among us, to be forgiving of those whom we believe have hurt us. May we always cherish diversity, respect all forms of Jewish life, work continuously for the unity of the people of Israel and always seek to find the Divinity that resides in the human soul.

May we struggle against

injustice against our people, in this country and in Israel, fighting hard for the dignity of our people and making it clear that we will never again tolerate the hatred and anti-semitism of previous generations or today's willingness to destroy our only Jewish state. May our commitments to Israel, our Judaism and our fellow Jews increase this year.

May we disdain gossip and realise again and again how thoughtless rumours and words can destroy good people and distort truth.

May we act with greater purity of heart and mind this coming 5779, despising none and loving all.

May the Jewish people and this Belsize Square Congregation be beacons of light to the world, to our community and to the State of Israel.

May we all have the honour of fulfilling the words of the Torah and of our rabbis to pursue peace in all our actions, loving our neighbour as ourselves, cherishing the gift of life that God has given to us and never taking for granted our health, our will, our spirit or our love.

May God bring peace to us and to all humanity this new year, 5779.

Rabbi Altshuler

HIGH HOLYDAY SERVICES

SELICHOT SERVICE

Saturday 1 September - 10.00pm

ROSH HASHANAH

1st Eve: Sunday 9 September - 6.45pm

1st Day: Monday 10 September - 9.30am

2nd Eve: Monday 10 September - 6.45pm

2nd Day Tuesday 11 September - 9.30am

KOL NIDREI

Tuesday 18 September - 7.00pm

Fast commences 6.54pm

YOM KIPPUR

Wednesday 19 September

Service at 10.00am

Fast ends at 7.56pm

KEVER AVOT (Visiting the Graves)

Sunday 2 September - 11.00am

We will gather at Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery, HA8 8QP, to remember our family and friends who are buried there.

SAVE THE DATE CHANUKAH MARKET 2018

Saturday 1 December, 5.00-8.00pm

Sunday 2 December, 9.30am-4.00pm

(First Candle: Sunday 2 December)

**Food
Fun
Gift Stalls**



All are welcome so come along to meet your friends and have a great time at this annual jamboree to support our Synagogue funds





WARSAW, TREBLINKA, VILNIUS: A PILGRIMAGE

Photos, clockwise from top right:

Our group in Warsaw's main square

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Commemorative Wall

Walking into Treblinka on the cobbled path lined with memorial plaques in six languages

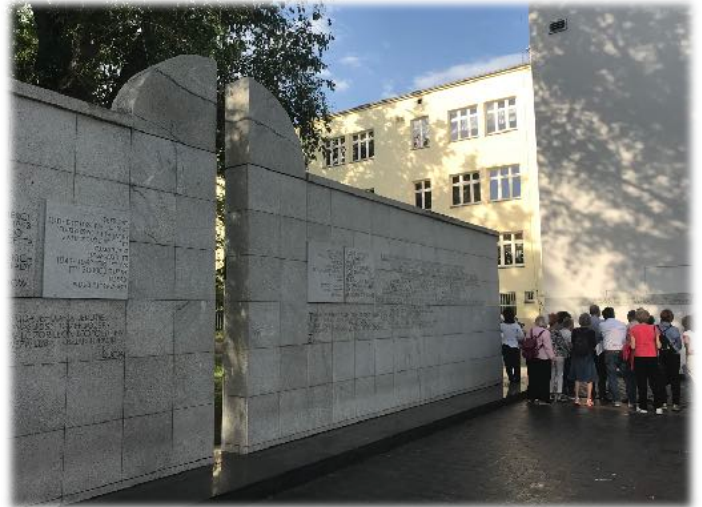
Line-up in front of mausoleum of the Vilna Gaon: (from left) Ruth Rothenberg, Antony Polonsky, Michael Horowitz, Rabbi Stuart Altshuler, Claire Walford, Dalia Lichfield

Group picture at Trakai Castle

Inside the Karaite Kenesa (Synagogue) near Lake Trakai

Warsaw's Nozyk Synagogue, completed in 1902

Pictures on this and following pages by Anthony Hellman and David Rothenberg



JOURNEY INTO THE UNQUIET

Ruth Rothenberg on the Synagogue's visit to Warsaw and Vilnius

If any of the 28-strong Belsize Square Synagogue group felt the need for a recovery period after their foray into Eastern Europe from 10-15 May this was completely understandable. The pace, the concentration and the emotional impact was bewildering. The weather, at least, was good.

Warsaw Ghetto Monument

Day One started, after a preliminary meeting in our modern streamlined hotel, with a guided tour of central Warsaw. Naturally, this concentrated on the Nazi-created ghetto, whose wall went across the end of our street. A piece of the brick wall is kept on view, as a grim souvenir. Because Warsaw was flattened by the Second World War and carefully restored to its former appearance, the 19th-century buildings look far newer and cleaner than they should.

At two points we stopped to say Kaddish, led by Rabbi Stuart Altshuler, with readings by members of our group. The first was at the Ghetto Heroes Monument to the uprising of April 1943, which surprised the Nazis by holding out for nearly a month. The inscriptions in Hebrew, Yiddish, Polish and English are dedicated to individual fighters. In a city awash with graffiti, they are universally respected and left untouched by human desecration.

We said Kaddish again with Rabbi Altshuler intoning *El Maleh Rachamim* at the large memorial block at the *Umschlagplatz*, the transfer area in the ghetto from which 300,000 Jews were crowded into trains for Treblinka some 50 miles away between July 1942 and November 1943. Three days later we were to see this place and realise its dark history in the forest.

Our first day ended with an illuminating talk from a well-known Polish journalist and Jewish activist. Konstanty Gebert is the son of a prominent former Communist official and a Jewish mother. A dissident in his youth, he has chosen to be openly Jewish and edits a Jewish magazine amongst other activities. He told us he can "still run round Warsaw openly wearing a kippah"

But the main reason for this freedom from fear is that popular hatred has been diverted to the "new outsiders", Muslim immigrants, even though Poland has none. There are more neo-Nazis in Poland than Germany, which treats them far more severely, while

prejudice or hate speech has in recent months been more widely and openly expressed in Poland.

Poland's problem, he informed us, is its own history of weakness, partition and foreign rule for over two centuries up to the fall of Communism in 1989, with a gap of just two decades in the interwar years of 1918-39 as a nationalistic, increasingly authoritarian and deeply anti-Semitic republic. Its legacy of suffering is perceived as overshadowed by Jewish suffering and Poles resent, for instance, the fact that more books have been written about Jewish than Polish suffering.

The present Polish government was elected on a promise to make Poland great again but has little to show for it. Jews are an easy fall-back target for the resulting frustration and underlying sense of grievance. Belief in Jewish ritual murder and conspiracy for world dominance has increased significantly.

The only redeeming feature in this depressing picture, we were told, is that the Catholic church is no longer involved. Although religious education has been reintroduced to the curriculum, it is not popular. Students do not want religion pushed down their throats and the clergy don't like awkward questions.

Holocaust Law Controversy

So what is this 2018 Holocaust Law that has caused so much controversy and why was it introduced? No one has ever accused the Poles of establishing or running the Nazi death camps and indeed over a million Poles died in them. Poles also constitute the largest national group of Righteous Gentiles at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial centre in Jerusalem.

The sore spot is the breath-taking scale of collaboration that resulted in two-thirds of Jews trying to hide in the countryside being denounced to their doom, quite apart from the murderous anti-Semitism shown to survivors returning home after the war.

Konstanty's interpretation is that this measure reflects internal politics and is intended to placate the government's right wing. The key phrase "Polish nation" is undefined and yet to be tested in the constitutional court. He tried to activate this by publishing an article which invited prosecution but

none came. There have been other instances of provoking a Jewish or Israeli reaction in order to complain about that reaction, which he sees as aspects of the struggle between progressives and conservatives.

The government is, in his view, populist but not fascist, and is seeking to establish a political system like that created by Viktor Orban in Hungary. Poland has no strong democratic tradition and he sees striking similarities with Italy in the 1930s.

Ethnic Cleansing

Ultimately, he sees the driving motive behind the controversial measure as the desire, after the nightmare of one ethnic cleansing, to avoid allowing the circumstances which could result in another. In other words (though not his), no Muslim immigrants.

But a thousand years of Jewish life in Poland has left its mark on Polish society – in 1931 Poland had the world's second largest Jewish population with over 3 million Jews – and Konstanty Gebert with his half-Jewish parentage is a living example.

He gave the statistics of 8,000 identified Jews affiliated to the Jewish community, 1,500 non-affiliated, and an unknown number, at least 30,000, who feel some connection with the Jewish world. There are still some dramatic "outings" of people who discover their Jewish origins but they do not make headlines any more.

And that was just Day One. Day Two was the Day of Museum Visits, organised by our co-leader (with Rabbi Altshuler), Professor Antony Polonsky, master of Polish-Jewish history. First stop on our walk was the Jewish Historical Institute, opened in 1947, which serves as the repository of 8,000 testimonies collated from 1944-47 and the research on them.

We were taken round the recently opened Ringelblum Archive, which covers a slightly earlier period, by the Director of the Institute, Professor Paweł Śpiewak. This remarkable collection of documentation on the Warsaw Ghetto was the brainchild of Emanuel Ringelblum, a historian, activist and social worker who created a secret group, *Oneg Shabbes* (Shabbat Delight), to record every detail of life in the overcrowded, undernourished and disease-ridden





ghetto and the efforts to survive it. Photographs and reports, drawings and poems give a vivid picture of activities – commerce, smuggling, soup kitchens, even music on the streets, as well as gaunt faces, figures and corpses. The whole collection was stuffed into three metal containers, including a milk churn, the first in August 1942 during the Treblinka deportations, another in February 1943 shortly before the uprising started on 19 April. Ringelblum escaped the ghetto but was discovered a year later and executed.

History Corridors

One cache was dug up in 1946 and another discovered in 1950. If the third is ever found, it is feared that the contents will have deteriorated beyond repair. The 6,000 documents rescued, around 35,000 pages, are regularly changed to avoid too much light. We were led through sobering and mind-boggling display cases by our guide, Kasia Person, team leader in producing editions of the documents in English, as well as the Polish and Yiddish originals.

Our path to our next destination, Polin, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, followed the ghetto border line. Opened in 2013, the striking building is laid out as a "narrative museum", walking you through corridors of history. You start in the 10th century. A Jewish merchant from Spain described Krakow in 960, 36 years before King Mieszko became Christian. Poland's first minted coins have Hebrew lettering. With little else to show for that period, the museum designer commissioned murals in mediaeval style from well-known comic strip

illustrators. It works well.

Gradually charts and early pictures come into view, then ever more numerous artefacts, as you arrive at industrialisation, especially railway lines. Finally, with the invention of photography come blown-up pictures of buildings and people, covering the last 150 years or so. It creates an effective experience.

We actually started with a meal (the museum's restaurant is to be recommended), while listening to the museum director, Professor Dariusz Stola, reflect on the attacks on the museum which resulted from its temporary exhibition on the "anti-Zionist" campaign of 1968. This highlighted the similarities between the anti-Semitic hate speech of that period and the use of similar expressions during the recent controversy provoked by the "Holocaust bill" in January, which was signed into law in March.

Top People

(Subsequent protests led to July's joint declaration by the Prime Ministers of Poland and Israel to acknowledge the actions of Poles for good and for bad, while absolving the state from responsibility. This means research can continue.)

After our tour, led in a well-practised duet with Professor Polonsky by one of the top guides, Dasha, we sat down to a discussion with the exhibition curator, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, designer of the "history corridors". She was enthusiastic and interested in our reaction to the deliberately stagey effect. We were so carried away that we went on almost past closing time and had to be kicked out.

You don't normally get the top person taking you round exhibitions and talking to you. It was thanks to our co-leader and expert in this field, Prof Polonsky of Brandeis University, that we were able to enjoy this privilege. He is chief historian for Polin and also sits on the JHI editorial board.

The day ended with a visit to the Orthodox Nozyk synagogue for Kabbalat Shabbat service, followed by a meal in the nearby kosher Galil restaurant.

The light and airy 1902 synagogue in neo-Romanesque-cum-Byzantine style is named after its wealthy merchant benefactor. It was the only Warsaw synagogue to survive the war, serving as Nazi stables and storage, and was returned to the Jewish community, though not fully restored until 1983.

The service was a lively affair, at least for the men who were led in dancing by four chasidim in full streimel and kaftan garb. Women were shunted behind a net curtain cutting off any view. Finally, the excited males settled down to the familiar service.

The dinner was good, tasty and kosher, even if service was short on training. We were addressed by Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich, New York-born grandson of Polish grandparents, who has worked in Poland for over 15 years. His knowledge and practical understanding of the Polish "hidden Jew" phenomenon is unsurpassed. Conversion is available for those who discover that their father, not mother, was Jewish and want to return to Judaism, and numbers are growing.

We had an example of this at our table: Katya, a delightful young lady in her 30s who discovered at the age of 26 that her father was Jewish. She now runs Hillel welfare and educational services for Jewish students in Poland. Like Konstanty Gebert, Rabbi Schudrich studied at New York's Jewish Theological Seminary with Rabbi Stuart Altshuler. This trip certainly benefited from our leaders' excellent contacts.

Saturday morning's service, for those who went, was a more sober occasion. The chasidim, who attended but without their streimels, play a vital communal role in shechitah and kashrut. Polish kosher meat is an important product, much of it exported to Israel.

The Zookeeper's Wife

Some of us went in the afternoon to the zoo to see the villa that was the site and subject of *The Zookeeper's Wife*, Diane Ackerman's 2007 book about the remarkable couple, Jan and Antonina Zabinski, who continued living in the director's house in the zoo grounds during German occupation. Working with the underground resistance, the couple sheltered and saved up to 300 Jews trying to escape from the Warsaw Ghetto.

The Jews stayed in the basement. When German soldiers approached,



Professors Pawel Speiwak (left), director of the Jewish Historical Institute, and Antony Polonsky address us at the special JHI exhibition of Szymon Zygelboim (pictured on wall), the Jewish representative in the Polish government in exile who committed suicide in April 1943 in protest at the failure to do anything to stop the mass murder of Jews.

Antonina played a warning piece of piano music. They left by a secret tunnel which led to animal enclosures, turned over to pig farming. A plaque next to the garden well explained how this was part of the escape route. The couple were named as Righteous Gentiles and a film of the book was released last year.

Sunday was the Big Drive, nearly 300 miles north east to Vilnius on slow roads through field and forest, with three scheduled stops en route. Actually, two as it turned out, the first at Treblinka, scene of another Kaddish in front of the stone memorial. The site started as a forced labour camp in the forest before its role in extermination by carbon monoxide, from July 1942 to October 1943. Nearly a million Jews were killed there, second only to Auschwitz. When the camp was closed, the mass graves were exhumed and bodies cremated.

Nothing was left to show how the forest had been used. Today there is a striking monument and small museum. The contrast between the environment – whether in Warsaw's spacious avenues and green parks or Treblinka's tranquil forest – and what took place there, seemed both surreal and sickening. It is hard to grasp, but it can certainly grasp you.

The long drive (packed lunches provided by our Warsaw hotel) took us through field and forest. The feel is quite different from the British Isles. The vast sweep of the flat North European plain has no hills to break up either view or weather patterns. Fields seem to merge into one another with no hedges, ditches or windbreaks. You don't see animals although there are plenty of cows and pigs. The culture is to keep them indoors. And the road through pine and birch seems endless. You remember those childhood fairy tales of evil deeds in the forest, like *Babes in the Woods*, and realise they have a basis in fact.

Birthplace of Esperanto

By early afternoon we reached Bialystok, a border town which, since its mediaeval foundation in Poland-Lithuania, has come under Prussia, Russia, Germany, Belarus and back to Poland. From the mid-19th century it had a large and thriving majority Jewish population which ran the textile industry. One of their innovations was a cheap woollen cloth, mixing virgin wool with recycled woollen cloth (shoddy), which made winter clothing affordable for the masses. The town's main claim to fame is as

the birthplace of Ludwik (born Eliezer) Zamenhof, inventor of Esperanto in 1887. An ophthalmologist he was inspired to remove the tensions between the different ethnic groups around him as he grew up (the family later moved to Warsaw) through a neutral language creating common ground. By publishing his invented language under the pseudonym of Dr Esperanto, he expressed his optimism but his three children all perished in the Holocaust.

Another Jewish connection is the late Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, born in neighbouring Belarus, who went to Bialystok for secondary schooling at the Hebrew-language Gymnasium. Shamir emigrated to Palestine in 1935 and lost all his family in the Holocaust.

Bialystok has its own ghetto history. First, it was annexed by the Soviet Union, thereby attracting even more Jews fleeing from Nazis. When Germany turned on Russia in June 1941, it seized Bialystok, massacred hundreds of the 50,000 Jews there and burned 1,000 in a synagogue set ablaze. A ghetto set up in July 1941 was used for forced labour until it was liquidated in August 1943 after a short-lived uprising.

Bialystok Films - Subtitled

Unsurprisingly, there was little to show of the town's former Jewish life, though attempts are now under way to mark Jewish sites. But our excellent and enthusiastic guide, Tomasz (Tomek) Wisniewski, who is not Jewish, told us of his efforts to keep its Jewish history alive, especially through his 44 short films with English subtitles. His guide book and local history books are, unfortunately for us, only in Polish.

To see an actual synagogue, we had to go a little further to the village of Tykocin, where the historic and imposing synagogue, built in 1642 and used as always by the Nazis as a warehouse, was carefully restored under Communism in the 1970s in a rare effort to preserve Jewish heritage. Visitors say it is very impressive.

Unfortunately, we didn't get there. An unscheduled lack of co-ordination between our coach driver and our group led to a two-hour delay in Bialystok, admittedly in warm sunshine in the lovely grounds of the French-style Branicki Palace, often called the Versailles of Podlasie,

the local region. But we had to miss Tykocin. Ah well, you can't have everything!

We reached Vilnius by 11pm and the streets of the old town were too narrow for our coach to access our boutique hotel. It parked nearby and disgorged us with our luggage to trot down the cobbled lane. I think we all slept well. Incidentally, both our hotels were excellent and many thanks to our organiser and tour manager manqué, former A & E head at University College Hospital, Dr Claire Walford, who also caters the tasty festival meals for the elderly at our shul. So many strings to her bow!

Jerusalem of the North

Our final two days in Vilnius were equally packed and full of interest. Our guide was Regina Kopilevich, a veritable font of knowledge of the rich Jewish history of this "Jerusalem of the North" as Vilna, under its Yiddish name, was known in the Jewish world. She studied at the Hebrew University and speaks half a dozen languages.

Our morning started with a drive to Ponary (its Polish name – Ponar in Yiddish and Paneriai in Lithuanian), a resort just over four miles from central Vilnius and now a suburb of it, with a railway station surrounded by woods. It was seized from Poland in September 1939 by Germany's then ally, the USSR, which gave it to Lithuania. The USSR formally annexed Lithuania in June 1940 and started to build an airfield in the woods outside Ponary.

The project was never finished but six huge pits were dug as storage for oil tankers. These were the pits used by the Nazi killing squads after Germany turned against Russia in June 1941 and invaded Lithuania. Meanwhile, of course, the Jewish population of the area had increased enormously with



Lithuanian survivor Fania Brantsovsky between Rabbi Altshuler (left) and Professor Antony Polonsky, with flowers for Ponary memorial





people fleeing from German to Russian-occupied territory.

Jews were rounded up from Vilnius to the Ponary pits. They were ordered to climb down into the pits, where they were shot dead in layer after layer, with sand strewn over each layer by prisoner "helpers" who were themselves shot in turn. If you were not dead immediately, you were soon crushed by the bodies on top of you. In addition to the 70,000 Jews murdered there between July 1941 and August 1944, were another 20,000 Poles and 8,000 Russian prisoners-of-war. There are memorials for each group and we duly recited Kaddish.

But the gloom of yet another confrontation with catastrophe was lifted by the extraordinarily life-enhancing appearance and remarks of a 96-year-old survivor, Fania Brantsovsky. Fania escaped from the Vilna Ghetto, joined the Communist partisans in the forest and knew exactly what was going on at the pits. They could smell the bodies decomposing, she told us. As at Treblinka, the Nazis later attempted to hide all traces of their crimes.

Fania was unstoppable, speaking in Russian and Yiddish. She barely paused for Regina's translation and was off again, telling us her feelings and experiences, as she must have done many times before. It did not matter that we hardly understood. Her sheer energy swept us away and uplifted us. It was wonderful and what we sorely needed. Then she suddenly stopped, looked at her watch and said, in effect: "I didn't realise the time. I must go." You had to smile.

The Gaon's Grave

We went next to the only surviving Jewish cemetery in Vilnius, outside the town, with its landmark grave of Rabbi Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman, the Vilna Gaon (1720-97), the great exponent of Jewish law and opponent of the rising Chasidic movement. The historic looking cemetery is well tended and is still in use. In fact, the more important and better preserved graves of the old Jewish cemetery were transferred to this spot under Communist rule in the 1950s in order to build a new sports stadium on the old site – a move that would cause an outcry and be unthinkable today.

A small mausoleum or *ohel* (literally a tent but more like a chapel) houses three graves, that of the Gaon, his *mechutan* (the father of a married child) and another relative. People

stand before the locked doorway and throw notes through the upper rails, as at Jerusalem's Western Wall. The notes land on the central grave, the *mechutan's*. The Gaon is to the left.

After taking our coach back into Vilnius to find some lunch in the town square, we followed Regina on a walking tour of the beautiful old town, untouched by wartime bombing. (The Nazis targeted industrial areas, not heritage sites.) Noteworthy in the concentrated Jewish quarter that became the ghetto for two years from September 1941-1943 are the house plaques honouring Vilna's Jewish intellectual elite, its scholars, writers, artists and campaigners.

The interwar years saw a flowering of Jewish higher culture. YIVO (*Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut*, or Yiddish Scientific Institute) was founded in Vilna in 1925 as the academic centre for scholarship and research into East European Jewry's history and culture. Its surviving leaders restored the project in New York in 1940. The plaques commemorate the founders' names. There is even a road called Zydu Gatve or Jews Street.

Child Murder

A reminder of historic anti-Semitism remains on a church plaque of 1623, commemorating the murder 24 years earlier of a 7-year-old boy. The Latin text on the Franciscan Church plaque says he was "cruelly killed by 170 Jewish [inflicted] wounds", implying his blood was used to make matzah. The Archbishop of Vilnius has agreed to put up a plaque explaining the falsity of both belief and accusation but nothing has yet been done.

The Choral Synagogue which we visited is, like Warsaw's Nozyk Synagogue, the only remaining pre-war synagogue, built in the same period and general style, though with the addition of a new-fangled choir loft (hence the name). It, too, survived as a storage depot for the Nazis but went on to become a metal workshop under Communism. Restored by the World Monuments Fund, it reopened in 2010.

Our group supper was booked at an aspiring haute cuisine restaurant, set in a large wooden building. As the proprietor listened to us chatting and realised what we were talking about, he informed us that the restaurant had once been a Jewish school.

Our final day took us 40 miles west of Vilnius to the remnant of a rare community. The Karaites are based at Trakai, a beauty spot by a lake with a

historic castle on a small island reached by a sturdy wooden bridge. The sect originated in Persia in the 7th or 8th century as a "back to basics" movement, rejecting any move away from *Tanach* (Bible), including Mishnah and Talmud. A Turkic-speaking tribe in Crimea converted to this version of Judaism. In the late 14th century, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, then at the height of its power, brought a branch of this people back to Lithuania, where they served in his army or worked on the land. Other "Karaim" were settled in what became Tsarist Russia. They had tenuous and strained relations with mainstream Jewish communities.

Karaim Saved

The Nazis were uncertain about their status though the Karaites believed they practised true Judaism. In the end it was decided they were not Jews, which saved the Karaites despite the odd mix-up. But Hitler was anxious to stay on good terms with neutral Turkey and this swayed the balance.

It would have been nice to learn more as we admired the *kenesa* or synagogue, a well proportioned square building, still handsome despite undergoing renovation. But our speaker, a polite young man, seemed to have little knowledge of his community's past. However, he did appreciate that the community has little chance of an independent future with only 200 people left. Short of a miracle, it is unsustainable.

And that, apart from a pleasant amble through the castle and lunch in a Karaite restaurant near a second *kenesa*, all overlooking the lake, ended our fascinating and, for me, puzzling journey. A world which has gone. A world which leaves you feeling, in my case, flat and empty. I am not sorry I went. But it is nicer to learn how other people lived rather than died. I was glad to come home.



Karaite kenesa (synagogue) at Trakai

Chatan Torah: Nick Viner

Victoria and I joined Belsize Square Synagogue in 1998 when Sam, our eldest son, started Cheder. Four B'nei Mitzvah on, our youngest, Zoe, is now entering her second year of university.

Living five minutes from the shul, we tend to set off for services and events only at the time they begin, so we are generally late for everything – but never by much! Brought up and barmitzvah'd in the United Synagogue in Sheffield, and married by Liberal Rabbi, Albert Friedlander, I have found my spiritual home in Belsize Square, with its very special services – which we try to attend on a regular basis. Over the last 20 years, our entire family has benefited hugely from the community and from the many new friends we have made during our time here.

Throughout this period, two wonderful Rabbis, from whom I have learnt so much, have set and maintained the tone. Together, they have helped shape my Jewish identity, and reinforced my appreciation of Jewish

values and the importance of community.

I have of course been proud to see my children contribute to services in different ways over the years, and I have been pleased to make my own contribution, both as a Board member, now starting my second term, and more recently as a member of the Executive Committee, and Chair of the Building Committee.

My career has been in business, interrupted by a stimulating 7-year rite of passage to lead the creation of JW3, a mile away on Finchley Road. Now my role at JW3, as Chair of the Development Board, is rather more focused. I am also a Trustee of the Institute of Imagination, a Member of Council at the Architectural Association, and Treasurer of Alexander Haus, a project with warm and close connections to Belsize Square, that is creating a centre for education and reconciliation at the Alexander family's pre-war lakeside summer house near Berlin.



Outside the non-profit sector, I spent many years as an advisor to large companies around the world as part of The Boston Consulting Group. I have also served as a non-executive Director of a range of businesses embracing fintech, property and publishing. Most recently with a partner, I have started a new business, Circle Sq., aimed at harnessing the experience and skills of the over-55s.

I am honoured to have been invited to be Chatan Torah.



My family moved to Belsize Square Synagogue in 1994, when I was 10 years old. Despite living on England's Lane, my parents had been unaware of the little gem around the corner from their home. At that time they were also unaware that discovering Belsize would be a pivotal moment in my life, as well as theirs.

Within a year of joining the synagogue my parents, Leora and Roger, had met Ofra and Jeff Graham. Ofra was my Hebrew teacher at Cheder and Roger and Jeff had encountered each other while on security duty. Twenty-four years on and the Hackers and Grahams couldn't be closer.

Chatan Bereshit: Joe Hacker

Shortly after my arrival I was introduced to the late Louis "Hershy" Hirschfeld, my future Bar Mitzvah teacher and enduring source of inspiration. To my surprise I learned that we were actually related as he was my paternal grandmother's first cousin; my "Oma's" maiden name was Hirschfeld. This Jewish "Yoda", as I describe him to my current students, guided my first steps into leyning and haftarah and opened my eyes to the huge variety of Jewish prayers, traditions and concepts.

The way in which he interacted with young and old with the same openness, curiosity and respect is something I continuously try to emulate. I still repeat his wise words to my students; the prayers and rituals of Judaism are "outer signs for inner feelings". Being a "good" Jew is not just about going through the motions. It is possible to pray every day while treating others badly, or conversely, to never set foot in a synagogue and yet be a beacon of kindness and paragon of *menschlichkeit*.

Under Hershy's guidance I tutored my first Bat Mitzvah student, Becky Lee, at the tender age of 15. By the age of 17,

I had taught Gaby and Hugo Brent, and Lara Singer. I picked up Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring again just three years ago, after a 14-year hiatus, and am now committed to walk in Hershy's footsteps. If I can nurture and inspire even a tenth of the number of youngsters that he did over his life, I will be proud. I am also incredibly fortunate to play a part in the High Holydays Youth Service team, led by Dilys Tausz.

In addition to tutoring for Bar Mitzvah, I tutor maths up to GCSE level, which also gives me great satisfaction. My other work-related passions are coaching and facilitation. I guide individuals and management teams through strategic planning and project planning processes. I help them clarify their goals and challenges and then channel their creative thinking towards effective, practical action. I have volunteered these skills to help the BSS community in the past and I hope to do so again in the future.

I live in Kentish Town with my partner Shelly and our dog Tilly. I'm a keen cook, reader, exerciser, and adventurer. I'm incredibly honoured to be your Chatan Bereshit.

The first two days of December will mark the 80th anniversary of the first Kindertransport train from Berlin to London, via the ferry from Hook of Holland to Harwich. Our member **Alasdair Nisbet** was among the cycling enthusiasts who retraced that 600-mile journey in a special commemorative six-day bike ride, arranged in midsummer for the sake of better weather.

BERLIN TO LONDON ON TWO WHEELS

The sun lit up the Frank Meisler statue outside the station in Friedrichstrasse in Berlin. Entitled *Trains to Life, Trains to Death*, one side shows a family with broken ransacked suitcases, looking uncertain about their future. On the other side is a boy, suitcase in hand, and a girl striding to their future, looking forward to their journey to London and freedom.

Forty two cyclists stood on 17 July to listen to representatives from the British and German governments, urging us to speak openly about our cause and reminding us that our ride was a ride for tolerance. After reciting the prayer before a journey, we left Berlin on cycle lanes, accompanied by a police bicycle escort. After 10 miles we were in the countryside and they bade us farewell, with another 580 miles to go.

The ride was organised by World Jewish Relief, whose predecessor, the Central British Fund for German Jewry (founded 1933), arranged and funded the extraordinary rescue effort, which saved 10,000 children from Nazi Europe from December 1938 to September 1939. Our route traced the children's train journey, following the tracks across Germany and Holland. We were to catch the overnight ferry before finishing at London's Liverpool Street Station, where the children were sent on to new homes.

Windmills lined our route like enormous sentinels waving us on. The trouble with windmills is that they only work in the wind. Whilst the hills were few, we had plenty of "Dutch Hills" as they like to call gusting headwinds. We enjoyed mainly warm, often sunny days (one rainy) and plenty of wind.

Some of us had a direct connection to the Kindertransport and over the six days we heard how their parents or grandparents had escaped and the life they made in Britain. One of the cyclists, Paul Alexander, was just 19 months old when his mother put her only child into the arms of a stranger to be taken to safety on the Kindertransport. Now 80 and living in Israel, he cycled alongside his son and grandson in a celebration of life.

My mother-in-law Pamela Goldhill, then aged about 10, remembers

visiting the hostel in Willesden Lane where some of the children were taken. Her father, Henry Cohen, was involved in raising the cash needed to fund each child's entry to this country.

I was riding to commemorate the journey made by Hanna Singer (nee Cohn) and her twin brother Hans (who became Gerald) who were 10 years old when they arrived on a Kindertransport in July 1939. They came via Harwich into London, Liverpool Street, where a snapshot of Hanna with long black braids clutching her doll has become one of the most iconic photographs from the time.

On arrival they were separated, with Gerald sent to school first in Somerset, then Surrey, while Hanna was sent to a girls' school in Shropshire. Gerald went on to become an insurance broker and subsequently a tour guide. He was also a devotee of classical music. With similar interests in music, I am sure we would have got on well. He died in July 2011, aged 83.

Hanna married Peter Singer, also a German Jewish refugee, and they had twin daughters, Debbie and Helen. Hanna became an English teacher. She did not join any synagogue but attended memorial events at Belsize Square. She died in April 2018 aged 89. It was lovely to have been in touch with Debbie and Helen and to hear about their mother.

After 500 miles, we arrived at our second Meisler statue, *Channel Crossing to Life*, at the Hook of Holland, after a day of being buffeted by wind. As we stopped for a picture, it reminded us of the terrible dilemma facing many parents after Kristallnacht,

the "spontaneous" attack on Germany's Jews in November 1938. The strength they must have had to put their children on trains and say goodbye, not knowing whether they would ever see them again, is the truly heroic part of the story. It prompted difficult questions about whether we could have done the same.

We crossed the North Sea to Harwich, just as the children had done 80 years before, and headed towards an overwhelming welcome on 22 July at Liverpool Street, and our third Meisler statue, this one called *Arrival*. Meeting Rabbi Harry Jacobi was particularly special. (He went on a Kindertransport to stay in Holland and was rescued again when Germany invaded Holland a year later.) He captured the moment with a few choice words and led Kaddish "for our parents", most of whom did not survive.

I started my journey by celebrating Shabbat at the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue in Berlin. Rabbi Jonah Sievers had welcomed me to the *bimah* and invited me to the communal lunch. The next Shabbat I celebrated at Belsize Square, where Rabbi Altshuler invited me to say *Birkat Hagomel*, ("who bestows good things on the unworthy"), the blessing for surviving a perilous journey, including crossing the sea. Britain and the world have been rewarded by the enormous achievements of those 10,000 *Kinder* who were saved from probable death.

What a magnificent and unforgettable experience it has been, bringing this important historical event to life through the ride and the stories it revealed. The support has been amazing and we have raised more than £170,000 towards WJR's work, saving lives today, just as it did all those years ago. My fund raising page is still open if you would like to donate: www.worldjewishrelief.org/alasdairberlin2london

If you are a descendant of a Kindertransport child or of older refugees who came from Germany or Austria in the 1930s, World Jewish Relief has an incredible archive relating to these people. It is a treasure trove of information and you can find out if they have documents on your family members by filling out an enquiry form at: www.worldjewishrelief.org/archive



Alasdair Nisbet standing next to the Frank Meisler Kindertransport statue in Liverpool Street Station, at the end of his 600-mile bike ride

"FINANCES REMAIN HEALTHY"

Points from Jimmy Strauss's fourth AGM Treasurer's Report

- Our finances remain healthy, with cash and deposits only slightly lower by £9,000. The operating deficit is down to just £25,000 but legacy income is well below 2016 when we received a most generous legacy of £324,000.
- Legacy Campaign relaunch: If you or family members are intending to write or amend your Will, we would be most grateful to be a beneficiary. Remember that charitable gifts are highly tax efficient.
- Cash balances continue in excess of £1 million, which allows a relatively modest deficit to be run. About half the balance is on yearly deposit, to earn a slightly better rate of interest.
- Following the Finance Committee's concern about over-exposure to one Financial Institution, other options will be investigated when the deposit is due for renewal near the end of this year. But without the necessary five-year time horizon, we remain reluctant to invest surplus funds in the stock market.
- Our income increased by £24,000 through:
 - Slightly higher membership fees in conjunction with increased membership numbers.
 - The generous response to the Belsize 100 campaign, raising just under £40,000 including gift aid.
 - The Chanukah Market which raised £16,000 and Supper Quiz, just shy of £2,000. Both are great social events. Income also includes rent from the Central School of Speech & Drama, Keren's Nursery and the Scout Hut. Discussions are under way with the latter two to improve our income from the start of 2019.
- However, subscriptions are less than wages and salaries, and less than half our total cost bill. Expenditure will be closely watched so as not to squander our predecessors' carefully built-up reserves.
- Sincere thanks to:
 - The AJR for their generous, much needed and appreciated funding of the work of our Community Care Co-ordinator, Eve Hersov.
 - The Office team, so ably led by Lee Taylor, which makes the job of all HOs so much easier
 - All Finance Committee members for their sage advice and, especially, Assistant Treasurer Adam Hurst, who is always available despite regular commutes to Toronto, and Clive Goldstein, who always manages to get the figures ready for the annual audit.
 - My warmest thanks to all.

MARKING TISHA B'AV 5778

Adam Rynhold reports on two services and a new initiative

This year's marking of Tisha B'Av saw Belsize Square Synagogue join the New London Synagogue at its Abbey Road premises, on the evening of Saturday 21 July for a very enjoyable pre-fast meal, concluded by Cantor Heller leading *Bircat Hamazon* to the *Eicha* melody in a mournful manner foreshadowing the fast.

After the meal 50 people, 20 from Belsize Square and the rest from New London moved to the Synagogue where Rabbi Gordon began with a brief history of his life, growing up at Belsize Square and spending the majority of his rabbinate at NLS. He had prepared two pamphlets, one on *Kinot*, the other on *Eicha*. (Confusingly, *kinot* means lamentations and *eicha*, meaning "how", is the first word of the book of Lamentations, which starts: How does the city sit solitary...) It was interesting to see how the *kinot* followed a set pattern of both rhyme and verb conjugation as well as Rabbi Gordon's thoughtful interpretations.

Following Havdalah, Cantor Heller led Ma'ariv. Then sitting either on the floor or on low chairs, we read the book of *Eicha*, each chapter chanted in the *Eicha* trope, as was that morning's Haftarah. This joint venture with New London will hopefully be repeated at Belsize Square next year when Tisha B'Av begins on the evening of Saturday 10 August. Please put this

date in your diaries now so that we have a good turnout.

The following morning, Sunday, around 20 congregants gathered at Pound Lane Cemetery for our annual Chevra Kadishah Service led movingly by Cantor Heller. This Service was instituted by Rabbi Kokotek z"l in memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Shoah. We now also invite relatives of members buried at Pound Lane to attend this Service

before visiting the graves of their loved ones.

The Service allows us to honour those who operate our Chevra Kadishah (Holy Burial Society). On Tisha B'Av we ensure they are invited to be honoured and receive the community's gratitude. The Service includes the recitation of *Eicha*, a short sermon by the Rabbi or Cantor, Kaddish, and a collection for the needs of the Chevra Kadishah.



Serving Holocaust refugees
and survivors nationwide



T: 020 8385 3070

E: enquiries@ajr.org.uk

W: www.ajr.org.uk

f [AssociationofJewishRefugees](https://www.facebook.com/AssociationofJewishRefugees)

t [@AJR_London](https://twitter.com/AJR_London)





Dear Fellow Members

I hope that you have all come safely through these barmy summer months. Here in Abernethy Mansions I have suffered when it was over thirty degrees Celsius. On some days I found it hard to breathe and even impossible to become asleep. Of course Mrs Klopstick was in her ailment. She loves nothing better than a headache. She says it gives her extra energy and poise.

In fact just as I am reading this column she is starting on her record-breaking marathon in four weeks and that is after taking part in the over nineteenth ladies Jewish hockey champagne-ship.

Because of her indisposition, although she is bursting with full health, she asked me to ask Rabbi Altschuler if it is possible for her funeral to be arranged in time before she kicks the bucket over. She wants to know in advance who will turn up for it and also here what is usual about her. She has also asked if it can be arranged that Cantor Heller, Sir Benjamin Wolf and the full size choir could be there too. I have told her that such a thing was unlikely as it would set a precedent with every woman in future wanting to go to their own funeral in advance. For me this would be a special problem, because being a full-time Cohen I could not go to my own grave side. I don't think I will embrace myself or the Rabbi with such a ridiculous bequest. I can always say that I forgot the question. She will believe this.

But I am asking myself the question when did everything go so pear-shaped in the Labour Party? Was it just when Jeremy Corbyn became the leader, or was this something underlining the far left anyway? Of course we should never



remember what the Nazi Party was really called – the National Socialist Worker's Party. Since such times I am personally very weary of the benighted Socialism. Sometimes with this is really inside hidden the opposite meaning.

Many of my fellow inmates here are very worried about their personal safety. I have to remind them that at these extreme oldness this is not a real concern. Of course if it is for the safety of their great grandchildren and their young ones then this worry would not be so illegitimate. The problem is that many are heart of herring and so they would not understand a wart and instead enjoy their worries.

Soon the days of Or will be on top of us again and Belsize Square will be packed to the rafters with all those unfamiliar faces again. Of course for us this is the most important time, being first our New Year then only in ten days we must atone for our misapprehensions. Surely this is wrong. Why are we not instead doing this at the end of the year and not just a few days into the new year?

Vile I look forward to this big Jewish festival, I must again plead about the quantity from upstanding and down sitting that takes place at infirmary threw out these services. For us infirmaries there should be a maximum upstandings both in numbers and in lengths of time. Instead of concentrating on my things I always find that I am more concentrated on my limbs. After all what is the point from wearing comforting shoes if you are going to make your feet hurt anyway?

With the best of intentions

Fritz Klopstick



**Remember Belsize Square Synagogue in your Will
and help secure the future of your community**



Although the community continues to grow and attract new members, we cannot flourish on membership fees alone.

We depend on the generosity of you, our members, to provide the inspiring religious services, a wide variety of education for adults and children, social events, burials and pastoral care for all members of our community and also to preserve our unique musical heritage.

Any legacy, large or small, will make a difference!

Any questions? For a confidential discussion please call Lee Taylor on 020 7794 3949

Shabbat Candle Lighting



Friday 7 September	Andrea Margulies
Friday 14 September	Pamela Mendel
Friday 21 September	Gillian Brent
Sunday 23 September	Sara Pollins
Monday 24 September	Sasha Spencer
Friday 28 September	Caroline Loison
Sunday 30 September	Victoria Boyarsky
Monday 1 October	Shelly Masters
Friday 5 October	Lea Trijbits
Friday 12 October	Monica Bohm
Friday 19 October	Dorothy White
Friday 26 October	Eve Salama

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

The Rabbi, Cantor, Emeritus Rabbi and their families, Honorary Officers, Members of the Board and Staff extend their best wishes to all our Members for a healthy and peaceful New Year.

EXAM RESULTS

Mazal Tov to all of you who have taken GCSE, AS, A-levels and University Finals this summer. News of superb results has been reaching us daily. We are always delighted to hear good news so please let us know how you've done. Whether you are still at school, gapping, trekking, starting a career, or going off to University, we wish you good luck for a sparkling future and please keep in touch!

Community News

The copy deadline for the next issue of
Our Congregation is Friday 12 October 2018

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a cordial welcome to:

Rosie Solomon
Karen Kidson with children Bella & Daisy
Lark & Omri Lumbroso with son Atlas
Joss Trenner
Susan & Adam Weitzmann
Martina Tafreshi
Judith & Jacques Van Vlymen
Georgina & Charles Black
Harry Sassoon
Sam Cohen

BAT MITZVAH

Mazel Tov to:

Lea, daughter of Patricia & Paul Trijbits, who celebrates her Bat Mitzvah on Saturday 6 October
Eve, daughter of Sarah Benioff & Alan Salama, who celebrates her Bat Mitzvah on Saturday 27 October

WEDDINGS

Mazel Tov to:

Sarah Cohen & Adam Graham, who were married on Sunday 29 July
Jennifer Balcombe & Charlie Goldblatt, who were married on Sunday 5 August
Sarah Goodman & Joshua Kendall, who were married on Thursday 23 August

BIRTH

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Khristina Belkina & Jonathan Lawrence on the birth of their son Ethan

BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Mr J Goldberger (91) on 4 August
Mr J Epstein (88) on 5 August
Cantor M Stone (87) on 8 August
Mr B Rebuck (90) on 10 August
Mrs S Allan (85) on 10 August
Mr S Kornhauser (85) on 30 August
Mrs C Krasner, (88) on 25 September

STONE SETTINGS

At Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery

Lothar Weiss on Sunday 23 September at 11.00am
Marlene & John Altmann on Sunday 7 October at 12.30pm
Grace Weinstein on Sunday 14 October at 2.30pm

HIGH HOLYDAYS

TICKETS & INFORMATION

Members of the congregation will have received in the post a pack with all the information required for our High Holyday Services. This will include tickets for each family member, which are sent out automatically. Application for tickets is now only required for non-members.

The pack also includes application forms for non-members' tickets, prayer books and transport requirements/volunteer provision. Please do not destroy. If you have not received this pack, please contact the Synagogue Office.

Please contact the Synagogue Office if you would like to discuss any aspect of these arrangements.

EXTRA OPENING HOURS

The Synagogue Office will be open for the collection of High Holyday Prayer Books and non-member tickets on Sunday 9 September from 10.00-12.00pm.

REGULAR SERVICES

Friday evenings at 6.45pm & Saturday mornings at 10.00am

Kikar Kids

Saturdays 1 September, 6 October, 3 November, 11.00am

Under-5s Service in the Crèche (Crèche opens 10am)

Junior Service for 5-9 year-olds 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

Term begins: Sunday 16 September

Half Term: Sundays 21 & 28 October

CANTOR HELLER'S KABBALAT SHABBAT CHAT

An invitation and opportunity for Bar Mitzvah class pupils to make Kiddush, sing Lecha Dodi and learn the lessons of the Parsha.

On the second Friday of the month

5.30pm in the Library

Next sessions: 14 September & 12 October



SUNDAY MORNING ADULT DISCUSSION

7 October

10.00-11.15 Rabbi Altshuler: From archeology to theology – Methodological Issues in studying Biblical History
11.15-12.30 Open Forum: Hot topics of the summer

14 October

10.00-12.00 *Rosenwald*: 2017 documentary film by Aviva Kempner, followed by discussion

(No September meetings. Half term: 21 and 28 October)

NW3 LOCAL LUNCHEON GROUP

Giacomo, 428 Finchley Road, London, NW2 2HY

1.00pm on Wednesdays 26 September & 24 October

Please phone Judy Field (020 8455 0614) if you wish to attend

OFFICE CLOSURES

The office will be closed on the following dates:

Rosh Hashanah: Monday 10 & Tuesday 11 September, reopening Wednesday 12 September

Kol Nidre: Tuesday 18 September at 12.00 noon, reopening Thursday 20 September

Succot: Monday 24 & Tuesday 25 September, reopening Wednesday 26 September

Shemini Atzeret: Monday 1 & Tuesday 2 October, reopening on Wednesday 3 October

SALVATION ARMY COLLECTION

We are collecting tinned and dried foods (non-meat, please) for those in need in Camden. If you wish to contribute, please leave tins & packs at the Synagogue during office hours or Services until Tuesday 2 October (Simchat Torah).

Branch Line

If you are thinking of pruning your pine, laurel or cypress trees, the Synagogue would be very grateful to receive branches for the Succah which will be erected on Thursday 20 September.

Please contact the Synagogue office to make arrangements for delivery if you can help.





WILL YOU HELP US CARE FOR MORE PEOPLE LIKE PAUL, THIS ROSH HASHANAH?

Paul is living with dementia. He's been alone since he lost his beloved wife five years ago. He started coming to the dementia day centre a year ago. He's made new friends and loves to play games. "The singing's Paul's favourite," explains his niece Susan, "it always makes him smile."

It takes £3,000 every day to keep our dementia day centres open for people like Paul. Please continue your support this Rosh Hashanah.

To donate please call 020 8922 2600 or visit jewishcare.org/donate

#PeopleOfJewishCare

JEWISH CARE

FROM CANTOR PAUL HELLER A Message to the Congregation

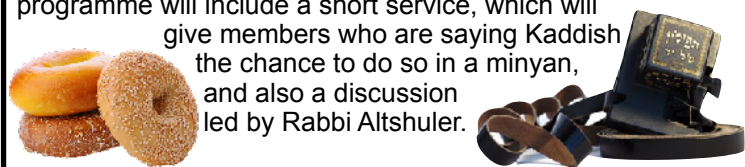
The month of Elul that leads up to the High Holydays is a propitious time to judge ourselves and ask if we can do better. Can we enhance our spiritual and human nature?

The High Holydays are a time of renewal and healing. I pray that you will be motivated by the ancient words of our liturgy, the inspirational words of our rabbis, the melodies and the voices of our choirs and the sound of the shofar. I feel blessed to be part of the caring congregational family of Belsize Square. As a Chazan, I am grateful to have the opportunity to pray with you. I love to lead you in prayer. I enjoy preparing our young daveners.

May the High Holydays awaken us spiritually. May God bless you and all your loved ones. *Shanah Tovah Tikatevu Vetechatemu.* May you all be inscribed for a good year!

TEFILLIN CLUB – A NEW INITIATIVE

Following discussions and recommendations by the Education and Liturgical Committees, the Rabbi and Cantor are introducing a Tefillin Club on Sunday 4 November at 9.30am for B'nei Mitzvah pupils to teach them how to lay tefillin. The Tefillin Club will be a breakfast event, complete with beigels, and is open to the whole community. The programme will include a short service, which will give members who are saying Kaddish the chance to do so in a minyan, and also a discussion led by Rabbi Altshuler.



SYNAGOGUE HELP LINES

THE BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HX

Tel: 020 7794 3949

Email: office@synagogue.org.uk

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

9.00am - 5.30pm

Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Lee Taylor - 020 7794 3949

CHEVRA KADISHA

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

FUNERALS

During Synagogue Office hours phone 020 7794 3949.

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

Enquiries to the Head, Jeanie Horowitz, in the Synagogue Office, or email jeanie@synagogue.org.uk

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Chairperson: Frank Joseph - 020 7482 2555

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Email: youth@synagogue.org.uk

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