



Mosaic
Choose your Jewish life

Liberal | Masorti | Reform

The Magazine of the **Mosaic Jewish Community**

March 2022/5782



For details of our services please see page 8

ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

Since our last issue

MOSAIC REFORM

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Jo Jones
Marian Byrne

WELCOME TO NEW FRIEND:

Colin Jones

NEW HOME:

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Elaine & David Mushlin

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their recent marriage

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to Rachel and Dan Highfield on the
death of their grandmother.
Roma Bendel on the death of her
husband, Allan
Oliver Kenton on the death of his
mother, Sybil
Zella Milstone on the death of her
husband, Dennis

GET WELL WISHES:

Sam Walport

MOSAIC LIBERAL

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Esther & Anthony Bamforth
Dario Celaschi
Ghazal Parjak
Ambra Schiavino

MAZAL TOV:

To Julia and Michael Lane on the
birth of a grandson, Alexander Theo
Lane, to parents Helen and Anthony
Lane
Brenda and Alan Hunt on the birth of
a grandson, Ezra Mervyn, to parents
Joel and Maryjane Winston

NEW HOME:

Joscelyne Kenton
Shirley Philipp

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY WISHES TO:

Irene Conway
Ron Collins
Clive Dexter
Tania Drake
Gideon Fiegel
Jack Leon
Karen Nash
Joy Pearson
Robert Rose
Michael Shelton
Iris Simons
Kenneth Sinclair
Cynthia York

GET WELL WISHES TO:

Michelle Drage
Ruth Eva Fiegel
Gideon Fiegel
Adrienne Green
José Mans

CONDOLENCES TO:

The family and friends of Cynthia
Green

MOSAIC MASORTI

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Zoe Buchalter
John & Kara Grant
Heather & Howard Eden
Susan Kritz
Joe & Avril Newman

BIRTHDAY WISHES TO:

Lore Lucas
Annette Benson

ANNIVERSARY WISHES TO:

Joanne & Jonathan Fenster on their
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MAZAL TOV TO:

Sue & Neil Mendoza on the
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Rosi Lindqvist-Jones
Elaine & Simon Glass on the
marriage of their son, Ben, to Dana

CONDOLENCES TO:

The family and friends of Sheila
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mother, Naomi

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Student Rabbi Anthony & Dr Aby

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Next issue (Pesach)

Copy date:

Wednesday 23rd March

Publication date:

Thursday 7th April

Send your articles, pictures,
letters etc to

newsdesk@choosemosaic.org

Stanmore Hill Building Update

February 2022

*THE ROOF IS ON, WINDOWS GOING IN –
BUILDING MAKING PROGRESS DESPITE COVID DELAY*

By Steve Levinson

The work on building our new home is progressing although the weather, Covid and construction supply issues are proving challenging for our development, just as they are for the whole industry.

Nevertheless a number of milestones are being passed in the process. The building has reached its full height and the roof has been completed meaning it is now watertight. By the time you read this article we will have the windows in place and scaffolding is shortly to be removed.

With the external elements nearing completion, the developer will increasingly concentrate on internal areas, which will allow the space inside to come together and take shape.

The issues mentioned above have added a few weeks to the project. Although dates are not fixed, the practical completion of the whole development and handover of the synagogue is still expected in the late Spring.

Then there will be an intensive 8-week fit-out programme to make the building fully functional. A number of volunteer teams have been hard at work for a while now in



designing, identifying and sourcing the numerous items needed to turn the building into a home for the whole Mosaic Jewish community. One of the most important features to go in will be the partitions which will allow the space to be adapted into

numerous configurations.

Once the major elements of the fit-out are completed it is hoped that test events for limited groups of people can take place, before a full opening.

The hoardings surrounding the development have already demonstrated to local residents and passers-by what the final look of Mosaic and the flats above will be. Nearer the date of completion we intend to step up our publicity in the area, but the first step in this process is updating our Mosaic website so that all the information and pictures about the development can be found in one place. This is already under way and elsewhere in this Kehila (page 20) you can find another article explaining the role and changes to the website.

The photo shows the kitchen and halls under construction.

UK FIRST FOR NEW RABBINIC ROLE AT MOSAIC JEWISH COMMUNITY IN STANMORE

(The following press release was published on 14th February)

Rabbi Anna Wolfson has started work in a unique rabbinic position in British Jewry. Rabbi Anna, who joins the Mosaic Jewish Community, is the first Development Rabbi in the country with responsibilities across three synagogues in different movements – Mosaic Reform, Mosaic Liberal and Mosaic Masorti. Her role is also to develop other expressions of Judaism beyond these existing movements and in furtherance of Mosaic's mission to "choose your Jewish life".

The Mosaic Jewish Community project is reaching a key moment, with its new building in Stanmore, due to be completed and handed over by the developers this Spring, and to be in full operation by summer. As well as providing a home for religious services the building will be a new cultural, social and educational centre in the area.

Commenting on her role Rabbi Anna said: "Being a Rabbi across 3 communities in one space has not been done before. This is not just about bringing new people into the community but letting them feel ownership. I am looking forward to building relationships, working with my rabbinic colleagues, facilitating creative community spaces, and being part of the wider Stanmore community."

Although this is new in the UK, a Jewish "emergent community network" has developed



in the USA which brings together varying synagogues trying to develop new forms of Jewish expression alongside existing religious movements.

As well as her development role, Rabbi Anna will also spend around one quarter of her time at Mosaic Liberal working alongside Rabbi Rachel Benjamin.

Anna grew up in Nottingham as a member of the Nottingham Liberal Synagogue. Between university and attending Leo Baeck College Anna has worked as a movement worker for LJY-Netzer and was an educator for the Netzer gap year program in Israel. Anna was ordained in the summer of 2020 and has since served as the Rabbi for Beit Klal Yisrael, Norwich Liberal Jewish Congregation and as the Chaplain for Progressive Jewish Students.

Mosaic co-chair Mark Phillips commented on Anna's appointment, "Our priority as a community as we emerge from the pandemic and look forward to our new home in Stanmore, is to help Jews "choose our Jewish life" – providing a diverse range of ways to engage with Judaism and our community. Anna's skills, experience and passion for Judaism make her perfectly placed to move us in this direction. We are excited that Anna is joining us."

For further information contact: Rabbi Anna Wolfson rabbianna@choosemosaic.org

Rabbi Rachel interviews Mosaic's newest Rabbi, Rabbi Anna

What did you do before you became a Rabbi? And what made you decide to enter the rabbinate?

I grew up in Nottingham, where I believe there were only around 600 Jews. I was always incredibly active in Nottingham Liberal Synagogue and thrived in the Liberal Youth Movement - then ULPSNYC and now LJY Netzer. I studied Religious studies and Theatre at an ecumenical Christian university in Liverpool where my favourite lecturer was a nun. After university, I went on to be a movement worker for LJY-Netzer following which I spent time living and working in Jerusalem for two years. Incidentally, I went to Israel to get away after working for the movement and to learn Hebrew in preparation for Leo Baeck College but after just four months of my Ulpan course, I had a phone call offering me a job with the World Union of Progressive Judaism in Jerusalem and returned to the movement to be an educator on the Shnat Netzer gap year programme. Throughout my time at University, Leo Baeck and in-between I have worked as a nanny, childminder and au pair. I was studying for my bat mitzvah when I first thought I wanted to enter the rabbinate. I adored Jewish community and in studying for my bat mitzvah was excited by the fact that my teacher and I could spend months grappling with just one small bit of text. I always thought I would grow out of my desire for joining the



rabbinate but I realised that so many of the things I loved to do, community building, informal education, working with people, exploring spirituality and so much more worked perfectly with a job in the rabbinate.

We know that you were recently married to Cantor Tamara Wolfson. As you enter this new chapter, what can you tell us about your family ethos?

I feel incredibly lucky to be part of a large and very mixed family. Although all my grandparents and parents are Jewish between my sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, niece, nephews and their spouses and children, we span religions and the world. My family are central to me and I was so happy when I met Tamara and found she felt similarly close to her family. Despite being from different backgrounds our extended families get on well together, which we know is not a given. We feel strongly that whilst our jobs can be all-encompassing it important for us to make time and space to connect with each other, spend quality time with our dogs and be there for our wider families too. With Tamara's family being on the other side of the Atlantic, in Nashville, we are committed to ensuring that the distance of miles does not translate to a distance in the relationship. Beyond our biological family we are grateful for our chosen family, the close

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friends we have made family as we build our lives together.

What do you think is the core ethos that makes the Mosaic project distinctive from other communities? Do you have a favourite Midrash or story that illustrates this?

One of the many things that excites me about Mosaic is that, despite the challenges that naturally crop up trying to navigate three communities' minhagim (customs) and religious interpretations or needs, there seems to be a true desire to find solutions and compromises that ensure the success of the common project. In my short month with the community, I have been in conversations that not only bring the problems but look to find solutions. For me, it seems there is a real feeling of judging people and what they bring to the conversation with 'kaf zachut', an assumption that it was brought with good intention. There is a rich tradition in Judaism of building relationship with people with whom you may not fully agree. I think of our sages Hillel and Shammai who could never agree on teachings in Talmud. In the Babylonian Talmud Eruvin 13b we read;

Eruvin 13b:10-14

R. Abba stated in the name of Samuel: For three years there was a dispute between Beth Shammai and Beth Hillel, the former asserting, 'The halachah is in agreement with our views' and the latter contending, 'The halachah is in agreement with our views'. Then a bat kol issued announcing, 'These and these (the utterances of both) are the words of the living God, but the halachah is in agreement with the rulings of Beth Hillel'. Since, however, both are the words of the living God' what was it that entitled Beth Hillel to have the halachah fixed

in agreement with their rulings? Because they were kindly and modest, they studied their own rulings and those of Beth Shammai, and were even so humble as to mention the actions of Beth Shammai before theirs, as may be seen from what we have learnt...

The phrase 'these and these are the words of the living God' highlights for me this acceptance of all the different ways, some we have tried and some we are yet to try, that we can express our Judaism and practice. Whilst sometimes decisions need to be made in order to move forward, in the Mosaic project, rather than decisions being made in agreement with one argument ie. in agreement with Hillel, it feels like the decisions are made according to what fits the ethos of the collaborative project.

What are your aspirations now for MJC? How would you like your contribution to be remembered?

I aspire for Mosaic to be a spiritual and cultural centre in London. My dream is that all Jews (and beyond) know that community can be for them even those who may not feel they fit the 'conventional' image of a Jewish community member. I would love to see all three communities grow and for the building to be a living bustling environment throughout the week not only for Mosaic members but for the wider Stanmore community. While I have other aspirations, I would love to get to know the community better and hear your aspirations because if our ideas do not align then my role fails at the first hurdle.

What do you enjoy when you're not working?

I have a deep love (some may say obsession) with animals, particularly dogs but I

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love all creatures. I enjoy walking our dogs and meeting other dogs on our adventures. I am a big fan of stand-up comedy which I attend regularly as well as music and theatre, but have not been to a gig or show since before Covid. Recently, in an attempt to find fun post-Covid, I have discovered Axe throwing and escape rooms! I have to admit I was much better at the

latter than the former. Thank goodness there are supervisors keeping close watch that no one is injured!

Finally, what would you prefer to be known as? – Anna, Rabbi Wolfson or Rabbi Anna?

I am happy to be known as Anna or Rabbi Anna.

The Yellow Candle

This annual initiative, which honours those whose lives were tragically lost in the Holocaust, will see thousands of Yellow Candles distributed ahead of Yom HaShoah – Holocaust Remembrance Day – beginning on the evening of **Wednesday 27th April**, ensuring we never forget. Candles can be ordered



at www.yellowcandleuk.org for direct delivery at a price of £3.75 per candle, with Genesis Philanthropy Group generously subsidising the cost of postage and packaging for a second year running.

Remembrance that is communal and personal

Each Yellow Candle includes a biographical card giving key information about a person who lost their life in the Holocaust. This is a key feature of the campaign, so that the acts of remembrance are communal and also deeply personal, with each candle honouring an individual life cut short.

This year's theme – Remembrance to Renewal

An added element to this year's project is

the theme of 'Remembrance to Renewal,' communicating the key message that the continuity and growth of Jewish life is itself a key act of remembrance, which honours the 6 million who perished.

Each candle will also be accompanied by a pack of dwarf sunflower seeds, that can be planted in the Yellow Candle tin

once each candle has been used. Each flower grown and displayed in participants' homes, will symbolise a commitment to remembering the past by planting seeds for the future.

Last year's supporters are partnering with Maccabi GB once again to make Yellow Candle 2022 possible. This includes Genesis Philanthropy Group, Betty Messenger Charitable Foundation, The Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust, 'We Are All Making A Difference' (who are funding Yellow Candles for Jewish Residential care homes) and Yom HaShoah UK. The Yad Vashem UK Foundation has also joined as a sponsor this year, and many other countries will also be participating in this project with thanks to Maccabi Europe.

MOSAIC JEWISH COMMUNITY CELEBRATES PURIM

**The Shushan Chronicles a story of love,
intrigue and faith**



The banquet of Esther and Achashverosh by Jan Victors

Everyone is invited

Put on your fancy hat, dust off your Purim grogger, bring out the Haman Taschen and join Mosaic Reform and Mosaic Liberal for a short service, Megillah reading and the One and only Musical Mosaic Purim Spiel

When:

Wednesday 16th March, 6.00 pm

Where:

In the Magical place of Zoom

Mosaic Masorti will be holding its Purim evening service and Megillah reading at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 16th March at the kind invitation of the Lazarus-Magrill family in Stanmore. Numbers will be limited so please contact Edwin Lucas chair@mosaicmasorti.org.uk for booking and details. Light refreshments will be served. Please bring your own megillah if you have one.

There will also be a morning Megillah reading and seudah at a member's home on Thursday 17th March. Details to follow.

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WHAT TO MAKE by Jonelle Roback

It's that time of year again... time to break out the bakeware and get into a "triangular" state of mind! The Jewish holiday of Purim is all about triangle-shaped foods – classic Jewish baked goodies like hamantaschen cookies. In the story of Purim, it is said that the villain, Haman, wore a triangular hat everywhere he went. Triangular foods like hamantaschen have three corners to represent Haman's hat. There is also a theory out there that Haman had triangular pockets, since the word hamantaschen literally translates from



Yiddish as "Haman's pockets" (I tend to think the translation has more to do with the fact that these cookies are filled, like little pockets of dough). A more poetic interpretation links the three corners of the triangle shape to the three founding fathers of Judaism—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whatever the reason, it's traditional to eat triangular foods like hamantaschen on Purim... so eat them we must!

Here is a Dairy Free version as they are easier to make for a first-time Hamantaschen maker rather than the buttery version.

The recipe is quite wordy but very easy to follow.

Dairy Free Hamantaschen

Prep Time – 15 mins

Cooking Time – 45 mins Make approx. 30

Ingredients:

- 2 large eggs
- 133g caster sugar
- 56g vegetable oil
- 1 tsp orange zest
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 282g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp water (if needed)
- Non-stick cooking oil spray

Filling: Use whatever you prefer, I used Apricot Jam, but can use Strawberry Jam, Poppyseed, Apple Sauce, Nutella etc, just don't over fill!

Method:

1. Before you begin making the hamantaschen, choose your filling and have it on hand to work with. This dough will dry out quickly if left to rest too long, so it's best to have everything ready to assemble when you start. Preheat your oven to 350F/180C/180CFan. In a mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, vegetable oil, orange zest and vanilla.
2. In another bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt.
3. Slowly stir the dry ingredients into the wet, using a large wooden spoon and using circular motions till a crumbly dough begins to form.
4. Knead until smooth and slightly tacky to the touch. Try not to overwork the dough, only knead till the dough is the right consistency. If the crumbles are too dry to form a smooth dough, add water slowly, 1 teaspoon at a time, using your hands to knead the liquid into the dough. Knead and add liquid until the dough is smooth and slightly tacky to the touch (not sticky), with a consistency that is

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PURIM

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- right for rolling out. It can easily go from the right consistency to too wet/sticky, so add water very slowly. If the dough seems too wet, knead in a little flour till it reaches the right texture.
5. Lightly flour a smooth, clean surface. Use a rolling pin to roll the dough out to 1/4 inch thick. Scrape the dough up with a pastry scraper, lightly re-flour the surface, and flip the dough over. Continue rolling the dough out very thin (less than 1/8 of an inch thick). The thinner you roll the dough, the more delicate and crisp the cookies will turn out, just make sure that the dough is still thick enough to hold the filling and its shape! If you prefer a thicker, more doughy texture to your cookies (less delicate), keep the dough closer to 1/4 inch thick. Lightly flour the rolling pin occasionally to prevent sticking, if you need to.
 6. Use a 3-inch round cookie cutter (not smaller) or the 3-inch rim of a glass to cut circles out of the dough, cutting as many as you can from the dough. Gather the scraps and roll them out again. Cut circles. Repeat process again if needed until you've cut as many circles as you can from the dough. You should end up with around 30/35 circles.
 7. Place a teaspoon of filling into the centre of each circle. Do not use more than a teaspoon of filling, or you run the risk of your hamantaschen opening and the filling spilling out during baking. Cover unused circles with a lightly damp towel to prevent them from drying out while you are filling.
 8. Assemble the hamantaschen in three steps. First, grasp the left side of the circle and fold it towards the centre to make a flap that covers the left third of the circle.
 9. Grasp the right side of the circle and fold it towards the centre, overlapping the upper part of the left side flap to create a triangular tip at the top of the circle. A small triangle of filling should still be visible in the centre.
 10. Grasp the bottom part of the circle and fold it upward to create a third flap and complete the triangle. When you fold this flap up, be sure to tuck the left side of this new flap underneath the left side of the triangle, while letting the right side of this new flap overlap the right side of the triangle. See photo. This way, each side of your triangle has a corner that folds over and a corner that folds under-- it creates a "pinwheel" effect. This method of folding is not only pretty, it will help to keep the cookies from opening while they bake.
 11. Pinch each corner of the triangle gently but firmly to secure the shape. Repeat this process for the remaining circles.
 12. When all of your hamantaschen have been filled, place them on a lightly greased baking sheet, evenly spaced. You can fit about 20 on one sheet... they don't need to be very spaced out because they shouldn't expand much during baking. Place them in the oven and let them bake for 20-25 minutes, till the cookies are cooked through and lightly golden.
 13. Cool the cookies on a wire rack. Store them in a tightly sealed plastic bag or Tupperware.
- Enjoy and happy cooking!! If you like, let me know how you get on. Jonelle Roback
(whattomake@choosemosaic.org)

CALL THE MIDWIFE

– Transmitted 21ST January 2022

By Tony Selman – Honorary Warden, Sandys Row Synagogue and member of Mosaic Reform Synagogue



Just three yards outside the boundary of the City of London and surrounded by an increasing number of high-rise office blocks can be found the small, old and beautiful Sandys Row synagogue, also known as the 'Dutch Synagogue'.

In today's dwindling East End Jewish population, the Shul struggles to survive and largely depends on income from talks and tours offered to both the general public and schools from the east end (as well as further afield), in addition to income from various charities. The Shul also encourages the entertainment industry to use the building as a concert venue and as a 'synagogue set' when such is needed.

In the summer of 2021, the Shul was approached by the production company that makes the series 'Call the Midwife'. They

asked if they could use the Synagogue for the making of an upcoming episode of "Call the Midwife" that involved a bar mitzvah. Nothing more was disclosed about the story line other than it involved a bar mitzvah.

The shul was told that its assistance would not be required on set since the 'Bar Mitzvah' boy and the 'Rabbi' would be professional actors, and a few extras would provide the congregation. Whilst the Shul had not been asked to act as technical advisors it was pointed out to the production company that, if authenticity was sought, more than 'a few' extras would be needed for the congregation (namely at least ten), not to speak of a couple of Wardens (Gubbas) for the service.

The Shul's ever-so-shrewd Chairman,

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having made a quick ring round the regulars, suggested to the production team that the shul could provide the 'congregation', as well as the 'Gubbas', subject, of course, to a suitable financial accommodation.

Thus it was that at a very early hour on the morning of a day toward the end of last summer that the 'Sandys Row extras', having been collected at an 'unholy' hour by taxi, excitedly assembled in a commandeered office block close to the Shul for a kosher breakfast. (Sadly, as early as we were, the film crew had got there before us and wiped out all the smoked salmon beigels!)

Moving on from breakfast we were steered to the hairdressing department and given haircuts appropriate to the time frame. From thence to the costume department where we were kitted out in suits, shirts, ties and shoes, again appropriate to the time frame of the episode. Those with spectacles were warned

to remember to remove them during shooting because their frames were modern and vigilant viewers would inundate the producers with complaints after transmission if they were not of the period. Similarly, we were issued with black and white talasim because the multi-coloured variety that many of us usually wore did not exist at the time.

It took until early evening to film the bar mitzvah scene. It was not until last Friday that I learnt, together with many regular viewers, the story line and finally got to understand why on the bimah the bar mitzvah 'boy' looked so old for a thirteen-year-old. I got my few minutes of fame.

Note: It is a very great shame that my co-Gubba, Ivan Kingsley, died suddenly last December and never saw himself on television. I dedicate the above piece to him.

(Note: Tony Selman is seen on the right in the above photo)

Forthcoming Event

Sunday 3rd April - 4.00 pm

Meet the UK Director of the World Uyghur Congress, Rahima Mahmut

Rahima is an Uyghur singer, human rights activist, and award-winning translator of the poignant prison memoir *The Land Drenched in Tears* by Soyungul Chanisheff. She translated the testimonies of survivors during the Uyghur Tribunal, and is a prominent voice for Uyghurs in the UK.

Rahima's work includes producing music for award-winning Al Jazeera documentary 'Living in the Unknown,' working as a consultant and translator for the Bafta-winning ITV documentary 'Undercover: Inside China's Digital Gulag,' Channel 4 documentary 'China: Search for the Missing' and translator for the BBC documentary 'China: A New World Order.' She is currently UK Director of the World Uyghur Congress, Executive Director of Stop Uyghur Genocide, and an Advisor to the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China.



HaMakom

by Viki & Toria

HaMakom is back up and running as near to normal as is possible from our new, albeit temporary home at Pinner Wood school. It is a fantastic venue and the children are having a great time.

Last term we held a Channukah party, with the obligatory food, drinks and a delicious cake. The children brought in board games to play with their friends and we made channukiot from kits that were put together by the charity Kisharon. We were

delighted to be able to support the incredible work they do with Jewish adults who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

At the end of last term, we bid a fond farewell to Anita Feldman, who has been our lead teacher at HaMakom for the last 3 years and has done a really fantastic job, particularly during lockdown when she came up with many fantastic ideas for keeping the children learning and engaged through Zoom lessons. She will be greatly missed.

We are delighted to have recruited a wonderful new Hebrew teacher for B'nei Mitzvah class - Liat Remon, who is a parent and has previously taught at HaMakom. We have also promoted to teachers Emma de Magtige



this wall hanging was made by the children of HaMakom

and Ben Brownstone, two of our older, fabulous assistants; they are the team teaching our youngest class.

Through MRJ, we have been offered the opportunity to work with a *ShinShin*, Shachar from Israel. He has been coming in monthly and working with the children by supporting Jewish Studies lessons, teaching Hebrew and organising big games for the whole school. He has been so good to work with and the children have really

enjoyed his input. He will be with us for the rest of the academic year.

This term the older children from the Kabbalat Torah and Assistant Trainee class are taking part in a self-defence course, which aims to make them more aware of their surroundings, to be able to take action in order to avoid confrontation, strong use of body language and voice and, if necessary, how to defend. We think these are such important skills for children of this age and are grateful to Scott Buchan for giving up his time for free in order to do this.

Purim is on the horizon and we are planning how we are going to make this fun, different and memorable. More on this next time..

Against the odds: The Israeli Government lives to fight another day !

**A personal view by
Mosaic Reform member,
Judith Bara**

On June 13th 2021, a new government consisting of eight disparate parties was sworn into office by the outgoing President of Israel, Reuven Rivlin. It represented a coalition between centrist and centre-left parties, known as the 'Change Bloc' comprising Yesh Atid, Blue and White, Labour and Meretz, the recently created rightist parties Yamina and New Hope, as well as the veteran Yisrael Beiteinu and the Arab Joint List. Collectively (at that stage) they held sixty-four of the 120 Knesset seats. This had followed protracted and difficult negotiations, spearheaded by the Yesh Atid Leader, Yair Lapid, who persuaded Naftali Bennett of Yamina to join and agreed to an alternating premiership with him. It appeared at the outset that there was only one real point of agreement. Primarily, all these parties



wanted rid of Netanyahu, who had betrayed, vilified, and denigrated all of them to differing degrees, but also to avoid yet another election. In the event, only one element of the Arab Joint List - Ra'am - remained in the coalition which reduced its tally of seats to 61, giving it the most wafer thin of majorities over the combined opposition total of 59. Much of the ensuing difficulty in agreeing a coalition was related to the distribution of portfolios - but that is hardly new to Israel. The coalition agreement was based on bringing stability to the country and, crucially, not to discuss detailed changes to the 'status quo' in religious affairs nor to

dismantle settlements on the West Bank.

Critically, on 4th November, the new government managed not only to pass a budget for 2020-21, but also a framework for a 2021-22 budget. This cleared one of the

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major obstacles of the previous Knesset and avoided new elections having to be called. It is also likely that these budgets, which are based on a two-year spending plan, will open the way to greater economic activity and trade, having removed a series of barriers and regulations. The budget also upheld the coalition agreement promise to invest substantially in the Palestinian-Israeli community as well as enabling and encouraging economic capacity in the West Bank territories. There is also speculation that a new law, limiting the length of time any prime minister can serve to eight years, thus preventing Netanyahu regaining power, will be introduced.

The government's policy package was described by *The Economist* as 'a change in tone but not in substance'. But tone can often be a catalyst for change and improved relations with the wider world. Indeed, the government will continue to enable settlements to be developed but will also encourage economic progress in the Palestinian Territories and greater engagement with the wider world. In domestic terms, it will promote infrastructure development, including a new airport and university, and will also prioritise greater attention to welfare and social justice. The Bank of Israel supports this. There will also be an inquiry to examine the disturbances of April 2021.

Furthermore, the nature of the coalition itself could create opportunities to build new alliances within Israel. It brings together different communities of parties and their voters who had been significantly disenchanted by government in recent years. Firstly, the elements of the right, notably Bennett, Sa'ar and Beiteinu, previous members or allies of Likud who had been demeaned by Netanyahu.

Secondly the centre-right, such as Gantz, who should have become Prime Minister had not Netanyahu reneged on the deal he had signed up to, and Lapid, who had received death threats from Netanyahu allies. Thirdly, the centre-left and left, notably Labour and Meretz, whose support had eroded over recent years and had worried that they might have failed to meet the electoral threshold. These groups are in the main secular and were fed up with seeing their rights eroded by the influence of the ultra-orthodox. Collectively, these communities could muster sufficient votes to outflank Likud and prevent some of its 'natural' allies from gaining ground. If the present coalition is successful, it could pave the way for a realignment in Israeli party politics. After all, the majority of Israeli voters are not ultra-orthodox.

In international terms, the new government has made some early moves to improve Israel's image and forge new ties. It is no exaggeration to say that the previous government seriously alienated much of the world, not simply in terms of policy, but in terms of its uncompromising attitude, as well as its clear support for the Trump regime. It is fortuitous that the American presidency had changed during the past year. Obviously, both Trump and Netanyahu were among the architects of the Abraham Accords with several Gulf states, and these are welcomed by both the new Israeli and American regimes and have already been built on.

President Biden, in his meeting with Prime Minister Bennett, discussed an upgrade to Israel's 'Iron Dome' defence system. There has been concern that Biden is 'soft' on Iran as he would like the US to re-join the Nuclear

Continued on following page >>

Deal. But the new, hard-line government in Tehran has indicated that it wants all sanctions lifted before it engages in talks with the US and that is unlikely to happen. To Israel's advantage is that Biden has only modest expectations about a negotiated peace deal with the Palestinians and would prefer to support economic development in the West Bank - which is also on Israel's agenda

On 24th November, Gantz as defence Minister, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on defence and security with Abdullatef Oudiyi, his opposite number in Morocco. On 29th November, Lapid and Liz Truss, as foreign ministers, signed an Anglo-Israeli deal on trade and security, including cybersecurity, aimed primarily at preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons. The UK has proscribed the political wing of HAMAS, which it described as a terrorist and anti-semitic organisation. Bennett has also visited Egypt for talks with President Sissi and Gantz has met with President Abbas to discuss economic development in the Palestinian Territories. Bennett also attended COP26, along with Ministers Tamar Zandberg (Environmental Protection) and Karine Elharrar (National Infrastructure, Energy and Water). Israel's response to the covid pandemic, under both

this and the previous government, has been monitored as an example of good practice.

Whilst international focus has been on government formation and survival, another development has taken place in Israel. President Rivlin, regarded as a supporter of the coalition and, despite coming from Likud, was a forthright critic of the previous government on occasion, came to the end of his seven-year term. His successor, Yitzhak Herzog took office on 7th July. He is a former Labour Leader and son of former President Chaim Herzog.

So, against the odds, the Israeli government which took office in June, has survived its first six months. More than that, it has made significant headway, especially in terms of averting an early election, passing a budget, and repairing bridges across the world. Yet we must not forget that it is still in a fragile position, having a knife-edge majority and could fall on the whim of one MK. We should not be complacent about its long-term survival, but Israel is clearly in a better place than it was in last spring.

Many thanks to Judith for sharing her thoughts. Please note that these are her personal views and NOT those of Mosaic Jewish Community or our three Synagogues.

Communal Seder - Save the Date!

Saturday 16th April - 7.00pm

We will be holding an in-person Communal Seder at an address in Hatch End.
Please save the date - full details to follow.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE VACCINATED

by Bernard Fisherman



Many people are filled with trepidation
Should they or should they not consider vaccination
Tests and trials have been completed
The question is has the virus been defeated
Only time will tell what the outcome will be
Shall I wait a little longer to decide if it's for me
Eighty-five is not a good age to be bold
I've been shielded and vulnerable that's what I've been told
What to do, what to do, I feel my confidence grow
If the chance comes along I'll give it a go
What's to lose at eighty five, really not a lot
So here I am ready and waiting please just give me the shot.

SPITTING IMAGE!

By Janet Byrne



Exam results were through at last
And the family had come to tea
Amongst them two kvelling Grandmas
Who could not hide their glee.

Paternal Gran said
"He takes after me
And in maths, he's like my brother
Plus physics was his dad's best subject
And in art he's like my mother

Maternal Gran, her feathers ruffled
Said, "I don't agree.
Why, Dan's really more like our Kate
With her 1st class Hon's degree!"

"Well," said paternal Gran to placate
"Perhaps he takes after both sides then.
Although in looks you must acknowledge
He's the image of my eldest, Ben."

But maternal Gran was not amused
"You've lost the plot!" Her voice was shrill
"Everybody says that Daniel is the very double
of our Phil!"

Paternal Gran is slow to anger
But this just got her riled
"Thank goodness in temperament then
He's definitely his father's child!"

But their faces soon turned from scowls to
smiles When their Grandson came into view
"You're so clever and handsome, kenahora,"
said both Grans "There's no one else like you!"

Mosaic Reform Synagogue's High Holyday Appeal 2021



Jeanette Leibling

Why has the High Holyday Appeal for 5781 been different from all other years? Because our members have been particularly generous to our request to donate towards our new home which we are all getting increasingly excited about. Next Rosh Hashanah in Stanmore and, thanks to your generosity, what a beautiful home it will be. You have already generously donated towards many of the extras but more is still needed. The "shopping list" is long, and we want our new home to be one that not only we, but our children, our grandchildren and even our great-grandchildren can enjoy and be proud of, so please help this year particularly so we can accomplish our goal. It's never too late to give.

We haven't forgotten that there are others less fortunate than ourselves so I am happy

to tell you that, together with your personal suggestions, our Rabbi and a small group of very helpful advisors, we have made donations to:

Bereavement Care
British Heart Foundation
Chai Cancer Care
Cure Parkinson's Trust
Harrow Mencap
Jewish Women's Aid
Leo Baeck College
Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre
New Hope (Watford Homeless)

Many thanks to you all for making this possible and I know the charities concerned have been very grateful for our support

UNTANGLING OUR TRADITION

We have a new weekly class at 7.00 pm on Tuesday evenings entitled 'Untangling Our Tradition'.

This will be an opportunity for our MJC members to come along and learn with one of our Rabbis, or to brush up on aspects of Judaism that might feel a bit rusty! We will be covering Jewish values, festivals, life cycle, calendar, and more.



Please feel free to come along to any of the sessions. We look forward to seeing you there. For the Zoom details, please see our website <https://choosemosaic.org/whats-on/events/>

Quizzical Giants 2021 & 2022

Frank & Liz Manches

Liz and I write to thank **John Ashmele** for all his effort, as well as time, researching the questions for his Monthly Quizzes.

John has now decided to hang-up his Quizmaster coat after many quizzes; whilst he possibly intends to change his uniform for his Toastmaster robe. His quizzes have been varied, informative and topical such that in his final quiz he asked 'What is the Capital City of Belarus?' (I will leave the reader to answer that one!) John also asked us a comical one as follows:-

What did the contestant 'Bob' answer, when asked on 'Tipping Point'; that Homer told us



that Nectar was the drink of the gods, but what was the food of the Gods?

I think the contestant may have had the wrong Homer in his mind, as he replied **Doughnuts!** This was the

answer John required.

Once again thank you John and we all wish you the best of luck in the future.

We must also compliment **Neil Goodman** on his current run of quizzes. These too are entertaining as well as informative, such that we are looking forward to our Monthly Sunday afternoon quizzes on ZOOM with him in 2022. Keep up the 'Goodman Work'

Happy Birthday in March:

Benjamin Banks, 4

Talia Jones, 12

Danny Ellison, 13

Aviva Ashkenazi-Bakes, 9

Cici Rutstein, 12



Upgrading the Mosaic Website

Enhancing our online communications to our members

By Sharon Pink

As a relatively new member of Mosaic, I've found the website a really useful resource to get to know how Mosaic works and learn about all the events and activities provided to support members and local communities. So I am delighted to be part of the team helping plan and implement some upgrades to the website content and we will be explaining more about these over the next few issues of Kehila.

The first set of updates includes a new dedicated area for Stanmore Hill on the website top-level menu. In there you will see an introduction to the project, a description of the development and a link to the recent presentations about progress on the new building. You will also start to see more information on the building itself, the highly-flexible new facilities and the state-of-the-art technology that is being installed.



This new section of the website is the place to check back to regularly, to keep up with information coming about events programmes, venue hire opportunities and much more.

PS. Some of you may already have spotted the other new tab on the main menu – currently called “4th Plinth”. If you’re wondering what Mosaic’s new Development Rabbi Anna Wolfson has in mind for that space, we will explain more in the next issue....

ONE DAY – Harrow's Holocaust Memorial Day Event 2022

by Bobbi Riesel

This year's event came under the auspices of Harrow Interfaith and took place from Harrow Arts Centre, streamed to well over a thousand people watching. As usual, after a welcome by our Mayor, candles were lit by somebody from each faith in Harrow, Rabbi Kathleen introducing the lighting and representing the Jewish faith. The evening opened with Ruth Colin and Archie Howard playing beautiful cello music.

Our Keynote speaker was Lord Daniel Finkelstein of Pinner, who told us about his research into his own family history leading up to and including World War II. We listened enthralled as his talk reminded us of our responsibilities as free peoples in a world where there is freedom.

David Phelops and Judith Silver with guitar proved an ideal combination to allow us to reflect on life and they were followed by a member of 'Stop Uyghur Genocide', a UK cross community organisation. Rahima Mahmud's talk was full of previously unknown atrocities.

Then it was time for 'Oseh Shalom' giving David Phelops the chance to display a great voice, accompanied again by Judith Silver's guitar. Before we heard from Fahima Zaheen from Palwand (Afghan refugee support organisation.), Sonoo Malkani, the Chair of Harrow Interfaith gave a vote of thanks, using the opportunity to promote HIF. A much appreciated few words and the concluding prayer was given by Rabbi Ben Kurzer of

Pinner United Synagogue. The evening ended with some closing remarks for this year's HMD Harrow Event from Jack Lynes, Chair of the Harrow Holocaust Memorial Committee, reminding us all that there is always another 'One Day' tomorrow – a day to remember, a day to resolve and not to miss the opportunity of making our world a better world, a safer world, and Shalom for us all.

The evening was presented by our own Steve Levinson who introduced all the participants and helped make this a very memorable event.

The evening's event has been recorded and may be viewed (without the music) using the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VfntSXhgPv4>

The photo shows Rabbi Kathleen with the Mayor, Gopal Bacchu, and some of the candle lighters"





Board Of Deputies

by Michael Reik

Board of Deputies Meeting online 19th December 2021

First Laura Marks spoke about 27th January being Holocaust Memorial Day. She requested that communities carry out an event to commemorate that day. She proposed that deputies and community members attend an event that will be taking place online at 7 pm on that day. Also at 8 pm community members were asked to consider lighting a candle to remember the Holocaust.

Marie Van De Zyl congratulated Joel Rosen on becoming President of the Union of Jewish Students.

She thanked Priti Patel on proscribing both sections of Hamas as terrorist organisations.

She sent a letter to the BBC complaining of the report regarding a Muslim slur supposedly coming from a bus with Jewish children travelling in London when the bus was attacked. This was extremely bad and unjustified reporting. She will be having a meeting with the Director General of the BBC. A further comment that the BOD should pursue with the Police exactly what happened in the incident and whether prosecutions of those who attacked the bus should be made.

It was proposed that the Board should take the lead in persuading Charedi Community members in London to take the vaccine if they have not so far done so.

A concern was raised that Christians had not been allowed to visit Jerusalem and Bethlehem over Xmas by the Israeli Authorities. A letter has been written to the Archbishop of Canterbury regarding his concerns on the reduced number of Christians now living in areas controlled by Israel. In fact within Israel proper the number of Christians has increased.

The Board has set up a number of working groups from the sub divisions including one on anti- Semitism

The Board is attacking the bill the government intends to bring out concerning the imposition of Asylum Seekers, making clear it is the traffickers the Government should be concentrating on.

A proposal was made linking bar and bat mitzvah to children who died in the holocaust This is already carried out in certain synagogues.

It was suggested that we have meetings on education not only in areas with a good size Jewish population but also with low Jewish population to allow non Jews to learn more about us, and increase interfaith activity.

The UN still refers to the Temple Mount only in Muslim terms. This since a 2016 resolution. Action is being taken by many nations, including the UK, to change this but this a slow process. Some nations are changing their vote to an Abstain which is a relative positive. Regarding

the UK, it is necessary that we all speak to our local MPs to emphasise the need to vote in favour of Joint Israel/ Palestinian terms.

Board of Deputies Plenary Meeting online Sunday 23rd January

Since the last Plenary the JNF UK Chairman, Samuel Hayek, made remarks which some considered to be Islamophobic, which included the comment that Jews have no future in England (possibly because of the number of Muslims in the UK). Mr Garry Mond, the Senior Vice President at the Board, the representative of the JNF at the Board and a Treasurer at the JNF was requested to disavow the comments of Mr Hayak. Garry stated he did not agree with comments of Mr Hayak but was not prepared to criticise him, stating Mr Hayak made the comments in a personal capacity and not on behalf of the JNF. Consequently, alleged Islamophobic social media posts were dug up concerning Garry Mond and this has resulted in Garry resigning from his positions at the Board believing continuing becoming untenable.

The meeting commenced with the motion 'The Board of Deputies hereby censures the Jewish National Fund UK (JNF UK) for failing to disavow the inflammatory and bigoted remarks of the chair Samuel Hayak.'

This was a consequence of the events I have listed above

There were speakers alternately for and against the motion. Typical of the comments made were

'There are a number of deputies who have an Anti-Israel Agenda'

'When a representative of the Muslim Council of Great Britain made anti-Semitic remarks, the Board stopped working with the Muslim

Council. Therefore, it is wrong to condone Mr Hayak's remarks'

'Why do Muslim Communities not stop antisemitism within their communities'

'We should vote in favour of a motion to support the Muslims who are in favour of the Jews'

'Members will leave the Board if the motion succeeds. Deputies need to focus on matters that concern them. Censuring an Israel Charity is not one of them.'

'As chairman of the JNF, Samuel Hayak would always be speaking in an official capacity, never in a private capacity.'

'With anti-Semitism at its height at the moment, we should be debating what matters to the Jewish Community'

'The JNF is a major contributor to the State of Israel'

This was the end of this debated motion which had taken place in a convivial atmosphere.

The vote was carried out with 133 in favour, 78 against.

Further discussions included. President Marie Van de Zyl, together with Lord Mann met with Tim Davie, head of the BBC, on 18th January to discuss the reporting of the Charedi Bus incident in Oxford Street. They await official comments back.

A vote took place to agree to continue electronic voting. This was passed by 94% in favour to 6% against

Divisional reports were then provided. Several deputies requested that they be allowed to be observers. Greater involvement in Jewish Muslim relations were requested. (Nisa Nishim is one group which is building on this). Holocaust Memorial Day Thursday 27th January. Deputies asked that they be involved.

Update from Northern Ireland, to be sure.

Neil Goodman

Last April, after the loss of my wife, I decided to move to N.I., to be closer to my son and his family who have been here about 16 years. They live in a small town, about the size of Pinner, called Ballyclare, 10 miles north of Belfast. Transport into Belfast is good but not frequent so one has to watch the timetables.

Ballyclare itself is very friendly and has almost everything you could want, e.g. 3 flower shops, 2 butchers, 1 greengrocer, 4 tea rooms, 18 (yes 18) hairdressers/barbers/beauticians.

As regards food, 2 chippy's, 4 Chinese, 1 Indian, 1 pizza, and 1 everything takeaway, and not forgetting an ASDA superstore. So I'm not going hungry.

That's my body sorted, now my mind.

I decided to research Jews in Northern Ireland. At the moment there seem to be about 500 residing in N.I. with approx. 70 in and around Belfast. There is 1 shul, orthodox, which has about 35 members, as of 2006, and sadly falling year on year owing to an aging congregation. Buying kosher food here is virtually impossible, and has to be shipped from Manchester.

They have a Rev, not a Rabbi, David Kale who presides, sometimes struggling to raise



a minyan, who moved here from Rhode Island, USA with his sister.

There have been a few notable Jewish residents here, the most famous being Gustav Wolff, co-founder of Harland & Wolff shipbuilders, of Titanic fame.

You may be interested in reading the following which was taken from "The Jerusalem Post" in July

2020: "The Northern Ireland Friends of Israel combines Jewish and non-Jewish supporters and has attracted over 6,000 people to its events since its launch in 2009. In 2020 a society for Jewish students was established at Queen's University, Belfast.

Over the past several decades, many Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland have taken to using the Arab-Israeli conflict as a proxy for their own political and sectarian tensions. More Palestinian than Irish flags decorate various Catholic neighbourhood. Finally, while in Protestant areas there are murals praising the state of Israel, some of these murals are frequent targets of vandalism by anti-Israel Catholic activists."

I will keep you posted of any further news from across the wee pond, and running the monthly quiz, so it is, bye for now.

REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

*If you missed any of our events, you can catch up with them by visiting www.choosemosaic.org and clicking on "what's on" and "past events".
There are more than 100 recordings to choose from!*

Talk Matters

By Pat Zatz



Jenny Nemko has been promoting the positive image of Israel to the British public for many years. First, during her time at the BBC. In the last 18 months using the spare time that the Covid restrictions created for her, Jenny has set up and run "TalkMatters – Jews and Arabs Together".

"TalkMatters" is a website providing a platform for the wide range of initiatives within Israel and the West Bank that are active in bringing Jews and Arabs to meet, talk and build up trust. These are individuals who usually do not meet socially.

Jenny raises the profile of these initiatives by putting on free zoom webinars for the UK audience.

Jenny started her talk by introducing herself and how she came to be involved in these activities. Via a series of short videos Jenny introduced us to three of the over thirty diverse projects that she is now promoting:

-The primary school in Neve Shalom/Whahat –al –Salaam/ Oasis of Peace, a mixed Jewish-Arab village situated half-way between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Within this village are four educational establishments drawing in young

people and adults not only from the village, but also from the surrounding Arab and Jewish villages.

-Tech2Peace bringing together young people interested in IT in all its variety.

-The Interfaith Encounter Association encouraging dialogue via hundreds of Jewish/Christian/Muslim groups throughout Israel and the West Bank.

It is easy to create emotive and often one-sided headlines when there are tensions in Israel-Palestine, but it is much harder to show a balanced view. Through "TalkMatters" Jenny hopes to bring positive co-operative partnerships to an even larger audience. Hopefully in time, the wider British public will have a more realistic idea of Israel's place in the Middle East.

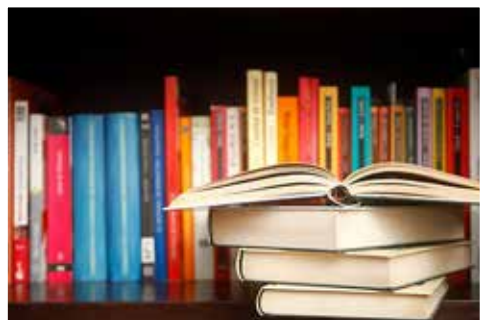
If you didn't manage to catch this programme, check out the recording to get a much better idea of how important this work is, not only for Israel but also for us in the Diaspora where there is so much confusion about Zionism, anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred.

If, as I do, you feel strongly that Israel is not doing too well in presenting its image then please help promote "TalkMatters" to your friends and families.

Website: www.talkmatters.info

REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

My Good Read by Caroline Chadwick



Judy Silverton welcomed everyone to the second session of “My Good Read” and introduced the participants from Mosaic Liberal and Mosaic Reform who would be reviewing two of their favourite books.

The first choice was “A Fine Balance” by Rohinton Mistry which was Judy’s first choice. This book was set in 1975, the place is an unnamed city by the sea. The government has just declared a State of Emergency, in whose upheavals meet four strangers, a spirited widow, a young student and two tailors who have fled the caste violence of their native village. It is a story of distrust to friendship and from friendship to love, talking about Indian culture and shocking poverty.

The second book was reviewed by David Leigh-Ellis and called “The Winter King” by Bernard Cornwell. David told us that he enjoyed reading fiction and non-fiction and first read this book as a teenager and probably read this book over five times as it gave him so much pleasure. The Winter King, a Novel of Arthur, is the first novel of the Warlord Chronicles trilogy by Bernard Cornwell. Most of the narrative is

recounted in a series of flashbacks to the life of Derfel and into present day.

The third book reviewed was by Janet Solomon, called “The Gift of Rain” by Tan Twan Eng, who has only written two books. Janet said she chose this book because it was about human courage, and beautifully written. She learnt about different cultures. The book is set in 1939 in Penang. The book presents a story of betrayal, barbaric cruelty, steadfast courage and enduring love. Tan Twan Eng’s debut novel casts a powerful spell, set during the tumult of World War II, on the lush Malayan Island of Penang, tells a riveting and poignant tale about a young man caught in the tangle of wartime loyalties and deceptions.

The fourth book was reviewed by Linda Matlin and called “Still Life” by Sarah Winman. Linda said she chose this book as it was beautifully written, about friendship, art and the beauty of Florence. The book is set in Florence in 1944 and about two strangers who meet and share an extraordinary evening. Ulysses Temper is a young British soldier and Evelyn Skinner is a sexagenarian art historian and a possible spy. Moving from the Tuscan Hills and piazzas of Florence, to the smog of London’s East End, is a sweeping, joyful novel about beauty, love, family and fate. Linda said that she would highly recommend this book.

The next book, “A Little Life” by Hanya Yanagihara, was the second book reviewed by Judy. She said that this book was a Man Booker Prize Finalist and was over 700 pages long. She is attracted to books that are quite a hard read and quite disturbing. This book was a stunning portrait of the enduring grace of friendship about the families we are born into and those we make for ourselves. Four

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REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

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classmates move to New York, an actor, a painter, an architect and withdrawn, brilliant Jude who serves as their centre of gravity.

David's second book choice was "To Your Scattered Bodies" by Philip Josee Farmer. This book was set in 1971 and is a science fiction novel. The title is derived from the 7th of the Holy Sonnets by English poet John Donne. David told us it was a story about British adventurer Richard Frances Burton who dies on earth and is revived in mid-air in a vast dark room filled with human bodies, some only half formed. There, he is confronted by men in a flying vehicle who then blast him with a weapon. The story continues telling us about his amazing adventures. David said the characters are brilliant and really enjoyed reading science fiction novels and felt this book was definitely overlooked and really worth reading.

Janet's second book choice was "A Gentleman in Moscow" by Amor Towles. Janet said she chose this book because it was a beautiful story about Count Alexander Rostov. In 1922 he is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and sentenced to house arrest in The Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov is an indomitable man of erudition and wit. The book has much humour and a glittering cast of characters.

The final book review was by Linda and called "Plainsong" by Kent Haruf. This book is the first of a trilogy and set in a fictional town of Colorado, USA. She said that the book stressed the importance of being kind to each other and to respect one another.

The book follows several stories of families in a small town in eastern Colorado. Maggie is the link between many of the other characters

and strands of the novel. She introduces Victoria to the McPherson brothers and has a romantic relationship with Tom whose wife is growing more distant and disturbed.

The zoom session ended with a few questions to the panel about their book choices. Such a lovely hour and I look forward to the next "My Good Read".

Celebrate Tu b'Shevat with the Woodland Trust *by Wendy McLeish*



On Sunday 16th January, to mark Tu b'Shevat, we listened to Martin Boiling describing the work of the Woodland Trust. The charity was set up in 1972 and now has 400,000 members. He told us that 10,000 years ago 70% of the UK was covered in trees. So many were felled starting hundreds of years ago for shipbuilding, to build homes and to smelt iron during the Industrial Revolution, that there is now only 13% tree cover. He

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REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

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added sadly that, because of climate change, bush fires and deforestation around the world, the green and pleasant land his grandparents left to him, he won't be able to leave to his grandchildren.

Trees are crucial as natural lungs to absorb carbon dioxide and emit oxygen. They reduce extreme temperatures, soak up and store water, reduce soil erosion. They are also home to a huge number of wildlife species. And it's just lovely to walk under trees.

The Woodland Trust has planted over 50 million trees since 1972. They run landscape change programmes, with groups of volunteers tidying and planting areas, bringing damaged ancient woods back to life. They also have a seed-to-tree project and have grown many thousand saplings from seed, using old 4-pint milk cartons cut down. This avoids having to import young trees that might carry pests or disease. There has been a tragic loss of many millions of trees due to diseases or pests like Ash dieback and Dutch Elm disease.

Mr Boiling described just some of their major future projects. They have a 25-year plan to plant 50 million trees along the M62 from one side of the country to the other. And in the Scottish Highlands, there is another huge plan to replant millions of oak, birch, scotch pine and other trees.

At the other end of the scale, twice a year they give out home-grown saplings to small groups free of charge, such as schools and communities like volunteers looking after their local parks. When our new synagogue is finished, he has pledged the trust's input into a scheme for the site, looking at the best trees to plant in the small area around the building.

For further information please contact: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

MEET THE SPACE DOCTOR

by Alan Solomon

The interview with Dr Daniel Grant on 18th January covered far more ground than might have been expected from the title. He is, as he assured interviewer Steve Levinson, a real medical doctor involved in



emergency medicine, and also talked of the importance of preventative medicine and the benefits of exercise and leading a healthy lifestyle. People could actually be helped in this by improvements in the way buildings and cities are designed, an interesting concept. He mentioned the importance of blood tests, emphasising that these helped in the prevention of health problems before they arise, warning of high cholesterol and sugar levels. Today these warning signs can

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show up from just a tiny amount of blood taken from a pinprick on a finger. Doctors can also learn a lot from urine and saliva samples. Our mentality on testing is shifting with so many of us self-testing for Covid. A lot of investigation can now be done remotely with patients only seeing a doctor when it becomes necessary, an idea which many of us might find worrying.

Daniel then went on to talk about the “space” part of his work. It was no surprise to be told that astronauts undergo extensive medical tests as part of their training, but we were introduced to the concept of telemedicine, the analysis and treatment remotely of any medical problems that might arise whilst in space. Space medicine is a specialised field; Daniel became involved in it after being accepted on to a course at NASA. The results of this work can be translated into medicine at home.

And back on Earth, Daniel talked of his work on medicine in other extreme environments such as deep-sea diving, high altitude, very hot and very cold situations, and emergency medicine and intensive care before treatment in hospital. He is also involved in healthcare in sport and other areas. He put forward the interesting idea that the health testing of all adults would save money for the country in the long term. It was a fascinating interview.

MEET THE DIRECTOR OF “WE BELIEVE IN ISRAEL” – LUKE AKEHURST



by David Pollak

On Tuesday 1st February, Luke Akehurst, a well-respected member of the Labour party and staunch supporter of Israel, was interviewed by our own Steve Levinson.

Having been a member of the Labour Party National Executive at different times since 2010, Luke has also been a councillor in the London Borough of Hackney, has stood for Parliament and has won various awards in the political arena. Learning that his Labour heritage goes back three generations, his great grandfather having been the Labour mayor of Gravesend, it was no surprise that Luke has embraced a traditional Labour philosophy. He also has many Jewish friends and he remembered growing up listening to his grandparents' stories of the Holocaust.

Nowadays, his focus is on ensuring that

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REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

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Israel is properly and fairly represented in the press and media through the organisation “We Believe in Israel” (WBII) of which he has been director since 2011. He firmly believes in a Jewish and democratic state of Israel and that it must have the right to defend itself. When asked how that might be achieved, Luke said that it would take money and it would be through social media which is becoming increasingly important and WBII needs to reach as wide an audience as possible.

There followed a discussion on the changes in the Labour Party regarding its attitude towards Israel and Zionism. According to Luke, there had been significant changes which dated back to the 1967 War and had culminated in the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader.

Luke explained that his anti-extremism views were developed at university and reflected his moderate socialism. While Luke is not Jewish himself, he has made many trips to Israel since joining the Labour Friends of Israel in 2005. That first trip left him inspired and quite emotional. Steve asked Luke if Israel was still “so interesting” as it was to him when he first visited. Luke admitted that the atmosphere in Israel is now more intense in the shadow of the Intifada. However, he maintained that the majority of Israeli Jews, Muslims and Christians lived in harmony with each other. He now makes 2 or 3 trips a year to Israel, taking with him not only MPs but councillors and other grass-roots activists. Through WBII, which has over 24,000 supporters, he has promoted moderation and has been a defender of Israel against the accusation of being an apartheid state, most recently expressed by Amnesty International.

Regarding his attitude to the settlements,

Luke became the politician and replied that the purpose of WBII was not to take sides but to act as a source of information. He did believe that as a non-Jew, he could act as an honest broker and taking sides would be counter-productive.

When Steve asked Luke if he thought that the term Zionism was helpful, once again, Luke gave a politician's answer by saying that the term was not properly understood and that groups such as the far left of the Labour Party and certain more radical Muslim groups were more influenced by what they heard than by what they knew. Luke's approach is education. His guiding principles remain the ideology of Herzl and Ben Gurion that led to the creation of the state of Israel.

The next question was whether the Labour Party had redeemed itself. Luke gave half an answer when saying that the shadow of Corbyn had been largely removed. However, the task is not complete. Many people were radicalised during Corbyn's tenure and Luke stated that people expelled by the party do not see the problem, mainly because they are the problem. The belief that there was and still is a ‘Jewish Conspiracy’ will take a long time to eradicate. However, the arrival of Keir Starmer, with a Jewish wife and family living in Israel, gives Luke hope that anti-Semitism can in time be eradicated. However, beware the risk of a new party being formed.

Steve wondered whether expulsion or the threat of expulsion was preferable to education. Luke's reply was somewhat defensive as he suggested mitigation and aggravation could explain unacceptable behaviour. He accepted that if someone refused to be educated and was, in effect, beyond redemption, then

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REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

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expulsion was the only alternative. When faced with outspoken anti-Semitic, anti-Israel or abusive language, as has been demonstrated by followers of Corbyn, Luke admitted that many traditional Labour party supporters, including himself, had agonised about remaining in the party. Luke also accepted that many Jews could have been tempted to leave the UK if Corbyn had been elected Prime Minister. Luke showed real emotion when tackling this thorny subject.

On the subject of the EU and Brexit, Steve asked if the Labour Party would support the UK returning to the EU in future. In short, the answer was no. Luke criticised the Labour party for having done little or nothing to promote the Remain argument. He suggested that Corbyn's worst crime was to persuade others that a second referendum was possible. In fact, he said, it might have been if Corbyn had accepted the condition that he would not become Prime Minister. Corbyn, he said, was the main architect of Labour's election disaster of 2019.

When asked if the media affected the way in which he looked at Israel, Luke replied that his judgement was based on personal experience. However, he accepted that non-Jewish and non-Israeli press were inclined to draw stereotypes which again, is something that WBII is working to correct.

There was only time for two questions before bringing a fascinating interview and talk to an end. Luke repeated his earlier point that the original principles that gave birth to the Labour Party and to Zionism, a homeland for Jewish people, still held good and talking through third parties will never be as good as direct dialogue between people of different opinions.

Steve and Michael Reik both thanked Luke

for giving us his time. However, the last word should belong to Luke himself and for that, we can do no better than to quote Luke's article which appeared in the Jewish News of 3rd February and days after National Holocaust Memorial Day.

"The delegitimization of Israel as "apartheid" won't succeed because it is so far from the truth.....it [Amnesty International] doesn't have a legitimate role in deciding the Jewish people are not entitled to national self-determination.....the existence of such a state is the Jewish people's only guaranteed shield against pogroms and genocide"

Missing Grandparents – the story of my parents' survival during the Holocaust

by Lydia Safir

On Sunday 6th February Noreen Plen give us a moving and informative presentation on how her parents survived the Holocaust. They were, like so many in their situation, reluctant to speak so Noreen has gathered snippets over the years and has done a massive amount of research, including an emotional trip to Poland in 2017.

Noreen divided her talk into two parts – what happened to her father, Jan, then her mother, Lola. Her father was born in Mielec and was one of four of his family to survive. One of these survivors is Noreen's cousin Cila, who spoke about her life as a child in

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REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

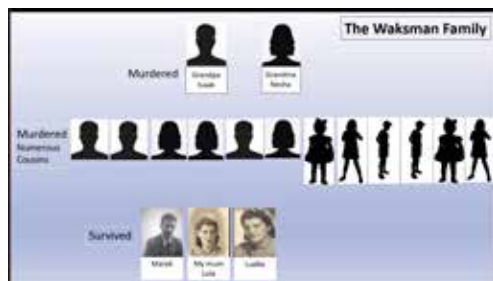
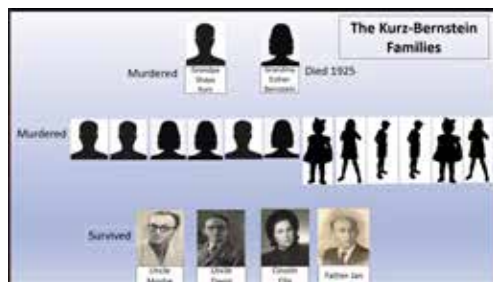
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Mielec and, at 93, lives in Canada. After the Germans invaded Poland life became humiliating and extremely difficult for the Jews and after the synagogue, slaughterhouse and bath house were set alight in Mielec on 13th September 1939 and forty Jews were murdered, Jan and his brother David left Mielec. Jan arrived in Lwow which was under Russian control and eventually spent time in a Russian Labour camp – probably in Siberia. There the conditions were dreadful. It was unhygienic, with no food and very very cold. He was eventually released in 1943 probably to a sanatorium. In 1942 the Jews were expelled from Mielec and Jan's father was shot. By November 1944 Jan was in the Berling Army, which was made up of Poles, in Russia.

Noreen's Mother, Lola, was one of three children and was born in Lublin. The family moved to Warsaw in 1934 and her father imported tea and coffee. In October 1939 the family was removed from their home and Lola and her sister Ludka were put into forced labour in a factory. By November 1939 the ghetto closed in. In July 1942 the sisters saw their parents deported. By January 1943 they planned their own dramatic escape in an empty potato lorry. Lola and Ludka worked on a farm, dyed their hair blond, changed their names to Therese (Lola) and Ludmila (Ludka) and adopted the Catholic religion. During the next two years they were on the run staying ahead of the Gestapo and Polish police. When the war ended they went back to Warsaw. In 1947 Lola married Jan and Ludka married Leon in a joint ceremony. Lola and Jan went to Paris via Prague and eventually on to Newcastle upon Tyne where Noreen was born.

It is here where my own story with Noreen started. Our mothers worked for WIZO in

Newcastle and became firm friends as did I with Noreen at the age of about four. The photo advertising this event for Mosaic was taken when Lola and Jan were on their way to my wedding to David in 1976. When Noreen started to research and write her parents' story I was honoured to be drawn into it, particularly because of my own Holocaust teaching. We spent many an hour during lockdown walking two metres apart in all weathers discussing it. Noreen's talk is extensive and of course I have only included key points. But yet again I was moved to share it with her and I know the audience was overwhelmed and deeply moved by it. Certainly a stimulating afternoon.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Zoom codes for the following events can be found
on our website www.choosemosaic.org

Tuesday 1st March 4.00 pm

Meet the Opinion Editor of Haaretz – Esther Solomon

Join us at 2.30 when Steve Levinson will interview Esther Solomon.

Esther is the Opinion Editor for Haaretz.com, its English-language website and print edition, a position she has held for nearly a decade.

Esther writes: When people ask me what I do, sometimes it takes me a while to gather my thoughts for an answer. I am aware of the many preconceptions many people have about Israel, and about Haaretz. There are also preconceptions about what an Israeli site in English covers, and about who actually reads us and where. Covering conflicts both simmering and spiking in Israel, the Middle East and the wider Jewish world is a complicated endeavour, often tumultuous, but also, I think, one of the most satisfying, intriguing and values-affirming jobs there is. In this discussion, I will attempt to open up the world of the Haaretz news room to you, talk about whether there is such a thing as objective coverage of Israel, how we think about antisemitism, and why opinion pieces can change the world.

Esther also writes opinion pieces herself, on subjects ranging from Corbyn, Bosnian genocide denial, Jews and the far right and Palestinian refugees.

Esther was born and grew up in London, educated at St Paul's Girls' School, studied English literature at Cambridge University and International Relations at LSE, and worked for the Union of Jewish Students, where she met Paul, married and made aliyah at the end of 1998. After ulpan, Esther worked for a think tank (precociously) building economic ties between Israel and the Arab world, but on her way to a meeting in Ramallah, two Israeli soldiers were lynched there, the second intifada erupted and she had to find another job. She survived two years of working as a strategic consultant for Deloitte and Touche before re-immersing into the world of politics and analysis, writing and researching reports for international institutions.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 6th March

Meet the Author – Jackie Shulman

Join us at 4.00 pm when Jackie Shulman will be talking about her first novel 'When, if Not Now?' Jackie will also explain about publishing and why she chose to do it on Amazon. There will be time for questions.

Josh Green was considered a pillar of the strictly religious Jewish community to which he belonged in northwest London. He was revered by all, including his five children and nineteen grandchildren. What would they think, if they knew of the dark, haunting secret he had concealed from them for fifteen years?

Now, aged almost seventy he has travelled to China on a sudden impulse, in an attempt to unveil an enigma which has tormented him for a decade.

A chance encounter in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Shanghai between Josh and a charming, erudite, gay British expat, evolves into an improbable friendship between these two strangers. Alistair Sylvester, a collector of rare Chinese snuff bottles and an expert on East Asian culture, is on his own perplexing



quest. They join forces and embark on a voyage of discovery, taking them to totally unexpected and unlikely destinations, as they both attempt to unravel their own mystery.

Jackie is donating the money she receives from sales of the book to an Israeli charity called ESRA.

Sunday 13th March

Meet the Artist – Alka Kapoor

Join us at 4.00 pm for a presentation by Alka Kapoor, an artist who paints, works in clay and now primarily works with glass

Alka is a versatile artist who creates unique kiln formed glass flowers, vases, jewellery and much more. Her influence and inspiration comes from the beauty of colour and its endless possibilities. This is reflected in all of her unique work.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 15th March

Food Waste & Rescue During the Covid Pandemic in Israel

Join us at 2.30pm when Michael Reik will introduce Joseph Gitler, Founder and Chairman of Leket, who will explain the effects of the Covid Pandemic on Israel Society, and the work Leket is currently doing to address the growing need for food support.

In 2003 Joseph Gitler founded Leket Israel, The National Food Bank, as a one-man volunteer operation, to respond to the paradox of growing hunger and poverty in Israel on the one hand, and significant food and waste on the other. Today Joseph's operation has grown to become the only food rescue and resource organisation in Israel, distributing over 50 million pounds of produce and perishable goods to over 250 non-profit organisations reaching more than 246,000 people in Israel weekly.



Joseph has received many awards, including the Presidential Award for Volunteerism from former President Shimon Peres, has been named as one of the 50 most influential Jews worldwide and, most recently, was selected to receive the 2018 Compassion Award for Children and Youth at risk.

(The photo shows Leket employees distributing food during the pandemic)

Sunday 20th March at 4.00 pm

Meet the MJC Rabbinic Team “Deconstructing the Denominations”

At Mosaic we pride ourselves on being the UK's first Jewish community that combines three active non-Orthodox denominations under one roof, but what do Liberal, Masorti and Reform actually stand for? What defines us? How do we differ and what do we have in common?

Join us at 4.00 pm and hear our Rabbinic Team define and discuss their denomination, in conversation with you and with each other.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 23rd March at 6.00 pm

Visit to the Wiener Library, University of London, Russell Square

We have recently loaned to the Wiener Holocaust Library two of the eight framed scroll covers that were hanging on the Bimah at Bessborough Road to remember the Czech Communities from before the second world war. Our Rabbi Simon Franes was very keen on the collection of Scroll Covers, particularly because of his own family's personal involvement with the destruction of the Jewish Community by the Nazis in Greece. The Wiener library has created a Digital Plaque and Digital Wall on which we shall remember Simon also with his involvement with Middlesex New Synagogue.

On March 23rd we shall be visiting the Wiener Holocaust Library to remember Simon and at the same time explore the library on a pre-arranged tour. The Wiener library is one of the World's leading and most extensive archives on the Holocaust, The Nazi Era and genocide. The library's unique collection of over one million items includes published and unpublished works, press cuttings, photographs, and eyewitness testimony.

For Mosaic members who wish to remember Simon please contact Michael Reik via the office to book your place. We are limited to a maximum of 20 people for this visit



Sunday 27th March - 4.00pm

Mosaic Quiz

Neil Goodman, will present another entertaining on-line quiz for the Mosaic Jewish Community & friends. No winners, no prizes, just a lot of fun. Refreshments: whatever is left over from lunch!



“STOP PRESS”

See details of our event on Sunday 3rd April on page 36

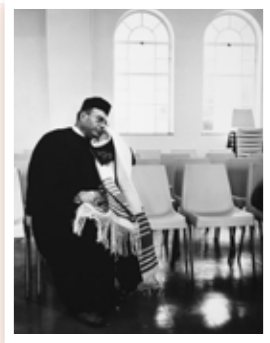
UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 29th March

CELEBRITY PHOTOGRAPHER ITALIAANDER & IMAGES THAT HAVE INFLUENCED HIS WORK

Join us at 2.30 when Gary Italiaander will be showing and talking about images that have influenced his work.

Gary Italiaander met Lord Patrick Lichfield, the Queen's cousin, at the very beginning of his photographic career and he was clearly impressed by the portraits that Italiaander had created. Certainly, Lichfield's work was of interest to Italiaander as were the portraits of a few others such as Snowdon, Arnold Newman, Richard Avedon, Irving Penn and the photographer that most influenced him, Karsh of Ottawa. Gary had the great privilege to meet Yousuf Karsh at his UK retrospective (at the Barbican) in 1988. One of Karsh's most well-known portraits is of Sir Winston Churchill.



*this photo of
Rabbi Lionel Blue was
taken by Gary*

Sunday 10th April – 4.00 pm

My Good Read



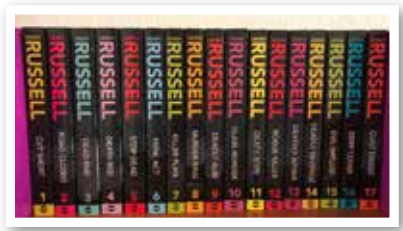
Please join us at 4.00 pm on Sunday 10th April for another in our popular series, to hear more of our prolific Mosaic readers discussing their two book choices.

There will be time for audience members to ask questions, comment and add their own choices if they wish.

We look forward to seeing you for this interesting and entertaining afternoon

Tuesday 12th April

Meet The Author – Leigh Russell



Join us at 2.30 when Steve Levinson will interview Leigh Russell.

Leigh Russell is the author of 27 novels. Best known for her million selling Geraldine Steel crime series, she has also written psychological thrillers, a dystopian novel (written during lockdown), and a historical novel set in the Jewish ghetto of Venice. Details of her books can be found on <http://leighrussell.co.uk> She is Chair of Judges for the Debut Dagger Award and a Consultant Fellow for the Royal Literary Society.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 20th April - 10.30am

Woodland Trust Guided Walk & Pesach Picnic

Join us at 10.30 for a guided walk at Heartwood, St Albans.

Heartwood is a vast new forest of more than half a million trees, pockets of ancient woodland, wildflower meadows and fantastic wildlife spotting. We have a special opportunity to be guided around the woods by Woodland Trust volunteers and we will have a bring-your-own Pesach picnic together part-way through the walk, finishing with a hopeful sighting of the bluebells in flower.

We will meet at the car park, walk into Sandridge Village, through the orchard, around the arboretum and then head for the picnic table which is a walk of just over 3 miles. After lunch we will head back to the carpark via one of the bluebell woods – just under 1 mile getting back about 1.30pm.

The car park entrance is off the B651, just north of Sandridge. Nearest postcode: AL3 6JB.

Please note, there are no toilets on site, the nearest are about an 8-minute walk from the car park.

This walk is limited to 20 people so please book (via the office) early and by 7th April latest for a place.

It takes around £200,000 a year to maintain Heartwood Forest, so a suggested donation to join this walk is £5 per person.



Sunday 24th April - 4.00pm

Mosaic Quiz

Neil Goodman will present another entertaining on-line quiz for the Mosaic Jewish Community & friends. No winners, no prizes, just a lot of fun. Refreshments: whatever is left over from lunch!



Sunday 27th March - 4.00pm

Katzes of Köln.

Join us at 2.30 to hear a family story compiled by 3rd Generation Tony Bruce relating his ancestral history.

His video narrates their lives and fates from 1920's Germany, based on many years of research by German Social worker, Michael Vieten, who became interested in the family and the Holocaust.

Tony is Joan Noble's nephew and Joan and her sister Marion will both participate in the Questions and Answers.

"I hold on tight to you
and you don't let me
loose!"



For zoom details for all the following events visit the mosaic website

<https://choosmosaic.org/whats-on/events/>

MARCH

Tues 1 st	14.30	Meet the Opinion Editor of Ha'aretz
	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Sat 5 th		Shabbat Pekudei
Sun 6 th	16.00	Meet the Author – Jackie Shulman
Tues 8 th	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Sat 12 th		Shabbat Vayikra
Sun 13 th	16.00	Meet the Artist – Alka Kapoor
Tues 15 th	14.30	Food Waste & Rescue in Israel
	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Wed 16 th	18.00	Erev Purim –
		Liberal & Reform Purim Spiel
	19.30	Masorti Megillah reading
Thur 17 th		Purim
Sat 19 th		Shabbat Tzav
Sun 20 th	14.00	Meet the Rabbinic Team
Tues 22 nd	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Wed 23 rd	18.00	Visit to the Wiener Library (pre-booking essential)
Sat 26 th	16.00	Shabbat Shemini
Sun 27 th	16.00	Meet the Photographer – Gary Italiaander
	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis

APRIL

Sat 2 nd		Shabbat Tazria
Sun 3 rd	16.00	Meet the UK Director of the World Uyghur Congress
Tues 5 th	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Sat 9 th		Shabbat Tazria
Sun 10 th	16.00	My Good Read
Tues 12 th	14.30	Meet the Author – Leigh Russell
	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Fri 15 th		Erev Pesach
Sat 16 th		1st Day Pesach
	19.00	Communal Seder
Sun 17 th		2nd Day Pesach
Tues 19 th	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Thur 21 st		Erev 7th Day Pesach
Fri 22 nd		7th Day Pesach
Sat 23 rd		8th Day Pesach
Sat 24 th	16.00	Mosaic Quiz
Tues 26 th	14.30	The Katzes of Koln
	19.00	"Untangling Our Traditions"
		with one of our Rabbis
Thur 28 th	19.00	Yom HaShoah
Sat 30 th		Shabbat Acharei Mot



The Mosaic office
opening hours are:

Monday	08.00 – 17.00
Tuesday	08.00 – 16.00
Wednesday	08.00 – 13.30
Thursday	08.00 – 17.00

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