

Sukkat Shalom

March 2011

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Scottish Charity No SC035678

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Events and Services

Date Friday 4 March

Event Kabbalat Shabbat Service
Venue Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road
Time 6:15pm

Date Friday 11 March

Event Erev Shabbat Service
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace
Time 7pm

Date Friday 18 March

Event Erev Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Mark Solomon
Venue Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road
Time 6:15pm

Date Saturday 19 March

Event Tea & Talmud
Venue Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road
Time 1pm

Date Sunday 20 March

Event Choosing Judaism
Venue Usual Location
Time 10:30

Event Cantillation

Venue St Mark's, 7 Castle Terrace
Time 3pm

Event Spinoza

Venue St Mark's, 7 Castle Terrace
Time 4pm

SATURDAY 19 MARCH

Purim Activities

Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road

5:30pm	Pizza Supper
6:30pm	Havdalah and Purim service with megillah reading, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon
8pm	Depart for Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation for Purimspiel
8:30pm	Purimspiel, 4 Salisbury Road

See p2 come in costume! bring along some Hamentaschen to share!

Date Saturday 26 March

Event Shabbat Service
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace
Time 11:00am

Date Friday 1 April

Event Kabbalat Shabbat Service
Venue Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road
Time 6:15pm

ELJC support line

07904 813162



Use this number if you have an emergency and really need to speak to someone. It goes to one of our members. Otherwise please leave a message on the community phone and we will respond as soon as possible.

Contents

- Page 2 Calendar, Members' news, Purim, Community Seder
- Page 3 Liberal Judaism
- Page 4 Fairtrade, dress up or stitch up
- Page 5 Sermon by Imam Halima Krausen
- Page 6 Interfaith announcements
- Page 7 Announcements, recipe
- Page 8 Current events at the Jewish Museum, Vienna

Future Dates

Our regular schedule is as follows:

Our **Erev Shabbat service** will be on the **SECOND Friday** of each calendar month and our **Shabbat morning service** on the Saturday after the **FOURTH Friday**. These services take place in the **Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace.**

Fri 8 April	Erev Shabbat Service
Fri 15 April	Kabbalat Shabbat Service (Mark Solomon)
Sat 16 April	Shabbat Service (Mark Solomon) Tea & Talmud
Sun 17 April	Cantillation, Spinoza
Mon 18 April	First night Seder
Sat 23 April	Shabbat Service
Fri 29 April	Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Jewish Calendar

Pesach	19-25 April 2011
Yom HaShoah	1 May 2011
Yom HaAtzmaut	10 May 2011
Shavuot	8 June 2011
Rosh Hashanah	5772 29 September 2011
Yom Kippur	8 October 2011

Community Matters

Purim 2011



We are thrilled that we will be having our own Megillah reading this year. Do bring your own gragger if you have one to make a great racket every time you hear Haman's name. You could make your own if you don't have one and we do have a few spare ones. in case you don't manage to.

We will also be having a **YtÇvç WÜxáá VÉÅñxáá ÉC** with **prizes** for all the kids who dress up, and maybe one or two for the adults. So do all come in costume - cross-dressing is to be encouraged.

We will be starting the evening with a light supper. We will provide some pizzas and drinks. It would be nice if some people would contribute hamantashen too. See page 1 for timings and details.

News of members

Joel Marks and Sam Foster and family (Oliver, Zachary and Nathaniel) are moving South to Morpeth where Sam is now a partner in a GP practice and Philippa Levinson will be moving South too, to be closer to her parents. They will all be missed, but we wish them well in their new homes and hope they will keep in touch.

We are delighted to welcome Colin Gajewski and Andrew Smith as members following their recent successful interviews with the Rabbinic Board of Liberal Judaism and formal admission ceremony at our last Shabbat morning service..

Community Seder

As usual, we will be holding a community Seder on the first night of Pesach (Monday 18th April 2011). Again, we are delighted that our Rabbi Mark Solomon will be leading it.

The Seder will be held in Marchmont St Giles Church Centre (same venue as last year). Last year we had well over 100 people and we had to expand into two rooms. As a result timings were difficult, we finished late and some people had to leave before the end. So this year we have decided to use only one room. This means that our numbers will be strictly limited to **80 places**. So if you want to come **you must book in time**.

A booking form is attached to this email or enclosed if you receive your newsletter by post. You can also download it from our website (www.eljc.org).

If all the 80 places are filled we will do our best to find places at home Seders (perhaps on the second night) for any people who we can't fit in. If you are having a home Seder on either night and could fit in one or two extra guests can you please let us know soon.

Get Your Haggadot in Time for Pesach

Like last year we will be using the Liberal Judaism Haggadah B'Chol Dor Va'Dor at the seder. Many people bought their own last year and we liked them a lot. They have a section that is especially suited to using with young children. We do have a few community ones to lend out at the Seder, but we strongly suggest that you get your own either for the Community Seder or to use at home.

They are available to purchase by calling Liberal Judaism on 020 7580 1661 or by visiting <http://www.liberaljudaism.org/publications-and-resources/shop.html>. Price: £8.50 plus postage



People Power – a Short Survey

Liberal Judaism wants to find out more about the volunteers who sustain our communities, in order to ensure that these irreplaceable people are better acknowledged and valued. Please take a couple of minutes to complete our short survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/ljvolunteers. Thank you!

Stop the Delegitimisation of Israeli Human Rights NGOs

Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR) is calling on its supporters and contacts in the Diaspora to write to Israeli PM Netanyahu, urging him to prevent the creation of proposed parliamentary committees to investigate the funding of left wing human rights NGOs, and to publicly acknowledge the important role they play in Israel's democracy. More information is available in Ha'aretz and you can read in detail about what RHR are asking its supporters to do by clicking here.

<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/knesset-may-vote-down-inquiry-into-leftist-ngos-1.340947>
<http://itnewsletter.itnewsletter.co.il/sending/webpage.aspx?d=51281124166734987648065739279615892&w=1&ar=0&isDe=True&rfl=False&l=216478&sll=0&mlt=True>

Phenomenal Week for Liberal Judaism in the Media

Liberal Judaism had a phenomenal amount of coverage in the media in late January, with five of our rabbis featured in the national and international media. The Times published an article by Rabbi Alexandra Wright about the LJS centenary and also covered the appointment of Liberal Judaism's president, Rabbi Julia Neuberger, to West London Synagogue. Chief executive, Rabbi Danny Rich, was quoted in the legendary American paper, the Jewish Daily Forward, on the subject of organ donation and the Guardian published an incisive letter from Rabbi Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah on the Al-Jazeera/Guardian leak. Last, but not least, Rabbi Pete Tobias spoke on BBC Radio Five about anti-Semitism. The articles can be viewed/ heard by clicking on the relevant links. Please email Alexandra@liberaljudaism.org if you

have any trouble accessing these.

<http://www.forward.com/articles/134961/>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/01/palestine-papers-peace-talks>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0070htg>

A DIY Wedding Workshop for People in Mixed-Faith Relationships

If you've recently got engaged or are thinking about getting married and in a mixed faith relationship, then Jeneration can help. Jeneration's Do-It-Yourself wedding workshop is for you if you are discussing what it means to be Jewish (or not Jewish) and wondering how to address that in your wedding and your marriage together.

Sunday 10th April 2011, 10am-4pm, £10.00 per person at a Finchley venue.

Take your partner by the hand and email

zahavit@jeneration.org or call on 07815 776435 for more information.

Online Booking Open: Day of Celebration for Liberal Judaism

Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/ljdocform>. More information on the Day of Celebration, to be held on 22nd May at the LJS in its centenary year, can be found on Liberal Judaism's website: <http://www.liberaljudaism.org/events-activities/thought-for-the-day.html>. Speakers include Daniel Finkelstein OBE, Lee Montagu and Jo Coburn. Cost: £6 for adults, £1 for under-18s or those in full-time education.

The First Disability Inclusion Seminar

Northwood and Pinner Synagogue on Sunday 10th April 2011

It is open to all disabled Liberal Jews, people who are caring for a disabled adult or child and those who have responsibility for ensuring equal access to and inclusion in synagogue life.

Please contact Leon Charikar, National Board Officer for Social Action and Inclusion, if you would like to know more, as soon as possible.

L.charikar@liberaljudaism.org - 07533 620 738.

For those who are coming from a distance (i.e. Scotland/North of England) there may be subsidies available to assist with costs - please apply to Leon Charikar when booking if needed.

Fairtrade - Dress up or stitch up?

Catherine Lyons

Fairtrade Fortnight falls this year just as we are planning our Purim dressing up clothes. And Fairtrade Fortnight this year is focusing not so much on food, but on the Great Stitch Up: poverty-causing market distortion in the cotton industry. As part of the theme, the Jewish Social Action Forum is promoting Fairtrade cotton kippot (www.fairtradekippot.org), as featured in The JC.



Ten million farmers across four countries produce cotton more cheaply than anywhere else in the world. You would think they would have a competitive advantage in the international commodity market. You would expect there to be sufficient revenue from their exports to fund basic infrastructure like sanitation, education, and healthcare.

Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali are among the least developed countries on earth, and they rely on trading cotton for 40% of their revenue. Cotton would be the white gold that lifts them out of poverty, were they not prevented from competing with the heavily subsidised cotton industry in the USA and Europe.

\$250 million every year, in trade revenue, not aid, is lost to West Africa by the obstruction of US/EU subsidies, according to Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Trade. Over the past nine years, the US and EU have invested \$32 billion in suppressing rural development in poor countries by subsidising domestic cotton. Including China and India, a total of \$47 billion has been paid in subsidies to cotton farmers since 2001. Reliance on aid in these poorest of West African countries is a direct result of market distortion by wealthy cotton-producing countries.

Ten years ago, the World Trade Organisation started to frame new trade rules, and conceded that these four cotton-producing countries were the quintessential example of grievous trade injustice. And so the Doha Development Round was launched, ostensibly to help poor countries access world markets. But as we now enter the 10th year since Doha, pledges made have not been implemented. 'The monster with three heads' is the way people from Burkina Faso describe the problems besieging their cotton industry: a weak dollar, low world prices, and US cotton subsidies.

US subsidies are the highest. But the European Union plays a significant role. Per pound of cotton, the EU hands out the highest subsidy. The EU produces less than 2% of the world's cotton but subsidises 100,000 producers. If subsidies were eliminated, production would decline in wealthy countries and rapidly expand in other countries in response to higher prices. As a result, production would shift toward lower-cost producing countries. The International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) says subsidies reduce prices by 10%; the World Bank says 12.9%. Oxfam calculates that removing US cotton subsidies alone would increase average household income in West Africa by 2-9%: enough to support food expenditure for a million people.

Here is one simple thing you can do:

use this link http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/products/cotton/take_action.aspx. to email Caroline Spelman, Minister of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. Persuade her to push the EU Council of Ministers to stop trade distortion in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) due to come into force in 2013. Despite the promise of Doha, the EU is not planning to discuss reform of its cotton subsidy. Working with other Fairtrade organisations, we can stop the EU paying to keep West Africans in poverty.

Halima Krausen's sermon on Shabbat Vayakhel 5771

Halima delivered this sermon at our last shabbat morning service. We are very pleased that she was able to let us have this text to share with all our members and friends.

As a Muslim theologian, I must admit that I never thought much about this Torah portion beforehand: it seemed to be linked with the history and pre-history of the Temple and with sacrifices that are no longer practiced, or also - in this context, with sensitive political issues around Jerusalem. Besides, I had some difficulties imagining the Tabernacle from this description, until, in the course of a recent visit to Jerusalem, I saw a model. It was therefore not easy to work on it. I had several ideas of what to say about it, but since I don't read holy scriptures like a newspaper or a manual, I keep making new discoveries whenever I approach the text and even when it was read this morning I got a new impulse.

Then, some time ago, I overheard a question by a three year old girl: "Where is God?" The mother promptly replied, "In heaven," and the question seemed answered for the time being.

But in fact, the question keeps coming back. Only last week, we read that the Children of Israel felt left to themselves while Moses was on the mountain, and they proceeded to make a Golden Calf. On the other hand, we learned that God spoke to Moses "face to face" - in Muslim tradition, Moses is therefore nicknamed Kalim Allah, the one who spoke or conversed with God. In the Bible and in tradition, we repeatedly hear of experiences of encounter between the human and the Divine; the place of such an encounter is then sometimes called Beit El, House of God, or, in Arabic, Bayt Allah. An example for the latter is the Ka'bah in Makkah that, according to the Qur'an, was built by Abraham. Such places were then visited - with prayers, sacrifices and great reverence.

In modern days, after the experience of two world wars and the shoah, and with all the progress in science and technology, the sense of God's presence in the world has widely been lost. God has become a "concept" that you choose to believe in if you think that it probably exists, or not to believe in if it does not fit your criteria for a benevolent power. God seems to be no-where.

But as ever and perhaps even more than ever, people are searching. On one hand, the Golden Calves of consumerism and economical power are flourishing. On the other hand, people are exploring ancient and new ways of religion and spirituality. And there it often helps to meditate on such traditional symbols.

Well, as a Muslim I am, of course, most familiar with our own symbols, in this case with the Ka'bah in Makkah where I went on pilgrimage almost seventeen years ago. As I mentioned before, It is linked with Abraham, in Muslim tradition nicknamed Khalil Allah, God's friend. Friendship, now, is a relationship of the heart. The Ka'bah is therefore, so to speak, a symbol of the heart. Well, in a way it is the heart of the Muslim world: in ritual prayer, wherever we are, we turn towards it. When explaining this to children, I like to say that we make a big circle around the world with the Ka'bah at its centre, and whoever prays is part of this big circle. And what is inside the Ka'bah? Nothing but space for God's presence. At some point in the past, people had put up a large number of idols in there, but at the time of the Prophet Muhammad when the faith in the One God returned to Makkah, they were taken out and destroyed. Thus we are to make space in our hearts for God's presence.

But back to the Tabernacle. It looks far more complex than the simple structure of the Ka'bah. The way the model looked to me, it seemed to be rather like a body that contains the heart that, in turn, provides space for the Divine presence including the ark with God's message: two tablets that outline the relationship between human beings and God and between human beings in society. The two cherubim facing each other seem to indicate that it is all about turning towards each other rather than being self-centred. The key is not about individually memorizing lots of rules and regulations and moving within their framework for the sake of it. Nor is it about metaphysical speculation about the nature of God. Rather, it is about loving your fellow as yourself.

Three things strike me specifically in today's passage:

1 We are told repeatedly that each man and woman contributed "what their hearts moved them to". Any relationship, no matter what the legal framework may be, is a matter of the heart. A marriage contract may be the legal document of a marriage, but the marriage itself is alive only

through the love and commitment of the partners. Our relationship with God may be documented in our religious affiliations and holy scriptures, but ultimately it is a matter of the heart.

2 The Tabernacle was portable. That means, whenever the Children of Israel moved camp, it was packed up like any other tent, to be reconstructed wherever they stayed for any length of time. In the time covered by the Torah, it was never a permanent structure at a fixed point in geography. Something along these lines applies to any relationship. Real life is not a romantic novel where, after a thrilling story, there is a happy end, and they lived happily ever after. What becomes of a marriage emerges after the wedding, in the challenges of everyday life. With regard to the relationship between the human and the Divine, the TaNaKh is a unique document of the ups and downs in this relationship with the example of the Children of Israel.

3 When we think of religion today, we often think of the link between individuals and God, about a personal spiritual path that does not necessarily appear in public. Coming back from Jerusalem where religion is a live presence in everyday life, the very secular atmosphere in Hamburg where I live seems spiritually barren like a graveyard. The additional dimension shown in the story is, in contrast, the community enterprise to which the individuals contribute: different materials, different skills, contributed by men and women, old and young - and I don't want to speculate beyond that, but I read the whole passage again this morning in order to make sure that my impression was correct: there is no indication that anyone's contribution was excluded or rejected. On the contrary, it needed all the diversity of colours, shapes, materials, knowledge and skills to build the Tabernacle. And given all that, God made a contribution as well: the wisdom that He gave to Betsalel and his fellows to coordinate this diversity.

Diversity is one of the great miracles of the One Creator who brought it forth. Now our task is to coordinate it in such a way that, together, we may build up a world that can be a sanctuary that gives space for the Divine presence.

If we do that, we may move from the feeling that God is no-where to the experience that God is NOW HERE.

Events and Announcements

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

J. David Simons, *The Liberation of Celia Kahn*

Sunday 13 March at 8.00pm at the Edinburgh Jewish Community Centre, 4 Salisbury Road.

Last session author J. David Simons spoke about and read excerpts from his book, 'The Credit Draper', which had been well received by the Book Club. At the time David revealed some of the thinking that lay behind the plot of the story and added insights that might not have been apparent at a first reading. He also tantalised us by announcing that there was to be a sequel following the fortunes of another of the characters in his first book. The sequel is to be released very shortly and David will return to give us another look behind the curtains of these dramatic tales. Copies of the new book will be on sale at the meeting.

Interfaith

Earth be glad www.earthbeglad.org.uk

You are warmly invited to St John's Church on Monday 14 March at 7pm for a presentation and conversation about Earth be Glad. The Earth be Glad project is the result of an exploration by members of St John's Church of what it means to live as people of faith in a world facing environmental crisis. It involves monitoring and reducing our environmental footprint together, and marking the season of Creationtide in the autumn. Please RSVP to Eleanor Harris, the Earth be Glad Co-ordinator. eleanormharris@gmail.com

see next page for another interfaith item



National Annual Women's Inter Faith Seminar

Sunday 27th March from 1 - 5pm in Glasgow. The theme of the seminar is 'The Heart of Wellbeing' and will look at the relationship between health, wellbeing, spirituality and faith. It will be lead by Astrid Bendorf from the Janki Foundation (www.jankifoundation.org). If you are interested in attending please contact Calum Henderson: chenderson@scottishinterfaithcouncil.org or phone us on 0141 420 6982. Lunch will be served so please let us know if you have any special dietary requirements.

Leo Baeck College Summer Institute 5-7th July 2011

Now in its fifth successive year this is a unique development opportunity for Jewish professionals, voluntary leaders, rabbis and teachers. This year it will be held in the Sternberg Centre, London. For more information please email Michael.shire@lbc.ac.uk or Madeleine.turner@lbc.ac.uk. One of our members attended last year and can recommend it very highly. Please leave a message on the community phone or send a message to info@eljc.org if you would like them to make contact with you.

House exchange or hosting with US family

My daughter is part of a theater group whose play, "Terezin, Children of the Holocaust," will be presented at the Fringe this summer. I think this group shares many values with yours. My first thought at writing was to inquire whether anyone in your group would be interested in a house exchange (we live in a beautiful coastal New England town, 45 min. north of Boston, USA) - or, possibly, some form of hosting or rental. I can't speak for the our whole group, but I am sure my 16 year old daughter (the cast ranges in age from about 6 to late twenties) would love an opportunity to have a mini-cultural exchange / evening with any teens in your group.

Pam Wool, Newburyport, Massachusetts, USA, pamwool@verizon.net



Ernest Levy Archives

You may have read in the press that these archives have been left to the City of Edinburgh Libraries. Liz McGettigan, Library and Information Services Manager, writes on the library web site: <http://yourlibrary.edinburgh.gov.uk/node/772>, where there is further information.

"I am very proud to have had the opportunity to know and work with Ernest Levy. Ernest lived through the Holocaust, at only 19 he survived seven Nazi concentration camps and losing half his family, including his father, a brother and a sister, before settling in Scotland for the latter 48 years of his life. He became a leading figure in the Scottish Jewish community – and, ultimately, among non-Jews – a synagogue cantor, a teacher, notably about the Holocaust, a passionate humanist and an advocate of inter-faith dialogue."

The library is planning to set up a steering group to decide on how to best make this collection available to the public, **They would be interested to have some people from the Jewish Community join such a steering group. If you might be interested and willing to help please contact Gillian (chair@eljc.org) in the first instance so we can coordinate our response.**

RECIPE

Our chavura suppers often feature great dishes. Hephzibah Plotkin brought this dish to our latest supper and has kindly shared the recipe with us. She gets her giant Israeli couscous and Belazu pickled lemons from Waitrose. The lemons which she says have a very distinctive flavour are shelved beside the vinegars and oils.

Israeli Couscous with Roasted Butternut Squash and Preserved Lemon

Recipe from the Epicurious web site

<http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/Israeli-Couscous-with-Roasted-Butternut-Squash-and-Preserved-Lemon-102250> If you would like a copy and don't have internet access, just leave a message on the community phone and we will post it to you.

Destruction not Construction? Current events at the Jewish Museum Vienna

Hannah Holtschneider

On 1 July 2010 the new director of the Jewish Museum Vienna, Dr Danielle Spera, took up office. One of her first projects was to be the necessary modernisation of the building and the development of a new permanent exhibition to replace its previous exhibition which was opened in 1996. At the beginning of February images of the destruction of the centrepiece of the previous permanent exhibition, a series of holograms featuring images relating to Jewish history in Austria, reached the press. The publication of these images prompted museum professionals and critics across Europe to react in shock and disbelief at this violent dismantling of an acclaimed exhibition.

The issues raised by critics, first on the weblog of museologist and art historian Gottfried Fliedl

(<http://museologien.blogspot.com>)

and then in an open letter by a group of concerned professionals challenge the manner in which the holograms were dismantled and the implications this has for the history and the future of exhibition of Jewish history in Vienna. Questions regarding the future permanent exhibition were also raised, in particular as there appears to be no wider academically supported consultation process in advance of mounting a new exhibition.

The issues raised can be summarised as follows:

Critics are agreed that change and renewal in permanent exhibitions is necessary. There is no question that the appointment of a new director and the comprehensive modernisation of the building are opportunities to effect changes to the permanent exhibition and present a new concept. However, critics are uneasy about the path taken by the Museum: *Was it necessary to destroy the holograms in order to remove them to make way for the modernisation of the main museum building (Palais Eskeles)?* The museum claims that it was technically impossible not to destroy the holograms, though no documentation has been produced to confirm this view. Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek and Martin Kohlbauer produced the concept for the holograms which were then produced and installed by an outside company. There appears to be

evidence that this company has apparently attested that safe removal would have been possible. Further, it does not seem that there were/are any plans for archiving the previous permanent exhibition as is now curatorial practice. If indeed it was deemed impossible to preserve the holograms, the process of arriving at this conclusion should have been discussed and documented.

The holograms were not merely a technology of display, but were themselves artefacts which are on display.

This dimension of the previous permanent exhibition is denied by the Museum. The Museum leadership displays a lack of awareness of the significance of the previous permanent exhibition in the Jewish Museum Vienna. Technical difficulties are foregrounded in all responses of the Museum. The holograms are characterised as merely a display technology which has now been superseded by more advanced media projections.

There is no recognition on the part of the Museum of the critical acclaim of the exhibition. This is astonishing as the international community has commented favourably on the innovative design and critical features of the exhibition which had the holograms as a centrepiece. Among the critics and international commentators on the exhibition, the holograms were appreciated both as a significant medium of display and as artefacts on display which were able to involve the visitor physically in the discovery of approaches to Jewish history in a post-1945 exhibition in Europe. Thus the holograms were not simply a display technology, such as a glass case or television screen, but part of the collections of the Jewish Museum Vienna. Critics point to the principles of ICOM which explicitly state that such artefacts need to be preserved and cared for.

What are the plans for the permanent exhibition due to open in autumn 2011? It has been critically remarked that there does not seem to be any consultation process with a committee or board of experts in the field of (Austrian) Jewish history and museum studies. Such a process is now established practice at all major museums and it appears incongruous that a (until now) world-leading institution in the innovative exhibition of Jewish history is forgoing this important consultative process.

