



May – June 2019

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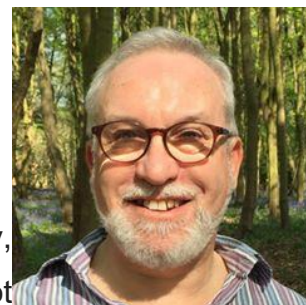
**Sukkat  
Shalom**  
Edinburgh Liberal  
Jewish Community

**Scottish Charity  
Number  
SC 035678**

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# The Service Will Continue

**Rabbi Mark Solomon**



A startling line in the Mishnah, discussing the way pious people pray, says, “Even if a snake is coiled around one’s heel, one should not interrupt one’s prayer.” (Berakhot 5:1) This came to mind when I read about Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein of the Poway Chabad synagogue in California, relating what happened just after an antisemitic extremist had shot off his fingers, and killed Lori Gilbert-Kaye, the heroic woman who threw herself in front of the Rabbi to shield him. “I grabbed a prayer shawl,” he said, “wrapped my arm, my fingers with it, that was just hanging, dangling, I’m bleeding all over the place. My congregation was gathered outside here, and I said I gotta do something. I got up on a chair, right there, and I looke at the congregation.” He then continued the sermon he had been delivering for the last day of Pesach, “We are a Jewish nation that will stand tall! We will not let anyone or anything take us down! Terrorism like this will not take us down!”

Only hours before that attack, at Sukkat Shalom Edinburgh, we welcomed a visiting group from Greenbank Church of Scotland to our Shabbat service. In my sermon I tried to grapple with the horrific bomb attacks on Christians at prayer (as well as tourists at breakfast) on Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka, one week earlier. Still fresh in our memory are the shootings at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, and just six months ago, the attack on Tree of Life – Or L'Simcha synagogue in Pittsburgh. There have been many more, from Coptic Churches in Egypt to the Mosque of the Patriarchs in Hebron to synagogues in Paris, Rome, Istanbul ... and on and on.

For a while it was school shootings that seemed to occur with shocking regularity. Now the aggression seems to focus on houses of prayer. Whether Jews, Christians or Muslims, at prayer we express the essence of who we are, of where we belong and what we stand for. We lay ourselves open to divine communion and to human community. We are vulnerable, not just physically, because we want to welcome everyone who seeks us, but spiritually and emotionally. Just as bullies target the weak, the terrorists seek not just to take lives but to destroy the very soul of their victims. The false god they worship – whatever religious label they claim – is nothing but hatred and destruction.

The timing of the Easter bombings and Pesach shooting is especially poignant, since at these times Christians and Jews alike celebrate redemption from slavery and death. Our God – whom we share with Christians, Muslims, and other people of ethical faith, is a God

of Life. That is why, as Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein said, “they will not take us down” – they cannot win. The Talmud says, “The wicked, even in their lifetime, are called dead; the righteous, even in their death, are called living.” (Berakhot 18a-b) Nothing can outweigh the tragic bereavements, but the outpouring of solidarity, love and friendship between people and communities after these attacks is life’s vital response to anti-life. A former teenage congregant of mine in Watford, now a Torah-yoga teacher in America, has responded to the shooting by calling on Jews to arm themselves with guns. That’s not a course likely to commend itself to us (I hope), but we certainly can’t take our security for granted. At the same time, however, we should Keep Calm and Carry On Praying. One Yom Kippur in my childhood, the Great Synagogue in Sydney received a bomb threat. My mother signalled from the ladies’ gallery that the family should gather outside, but old Rabbi Porush announced that the service would continue while the police searched the building. I remember, even as a child, admiring the courage of those who stayed and prayed on.

The Rabbis of the Talmud weren’t foolhardy. They qualified the teaching of the Mishnah by ruling that it only applies to a harmless snake. If it’s a viper or scorpion, likely to strike at once, one must interrupt one’s prayer to preserve life (Berakhot 33a). We must be prudent and take sensible precautions, but even in the current atmosphere of anxiety, our service – to God and humanity – will continue, and life will prevail over death.

**29 April 2019**

# Diary

May 2019			
Fri 3	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Fri 10	7:00 pm	Erev Shabbat service	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Fri 17	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Fri 24	7:00 pm	Supper & Songs, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Sat 25	11:00 am	Shabbat service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Sat 25	3:00 pm	Tea and Talmud	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Sun 26	4:00 pm	Discussion Group	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Fri 31	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
June 2019			
Fri 7	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Sat 8	7:00 pm	Erev Shavuot service	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Fri 14	7:00 pm	Erev Shabbat service	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Fri 21	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Sat 29	11:00 am	Shabbat service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Sat 29	3:00 pm	Tea and Talmud	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Sun 30	4:00 pm	Discussion Group	<a href="#">St. Marks Unitarian Church</a>

- [Word from the Chair](#)

How do you feel about change? I ask because, as I get older, it's something that I become more aware of especially at work. For sure we've always had change at work, and I can remember phrases such as "change is the only constant" and "if you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got" from many years ago. In principle I like to think I'm in favour of change, but I think the reality is that these days I'm less positive about change. In my younger days I would



typically think that change offers an opportunity even if I didn't quite know what it was, whereas now I quite often need to be able to see what the opportunity is before I can embrace the change. I suspect that there's a happy medium somewhere – you don't want change for its own sake, but equally you sometimes want to take a bit of a risk with something that's new even if it's not immediately clear what exactly the benefit will be. Why do I mention change? Well it's something that I've been thinking about in the context of religion in general and our community in particular. In general terms, I think that religion tends to be slow to change although my guess is that there are quite a few of us who like it that way. The rate of change in our daily lives seems to be increasing, we're all busy trying to keep up, and having something that is familiar, dependable and reliable is both a benefit and indeed a comfort. That's maybe one of the reasons why many of us are drawn to our community. We have our services, which are mostly familiar, and by and large you could say that we know what we're going to get. That's not to say that we are averse to change. A couple of examples are the meditative services that we've had over the last year and a half, and the Shavuot seder we had the last time Rabbi Mark was here for Shavuot. And yet while these were what you might call non-standard services, I would say that they were still within the general ethos of ELJC. Somewhat different perhaps but nothing too over the top. Another example of change in our services and which was initiated by Liberal Judaism, was the use of the trial Shabbat morning service prayer book last year. This prayer book is quite different to our current siddur, and most of the comments I heard were critical. I remember thinking at the time that it is often easy to be critical of new things, but no doubt when our current siddur lev chadash first came out, there were people who said "this is change, and I don't like it". As I said earlier, my feeling is that religion in general tends to change but somewhat behind general society. I think we can be proud that Liberal Judaism changes at a much quicker pace than many other religions – be that other strands of Judaism or other religions in general. For example, embracing equal marriage is something we can be proud

of. But interestingly, as I think I've said before, even within Liberal Judaism there is a tendency to embrace some religious practices that you would generally consider as 'old' rather than 'new'. And this I think comes back to the comfort and familiarity we want from our community. We do want our Judaism to be relevant, modern and applicable to today's world. And that's not to say we don't want to be challenged either, but I'm pretty sure most of us want our community to be a place where we feel comfortable. I'd like to think that we've got the balance about right – and as I type this, I realise that for me personally this has to be so otherwise I wouldn't have been so involved with ELJC. But that's not to say that the balance is right for all of us, and it is incumbent on all of us to try and ensure that we do get the balance right not just for ourselves, but for all of us. As Hillel said, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I?" Interestingly, I was deliberately going to leave off the last part of the quote which says "And if not now, when?", because I never really understood that last bit. Except of course I suddenly realised that this is obviously about change – you'd better get on and make the changes you need to make now. Maybe me writing my 'word from the chair' was beneficial, to me if no-one else, after all!

**Nick Silk**

## All about our new associate membership

This year's AGM has adopted an important resolution introducing associate membership in Sukkat Shalom. This decision, which did not require changes of the constitution, follows similar policies and practices within other LJ communities in the UK. While the associate membership status has been conceived mainly for non-Jewish spouses and partners of our members, it is an option available to every non-Jewish individual wishing to be an integral part of our community.

On the other hand, for those attending or wishing to attend "Exploring Judaism", associate membership is now a requirement. It formalises the relationship between the members of the study group and Sukkat Shalom as well as helping to cover the expenses necessary to organise classes and events.

Associate membership provides the same rights as the full membership (for instance, free High Holiday tickets) with the exception of voting rights at the AGM, and the chance to take on certain roles in religious services where Jewish status is required. The associate membership fees are equal to half of the full membership fees, i.e. £125/year or £10.42/month. For those attending the study group for conversion purposes, the

membership fees are waived for a period of twenty-four months of enrolment. This is to reflect the fact that there are fees due to our parent organisation (Liberal Judaism) before a proselyte can attend the Beth Din. There is also a significant reduction for students.

Anyone who is interested in becoming an associate member or who would like to have more details can send me an email at [membership@eljic.org](mailto:membership@eljic.org)

**Stefano Giossi**

## **Liberal Judaism Day of Celebration**

**Saturday 23 June 9.30 – 4.00**

**Liberal Jewish Synagogue, London**

This year's Liberal Judaism Day of Celebration will focus on the role of our communities, discussing the Jewish textual basis for community relationships, current best practice and the deeper questions around community responsibility versus state responsibility. How can a community provide services the state doesn't? How can people best volunteer their time? How much can we realistically be expected to do ourselves? Presenters will include senior LJ rabbis and leaders as well as speakers from a range of other organisations and charities.

LJ Netzer will be running a parallel programme for children aged 6 – 15 and there will be a fully staffed creche for younger children,

Tickets cost £35/ £15 (students) and include lunch.

<https://www.liberaljudaism.org/calendar/day-of-celebration/tickets/>

Find out about possible help with travel costs from Tom Rich 0207 580 1663

[t.rich@liberaljudaism.org](mailto:t.rich@liberaljudaism.org)



## 'I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine'

Mazel Tov to Becky and Fraser on the occasion of their wedding - the very first to take place since Sukkat Shalom moved from Columcille to St Mark's Unitarian Church. The wedding ceremony was movingly conducted by Rabbi Mark Solomon followed by a party enjoyed by all Fraser and Becky's families and friends. We wish them all the very best.



## Invitation to Scone Palace Tuesday 14 May – BOOK NOW!

The Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation invites all members and friends of Sukkat Shalom and their families to join them on a fantastic trip to 12<sup>th</sup> Century Scone Palace, just outside Perth. The Earl and Countess of Mansfield, whose ancestral home it is, will be there to welcome us and tell us about the Palace and its history. The visit will include a tour of the state rooms and a chance to explore the magnificent grounds and gardens.

The whole trip, including transport to and from Scone Palace and packed lunches, has been generously sponsored by the Edinburgh Jewish Board of



Guardians and Jewish Care, and representatives from both these organisations will be on hand to chat informally about the services they have on offer.

The coach will leave the EHC synagogue, Salisbury Road at 11.00am to arrive at Scone around 12.15pm. There will also be a pick-up point en route at Murrayfield, where there's plenty of parking. The coach will leave Scone Palace at 3.00pm to arrive in Edinburgh around 4.15pm. **You can be collected from your own home if you're unable to get to Salisbury Road or Murrayfield independently.**

**To book your place and arrange transport to and from Salisbury Road or Murrayfield if required,** email [sconepalaceouting@gmail.com](mailto:sconepalaceouting@gmail.com) or phone/text 07973 635 655 as soon as possible.

## Mazel Tov Sadie!

Sadie Budd celebrated her Bat Mitzvah in Jerusalem on 14 April 2019, along with her family grandparents from Canada . The service was held at the egalitarian area of the Western Wall was greeted with shouts of Mazel Tov from all around the Kotel. Sadie is between parents, Nadine and Adam, below with big sister Yael on the right.



## Sharing the load



As I am sure you know, Sukkat Shalom is a community run by its members and friends, who volunteer their time to keep things going. The more of us who are involved the less work there will be for each person. . And it does not need to be a big commitment. We now have rotas (actually doodle polls) for people who will help to get things set up for services at St Mark's and also one for people who can bring a challah or two for the kiddush at St Mark's. So please let us know if you could join the lists of

- **Helpers** who can come early to services to set things up
- **Challah providers** Who could bake or buy a challah for the kiddush

In each case you need only commit for one or two services per year, and you will even be sent a reminder a few days before.

Please let us know by replying to this email saying which rota(s) you would like to join and you will be sent instructions and a link to the doodle poll.

Thanks to everyone who is signed up already.

**Sue Bard and Gillian Raab**

## Do you want to try your hand at live streaming?

Not all of us are able to attend services, and one of our members suggested that we consider live streaming some of our services, as is done by other Liberal synagogues (and no doubt many other religious communities too). We felt that it would be best to stream those services that Rabbi Mark leads, and Rabbi Mark is indeed happy for his services to be streamed. Obviously to do this we need someone to actually 'do' the streaming. We're told that this is easy to do and so if you would like to have a go at doing the streaming, just for two or three services in the first instance, please speak with Nick or Maurice and we can discuss how we can progress this.

**Nick Silk**

# Yom Ha'atzmaut Family BBQ

**Sunday 12 May, 2019, 4pm - 6pm**

**Newton Mearns Synagogue ([14 Larchfield Court, Newton Mearns](#), Glasgow, G77 5PL)**

Please join us to celebrate Israel's 71st Birthday with a special Family BBQ. There will be fun activities for the kids, a storyteller and plenty of BBQ delights.

All welcome.

Cost is £5 per person (under 1 year are free).

Reserve your place by emailing: [yomhaatzmautglasgow@gmail.com](mailto:yomhaatzmautglasgow@gmail.com)

Don't forget to join us on the Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebrations in Glasgow Facebook group for all the latest information and

updates: <https://w.facebook.com/groups/281281669071091/>)

The event is being organised by the Glasgow Israel Committee and is generously supported by Enjoy, Maccabi GB Scotland, Netherlee and Clarkston Charitable Trust, Queen's Park Charitable Trust, UJIA, JNF KKL Scotland, Jewish Youth Fund, Habonim Dror, NMHC, GNHC, and PJ Library

## Havdalah Cheder

The cheder classes recently held a special havdalah-themed event, with the help of PJ Library. PJ Library is a charity that sends Jewish books every month to children between six months and eight years old. First, we discussed the symbolism of havdalah, created shadow puppets and drawings, and practised writing havdalah-themed words in Hebrew. The children then explored the scents that made them think of the sweetness of Shabbat, and created their own besamim spice bags to take with them. We ended the session by practising the prayers that we say during havdalah, and finally singing them all together.

Each family got to take home a scratch and sniff havdalah card that PJ Library sent us.



We also raised £16 in donations for the Edinburgh Sick Kids Hospital Charity from pyjama-wearing cheder students.

**Katy Bromberg**



## Our Seder

We were delighted to welcome 82 people to our seder this year, including many visitors. Among them were Marjorie Brewer and Andrew Johnston who had been married two days before at Traquair House with a blessing from Rabbi Mark together with Marjorie's parents and Andrew's mother and sister. Rabbi Mark conducted a seder that was full of music, vitality, meaning and participation, reminding us once again of the universal significance of the Exodus story. In this vein, seder plates can represent changing as well as traditional preoccupations. Shank bones, burnt eggs, karpas, maror and charoset have at times been joined (or replaced) by beetroot (representing the shank bone for vegetarians), oranges (representing women), olives (representing the possibility of Palestinian and Israeli co-operation) and tangerines (representing LGBT inclusion). This year, inspired by the Extinction Rebellion Jews, many seder plates, including ours, sported a chilli, representing the threat of climate change. And Miriam's cup of water accompanied Elijah's cup of wine.

As ever, Judith Stewart and her team from the Butterfly Cafe achieved a miraculously smooth and patient catering operation – their kneidlach get better each year.





**Sue Bard**

## Summer Barbecue Sunday 16 June

Our annual summer BBQ will be at Kate and Nick's, 18 Grange Knowe, Linlithgow, tel (01506) 845325 on Sunday 16 June. Arrive any time from 12.30. Contributions of food and drink are welcome but please no pork or shellfish. All welcome - kids, adults, friends, relatives.



If anyone wants a lift from Linlithgow station, just call (but ideally let us know beforehand so we've not drunk too much....). It is also possible to walk from the station by the scenic route round the back of the loch, estimated time around 45 minutes.

By car, come off the M9 at Junction 3 and turn left towards Linlithgow. As you go past the Oracle Factory there is a turning for Grange View on the left. Turn in there, then left at the roundabout into Grange Knowe. We're in the first cul-de-sac on the right.

**Nick Silk**

## Celebrating Liberal Jewish Music

**Saturday 22 June at Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue (NPLS), London**

A very special day of music is being held for all Liberal Jewish Communities to come together for a day of sharing songs and ideas. The day will begin by preparing for Shacharit service with a chance to choose different ensemble groups - traditional choir, a capella, guitar led group - to lead different songs in the service. Following lunch there will be a range



of workshops, talks and discussions to choose from. Havdallah concludes that part of the day, and then we continue together for an evening of 'open mic'-style performance, from sharing songs learnt during the day, to performances by music leaders, choirs and ensembles of all ages and musical styles. LJ Music Day is for everyone with an interest in Synagogue music - enthusiastic congregant singers, choir members, music leaders and instrumentalists.

As we trial a new LJ Siddur, this is a good moment to consider how our LJ music reflects our texts: how can we keep our heritage music with new texts; how to reflect the meaning and mood of text when composing new tunes. We now have so many options for styles of music: nusach, hazzanut, traditional liberal choral, 'folk' melody, etc; and so many instruments from organs to saxophones. How do we choose what to use and when? With a decline in general music literacy, how can we best encourage congregational singing. Likewise 'traditional' organs are losing popularity, so how best can we accompany the singing without losing our Liberal Heritage?

The cost of this all day and evening event, with lunch and dinner included is:

£20.00 for adult members and associate members of LJ communities.

£30.00 for adults who are not members of LJ communities.

£10.00 for under 18s and students.

To book, go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/day-of-celebrating-liberal-jewish-music-2019-tickets-57879522209#tickets>

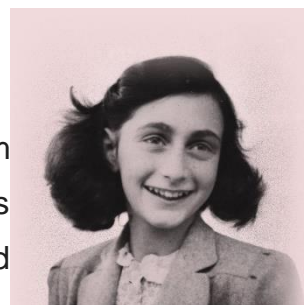
NPLS may be able to provide accommodation for people coming long distances. To find out, contact 01923 822592

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## Anne Frank's Ambassadors

On Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> of February, members of Sukkat Shalom attended a reception at the Scottish Parliament celebrating ten years of the Anne Frank Trust UK working against discrimination and prejudice in Scotland. This event was hosted by the Rt Hon Ken

Macintosh MSP, and featured speakers from the Trust – both adults and, more importantly, the young Anne Frank Ambassadors from various schools across Scotland.



The Anne Frank Trust is an organisation that strives to “inspire and empower the next generation to help create a society safe from prejudice and discrimination”. By working closely with schools and using the story of Anne Frank and her family as a model, the Trust challenges young people to tackle discrimination in all forms. As a student-led initiative, the Ambassadors – young people from their first year through to their sixth year at high school – were the ones truly running the event, and it was fascinating to hear them speak confidently and knowledgeably about both Anne Frank and the wider problems of prejudice in the world today. As well as presenting talks and a short video, the Ambassadors were available to answer any questions visitors had on the ‘Anne Frank: A History for Today’ exhibition which was set up around the room and told the story of Anne’s life. The passion and insight of these young people was incredible and showed a real hope for the progressive future of Scotland and continuous positive social change. We were truly inspired by the hard work and enthusiasm that went into creating and hosting the reception, and we can expect great things from the Anne Frank Trust now and in the future. Their website <https://annefrank.org.uk/> has details of their work, ongoing projects, educational goals, and everything else there is to know about the Trust and the work they do.

**Shannon Mooney**

### ***Are you interested in interfaith activity?***

We participate in various interfaith events, for example we have made our tu b’svat seder an interfaith event for the last few years, and a good number of us take part in the annual EIFA (Edinburgh Interfaith Association) Peace Walk each year (see below). We don't currently have someone in the role of interfaith representative. In the first instance the role would be to promote interfaith awareness and activities within our community. There is nothing specific; it would be up to whoever takes it on to develop it. Having said that, there could well be opportunities such as becoming the EIFA rep for the whole Edinburgh Jewish community, but that would very much be something to consider over

time. In the first instance, it is just an opportunity for us to develop our interfaith involvement in whatever way we think is appropriate.

If you're interested in taking on this role, or just in finding out more about it, please contact Nick. ([chair@eljc.org](mailto:chair@eljc.org)).

**Nick Silk**

### **Community Phone – 0131 777 8024**

This phone number sends voicemail to members of the Contact Team

To reach the Care Team, call the Community Phone or email [care@eljc.org](mailto:care@eljc.org)

Contact Team – [contact@eljc.org](mailto:contact@eljc.org)

Etrog Team – [newsletter@eljc.org](mailto:newsletter@eljc.org)

Chair: Nick Silk ([chair@eljc.org](mailto:chair@eljc.org))

Treasurer: and Membership: Stefano Giossi ([membership@eljc.org](mailto:membership@eljc.org))

Secretary: Gillian Raab ([secretary@eljc.org](mailto:secretary@eljc.org))

**Scottish Charity SC035678**