

Sukkat Shalom

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Scottish Charity No SC035678

April 2013

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Community Phone: 0131 777 8024 Email info@eljc.org Web www.eljc.org

Events and Services

Date Friday 5 April 2013

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

Date Friday 12 April 2013

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

Date Friday 19 April 2013

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

Date Friday 26 April 2013

Event Chavurah Supper with Rabbi Mark Solomon
(Bring a non-meat dish to share)
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace
Time 7pm

Date Saturday 27 April 2013

Event Shabbat Service with Rabbi Mark Solomon
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace
Time 11am

Date Saturday 27 April 2013

Event Tea & Talmud
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace
Time 3pm

Date Sunday 28 April 2013

Event Choosing Judaism
Venue Usual location
Time 10:30 am

Date Sunday 28 April 2013

Event Philosophy Reading Group
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace
Time 4 pm

Date Friday 3 May 2013

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

Date Friday 10 May 2013

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

ELJC support line

0131 208 1447



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.

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Deadline for copy for May 2013 newsletter: 21 April

Future Dates

Our regular schedule is as follows.

Our **Erev Shabbat** service will be on the **second Friday** of each calendar month.

Our **Shabbat morning** service will be on the Saturday after the fourth Friday.

These services take place in the Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace.

Jewish Calendar

Festivals begin on the evening before the day listed.

Shavuot	16.-16.5.2013
9 Av	16.7.2013
Rosh Hashanah	5.-6.9.2013
Yom Kippur	14.9.2013
Sukkot	19.-25.9.2013
Simchat Torah	26.9.2013
Hanukah	28.11.-5.12.2013

Yom Hashoah Service

This year, the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, sees Yom Hashoah services around the country, including a large communal gathering in London, in Hyde Park.

In Edinburgh, there will be the customary service in the the Peace Gardens, Princes Street on Monday 8th April at 6.45 pm.

Board Games and Bridge Night

Sunday 21st April 2013, 5.30pm, at the Community Centre, 4 Salisbury Road,

For Bridge players, or fans of Connect 4, Jenga, Boggle, or take your own board game along.

Play starts at 5.30pm. Soup and rolls, coffee and cake will be served at about 6.30pm.

Recommended minimum donations are £10 for adults and £5 for students/children.

If you plan to go, please contact the organisers in advance (to help with catering) by emailing info@eljc.org with 'Bridge night' in the subject line, or by calling our community phone.

Faith in Older People

Faith in Older People is collaborating with the Edinburgh Interfaith Association on a civic cafe event to coincide with an EIFA Community Meal:

Faith and Ageing & Wellbeing Civic Café explores questions including: What is wellbeing? How does our healthcare system address wellbeing as we age? What do our faith traditions/spiritualities teach about the wellbeing of our body, mind and spirit? What are some good habits to get into now and/or at any stage of your life?

The fee is £5 and all are welcome to join the meal at 6pm in the Church Hall, where the conversation will continue with panellists Professor John Starr (Consultant Geriatrician, Edinburgh University) and Louisa Gupta (Brahma Kumaris' representative)

Monday, 8 April. 4:30pm

St. John's Church Hall, Princes Street

For more information, contact

0131 346 7981 info@fiop.org.uk

Book online at www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk

Steven Pinker, Gifford Lecturer 2013

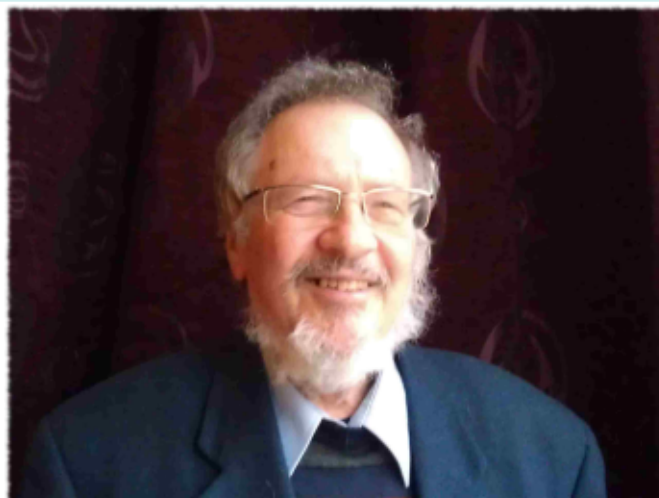
Steven Pinker, Harvard Professor of Psychology, will present 'The Better Angels of Our Nature: a History of Violence and Humanity', 29 May, 5.30pm, McEwan Hall, Teviot Place, Edinburgh. More details p. 6

Leo Baeck creates Vocational Studies position

Leo Baeck College has appointed its first Head of Vocational Studies, a post named in honour of the College's founder, Rabbi Dr Werner Van der Zyl z"l.

The part-time post will be filled by Rabbi Maurice Michaels, a member of the College's vocational faculty and experienced congregational rabbi. Rabbi Michaels was formerly lay chair of the Reform Movement and of Leo Baeck College.

Chairman's word



The dust has finally settled on Pesach. Dust is an important concept where Pesach is concerned. When in years gone by I used to get over enthusiastic about clearing away chamets, my son used to remind me with a twinkle in his eye that we always recited the traditional declaration that any chamets left behind should be considered as the dust of the earth. This year older bones were less inclined to clear away, clean and scour to the nth degree. I suppose too that

Wendy and I were more involved in getting the Communal Seder going than we had been in the past. Still, all was ready pretty well on time for Rabbi Mark to begin. As one of our extra songs says, There's no Seder like our Seder ... Rabbi Mark conducted it with great verve as always. His rendition of 'Who Knows One' at the end, which involves everyone in following his actions, brought the house down as it were.

Of course he emphasised too the serious issues to which the Seder draws attention. We used the new Liberal Haggadah *B'Chol Dor Va-Dor*, which highlights both traditional insights and more contemporary concerns. In addition he used some material garnered from Rabbis for Human Rights in Israel, which he asked people round the table to read. These passages invited a number of individuals whose situations are parlous, and indeed analogous to slavery, to come and join us at our Seder of freedom. Our Haggadah talks of the liberation of peoples. Yet it is difficult to imagine sometimes things that are on a vast scale. They are in danger of becoming impersonal however worthy. Here were accounts of individuals with whom I could empathise. I could begin to look for a meaning in what I was doing. My clearing away was like a physical enactment of the spiritual clearing away I need to do so that I can listen and respond to the plight of others.

It is to many individuals that thanks are due for making the Communal Seder the event that it was. To those people who loaned Seder Plates, thank you. To those people who provided the contents of the Seder Plates and helped prepare them : Lisa Barcan, Sue Lieberman and Wendy Crane. To Maureen Mackinnon who bought provisions, helped organise the menu and dealt with bookings. To Gillian Raab on the door on the night and no doubt others I have inadvertently forgotten. Our especial thanks are due to Judith of Butterflies Cafe and her team for putting up with our vagaries and catering for us so well.

It was very pleasing to be able to start the Seder on time. Recently, our punctuality has been slipping. We would encourage congregants to arrive in time for the advertised beginning of services. We intend to start them on time!

I am pleased to say that a small group met recently to discuss premises: ideas, parameters, desirabilities, opportunities and constraints. Back of the envelope stuff really, but a start and enough for Rebecca Wober as an architect and Council member come to give a visual presentation at our next Council meeting.

Norman Crane

Community News

We welcome new member Melissa Eisenberg. Melissa has been part of our community for some time now, and we are pleased that she has become a member. We also wish Melissa the best of luck in her cabaret competitions in the next couple of months, and look forward to a full report in these pages.

We also celebrate the arrival of the youngest member of our community, Kaela, daughter to Sarah Meek and Ami Bender, Mazel tov to Sarah and Ami, and welcome to Kaela, who was born last month.



Edinburgh Star, Pesach Edition

The *Star* comes out twice a year, before Pesach and before Rosh Hashanah. If you haven't read the most recent copy, you can still get it. And then you won't miss Norman Crane's 'The Book of Judith: a tale of gender, sex, and politics'.

To get a copy of the *Star*, contact Sidney Caplan by emailing him via info@eljc.org, with 'FAO Sidney Caplan' in the subject line.

New Book published by Gordon Barclay

Mazel tov to Gordon Barclay on his book *If Hitler Comes*, which will be published by Birlinn Books on April 10th, and available from booksellers from that date.

Between May 1940 and the summer of 1941, the British people expected a German invasion.

Had it succeeded, they would have become enslaved by the Nazis' racist war.



This period saw an unparalleled effort to prepare the defence of the UK against invasion.

Scotland's nationally important heavy industries, vital Royal Navy bases, and one of the UK's key ports were very vulnerable to the sort of airborne attack that had devastated the defences of Belgium. Everyone was certain that a Fifth Column of Nazi sympathisers and agents was working actively to spread rumours and despair, and to aid the invasion forces, and in reality the country was far from united.

Although the 1939–45 War is the most written-about war in history there is no account of the heroic efforts made in those months to prepare Scotland for the inevitable invasion, and how the defences were intended to be used. This book tells that story, against the wider history of the period and its people, and describes what was built, and what now survives.

Gillian Raab

Jewish Action against Poverty

Local, national, or international: community initiatives against poverty are increasing.



Stewart Green, our representative at the Edinburgh Interfaith Association, invites us to the Civic Café against Poverty organised under the auspices of the Three Faiths Forum.

While Iain Duncan Smith is being challenged to lived on £53 a week to experience the reality of life on benefits, Tzedek (Jewish Action for a Just World) is organising a fundraising event challenging us to 'live below the line', spending only £1 on food for five days.

Tzedek and World Jewish Relief are both part of the 'Enough Food for Everyone IF' campaign, and encourage us to write to our MP.

Action Against Poverty

Civic Café Against Poverty
Sunday June 2nd, 2pm
The Undercroft,
St Andrew's and St George's West Church,
13 George Street



In a challenging economic climate, the government have introduced austerity measures which they argue are vital to enable the country to emerge from recession. Many people affected are the vulnerable in our society. The Civic Café asks are these cuts truly necessary? Is there an alternative? And how might the three faith communities respond in practical ways?

The Three Faiths Forum recognises the commonalities shared by the three Abrahamic Traditions, including the responsibility to end poverty. It encourages members of the three faith communities to attend this vital meeting to ensure their voice is heard on this issue, to have a chance to direct questions to the people of

influence and to identify what steps can be taken to address the problems of the rise of poverty in the UK.

Live Below the Line

Live Below the Line is an initiative of Tzedek's partner, the Global Poverty Project, an education and campaigning organisation whose mission is to increase the number and effectiveness of people taking action against extreme poverty.



Live Below the Line changes the way people think about poverty by challenging us to live on the equivalent of the extreme poverty line for 5 days.

Tzedek works with some of the world's poorest communities, giving people the sustainable support they need to ensure that even once a grant has run out they can continue to live a life free from poverty.

To sign up to Live Below the Line and raise funds for Tzedek:

https://www.livebelowtheline.com/lbl_users/sign_up?lang=en&partner=uk-tzedek

Enough Food for Everyone

World Jewish Relief (A Jewish Lifeline Worldwide) is part of the IF campaign. While the world is turning its attention to Britain for the G8 Summit in June, WJR is turning its attention to the four big IFs that can mark the beginning of the end for global hunger: Aid, Land grabs, Tax Dodging, and Transparency. To sign up to IF through WJR, visit <http://www.wjr.org.uk/get-involved/if-hunger-campaign/#jump-to-sign>



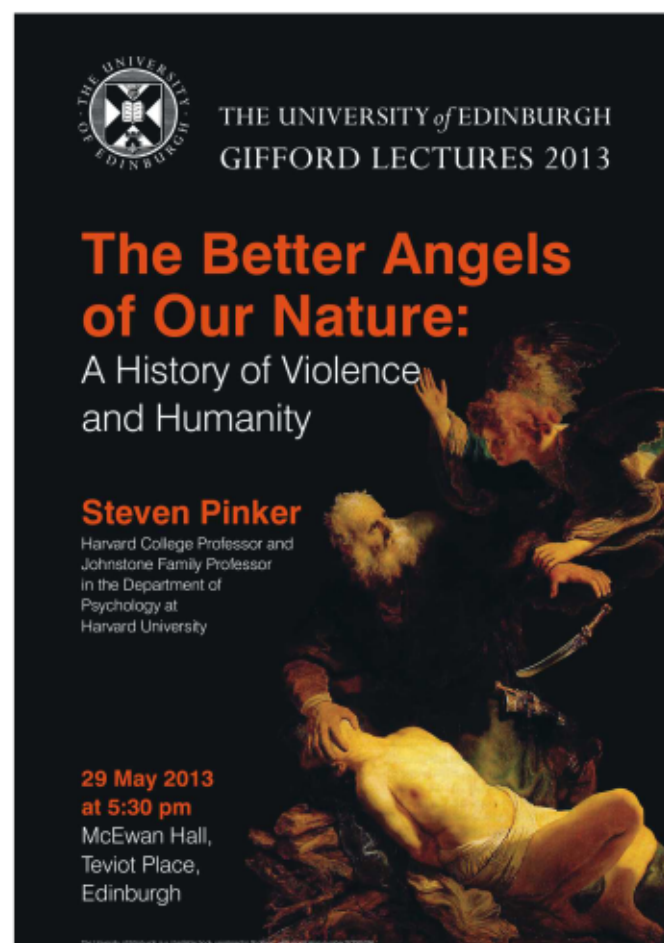
The Better Angels of our Nature: a History of Violence and Humanity

Steven Pinker, Harvard Professor of Psychology, presents the Gifford Lecture at the University of Edinburgh this year.

Contrary to the popular impression view that we are living in extraordinarily violent times, rates of violence at all scales have been in decline over the course of history. Pinker explores how this decline could have happened despite the existence of a constant human nature.

Pinker's recent book of the same name covers a broad sweep of history, from Classical and Hebrew antiquity, through Enlightenment thought and present-day rights revolutions.

Debunking both the idea of the 'noble savage' and an over-simplistic Hobbesian notion of a 'nasty, brutish and short' life, Pinker argues that modernity and its cultural institutions are actually making us better people. He ranges over everything from art to religion, international trade to individual table manners, and shows how life has changed across the centuries and around the world, not simply through the huge benefits of organized government, but also because of the



extraordinary power of progressive ideas. Why has this come about? And what does it tell us about ourselves? It takes one of the world's greatest psychologists to have the ambition and the breadth of understanding to appreciate and explain this story, to show us our very natures.

Israel Trip report

I have been working with the Israel Defense Forces in Israel in Mazrap, a medical supplies base in Ramat Gan, volunteering through a Sarel placement. IDF volunteering provides the IDF



with much needed and vital support, so it is a rewarding experience and great opportunity if this line of work interests you. I'm so proud to wear my IDF uniform with the Sarel Flash.

This is my first visit to Israel, so it has been a unique opportunity to experience military life and civilian life, but most of all experiencing and seeing Jewish life flow daily. When I am off base, I'm regularly visiting Jerusalem before Shabbat. And I was lucky enough to be here for Obama's visit.

I have made many friends on base, who live in Israel and outwith. We recently had a big passover party at IDF Mazrap. IDF kindly gave us permission to take selected photos and share them with our communities which I'm very happy and grateful to share.

*Melvin Davies
(from the Choosing Judaism Class)*