



est 2004

לולב *lulav*

vol II
issue 10

October 2015
Tishrei – Cheshvan 5776

4	Erev Simchat Torah		
	CC	6.30	
9	Erev Shabbat		
	CC	7.00	
16	Kabbalat Shabbat		
	MSG	6.15	
24	Shabbat Morning Service		
	CC	11.00	
	Tea and Talmud		
	CC	3.00	
25	Philosophy Reading Group		
	CC	4.00	
30	Kabbalat Shabbat		
	MSG	6.15	

November

6	Kabbalat Shabbat		
	MSG	6.15	
13	Erev Shabbat		
	CC	7.00	
20	Kabbalat Shabbat		
	MSG	6.15	

Venues

CC	Columcille Centre 2 Newbattle Terrace
MSG	Marchmont St Giles 1a Kilgraston Road

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Word from the Chair

As I write this, we are approaching the final round of the great cycle of Autumn festivals. The cycle concludes with *Simchat Torah*, when we celebrate the completion of the annual reading of the Torah with the end of *Devarim*, and immediately start it again with the first book, *Bereshit*. The day is a joyous one, with singing and dancing and parading of scrolls. This tradition is recent by Jewish standards. It dates from roughly the 11th century CE. By this time the annual cycle of Torah readings was universally accepted. It replaced everywhere the earlier custom of several different triennial cycles for reading the Torah.

It became, and still is, a great honour for the persons called to recite the blessings and the reading of the last passage in *Devarim*, which tells of the death of Moses, and the first passage in *Bereshit*, which describes the Creation of the world. So great was the honour that special terms were coined to designate the two people chosen each year for this mitzvah. The person called up to the last section of the Torah was called *Chatan Torah*, Bridegroom of the Law, to symbolise the marriage of the Jewish people to the Torah. He who was called up to the beginning was called *Chatan Bereshit*.

The day that we in the Progressive communities designate as *Simchat Torah* is referred to in the Bible as the Eighth Day of Solemn Assembly at the end of *Succot*, but had no particular observances attached to it. Religious customs and practices do evolve over time, sometimes slowly as evidenced by the development of *Simchat Torah*, but sometimes relatively quickly.

If I look back over my own lifetime, some great changes have taken place in Jewish practice, particularly in non-Orthodox forms of Judaism. Back in 1975, as a newly appointed headteacher of a Cheder at a synagogue in Manchester, I took on responsibility for preparing young people for their *b'nei mitzvah*. Previously the girls had taken part in a joint ceremony involving a parade. The most able girl each year read the Ten Commandments from the printed Chumash. The feature of the event given the greatest importance, it seemed to my prejudiced eye, was the choice by the mothers of which dress, all identical, the girls should wear for the occasion. I put it to the next group of girls that they could easily do what the boys did. They were reluctant and insisted in coming to the bimah in groups of three or four. The following year it was groups of two. The year after that had individual *b'nei mitzvah* like the boys. They realised, I think, that they had been reading from the scroll individually, even when they were standing in groups.

I apologise to any of the people involved, if I have offended them in what I have described, if they or their families happen to read this. And I should not exaggerate my own role in this transformation. I was merely going with the tide in society's attitudes. It was, for example, the time of the appointment of the first female rabbi in a progressive movement in the UK.

Nowadays, some forty years later, of course it is the norm for women to be called up to the Torah equally with men. It can be no surprise, therefore, that this year, as also last year, we do not have two Chatanim, we have two women taking this role, in recognition of the work they have done for the community. Therefore we use the term *Kallah (Bride) Torah* and *Kallah Bereshit*. Perhaps this helps to make up for all those years when women were excluded.

It has also become the custom in our community for the *Kallot* or *Chatanim* themselves to read from the scroll, whenever possible, instead, as has generally been the custom since Talmudic times, of simply reading the blessings. To do this as well as possible requires a lot of effort. Those people, particularly women, I have talked to about this experience have expressed a feeling of empowerment. For me, being able to read from the Torah emphasises the fact that the Torah belongs to all Jews, not just the Rabbis. For two women it could be said it is a small step, but represents a giant step forward for womankind.

Norman Crane

Best wishes to Gary Dixon for a healthy new year

Mazel Tov to Gary on his discharge — *escape*, says Gary — from the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Gary would like to thank all who sent their best wishes for his recovery, including the Cheder, who sent a honey cake, and the Welfare team.

Our Cheder Children help to explain Tzedakah in Scottish Schools

At cheder and at the Yom Kippur children's service I asked the children to decorate thirty-two tzedakah boxes (of which sixteen are pictured below). These are one category of Jewish objects that will go into a set of thirty-two collections, as part of a SCoJeC project. Each box of Jewish artefacts is going to one of the thirty-two education authorities in Scotland. Volunteers in each local area can use the artefact boxes as an educational resource.



Decorating the boxes helped cheder children to understand about sharing money, and about explaining Judaism to other children in Scotland. The children will also be making tzedakah boxes to take home.

Nancy Lynner, Cheder Teacher

Job opportunity

Two of our cheder teachers, Wendy Crane and Joanna Bleau, will be retiring next summer. Cheder is looking for two teachers to replace them. If you are interested in applying, or to find out more about the positions, contact Cheder head teacher and chair of the community, Norman Crane.

Trees of Life

Mitzvah Day in the Garden of Tiphereth

Mitzvah Day is an initiative to encourage Jewish communities, schools and groups across the UK to engage with their local community in some form of positive social action. This year Mitzvah Day is on Sunday **22 November** and Sukkat Shalom will be working with Tiphereth, an Edinburgh charity, which is an intentional community whose members include adults with learning disabilities. Tiphereth belongs to the international Camphill Movement and is one of ten such communities in Scotland.



Photo: Mitzvah Day



One of its households, The Hollies, in Colinton, has an extensive and beautiful garden but it is in need of some care and attention. Please join us for a few hours (or as long as you can manage) on Sunday 22 November and help us clean up the garden and the pond. The residents at The Hollies very much

look forward to welcoming us and will provide hot drinks (and cake if we're good!).

The work will be physical in nature but no gardening experience is necessary. All you need to bring is your energy, a smile and clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. Please help us to make a difference this Mitzvah Day.

Helen Zollinger

To get involved, please contact Helen Zollinger via the Contact Team by Friday 30 October. The event will take between 10.00 and 3.00 approximately on 22 November. Exact timing will be weather-dependent and is still to be confirmed.

Scotland Welcomes Refugees

Members of Sukkat Shalom might like to know that the Scottish Refugee Council, in conjunction with the Scottish Government, has a website where practical offers of help can be made to the small numbers of refugees we will be allowed to receive. These include offers of **accommodation, befriending, translation skills, English-language teaching and professional health advice** — in fact, all the kinds of help we would like to have been available to our ancestors when they arrived here.

The website is at www.scotlandwelcomesrefugees.scot.

Lindsay Levy



*Donate to the
Jewish Council for
Racial Equality
Emergency Appeal*

*Donate to the
World Jewish Relief
Crisis Appeal*

We continue our Tradition of Tashlich at the Water of Leith

This Rosh Hashanah afternoon, we were joined by Rabbi Danny Rich and family, in our usual spot.



Photo: Maurice Naftalin



Left to Right: Stew Green, Jewish Community Interfaith Representative; Rabbi David Rose, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation; Iain Stewart, General Secretary, Edinburgh Interfaith Association; and Nasim Azad, Blackhall Mosque and Beyond the Veil.

was a truly enjoyable day, made all the more memorable by the various welcomes and meaningful offerings of the religious leaders along the way. Both Rabbi David Rose and Rabbi Mark Solomon were able to participate. Thanks to all who gave their support; here's looking forward to next year!

Stew Green

EIFA Peace Walk: from Shul to the Mandir

The EIFA Peace Walk on 20 September was a great success. As promised (haha), the weather was indeed kind and the walk was enjoyed by a diverse group. While some folk dropped out at the intermediate points, others joined, and a sizeable number eventually completed the full journey.

Those who reached the Mandir were royally treated to a wonderful vegetarian meal. This



Arriving at the Mandir. Rabbi Mark Solomon is fourth from the left.

Kol Nidre Appeal: Mary's Meals and Cosgrove Care

It is our minhag to donate to a range of causes at this time of year: two local charities, one Jewish and one not; a non-profit organisation working for peace and justice in Israel and Palestine, and one working for international development. We like to select small-scale grassroots projects that embody Jewish values of justice and dignity. This year we have selected Windows for Peace, Mary's Meals, Cosgrove Care, and LINKnet Mentoring. This month, we explore Mary's Meals and Cosgrove Care.

Mary's Meals

Mary's Meals' goal is nutritious daily meal in a place of education for every child. It is a Scottish organisation operating in twelve countries, especially in Malawi. Children who go to school hungry struggle to learn. Families who struggle to feed their children may find it difficult to send them to school. Mary's Meals makes sure that eating well and getting an education are mutually supportive. Mary's Meals is now feeding a million children every day. Long-term data trends from Malawi show that school enrolment increases by an average of 30% three years after the introduction of Mary's Meals; the increase in Liberia has been much higher.



Graduation Party at the Mzedibutao Under 6 Centre, Malawi As children prepare to start primary school they celebrate with chicken and rice. Each of these graduates received a backpack, donated by Mary's Meals supporters, filled with school equipment to ensure they have everything that they need for their first day of primary school. (Photo: Mary's Meals on Facebook.)

Cosgrove Care

Cosgrove Care specialises in providing personalised support for children and adults who have learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, and mental health issues, living mainly in and around Glasgow and East Renfrewshire.

With its roots in the Jewish community, Cosgrove provides its services inclusively, and honours and supports the cultural diversity of its service users. One of the main aims of Cosgrove is to support individuals in planning and achieving their preferred lifestyle. Currently there are 120 children and adults using Cosgrove services, ranging in age from 3 to 83. Cosgrove's services for children include one-to-one support at home and holiday play schemes.

For adults and teenagers preparing to leave school, Cosgrove provides supported employment in a community café, charity shop, and, since this summer, in an upcycling project. Cosgrove also partners with local businesses (e.g., Slaters menswear) to provide supported work experience. People with learning disabilities are provided with training programmes that lead to vocational qualifications.



Cosgrove service users learning about customer service from a visiting tutor

*To contribute to the Appeal, either send a cheque payable to "Sukkat Shalom: Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community," to The Treasurer, ELJC, 10 Ainslie Place, EH3 6AS, or donate by BACS to sort code **30 13 01** account number **00974077** and email confirmation to treasurer@eljic.org.*

Ten years on: the Edinburgh World Justice Festival

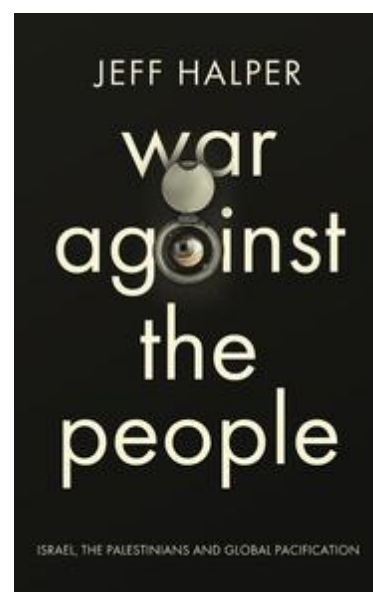
Ten Years ago the G8 met in Scotland, and a quarter of a million people marched on Edinburgh's streets calling for an end to poverty through changes to a glaringly unjust trade system and a suffocating debt burden. We and the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation hosted the Make Poverty History Jewish Coalition. Ten years on, remembering that event, comes the [Edinburgh World Justice Festival](#), in the cause of "bringing together people and organisations who share the common values of justice, peace, non-violence, human rights for all, democracy, respect of differences, independence and self-responsibility, honesty and openness, equality and solidarity."



Ten years on, our children have grown, but poverty remains

Members may be interested to know that at one of the Festival events, Jeff Halper from the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions is speaking about his new book. Jeff was one of the hosts of our Human Rights Tour of Israel and the occupied West Bank, two years ago.

[War Against the People: Israel, the Palestinians, and Global Pacification](#) is the title of the book and the event: on **17 October**, 10.00 (a Saturday, unfortunately) at St Augustine Church.



EIFA Annual Lecture **Christianity, Secularity and Religious Plurality: Some Challenges of Three-Dimensional Living in a Four Nations State**

The Annual Lecture of the Edinburgh Interfaith Association will be given by Professor Paul Weller from the University of Derby's Centre for Society, Religion, and Belief. Professor Weller's lecture on religious plurality will be hosted by EIFA's patron the Lord Provost, and will be followed by a civic reception.

Tuesday **27 October**, 7.00 – 9.00, at the City Chambers: [book your free place using Eventbrite](#).

Sounding the Shofar for Justice: Rabbis call upon the Prime Minister

Tzelem, the UK rabbinic movement for social and economic justice, has called upon Downing St to honour the Kindertransport and open our gates to refugees who are fleeing from tyranny and evil.

More than 100 rabbis (almost every UK rabbi you know, perhaps, including our own Mark Solomon) call upon the Government in particular to review the policy that prevents asylum seekers from working. The rabbis told David Cameron to heed Maimonides: the highest form of charity is to enable the needy person to become self-sufficient.

Tzelem includes Liberal, Reform, Masorti, and Orthodox rabbis.

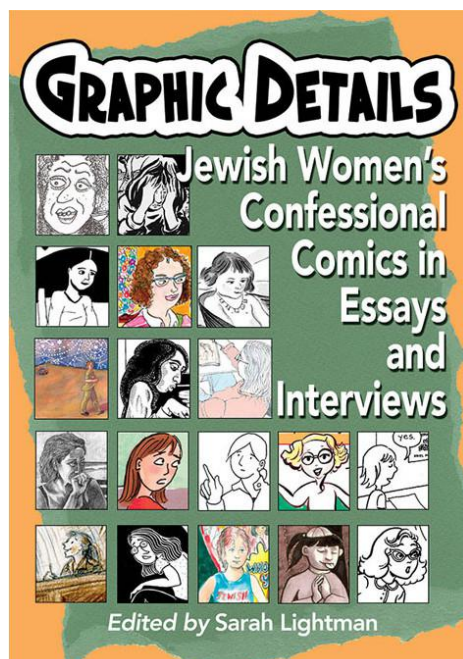
Pictured here, left to right, at Number 10 are: Mr Ernest Simon (Kindertransport, born 1930 in Vienna), Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg (Masorti), Rabbi Harry Jacobi (Liberal; unaccompanied child refugee, born Berlin 1925), Rabbi Sybil Sheridan (Reform), Rabbi Meir Salasnik (Orthodox), and Rabbi Natan Levy (Orthodox, Interfaith & Social Action Officer, Board of Deputies).

Rabbis Harry Jacobi and Natan Levy are recent visitors to events in Edinburgh.



Photo: Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild

The Lit Season Opener is Sarah Lightman, co-curator of *Graphic Details: Confessional Comics by Jewish Women*



Sarah Lightman, artist and writer, is a co-founder and co-director of Laydeez do Comics. She will be presenting "Too Much Information? Miscarriages, Marrying Out and Breaking Soldiers' Hearts in the Confessional Comics of Jewish Women" at the first meeting this winter of the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society, **25 October**, 8.00 at shul in Salisbury Rd.

Graphic Details: Confessional Comics by Jewish Women is both an exhibition, touring internationally, and book edited by Lightman (which will be for sale, heavily discounted, at the meeting).

Sarah Lightman's autobiographical *The Book of Sarah* will be published in 2017. She is currently working on a PhD on autobiographical comics at University of Glasgow: "The Drawn Wound: Hurting and Healing in Autobiographical Comics," in which she will explore how the creative process of making comics can contribute to healing.