



From the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

November 2015

Cheshvan – Kislev 5776

13 Erev Shabbat **Communal Supper** (*Bring non-meat food to share*)

CC 7.00

15 Philosophy Reading Group

CC 4.00

20 Kabbalat Shabbat

MSG 6.15

28 Shabbat Morning Service

CC 11.00

December

4 Kabbalat Shabbat

MSG 6.15

11 Erev Shabbat

CC 7.00

12 Tea and Talmud (*Note changed time and place*)

MSG 2.00

Chanukah Party

(*See p. 3*)

MSG 4.30

13 Philosophy Reading Group

Venue tbc 4.00

18 Kabbalat Shabbat

MSG 6.15

Venues

CC Columcille Centre
2 Newbattle Terrace

MSG Marchmont St Giles
1a Kilgraston Road

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Community Phone This phone number sends voicemail to members the **Contact Team** 0131 777 8024

Care Team Call the **Community Phone** or email care@eljic.org

Email Contact Email the **Contact Team** contact@eljic.org

Email the **Lulav Team** lulav@eljic.org

Website www.eljic.org **Contact Form** contact.eljic.org

Chair Norman Crane *Treasurer* Gillian Raab
Lulav Editor Catherine Lyons *Membership* Sharon Goldwater



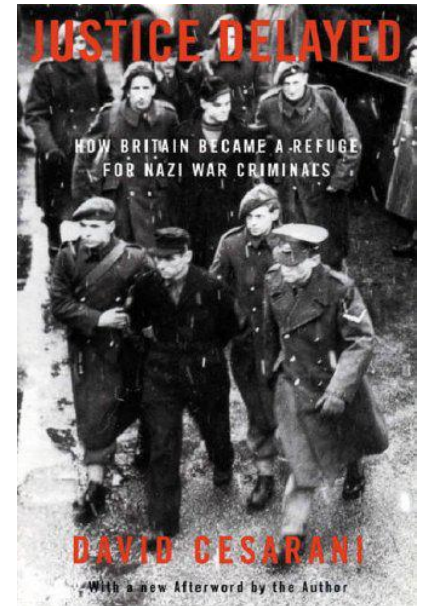
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Scottish Charity SC035678

Word from the Chair

David Cesarani, *z"l*, the leading Jewish historian of our era, died on 25 October. He was both a towering intellectual and also active in the politics. His method — as a historian — was to examine in detail the facts of the issues he dealt with before coming to his conclusions. In this way he often debunked the writings and opinions of others. A prime example is his treatment of Adolf Eichmann as an executioner of the Holocaust. Using archival material hitherto unavailable, he dismantled the notion constructed by Hannah Arendt that Eichmann was essentially a banal bureaucrat. Dismissing Arendt as an unreliable witness, he showed that Eichmann's anti-Semitism and belief in Nazism fuelled his participation in the Holocaust.

In 1992, his book, *Justice Delayed: how Britain became a refuge for Nazi war criminals*, demonstrated that the policies of the post-war government, ostensibly to meet the need for labour to rebuild the country, had encouraged the entry into Britain of Nazis and Nazi sympathisers from Eastern Europe, whilst at the same time making it difficult for Jewish immigration into Britain post-Holocaust. The book emerged from the work Cesarani did following research for the all-party parliamentary war crimes group, which produced a report on the topic. He was critical of Britain's lamentable post-war record in dealing with war criminals. His work was instrumental in the passing of the *War Crimes Act (1991)*, which extended the jurisdiction of UK courts to acts committed on behalf of Nazi Germany. This law was only passed through the use of the Parliament Acts, at the time the only occasion these had been used by a Conservative government to force through a law. In my opinion, opposition to the act resulted from the latent anti-Semitism in some quarters of the British establishment. In 2005 David Cesarani was awarded the OBE for his work with the Home Office unit responsible for the establishment of Holocaust Memorial Day in the UK.



Cesarani believed that Israel's right to exist is unquestionable and he was strongly critical of academic and business boycotts against Israel in the United Kingdom. However he was equally critical of Israeli government policy, conduct, and expansionist sentiments. He was careful to stress that criticism of Israel's government or Israeli society is not *a priori* anti-Semitic. He was clear that it is possible to support the Palestinian struggle against the occupation and for a viable state without endorsing the murder of innocents or conspiracy theories about Jews. In an article of 26 January this year, he deplored the current hysteria about the rise of anti-Semitism. He argued that Jews are not socially or legally isolated, as they were in the 1930s and 1940s, but find themselves enjoying unprecedented solidarity.



David Cesarani in 2004 (from [his obituary in The Guardian](#))

Many people will consider his views with either approbation or disapprobation. For me he represents the voice of reason and moderation. His views, it seems to me, are based on careful consideration, just as his historical writing is based on careful accumulation of fact. We would do well to heed his advice; that Jews, non-Jews, and Muslims should stand together against a common threat of terrorism.

Norman Crane

Welcome to new member Naomi Saphra!

Our latest new member introduces herself

I'm a first-year PhD student at the Institute for Language, Cognition, and Computation at the University of Edinburgh. I like programming, knitting, felting, and martial arts. I grew up in New York, where I was raised with a Reconstructionist congregation that also, like this community, migrated between churches.

I'm heading back to NY for a few months now for treatment for an RSI (from programming), but I look forward to properly meeting everyone when I get back.

Naomi Saphra



Thanks to Naomi for this photo of our candle-lit sukkah



Get ready for our Grand Chanukah Party

Adults and children are all welcome to our party on Saturday **12 December** (the 6th candle) at Marchmont St Giles Church Centre. There will be doughnuts, dreidls, games, songs, food, and good company. Bring your chanukiah for our mass chanukiah lighting. We will finish with latkes and a pot luck supper. Bring a non-meat dish to share.

- 4.30 Children's party with games and refreshments
- 5.30 Havdala, Chanukiah lighting and singing with Rabbi Mark Solomon
- 6.00 Social and pot-luck supper



Our mass chanukiah lighting three years ago

If you would like to help in the planning and organizing, contact Katy Bromberg via the Contact Team.

A fresh start for Mitzvah Day: another opportunity

Readers will know that our Mitzvah Day project this year is work in the garden of Tiphereth. Helen Zollinger and Sue Gutteridge, the organisers, are happy to report that they have plenty of volunteers signed up to help.

If muddy work is not for you, you could make a contribution to the Mitzvah Day Project at the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, which is being organised by Janet Mundy.



Fresh Start's sorting station for donated homeware

Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation has chosen to support Fresh Start's Starter Packs for new tenants as our Mitzvah Day activity for 2015. Fresh Start is an Edinburgh charity that works in partnership with over 40 churches around the city (including Marchmont St Giles) to help break the cycle of homelessness.

We know that ELJC have chosen to clear the garden at Tiphereth, but for any non-gardeners amongst you (or anyone wanting to clear out their own homes!) we are looking for donations of any of the following:

Dishes and cutlery dinner plates, side plates, bowls, cutlery, glass tumblers, mugs, tea-towels

Pots and pans soup pots, frying pans, milk pans, cooking utensils, Tupperware, can-openers, potato peelers, wooden spoons

Cleaning items washing up basins, washing up liquid, toilet cleaner, toothbrushes, toothpaste, hand soap, toilet rolls, bin bags and liners, dustpan and brushes, all-purpose cleaner, laundry tablets, J-cloths

Bed linen and towels single, double and king sheets, duvets and duvet covers, pillows and pillow cases, blankets, towels, curtains, face cloths

Electrical items kettles, toasters, lamps, vacuum cleaners, irons, radios, DVD players, microwaves, music systems

Food tins and jars of: coffee, beans, spaghetti, soup, vegetables, meat, fish; packets of: rice, pasta, soup, biscuits, porridge, cereal, tea

On the morning of Mitzvah Day itself (Sunday **22 November**) Salisbury Road will be open for any donations.

If you would like to donate, please contact Janet Mundy via the Contact Team.

Kol Nidre Appeal: looking at LINKnet Mentoring

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 LINKnet Mentoring, with a guest article from its director.



Under a partnership between the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community and the Voluntary Action Fund, Liberal and Orthodox members of the Jewish community in Edinburgh attended a mentor training day at LINKnet. Norman and Wendy Crane, Catherine Lyons, and Judy Sischy are currently volunteering as mentors at LINKnet.

Mentor training at LINKnet. This group included Judy Sischy, seated right. Judy is a member of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Sponsored by the Scottish Government and City of Edinburgh Council, LINKnet helps Individuals from minority-ethnic groups to find employment or education. LINKnet recruits qualified and experienced volunteers and trains them to be mentors. The service is completely free of charge. Hundreds of minority-ethnic people have secured employment or achieved other personal development goals with the help of LINKnet's mentoring service. With 14 years' experience of providing this service, LINKnet is in a position to strongly recommend mentoring to people who face barriers in their personal and career paths. LINKnet also works with the army and the police to help recruit more people from minority-ethnic communities to their respective forces.

LINKnet understands that some minority-ethnic people need to improve their English language skills to secure employment. To address this need we have launched a series of free English language classes to teach conversational grammar. This project is currently supported by the goodwill of LINKnet staff and does not yet receive funding. At present 25 people participate in these classes.

Ranbandara Dissanayaka (Dissa), director, LINKnet Mentoring

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.

[Your editor is also the LINKnet coordinator. To find out more about becoming a mentor, contact me, Catherine Lyons, via the Contact Team.]

Scottish Minister for Climate Change to open Interfaith Week in Edinburgh

Stew Green, EIFA Jewish Community Rep

This year Scottish Interfaith week will run from **22 to 30 November**, with the theme of Care for the Environment. Always an important topic; more so this year, with the United Nations Climate Change Conference about to start in Paris on 30 November.



Scotland's Eco-Congregations Baton on its way to the Paris Climate Summit

As ever, there are varied and stimulating events on offer in the Edinburgh programme. This year, and in particular regard to the theme, the launch event will be coming to Dynamic Earth on Sunday **22 November** at 2.00. Aileen McLeod, the Minister for Environment, Climate Change & Land Reform will open the event. Guests will also hear about two faith-based projects to reduce carbon emissions. This event however, is by invitation only.

With the exception of the Religious Leaders' conference on 25 November, the other events are open to all. The Peter Owen Jones event is chargeable but everything else is free (or by donation). There is something for everyone, and I would like to draw your attention to a few events in particular:

From 5.30 to 8.00 on Tuesday **24 November** in the University Chaplaincy there will be an Interfaith Earth Honouring of music, song, dance and food. As a bonus, the Eco-Congregations Baton for Climate Justice, which has been relaying Scotland in preparation for its journey to the Paris Climate Summit, will be present! No need to book, just turn up.

On Thursday **26 November** at 7.00 in Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Peter Owen Jones of the BBC's Around the World in 80 Faiths, will share some of his learnings from his pilgrimage to visit the world's many faith traditions. He poses the question, Why do we forget to share? Tickets £9 (£7 concessions, £5 students) from Eventbrite or [mail info@eifa.org.uk](mailto:info@eifa.org.uk)

On Saturday 28 November at midday on the Meadows is Scotland's Climate March, part of the worldwide movement marching for a better future. Ahead of the UN climate change negotiations in Paris participants will be standing up for people affected by climate change and demanding that world leaders agree an ambitious deal. It's just unfortunate that this clashes with shul.

Sunday 29 November, 2.00 – 5.00 at the Kagyu Samye Dzong Tibetan Buddhist Centre 4 Walker Street is an afternoon of 'Caring for Mother Earth' activities including a talk by the 17th Karmapa Lama, tree planting of indigenous species with environmentalist Natalie McCall and delicious Chai from the Edinburgh Nepalese community. No need to book.

Also on Sunday **29 November** is the Big Interfaith Quiz. Always hugely enjoyable and popular — not least the a delicious buffet of dishes from many different faith cuisines — this event is at 7.00 – 9.00 in the Well Cafe, City of Edinburgh Methodist Church, 25 Nicolson Square. Free but please register (individual or team), info@eifa.org.uk.

A fringe event will be Breaking Barriers: Who is your neighbour? This event brings together Jews, Christians and Muslims to discuss scripture and learn about each other's beliefs and traditions and to help guide interactions with individuals, communities and nations. Delicious food will be provided. This event will take place on Tuesday **1 December**, 6.30 – 9.00, in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, 19 George Square. Places are free but must be booked, info@eifa.org.uk.

Looking ahead: Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January 2016) will be commemorated in Edinburgh on Thursday 28 January at Firrhill High School

A shared community centre? Tell Clive what you think

The Dialogue project is currently researching the feasibility of an Edinburgh Jewish Cultural and Community Centre. Many of you have already met Clive Lawton, our consultant for this work. Since it is not possible for everyone to express their opinions face-to-face, we have put together a simple online survey, and we are particularly keen for people who have not already been involved in the consultation to air their views, especially those who are not active members of either of the Edinburgh congregations. Please visit the short [online survey](#) and encourage family members and friends to do so too. The results of the research will be available in Spring 2016.

Janet Mundy, Edinburgh Jewish Dialogue

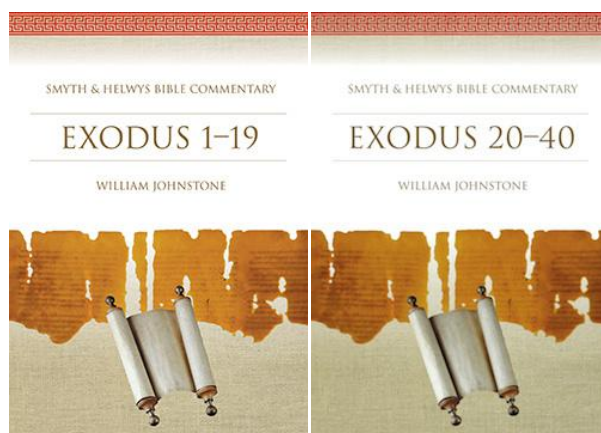
Scholar from the Kirk to address the Lit

Happily coinciding with the climax of Interfaith Week, the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society is hosting 'Decalogue and Dialogue', by William Johnstone, on Sunday **29 November**, at 8.00. Emeritus Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages at Aberdeen University, William will propose that the Ten Commandments provide a model case for biblical interpretation. Despite being 'written in stone', the surprising fact is that they appear in two versions. Dialogue between diverging yet valid interpretations thus stands at the heart of the Bible.

William participated in excavations at Ras Shamra/Ugarit in Syria and at Enkomi/Alasia in Cyprus. He was epigraphist to the Marsala Punic Ship expedition, Sicily. His two-volume commentary on *Exodus* was published last year.

£3 on the door for non-Lit members, at the usual venue, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, 4a Salisbury Rd. For more information, see www.ejls.org

Norman Crane adds: William's professorial chair was established in 1673, more than century before the arrival of Jews in Edinburgh. William is a friend of our community through his wife, Elizabeth (also a retired Hebrew Studies academic), who is a regular at Tea and Talmud and the Philosophy Reading Group.



Chanukah in the City

On Monday **7 December**, the Lord Provost is once again graciously hosting a Chanukiah lighting at the City Chambers on the High Street. This follows on the great success of last year's inaugural lighting of the Chanukiah that now resides within the Edinburgh City Chambers.

The Lord Provost extends his invitation to all members of the Jewish communities within Edinburgh and to those Jewish people who may not be affiliated. The reception will be from 6.00 until 8.00 with the lighting scheduled for 6.45.

RSVP to Helen Johnston in the Lord Provost's office (Helen.Johnston@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 3191).



Last year at the City Chambers