

# Sukkat Shalom

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Sukkat Shalom is a constituent of liberal judaism

## February 2007

**Chairman:** Maurice Naftalin, chair@elj.org  
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### EVENTS & SERVICES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Friday 2nd February</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Erev Shabbat Service</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Columcille Centre</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>7pm</u>

As it is also Tu Bishvat, the new year for trees, we will be holding a 'Tu Bishvat seder' after the service. This seder involves eating various fruits and, like the traditional seder, drinking four cups of wine (or grape juice!). The big difference is that the formal part will only last about 10 minutes!! (There will be time afterwards to have a chat if you wish.) So, come along and help celebrate ELJC's first Tu B'Shevat seder. (See page 2 for more information)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunday 4th February</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>AGM</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Columcille Centre</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>4pm</u>

**(Please note change of time)**

A short AGM will be held this year. All members should have received relevant reports and paperwork by now. We will follow the AGM with a social event (with food of course!) The earlier than previously stated time will allow for children to attend!

<u>Date</u>	<u>Saturday 10th February</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Shabbat Service</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Columcille Centre</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>11am</u>

Please note that the date of our February Shabbat service is a week earlier than normal. This is because Rabbi Mark is also giving a talk to the Lit this weekend (see elsewhere in the newsletter for details) so we have moved our service forward to coincide with Rabbi Marks visit.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Saturday 10th February</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Talmud Reading Group</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Columcille Centre</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>3pm</u>

We will make Havdalah when we finish, at about 5pm

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunday 11th February</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Introduction to Judaism class</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Raab's house</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>10am</u>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Friday 2nd March</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Erev Shabbat Service</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Columcille Centre</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>7pm</u>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunday 4th March</u>
<u>Event</u>	<u>Purim Play</u>
<u>Venue</u>	<u>Columcille Centre</u>
<u>Time</u>	<u>4pm</u>

Lauren Fox will be co-organising the Purim play with any other young adults who are interested. If anyone would like to help organise or just be involved in any way then please get in touch with Lauren at [laurenfox@hotmail.com](mailto:laurenfox@hotmail.com) or on **07737 425880**.

### Would you like to help lead a service?

This can be as much or as little as you like, from leading a prayer through to leading the whole service. We're looking to get more people involved with service taking in 2007, so if you'd like to help, have a chat with Nick.

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**ELJC Welfare Support Line**  
**07904 813162**

Let him that would move the world first move himself

*Socrates*

## **Chairman's word**

This Friday is Tu B'Shvat, so we decided to celebrate with a seder, though I don't think our planning for it went much beyond making sure that there would be enough food available, and that it wouldn't last very long!

For myself, I vaguely knew that it's an occasion for planting trees - in Glasgow this used to be a very enjoyable if muddy variant of Religion School. So I was very pleasantly surprised to find a wealth of material on contemporary meanings that are being found in Tu B'Shvat. The first piece below (from the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, COEJL) explains the origin of Tu B'Shvat in the beginning of the accounting year for the calculation of tithes on fruit trees. Modern understanding reinterprets this unpromising start in terms of the tithes that we, as stewards of the earth, owe to its Owner. COEJL has many ideas for activities around Tu B'Shvat and its Seder that we can use to remind ourselves of our responsibilities as stewards and ways we can begin to fulfil them. For this year, though, I've chosen (in the second piece), only to reproduce a single prayer expressing love and respect for nature as God's creation.

### **What is Tu B'Shvat?**

Tu B'Shvat, the New Year of Trees, falls on the fifteenth day of the month of Shvat. Tu B'Shvat is the beginning of a new cycle for the tithe on fruit trees. Before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E., ten percent of all produce was set aside for the support of the priestly class and the poor. Tu B'Shvat (which means "the 15th of the month of Shvat") marks the beginning of a new fiscal year for tithing. While the Temple is no longer standing, the principles that lie at the foundation of the practice of tithing are eternally relevant. According to Jewish tradition, the earth is the Eternal's and all that it holds (Psalms 24:1). The Land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine (Leviticus 25:23). The land is not ours do to with as we please. We must be responsible stewards of both the land we inhabit and its produce. According to the biblical tradition, this requires sharing the bounty of the land with those in need, allowing the land to rest during the Sabbatical year (every seventh year), redistributing land every fifty years (the

Jubilee), and maintaining the integrity of the land so it will sustain future generations. Though Tu B'Shvat no longer serves its original fiscal function, Jewish communities have continued to celebrate the New Year of Trees as a minor festival. In the 1600s, Kabbalists (Jewish mystics) in Tsfat created a Tu B'Shvat seder modeled after the Passover seder. Participants eat four different categories of fruit and drink four different combinations of red and white wine or grape juice, symbolizing the four seasons and the mystical "four worlds". The early pioneers of the State of Israel celebrated Tu B'Shvat by planting trees. This practice continues today. In recent years, Jewish communities around the world have begun to celebrate Tu B'Shvat as a "Jewish Earth Day" - organizing seders, tree-plantings, ecological restoration activities, and educational events, all of which provide an opportunity to express a Jewish commitment to protecting the earth.

### **A Tu B'Shvat Prayer for Creation By Rabbi Warren G. Stone**

Source of Creation and Life of the Universe, we gather together on Tu B'Shvat, as Jews of conscience, with a deep spiritual bond to your natural wonders, to affirm and preserve creation.

We are grateful for creation in all its majesty: the ever-flowing waters, the azure blue skies, the complex life of Earth's forests, the myriad of lifeforms--amoebae and falcon, black footed ferret and wild turkey, human being and soaring eagle.

The life of all creatures and our own lives are One, profoundly dependent upon each other. We call our ancient scroll of wisdom, the Torah, an "eytz chaim," a tree of life, for it, like the Earth's great forests, sustains us. Torah teaches us that creation, in its great diversity, is harmoniously interconnected. Like the trees, we too need strong and deep roots for nourishment.

The uplifted branches of trees point to our future. God let us be strong, as strong as ancient trees. The Psalmist was right when he said, "like a tree planted by the waters, we shall not be moved."

We are grateful for the life we are lent. We pledge to lift up our voices both in praise of You and in defense of Your Creation.

## Siddurim

Our stock of 'cut price' siddurim (prayer books) has now run out. We do have siddurim for sale; the cost is now £20 for Hardback and £30 for Leather-bound. See Nick if you would like one.

## Help wanted

Do you have some time to help cover our prayer books? Not only would this help protect our communal prayer books, but it also helps distinguish them from those that members have bought for themselves. So, if you would like to cover the books (about 20 siddurim and 20 High Holydays machzorim), please get in touch with Nick. Also, we have just bought 60 grace after meals booklets. It would be nice to put 'property of ELJC' stickers inside them. If you would like to help with this (and we can provide the stickers if you don't have a computer and printer), also see Nick.

## Welcome

We are delighted to welcome **Yonatan Eisenberg** as a new member of the community, our first sabra member. Yonathan has volunteered to be our modern Hebrew teacher and a small group of us have been enjoying his lessons on Sunday afternoons. Any others who would like to join should email [hebrew@eljc.org](mailto:hebrew@eljc.org) or [membership@eljc.org](mailto:membership@eljc.org) or phone the community phone on .

## 'In the Tent of Abraham' Fri 2 March, 2.30pm

An afternoon of tales and story sharing from the great Middle Eastern faith cultures of Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Hosted by Donald Smith as part of the Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace.

Scottish Storytelling Centre  
43-45 High Street  
Edinburgh  
£5/£3

For more information please telephone 0131 556 9579, or email [esther@scottishstorytellingcentre.com](mailto:esther@scottishstorytellingcentre.com)  
[www.scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk](http://www.scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk)

## Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

**Rabbi Mark Solomon,**  
The Liberal Jewish Synagogue



### ***The Secret Light: Islamic Influences on Jewish Spirituality.***

He will further elaborate on his acclaimed talk on the *Influence of Islam on Judaism* given at Limmud 2005, this time focusing on philosophy and mysticism. His rabbinical training began at Lubavitcher yeshivot in Melbourne and Israel, and he received ordination from Jews' College, London. He is currently rabbi at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St. Johns Wood, acts as 'foster-rabbi' of the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community and is a lecturer at Leo Baeck College.

**Marian Oppenheim Hall, The Community Centre, 4 Salisbury Road, January 28 at 8pm sharp.**

## The Yiddish Song Project

The Yiddish Song Project was on Radio 4 on the morning of Sunday 28th January. The programme, called **Sunday Worship**, was a broadcast of a Christian service taking the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day. The producer approached the Yiddish Song Project, which includes **Stephanie Brickman** on vocals, to get some Jewish musical input. If you didn't catch it when it was broadcast, you can listen again by going to [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4)

The Project's most recent gig at The Lot on the 14th January was another sell out success.

Details of any more gigs will be published very soon. [www.yiddishsong.co.uk](http://www.yiddishsong.co.uk)

# liberal judaism

## Wake up to Wogan.... with Rabbi Pete!

You can hear Rabbi Pete on BBC Radio 2 on **Good Morning Sunday** with Aled Jones on **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February** between 7.30 and 8am and giving a Pause for Thought on **Wake up to Wogan** on Tuesdays beginning on **March 6<sup>th</sup> 2007**.

### Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Liberal Judaism is recruiting for the role of Administrator in the Chief Executive's office, funded by the Liberal Judaism Council of Patrons and the Jewish Youth Fund. The post is full-time. To find out more, go to [www.liberaljudaism.org/work.htm](http://www.liberaljudaism.org/work.htm), phone Elvira Museri on 020 7631 9835 or email [e.museri@liberaljudaism.org](mailto:e.museri@liberaljudaism.org)

## REFLECTIONS Jewish Musical Journeys

The **REFLECTIONS** project grew out of the North Western Reform Synagogue's music director Viv Bellos' inspirational idea of creating an anthology of melodies sung in progressive homes around Britain at *Seder*, *Chanukah* and *Shabbat*. There are numerous tunes sung to the same lyrics which reflect the family's origins, and by tracing the source of these melodies and the stories that accompany them, we can create a social history of the progressive movements in Britain.

Working with project manager Vicky Joseph, formerly Reform Judaism Social Action co-coordinator, a substantial amount of money was raised under the auspices of 'Alyth' synagogue. With the benefit of a £50,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund as well as several other donations, some anonymous, Viv and Vicky have started to interview people with fascinating songs and family stories. The first interviewee provided us with a marvellous Pesach song 'Echud Mi Yodea', the verses in Hebrew and the chorus in Arabic, which her grandfather had learned as a small boy, from

his father who lived among the Spanish Jews in Jerusalem. Another interviewee, although singing the familiar traditional tunes, learned them whilst growing up in Nairobi.

Our advisory group includes Geraldine Auerbach of the Jewish Music Institute, musicologists Victor Tunkel and Dr Alexander Knapp and head of JFS Music Department Simon Appleman. However – the REFLECTIONS project can only succeed with the input of people like **YOU**. We need your songs, particularly those that are different to the traditional tunes and we need your stories. We'd also like photographs of your family, if you have them. Don't worry if you don't have the voice of an opera singer - it's not important!

As this material is recorded it will be put directly onto our website and at the end of the project it will be published in an archive, copies of which we hope will be housed in Jewish communities and music institutes around the world.

Viv is happy to run a workshop at your synagogue to explain more about the project and also to interview anyone who may be able to contribute to the project at home, anywhere in the UK. The more material we can record, the more exciting the archive and the website will be. If you would like to contribute or know someone who would, please contact either Viv at [viv@jewishreflections.org](mailto:viv@jewishreflections.org), telephone 07956 912567 or Vicky at [vicky@jewishreflections.org](mailto:vicky@jewishreflections.org) telephone 07957 494 572. And do take a look at our website. [www.jewishreflections.org](http://www.jewishreflections.org)  
*Vicky Joseph*



### Edinburgh Women's Inter-faith Group

Nicolson Sq Methodist Church  
Undercroft Café

#### **Wednesday 7th February 2007**

Topic: Spirituality practices- prayer, meditation, holy scriptures

#### **Wednesday 28 February 2007**

Topic : Spirituality practices - music and dance  
*Gather at 7pm to share "finger" food, and then start the conversation about 7.30pm.  
Everyone is welcome.*

## **4th Edinburgh International Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality & Peace**

There is a huge amount going on in the Festival, which runs from **7th February - 11th March 2007**. We have some programmes that will be available at services. The website ([www.mesp.org.uk](http://www.mesp.org.uk)) has full information. Here are some of the highlights of special Jewish interest during February; March events will be announced in the next newsletter.

### **Film: Knowledge is the Beginning**

Wed 14 Feb at 6.00pm, Filmhouse, Lothian Rd

World-renowned conductor Daniel Barenboim and the late Palestinian writer and activist Edward Said founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra in 1999. This documentary follows this unique collaboration from its inception. Comprised of Israelis, Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians and Syrians, it is a living expression of its aim to further peaceful co-existence in the Middle East. This film was part of the Jewish Film Festival. English, Arabic, Hebrew, with English subtitles. It is part of the Filmhouse Middle East Season, including films from Iran, Turkey, Palestine, Lebanon and Britain.

### **Forum: Spirituality, Civil Society And The Status Of Women**

Chair: Joyce McMillan,

Respondent: Richard Holloway..

Speakers include Rabbi Nancy Morris

Wed, 14 Feb, 2007 at 7:00pm; Martin Hall, New College, The Mound, Edinburgh. Admission Free

Four women from different traditions, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh speaking personally (not representatively) on what the status/power relations between men and women should be in contemporary civic society and how their own spiritual/religious tradition bears on it helpfully or unhelpfully. Richard Holloway will offer a response to the contributions.

### **Middle Eastern Friday Night Meal, And Dialogue With Noa Marom: Dialogue, Peace, And Spirituality**

Friday, February 23, 2007 at 8:00 pm

The University of Edinburgh Jewish Society welcomes Noa Marom, the newly arrived

Shlichah for Liberal Judaism. Noa believes that it is vital to have an open dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians on all levels of society, but crucially amongst the student population. A traditional Middle Eastern Friday night meal will be served with Noa speaking about efforts to initiate dialogue in the Middle East. Peace can become a reality with hard work and a mutual respect for all.

Cost: £3. Contact: [edinburghjsoc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:edinburghjsoc@yahoo.co.uk)

### **The Art Of The Bow:**

A Solo Concert Of Bowed Stringed Instruments  
Celebrating Both The Diversity And  
Commonalities Of Traditional Music From The  
Middle East And The Balkans

Date: Sunday, February 25, 2007 at 7:30 pm.

£10/£8 (Concessions), on the door on the night. Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace.

Beth Bahia Cohen is a professional violinist of Syrian Jewish and Ukrainian Jewish lineage, and a passionate explorer of the various ways the violin and other bowed instruments are played throughout the world. She has learned from and performed with masters of the violin, lyra, kemence, yayli tanbur and rebaba from Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Hungary, and Norway. She produces concerts of Jewish music from both the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

### **A Pilgrimage To The Middle East In Story And Music**

Monday, February 26, 2007 at 7:30 pm,  
Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High Street.

**Storytelling:** In this concert Peter Vallance will share traditional stories from the Middle East that express hope and faith in the power of community. Muslim, Christian and Jewish traditions draw from an ancient common wisdom that celebrates nature as a symbol of peace. Peter Vallance lives at the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland where he teaches dance and tells stories in conferences, workshops and local festivals.

**Music:** Beth Bahia Cohen will weave music around Peter's storytelling, from Arabic violin taqsims to Turkish Sufi ilahis to Sephardic Jewish songs.

Cost: £10/£8 (Concessions). For tickets in advance contact Tickets Scotland, 0131 220 3234



**Mango & Avocado Salad with Sticky Balsamic Vinegar**

**Serves 4**

**Ingredients**

- Generous handful of pine nuts
- Olive oil for toasting
- 2 small Fairtrade avocados (not too ripe)
- 3 small or medium, ripe Fairtrade mangoes
- 1 ripe Fairtrade lime
- Good quality balsamic vinegar

**Method**

- Mix the pine nuts with a little olive oil and place in the oven on a baking tray to toast for five minutes, or until nicely golden.
- Meanwhile, peel the avocados and mangoes and slice them lengthways into generous pieces. Mix and arrange them on a plate – but avoid damaging the delicate fruit.
- Add a generous squeeze of lime juice, a drizzle of the stickiest balsamic vinegar you can get your hands on, and scatter the toasted pine nuts on the top.

*This recipe is reproduced with the kind permission of Joanne Harris.*

**A Hole in One**

A rabbi loved to play golf, but he never seemed to have time. He couldn't play on Shabbat, there was religious school on Sundays, and on days off, something always comes up. But, amidst all the activity of the High Holidays, he got a very early tee time before services on Yom Kippur. A passing angel saw him and reported to the Lord. "I'll take care of him," was the casual response, and the angel hurried back to the golf course to watch. On the next hole, the rabbi got a hole in one. Baffled, the angel returned to question the Lord. "Weren't you going to punish him for playing golf on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar?" the angel asked. "He just got a hole in one!" "I know," replied the Lord. "But who's he going to tell?"



**Tu Bishvat Quiz**

1 This is the first grain to ripen in the spring in Israel.

**Barley                  Wheat                  Pomegranate**

2 The tree that this grows on can live over 1000 years and still bear fruit. Oil is made from this fruit.

**Grapes                  Date                  Olive**

3 Legend says that this fruit has 613 seeds, the same as the number of mitzvot in the Torah.

**Barley                  Pomegranate                  Date**

4 Some rabbis say that this was the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, not the apple. We eat it on Tu B'Shevat.

**Date                  Fig                  Wheat**

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**Many thanks to all who contributed this month. Items for publication are welcomed as are responses to items published. The deadline for the next newsletter will be Wednesday 21st February. Please email any contributions to [newsletter@eljc.org](mailto:newsletter@eljc.org)**

