



# European Union for Progressive Judaism

July~August 2016 Newsletter

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## From the Chairman

Our continent seems to be going through a period of turmoil. In northern Europe the weather has not, until recently, been as summery as it could or should be. The result of last month's referendum in the UK has been both a surprise and shock to many. Fortunately the Brexit vote does not affect the workings of the EUPJ, and I can confidently tell you that in our organisation – as opposed to the one based in Brussels – the UK will remain a full, vital and active member.

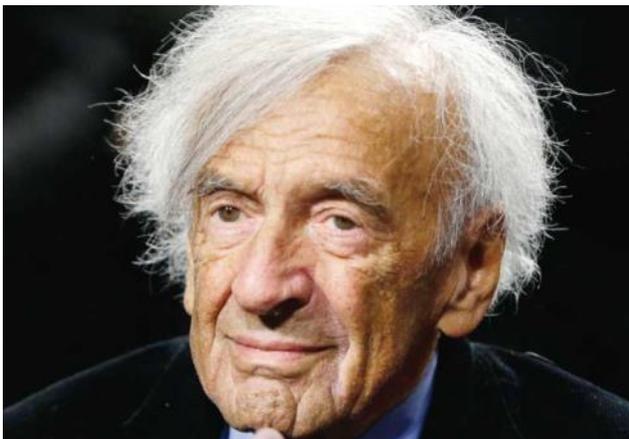
The recent terrorist acts in several countries continue to cause dismay to all right-thinking people and there are calls for governments to do more to prevent these horrors. It is clear to me that it is virtually impossible to predict, and therefore prevent, an individual who has in mind to act alone to cause such destruction. Our hearts and thoughts go out to the victims and their families, and we all pray that these dreadful incidents will not be repeated.

Miriam Kramer



Miriam Kramer

## In Memoriam Eli Wiesel z”l



Eli Wiesel

“In spite of it all, we must cling to this faith, to this memory, to this existence that preceded ours, to this quest that remains ours: a quest for truth, a quest for justice, a quest for brotherhood, a quest for love, a quest for friendship.”

Eli Wiesel

See his full 2009 Yom Hashoah speech [here](#).

## Progressive Jews stand with France

The European Union for Progressive Judaism and the World Union for Progressive Judaism express our deepest sympathy to the families of those ruthlessly killed in the horrific attack in Nice, France. The evil mindset that seeks to cause death and harm to innocent people celebrating French Bastille Day is beyond comprehension.

On Shabbat, July 15-16 our 1200 Reform, Progressive and Liberal synagogues prayed for the safety of all the citizens of France, and for the healing of their nation. We sent special Shabbat wishes to our Progressive congregations in France at this difficult time. We pray for strength and fortitude for our communities across France, Europe and around the world.

May the days ahead usher in peace and a shared faith in all that is good.

**Rabbi Daniel H Frelander**, President, World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ)

**Carole Sterling**, Chair, WUPJ

**Gordon Smith**, President, European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ)

**Miriam Kramer**, Chairman, EUPJ

**Stéphane Beder**, President de l'Assemblée du Judaïsme Libéral



Honouring victims at Promenade des Anglais in Nice

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Gillian Thomas, Assistant Editor



## Continuing request

Our EUPJ Newsletter aims to present articles from every country (17!) in our organisation and from as many communities as possible. To accomplish this vision, we are dependent on receiving news and photographs from our member communities and individual readers.

In this issue, we have news from 11 member countries, and we really want more complete representation in the future. As previously stated, if your EUPJ community or country is not in these pages, it is only because we received no material from you. The remedy is simple: please add [newsletter@eupj.org](mailto:newsletter@eupj.org) to your mailing list to make sure your news reaches us.

Next, make sure all your members and others who receive your announcements also receive the EUPJ newsletter. You can forward the newsletter to all of them when it arrives. Or you can add this link to your home page and regular mailings: [www.eupj.org/publications/eupj](http://www.eupj.org/publications/eupj). We have a great deal of positive news to spread, and I am sure your community's members and friends will be glad to read about it.

**Arthur Buchman, Editor**

## Letters

Rarely has a page of this newsletter been written, formatted and laid out within the hour. A marvelous result of great co-operation. Many thanks, indeed! **Rabbi Walter Homolka**  
Just a note to applaud the new format of the Newsletter. Great idea to publicise events throughout the region. Please convey my congratulations to Gordon Smith upon becoming President.

**Rabbi Rick Block**

See the EUPJ website: [www.eupj.org](http://www.eupj.org).

Subscribe to the EUPJ Newsletter [here](#).

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## Synagogues everywhere

Progressive congregations and Shabbat services can be found nearly everywhere during your travels. Click on a blue link to find a synagogue near your destination: [Europe](#) — [Worldwide](#)



**Bet Januka de Andalucia**

## Join the Israel Advocacy mailing list

About three years ago we held an Israel Advocacy conference in Paris.

Thereafter we built up a list of Israel supporters to which we, from time to time, send articles to address questions in your local community when Israel is attacked verbally about the actions it may be taking.

We also provide articles from time to time regarding the Progressive movement and similar organisations within Israel.

If you as readers of the EUPJ newsletter are not on this Israel Advocacy email list please send your details to [jhgroup.t21@btinternet.com](mailto:jhgroup.t21@btinternet.com) and I shall ensure you are included in it.



**Michael Reik**

**Michael Reik, Vice-Chairman**

Please support  
Friends of Progressive  
Judaism  
in Israel and Europe.  
They support us.  
[www.fpjie.org.uk](http://www.fpjie.org.uk)



### Ohel Jacob in Lisbon is growing



Our website is under construction. You can contact us at [info@hehaver-oheljacob.org](mailto:info@hehaver-oheljacob.org)



### Madrid news

The Reform Community of Madrid made its first firm step into committed interfaith dialogue as part of an event organised by different religious groups in Madrid. We on behalf the Jews, Christian groups including Catholics and Evangelicals, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hare Krishna gathered at the Central Mosque of Madrid to share publicly our concerns about the refugee crisis in Europe and our commitment to make the government move forward. It was so fruitful and an ethical commandment for us, as Progressive Jews in Spain.

As we did last year upon the occasion of sunny and luminous days in Madrid, the Reform Community of Madrid transported Kabbalat Shabbat and dinner to the park.

We welcomed the attendance of Andrew Keene, former NFTY president and current member of the Executive Board of the WUPJ, whose presence was a plus. Families and singles enjoyed experiencing Shabbat with the spiritual addition of nature and meditation. Kids and adults interacted in a very focused way. We celebrated with challot, and we used LED candles to protect the park.

### A Sefer Torah for Madrid



#### Reform Jewish Community of Madrid gets its Torah

The EUPJ Conference in London last April was a great moment for the Reform Jewish Community of Madrid. Not only were we accepted into the EUPJ and through it into the WUPJ, but we were honoured to receive a small Sefer Torah.

One of the world's oldest Progressive Jewish communities, the West London Synagogue, donated a Sefer Torah to the EUPJ and both thought of us to be the first recipients of this generous two-year loan. Actually, it was our first Sefer Torah, a very beautiful specimen that it is around 200 years old.

West London Synagogue made the presentation to Madrid's Reform Community at the Kabbalat Shabbat service in the presence of the conference attendants, our rabbi, Stephen Berkowitz, and president, Yael Cobano. The handing over was so moving and meaningful. We have recently been born, we are working to have a vibrant and committed kehilah and our founding values were represented in this small scroll. We felt complete.



Celebrating the new Torah in Madrid  
Photo: Victoria Atlas

On May 28 we made our formal presentation and held our first Shabbat morning service with the new scroll. About 35 of our congregants accompanied us in a heartfelt service led by Rabbi Berkowitz. Evan Traylor, URJ Presidential Fellow on Millennial Engagement, and his partner Lindsey Benjamin, a congregant during her annual stay in Madrid, supported us.

This coming December and February, our first bnei mitzvot will read their parashah with the new Torah. These are moments of living Torah, so we thank the EUPJ and West London Synagogue for making all this possible. Shehecheyanu!

## Spain



קהילה יהודית של נסיכות אסטוריאס  
COMUNIDAD JUDÍA DEL PRINCIPADO DE ASTURIAS

### Shabbat “served at home”



Shabbat with the Fernández family

At Kehila Beit Emunáh in Oviedo we are guiding many people towards their way back “home”, the house of Am Israel. For this purpose we initiated a course in Judaism in October 2014, assisted by the EUPJ with lectures by Rabbi Alona Lisitsa.

The entire Ramel Fernández family has opted for this path. Recently three members of the Kehila travelled to their home to share a Shabbat with them. We celebrated Kabbalat Shabbat, Tefillah and Oneg Shabbat, as well as held Saturday Services, Havdalah, and Shacharit on Sunday and Monday.

It was an enriching experience for all of us, and we at Kehila Beit Emunáh would like to express our appreciation for this family’s hospitality and generosity, and for filling our weekend with light and joy.



Back in Oviedo we continued to feel the boost of energy developed during our visit to the Ramel Fernández family. We are convinced that this experience can serve as an example for further visits all over Spain where unfortunately there are no communities to support those who wish to live a Jewish life.

Thank you Nuria, thank you Joss, thank you Patricia, thank you Rebeca. May God bless you all.

**Aida Oceransky**

Beit Emunáh/בית אמונה  
Comunidad Judía del Principado de Asturias  
Oviedo, España

[www.sefarad-asturias.org](http://www.sefarad-asturias.org)  
[kehila.asturias@gmail.com](mailto:kehila.asturias@gmail.com)



### Bet Shalom Barcelona participates in its first iftar



Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz addressing iftar

Bet Shalom participated last July 2 in an iftar (the meal eaten by Muslims after sunset during Ramadan), organised by the Association of Interfaith Dialogue Forum Hospitalet and the mosque Camí de Pau (Path of Hope).

This public event, which took place in a park, gathered members of Bet Shalom, neighbours, representatives of other religious traditions and political representatives from the City Council and the government of Catalonia. We all shared this important moment for the Muslim community.

Our Rabbi, Stephen Berkowitz, who is the first rabbi to participate in an iftar in Catalonia, addressed a message to the participants at this event and especially to the Muslims to which he wished Karim Ramadan.

In his address, Rabbi Berkowitz emphasised the ties that unite Jews and Muslims and recalled that in both traditions, “rituals such as prayer, fast and contemplation help us control our body with the purpose of improving our spiritual life and lead us to act with justice.”

Bet Shalom is a member of the Forum L’Hospitalet and of other institutions that work towards the promotion of interfaith dialogue and mutual knowledge between different religious traditions.

**Jose Luis Martin**

### Apology and correction

Personally and on behalf of the EUPJ, I apologise to ATID, Bet Shalom and our readers for an error in our last issue. The tnuá “Netzer” and its Majané Kaitz belong to ATID and not to Bet Shalom as was published. I copied the story and edited it from the Shnat Weekly Update and somehow misattributed the event. We are grateful for the understanding of both communities.

**Arthur Buchman, Editor**

### Beit Warszawa news

On Shabbat, June 17 and 18 we welcomed once again a special guest at Beit Warszawa, Rabbi Yoel Kahn who is a rabbi at Congregation Beth El in Berkley, California.

On Friday Rabbi Kahn presented a lecture "The Origins of the Shema". He also led Shabbat prayers together with our Shatzim, Rivka Foremniak and Piotr Mirski.

Magical Shabbat Gam Yahad classes for children ages 4 to 11 were held on Saturday June 25.

We had Israeli Folk Dancing on Saturday July 2, led by Dominika Zakrzewska in the children's room on the first floor. During the summer, our dance meetings will be held irregularly.

Friday July 8 featured Dr Joanna Michlic, lecturer at the History Department of the University of Bristol and author of "Poland's Threatening Other. The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present."

On Friday July 15 our guest lecturer Waldemar Wasilewski spoke about 'Kabbalah and the meaning of life!' The meeting was an introduction to what Kabbalists have been teaching for thousands of years about the meaning of life, happiness and the special role of the People of Israel.

There are many doubts, myths and misstatements about Kabbalah, and our guest answered all our questions. On Saturday, July 16 we had a family picnic at Beit Warszawa. The programme for the afternoon included skill games, arts and crafts workshops, dancing, board games and much more! Everyone found a fun activity just for them, no matter the age. Picnic guests brought their own snacks to share (cakes, fruit, salads, etc).



Rabbi Yoel Kahn



Joanna Michlic

### Bet Debora conference September 1-4

Wroclaw/Breslau, Poland, the 2016 Cultural City, will host the eighth conference of Bet Debora: "Jewish Women in Europe, creating alternatives". Ruth Herzka will be present with an exhibition. You will find further information and a registration page at [www.bet-debora.net](http://www.bet-debora.net).

### Shavuot 2016 with Progressiv Judendom i Stockholm



Swedish cheesecakes ready to be tasted & voted on

On Sunday 12 June the Progressiv Judendom i Stockholm Association held its annual outdoor Shavuot cheesecake contest at the garden allotment of Chair Eva-Britt Henmark. Before eating lots of wonderful cheesecakes, participants joined in an interesting and animated discussion about the Book of Ruth led by Kerstin Söderström. The approximately 25 people who attended this event thoroughly enjoyed this warm early summer afternoon. After the votes were tallied, Joel Klein won first prize for his delicious homemade cheesecake.

### Paideia Celebration Conference

Paideia, the European Institute for Jewish Studies, hosts a conference September 25–26 in Stockholm in celebration of: 15 Years of Building a European Intellectual-Activist Community with 500 alumni in 40 countries, moving to our new home, inauguration of a new Paideia institution: Paideia Folkhögskola and the installation of our new director: Professor Fania Oz-Salzberger.

The conference will be titled "Bayit", Home, a subject appropriate to our new premises, and will deal with the theoretical, political, and textual complexities of this seemingly simple notion. The two day conference will include panel discussions, textual study, and more.

Please join us for this very joyous and important occasion in the life of Paideia and in the reclaimed life of Jewish culture in Europe, in which Paideia is playing such a vital role.

Register [here](#).

For more information: <http://www.paideia-eu.org/>

### Correction and apology

Many thanks to Rabbi Gil Nativ for writing that the photo of Dominika Zakrzewska in the previous newsletter on page 6 is not the young woman he knew from his conversion class and her wedding where he officiated. I apologize for this error, and hereby present her true likeness.

Arthur Buchman, Editor



Dominika Zakrzewska



**Beth Hillel Roma news**



**Irene Kajon lecturing at Beth Hillel Roma**

Immediately after the conclusion of the series of lectures on the Book of Kohelet by Shmuel Sermoneta Gertel, a second series of lectures, offered by Irene Kajon, focused on "Roots of Reform Judaism: The Guide for the Perplexed by Maimonides." Beth Hillel was really grateful to both presenters.

Both courses were attended by a large group of people interested in Jewish culture, some coming for the first time to Beth Hillel and some already involved in our community.



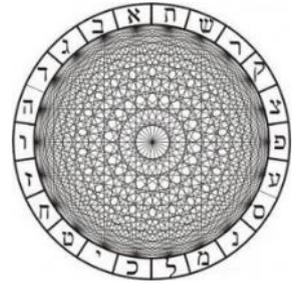
**Regina Jonas conference at Beth Hillel Roma**

Of a great interest was the conference about Regina Jonas, an erudite, charismatic, courageous female Rabbi. The conference was sponsored by the Italian Institute of Germanic Studies, the Hebrew Christian Friendship Association, the Project Lea Sestieri, as well as Beth Hillel.

Thanks to the important contributions of scholars gathered in Rome for the occasion, a strong character was portrayed of the first woman in history to achieve the title of rabbi without breaking the link with tradition and orthodoxy.

**Jewish Meditation at Lev Chadash**

As part of the cultural activities organised by Lev Chadash, Italian Association for Progressive Judaism, on Tuesday July 19 there was a Jewish meditation evening. Sergio Donati, a lawyer and meditation enthusiast (whether Jewish or not), presented a series of meditative exercises and some theoretical reflection.



**Language fun at Lev Chadash**

For the European Day of Jewish Culture on Sunday September 18, Lev Chadash Milan is offering an evening of "the family lexicon": sayings, proverbs, dialogues, stories and remembrances heard in our families. Do you want to share with us and the audience memories and anecdotes of your family vocabulary? Whether they are in Italian, Hebrew, Ladino, Yiddish, English, Bagitto, French, Spanish, Russian, Turkish, Venetian etc, etc, anything goes. We would like to receive direct quotations such as quarrels between grandparents, scolding parents, uncle proverbs, nursery rhymes, children remarks, idioms in everyday life. Even just a few words or sentences!

We will be happy if you will also actively participate in the evening by telling your stories yourself. They will all be coordinated and linked by Dorotea Ausenda, actress and theatre director and friend of Lev Chadash.

The only constraint is that of time, so please send us your testimonies as soon as possible to [cultura@levchadash.it](mailto:cultura@levchadash.it). Thanks for contributions already sent, they are valuable and interesting and very funny.

The time has yet to be determined, but the late afternoon or evening is most likely, of course with refreshments.

Dorotea Ausenda, born in the US, is Italian, French and American, She graduated from Filodrammatici di Milano and the Bottega di Gassman and has long worked with Carlo Cecchi. She also teaches theatre and communication skills.

**Beth Hillel Roma Shabbaton**



**Lake Vico**

The second edition of the Shabbaton at Lake Vico, which took place in the second half of May, was very well received by all participants. Many booked well in advance, and all the apartments available for Beth Hillel were filled. A great and cosy Jewish atmosphere coupled with a total freedom of movement in the entire perimeter of the farm of La Valle di Vico for the youngest were the keys to success. We received enthusiastic reports from the participants again this year!

### Beth Shalom Milan news

Before we all take off for who knows where, we wanted to inform you of the happy news we have. We know that airline announcements are a bit out of place in a synagogue newsletter, but in this instance we think you will agree with us that we can safely say "Fasten your seatbelts" – we're taking off full speed ahead.

We are thrilled and honoured to inform you that Rabbi Donald Goor and Cantor Evan Kent will be returning to conduct our High Holy Day services. Those who were lucky (perhaps blessed is the proper word) to hear Cantor Kent's moving rendition of Shema Koleinu or Rabbi Goor's truly memorable talk on 'Walk the Walk' last Rosh Hashana morning know what is in store for us during the Moadim, a truly moving experience not to be missed.

What's new? We will be holding our services at the Enterprise Hotel in Corso Sempione 91, easily reachable by public transportation (trams, busses, even the Metro), and it has its own parking lot. We will inform you in a later announcement of the times for our various High Holy Day services. But our exciting news does not finish here. We



Enterprise Hotel

are truly honoured to announce that Rabbi David Whiman will be arriving in mid-October and will be our resident rabbi in Milan through June 2017. This is the first time we have had a rabbi for such an extended period. Those of us who have met Rabbi Whiman either in NY or on Skype think he is the perfect person for our congregation. He is warm, extremely intelligent, lively, well versed in Judaism and has a great sense of humour.



Rabbi David Whiman

We are also happy to announce that we received a significant donation from a major American congregation that will enable us to rent an apartment for Rabbi Whiman which will be used for adult education courses, book groups, study sessions, etc. It is up to all of us at Beth Shalom to fully utilise the rabbi's myriad talents so that all together we can - as a warm, inclusive, welcoming congregation - go from 'strength to strength' with the rabbi's assistance and wisdom.

Have a great summer.

The Board of Beth Shalom

### Rabbi Walter Homolka honoured



Rabbi Dr. Walter Homolka accepting the appointment as Knight Commander of the Republic of Austria

Rabbi Dr. Walter Homolka, Rector of Abraham Geiger College in Germany has been appointed a Knight Commander of the Federal Merit Order for services rendered to the Republic of Austria. The investiture was held on July 4 at Dietrichstein Palace in Vienna and conducted by the Minister of the Federal Chancellery of Austria, Thomas Drozda.

The honour acknowledges the founding of Jewish theology as a university subject within the European Union. Germany's past president of Jewish communities Charlotte Knobloch acknowledged the achievement: "Walter Homolka stands as an example for the renaissance of Jewish intellectual life after the Shoah. As a rabbi, widely published scholar and educational leader he is unique in building a bridge between our ancient Jewish tradition and modernity." In 2015, the rank of Knight Commander has been awarded only five times by Austria's president Dr. Heinz Fischer, and this is the only one conferred upon a foreigner.

### Rabbi Walter Jacob honoured

Recently Rodef Shalom Temple in Pittsburgh bestowed the prestigious Pursuer of Peace Award on Rabbi Walter Jacob, who, among his many accomplishments, founded Abraham Geiger College in Germany. As you may know, Abraham Geiger College is the first rabbinic seminary in continental Europe founded after the Holocaust and was co-founded by Rabbi Walter Homolka. Rabbi Homolka spoke at Rabbi Jacob's award ceremony and also spoke at the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh on June 7. I was privileged to be able to take photos during Rabbi Homolka's talk at the Holocaust Center and they can found [here](#). To best view the photos, click on the link, click on the first photo, maximise the page, click on the diagonal arrow on the top right of the page and scroll through the photos.

Dale Lazar

### LJG Hamelin news

It was a bittersweet moment as we bid Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy goodbye after his last visit with us on Shavuot. He has accepted a position in Moscow, but we hope to invite him for a weekend seminar when he is in Germany visiting his wife, Rabbi Natascha Lyskovoy. Our members love his authentic, entertaining and dramatic style and especially hearing it all in their mother tongue. It was fitting that his last weekend with us this year be on Shavuot.



**Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy**

After services and a festive Kiddush of cheesecakes and fruits were enjoyed, a semi-circle was formed and the learning began. The aroma of spring flowers was as sweet as the lively discussion with Rabbi Sascha. A parting compliment was overheard as a member said, "I will miss his visits. When he speaks, I understand everything. He touches my heart."

Our members Boris Utchitel and Arkadij Drejzer gave a fascinating lecture about the history and development of the FSU space programme. Both octogenarians spoke excitedly about their part during their careers. Those in attendance were captivated and one question followed another. The discussion continued at the refreshments table, beautifully prepared by Doroti and Valerij Bogachyck. This was yet another valuable programme organised by Polina Pelts and supported by "Aktion Mensch." We thank Aktion Mensch for help and support for seed monies that address the needs of our older congregants. These programmes have been very well received and are as informative as they are entertaining.

It is with great pleasure that the Dohme family wishes to share their happiness with members of the congregation in early September as their daughter Rebekka and Amitai Yareev Schleier marry under the chuppah. Rebekka and Amitai's families welcome you to share their joy and rejoice with them on this very special occasion. The young couple is the first to stand under the chuppah in our new synagogue. Personal invitations will arrive by post.



**Rebekka Dohme**

**Rachel Dohme**

Read much more in our [July-August newsletter](#).

### Union of Progressive Jews of Germany 28th Annual Conference

The conference of the UpJ has a new home and this year we will meet in Bonn from July 28 to 31. The conference offers fascinating speakers, hands-on workshops, moving services and time to reconnect with colleagues and friends from all over Germany. There is a children's programme and, as always, the conference languages are German, Russian and English.

Information and registration are available [online here](#) and from the UpJ office at [info@liberale-juden.de](mailto:info@liberale-juden.de).



### Hamburg Liberal Jewish Community news

The Hamburg Liberal Jewish Community is very active at the moment and trying to be more visible. Hamburg member Vera Venediktova has written an important article about the long reform Jewish tradition in Hamburg and Germany and its relevance. You can read it in both [English](#) and [German](#).

We hope for a diverse Jewish cultural life in Germany again.

**Bettina Wagner, Public Relations LJGH**  
[www.davidstern.de](http://www.davidstern.de)

### Shavuot at Beit Haskala Berlin



**David Maxa (l) at Beit Haskala for Shavuot**

Rabbinic student David Maxa joined [Bet Haskala](#) in Berlin, as part his Abraham Geiger College internship, to lead the congregation in Shavuot services along with Cantor Aviv Weinberg, Board Member Sara Gross, CEO of Bet Haskala Benno Simoni, and Myfanwy Pipkin, Werner Wilhelm, Efraim Grisk-Simoni, among others. Maxa and Cantor Weinberg led the reading of the Book of Ruth, which was accompanied by handmade puppets depicting characters of the story. At certain points during the reading, participants responded interactively with the stick figures, creating an experiential and enjoyable evening that engaged participants with the Megilla.



## Let us move ahead

In June 12 in the United States during Gay Pride month, 49 people were killed and 53 wounded in the Pulse, a gay night club in Orlando, Florida. Our hearts go out to the families of those who were murdered and those injured.



Rabbi Ira Goldberg

We stand in solidarity with the survivors of this horrific shooting, and the LGBT community that has been faced with so much violence, discrimination and abuse. No one should ever live in fear because of who they are and the peaceful choices they make about how to live their lives. As a community and as human beings we cannot abide the pain and suffering to which people who are LGBT are routinely subjected.

Nor can we judge the many by the acts of the few. The killer claimed allegiance to several different groups that are all connected to Islam. His extremism perverted a faith. We cannot and must not judge all members of that faith by what he did. As always, there are so-called leaders, demagogues, who are using this terrible tragedy to stir up hatred and to gain power. We cannot succumb to the fear and hate they sow, give them power. For the sake of everyone who has suffered from discrimination, prejudice or hatred of any kind, we have to be up-standers, not by-standers. Together we stand against all hatred and bigotry, whatever its source and whoever its target.



Together, as individuals and a community deeply pained once again by violence against innocent people, we refuse to give in to terror and hate. May we all find the support we need and have the strength and courage to

stand for the best in each of us and in our Jewish community. Let us move ahead with the determination to build a better future.

Rabbi Ira Goldberg  
IJC, Brussels

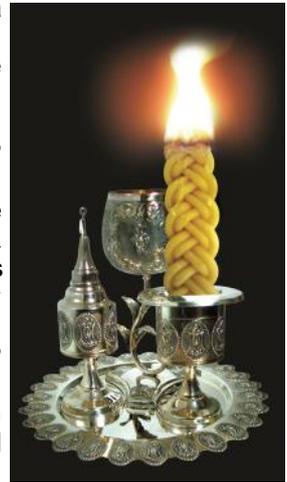
## IJC summer activities

The IJC held a Torah Breakfast on Saturday June 25. The topic was "Burying our cravings: what do we do with our desires and cravings?" This was followed by a Shacharit Morning Service with Parashat Beha'alotcha. During the service we honoured all the IJC high school graduates who are heading off to universities around the world. We celebrated their accomplishments and wished them luck. The service was followed by kiddush, a light potluck lunch and our Annual General Meeting.

On Friday July 29 we will hold a Rooftop Kabbalat Sabbath Evening Service at a member's home in Leuven. The short service will be followed by a potluck dinner, so bring some food to share. For the address and to RSVP email [leuven@ijc.be](mailto:leuven@ijc.be).

On August 20 at 7 pm there will be a potluck BBQ & Havdalah Service in a member's home near Antwerp. For suggestions on what to bring, the address and to RSVP email [info@ijc.be](mailto:info@ijc.be).

We resume services on September 9th & 10th and Hebrew School on the 10th.



## Brussels accommodations needed

Rabbi Marc Neiger will take a well-earned holiday in August. In his absence, the Shabbat services on August 5-6 and 12-13 will be led by Esther Villaz and members of our community. Esther Villaz is coming as a volunteer from Lille to help us in the absence of Rabbi Neiger.



Esther Villaz

We are seeking a Beth Hillel member or friend who could host and welcome Esther, her husband and their daughter Brünnhilde (who will celebrate her Bat Mitzvah at Beth Hillel on August 27) on those four nights.

The Board of Directors met in mid-July and our directors and administrators unfortunately cannot accommodate them. It would be consistent with our values that we, the members of the community can accommodate our friends, in a simply human and fraternal gesture.

## France

### An afternoon at MahaNetzer



Studying Mishnah while hearing in the background, beyond the noise of the cicada insects that frame the ambiance of the south in France, one group of kids screaming loudly as they encourage their teammates in a sports activity and the power chords of several guitars strumming out a melody in another group

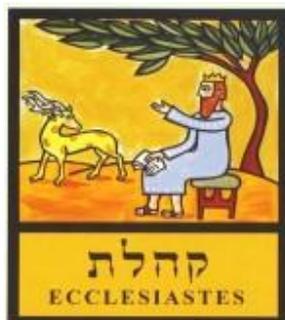


One of several activities for the littlest group

### Wisdom from Kehilat Geshar

Kohelet's ultimate message of wisdom, which we studied at Kehilat Geshar on June 16 during our last session this year on the book of Ecclesiastes: "Eat simply, drink moderately, work meaningfully, and cultivate love and friendship". May we all learn this lesson.

Rabbi Tom Cohen



### New artwork at Keren Or Lyon

Un, Vide & Plain (One, Full & Empty) by Dror Endeweld is a work that speaks with economy of means and a radical blueprint. It is white, and is distinguished from the white wall from which it is kept apart only by its shadow. The light changes according to the day. The hanging is a flat plane in which is carved the word Un (One). This word is composed of two identical letters, one in outline and the other open and represents the prayer "Shema Israel". We can distinguish the letter Shin in the upper right which is the first letter of the word "Shema" and then Un / Echad ends the sentence. This word alone sums up the aspiration to monotheistic spirituality.



Un, Vide & Plain  
by Dror Endeweld

Dror Endeweld

### Keren Or photos



The Bet Din at Keren Or:

L-R: Rabbi René Pfertzel, Daniel Olivier, Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz, Floriane Samoggia, Rabbi François Garai



Bar Mitzvah of Eyal Endeweld at Keren Or

## EUPJ, WUPJ and Jewish Agency leaders meet in Paris



L-R: Shai Pinto, WUPJ Vice President and COO; Paul Azoulay President of Kehilat Gesher; Rabbi Yann Boissière (MJLF); Marc Konczaty, President of Mouvement Juif Libéral de France (MJLF); Jean-François Bensahel, President of ULIF-Copernic; Rabbi Jonas Jacquelin (ULIF); unidentified; Rabbi Daniel Freeland, WUPJ President; Rabbi Philippe Haddad (ULIF); Stéphane Beder, President of l'Assemblée du Judaïsme Libéral (AJL)

On June 26 - 28, lay and professional leadership of the EUPJ and WUPJ attended the Jewish Agency for Israel Board of Governors (JAFI-BOG) meeting in Paris, bringing together more than 200 leaders from major Jewish organisations like the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and Keren Hayesod.

Productive discussions led to many significant partnerships among attendees, most notably the unanimous vote to pass a resolution urging the government of Israel to implement a plan to resolve interdenominational disputes over the Kotel in Jerusalem. (Read more [here](#).)

Attendees met with leadership of the French Progressive Jewish community at the Union Libérale Israélite de France (ULIF), also called the Rue Copernic synagogue, for discussions with rabbis and community leaders. Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur of MJLF presented an engaging presentation on the future of French Jewry. As one of two women rabbis in France, Rabbi Horvilleur is trying to expose the country's Jews to a more liberal line of Judaism in her congregational and academic work.

Reflecting on the significance of the meetings, Rabbi Daniel H Freeland noted, "It was an affirmation of Jewish life in France."



### Follow AJTM

Follow our Paris community Beth Yaakov on social networks. Read their [Facebook page](#), share it, "like" it. Become one of their ambassadors and feel free to post messages or respond to articles that they post.



## Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur at the Grand Lodge of France

On June 22 Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur addressed a full house at the Grande Loge de France on "faith, violence and hope", one of many opportunities she takes to bring the essence of Judaism to a wider audience. Through Torah, Talmud, midrash, Jewish humour and an occasional reference



Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur

to her books, she responded to questions for two hours. On faith, she said Judaism is more interested in learning, questioning, uncertainty and ethical behaviour; undue certainty may lead to intolerance or worse. Violence is inherent to humanity, but must be controlled. Revisiting sacred texts about violence may avoid violence to man in the name of divinity. Hope we must, but results call for acceptance of pluralism and recognition that our own community has been built through interaction with others.

## MJLF synagogue renovation



The MJLF synagogue sanctuary, untouched since 1980, is being renovated to bring more light and warmth to our services. Returning from their estival escapades, members will discover an expanded entrance, a new open tevah (bimah) and new chairs for all.

## Shabbaton at Fontainebleau

From September 23 to 25 Rabbi Floriane Chinsky will lead services for the traditional MJLF Shabbaton at the Carmelite Convent at Avon, a short walk from the beautiful town, park and chateau of Fontainebleau. This is a great occasion to prepare for the new year with prayer, stimulating discussion and easy walks. A special Kaddish will be said for Father Jacques who was deported with the children he had hidden at the convent for several years. Open to all – see the programme at [www.mjlf.org](http://www.mjlf.org).

Robert Ley

## Interfaith panel discussion in Paris

"Can Sacred Texts be Changed?"

On June 1 Rabbi Yann Boissière of the Mouvement Juif Liberal de France (MJLF) joined Professor Jacques-Noël Pérès from the Institute of Protestant Theology, and Karim Ifrak, a researcher of Islamic text and thought in the Muslim world at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) for an interfaith panel discussion of "Can sacred texts be changed?" ("Peut-on toucher aux textes sacrés?")

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Rabbin du Mouvement Juif Liberal de France (MJLF), affilié à la World Union for Progressive Judaism

**Jacques-Noël Pérès**  
Professeur honoraire à l'Institut protestant de théologie, ancien directeur du Institut supérieur d'études oecuméniques

**Karim Ifrak**  
Historien des textes et de la vie de la pensée dans les mondes musulmans, CNRS Paris

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La conférence sera suivie d'un atelier de questions et réponses à 20h30

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www.associationcordoba.org

exploring the possibility of different interpretations of sacred texts, and the role of individuals in understanding their meanings. The conference was organised at Vincennes, near Paris, by the Association Cordoba, an interfaith cultural organisation aimed at fostering dialogue among Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

[Read more here.](#)

## GIL in Venice



Rabbi François Garaï (l) and GIL B'nai Mitzvah youth and families visited Venice on June 27-29.

DISCOVER JEWISH CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE **European Days of Jewish Culture**  
September 4<sup>th</sup> 2016



## Can one kill in the name of God?

In New York in 2001, Madrid in 2004, London in 2005, Paris, Brussels Orlando, Ankara, Nice and Munich in recent months, men women and children were killed in the name of God. This type of fanaticism, once thought to be limited to the Christian Middle Ages or the Muslim Middle East, attacks Western societies today. Is God responsible? Is it an excuse? Is fanaticism common to all religions? On July 3 these questions were debated peacefully at the Protestant Centre in Paris, moderated by Antoine Mercier, journalist at France Culture. Participants were Florence Taubman, pastor of the United Protestant Church; Jonas Jacquelin, rabbi of ULIF; and Mohamed Sifaoui, journalist and writer at Cercle Théologie et Actualité.



## European Day of Jewish Culture

On September 4 GIL offers a tour of the synagogue at 12:30 followed by a buffet. At 14:00 there will be a presentation by Mrs Sarabella Benamran-Wajnberg, "A musical journey to the heart of the Yiddish language."

**MIGWAN** מגוון  
LIBERALE JÜDISCHE GEMEINDE  
LIBERAL JEWISH CONGREGATION  
BASEL

## Migwan starts youth program

We would like to bring your attention to our new youth programme which we started last autumn with a teen group. Led by Dan Dunkelblum, they meet periodically to learn, discuss, watch movies, eat together and socialise. This programme is offered to Migwan teens age 13 and up.

Our youngest children meet for a Sunday programme to make crafts, sing and have fun. Lea Schmid and Aviva Rosenbaum are leading this activity, which is suitable for ages 3 to 6.

New faces in both groups are very welcome. You can find the newest information on our homepage, [www.migwan.ch](http://www.migwan.ch), and you can register at [migwanim@migwan.ch](mailto:migwanim@migwan.ch).

Migwan is also on [Facebook](#). Please visit the page and comment, like and invite others.

Please note: The Migwan office will be closed all July during the official school holidays in Basel-Stadt. You can reach us by email during this time at [info@migwan.ch](mailto:info@migwan.ch).

### Liberal Judaism Biennial 1-3 July



Rabbis Dr Andrew Goldstein and Charlie Baginsky leading services at the LJ Biennial. [Click here to see many more photos.](#)

### Finchley Reform Synagogue hosts London mayor Sadiq Kahn for Iftar

On Sunday June 26 the Mayor of London, Sadiq Kahn, was the guest of honour at an Iftar, the Ramadan fast-breaking meal, at the Finchley Reform Synagogue (FRS), a member of the UK Movement for Reform Judaism which is a member of the EUPJ. The event celebrated a special three-year friendship between the congregation and the Somali Bravanese



Mayor of London Sadiq Kahn

Welfare Association (SBWA). Since 2013, FRS has played host to nightly prayer meetings throughout the month of Ramadan.

The SBWA provides religious, educational and welfare support to a community of refugees and their families who fled conflict in Somalia. When their north London community centre was destroyed in an arson attack in 2012, Rabbi Miriam Berger of FRS offered a helping hand. With the support of North London Citizens community organising group, the synagogue to become a temporary meeting place for Muslim prayers. FRS has now had the honour of playing host to four SBWA Ramadans.

Sadiq Kahn returned to FRS for a celebratory Iftar with 200 guests, having also been present in 2014 and 2015. London's first Muslim mayor spoke warmly about the inspirational connection between FRS and SBWA, and recounted that it is a story of friendship that he often shares with his fellow mayors from other cities worldwide. Rabbi Berger said of the event, "After a weekend of profound political uncertainty the coming together of two such different communities who are now long standing friends, along with the hope filled leadership of the Mayor of London, was a deeply healing moment for everyone there." Read Mayor Kahn's speech to the Jewish community in London in the Jerusalem Post [here](#).

### Rabbi Aaron Goldstein addresses intermarriage issues

Rabbi Aaron Goldstein responds to the Institute of Jewish Policy Research's "Jews in Couples – Marriage, intermarriage, cohabitation and divorce in Britain" report:

"The survey shows that intermarried couples are less likely to bring their children up as Jewish, but it doesn't tell us why. Surely, the figures say as much about how the Jewish community treats such couples as it does about the attitudes of the couples themselves?"

"If we treat them with disdain then it is hardly surprising that they choose to opt out of our community. But if we welcome such couples – as Liberal Judaism does – then we massively increase the chances that intermarriage means marrying in, not marrying out."

You can read the full report [here](#).

### Edinburgh's Interfaith Peace Walk

This year's Peace Walk on May 29 had a great group spirit among the many people of all faiths, including members from both Edinburgh Liberal



Edinburgh Interfaith Peace Walk

Jewish Community and Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, who took part. Beginning at St Mary's Cathedral and progressing via the Baha'i Centre, the Annandale Street Mosque, the Hindu Mandir and the new Kagyu Samye Dzong Buddhist Centre, the walk ended at the Sikh Gurdwara in Leith. Here Rabbi Mark Solomon contributed to an Interfaith Peace Service which was followed by a wonderful shared meal. All in all, a very meaningful and enjoyable experience.

Click the logos for news of our UK movements



## A Shabbat welcome for refugees in South London



L-R: Rabbi Janet Darley, SLLS Chair Alice Alphandary, Laura Griffiths

Laura Griffiths from SafePassage UK was the guest speaker as South London Liberal Synagogue (SLLS) observed Refugee Week with a special Refugees Welcome Shabbat.

Laura spoke about the work being done to find safe and legal routes for refugees to come to the UK.

SLLS is part of the Lambeth Citizens Refugees Welcome team and the previous week supplied collected household items for the latest Syrian family to be resettled in Lambeth.

Rabbi Janet Darley said: "Torah tells us numerous times about the importance of welcoming and supporting the stranger. We are pleased to be able to work with our neighbours and with Lambeth Council to make this a reality in our area."

## Liberal Judaism appoints director of strategy and partnerships

Rabbi Charley Baginsky has been appointed as Liberal Judaism's first director of strategy and partnerships.

Charley is also part-time rabbi at South Bucks Jewish Community and coordinator for the Alliance for Progressive Judaism. She will be responsible for completing and implementing the Liberal Judaism Strategy Document, as well as creating and building partnerships between our movement and organisations within and outside the Jewish community in Britain and Israel.

Charley will also act as a spokesperson, when required, to represent Liberal Judaism's values and ideology. She will work closely with LJ's senior rabbi, Rabbi Danny Rich.



Rabbi Charley Baginsky

## Liberal Judaism Patrons' Dinner



Liberal and Progressive Rabbis at the House of Lords for the annual Patrons Dinner. Photo: John Bernard

Rabbi Danny Rich, the senior rabbi of Liberal Judaism, hailed a successful year for the movement when addressing the 12th Annual Council of Patrons' Dinner on June 14.

Taking place at The House of Lords, Rabbi Rich outlined how money donated by Patrons is used for three agreed purposes: to raise the Liberal Judaism profile, to support the development of new communities and to pioneer new initiatives.

After speaking about Liberal Judaism's successful student work and increasing media profile, Danny turned to how the movement strengthens and supports communities.

He said: "The decision of Shir Hatzafon, the Progressive Jewish community of Copenhagen, to join Liberal Judaism is significant.

"Subject to the British electorate, we may soon be in a position to apply for grants from the European Union (EU), being represented in three EU countries: the United Kingdom, Eire and Denmark.

"More important it shows a little strategic thinking. When Sandra Kviat was ordained by the Leo Baeck College some years ago as the only Danish speaking Progressive rabbi in the world, it was utilising Patrons' money that I created a post for her as Liberal Judaism's Education Director.

"This is an example of a virtuous circle where Patrons' money is invested in the future of Judaism. Were that not enough we already have requests to support groups in Belfast and elsewhere, so watch this space!"

The keynote speaker was Rabbi Gilad Kariv, Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism (IMPJ). He spoke about the continuing battle for equal rights for Progressive Jews in Israel, as well as the successes the IMPJ has enjoyed in its 50-plus year history.

Other special guests at the dinner included Gillian Merron, chief executive of the Board of Deputies, and student Jennifer Harper, who spoke passionately about the support she has received from Liberal Judaism while at university.

The dinner was hosted by Lord Haskel, Deputy Speaker of The House of Lords, and organised by Joan Shopper.

WORLD  
UNION FOR  
PROGRESSIVE  
JUDAISM



האיגוד  
העולמי  
ליהדות  
מתקדמת

## WUPJ 2017 Calendar

February 16-26, 2017

[Beutel Leadership Seminar](#), Jerusalem

May 15-21, 2017 [CONNECTIONS 2017](#), WUPJ 38th Biennial Conference, Jerusalem

## Open Call: Beutel Leadership Seminar



Beutel Leadership Seminar workshop

The Beutel Leadership Seminar, run by the Saltz International Educational Center of the WUPJ, is opening its application process to nominations of congregational and community leaders to join its prestigious ten-day seminar in Jerusalem, February 16-26. Courses explore Jewish texts, current political and social issues across world Jewry and Israel, spiritual pathways and concepts of Jewish leadership and more, all within an interactive and experiential Progressive Jewish context.

To nominate leadership from your congregation or find out how the Beutel seminar will transform your community, [click here today](#).



Every week, WUPJ emails *Torah from around the World*, a commentary on the Parashah (Torah portion) of the week by a rabbi from one of its congregations. Please click [here](#) to subscribe.

## Subscribe to WUPJnews

[Sign up for WUPJnews](#) to receive on-going updates about our communities around the world.

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## IMPJ Newsletter

Click on [this link](#) for the newsletter of the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism.

## Beutel Leadership Seminar Scrapbook



## Important public affairs updates

Over the past few months, the IMPJ has been involved in a number of crucial public affairs. First and foremost, the implementation of the government resolution to build an egalitarian section at the Kotel remains at the top of our agenda. In addition, we have been at the forefront of a public struggle to mandate state-funded mikvaot (ritual baths) for non-Orthodox converts as well as the battle to allow businesses and restaurants to display non-Chief Rabbinate mandated Kashrut certificates. To read more about these issues, go on our [website](#).