

September / October /
November 2012

Number 49

Kehillah North London Newsletter



Kehillah events....

- **HHD Ticket application form**
See accompanying flyer

- **Sukkot & Simchat Torah**
Join us on **Sunday 30th September**
5pm Decorating the Sukkah
7pm Special Sukkot Service &
Supper in the Sukkah, and on
Sunday 7th October

6pm Special Simchat Torah Service,
followed by Celebrations & Supper.
*Adults & children all welcome. Please
bring a vegetarian dish to share.*

- **HHD Singing Session**
Rebekka Wedell will lead a pre-
Haggim singing session on 1st
September at 10am before the
Shabbat service. Come along and
learn the melodies for Erev Rosh
Hashanah - everyone welcome

- **Family and Community
Service & Intergenerational
Art Workshop ~ 3rd November**
10.45am -11.45am Service for the
whole community. This short lively
service includes live drama, and
leadership from the young people of
the community.

12 – 1pm Intergenerational Art
workshop with Cath Goldstein,
inspired by our new Ark. Bring your
New Year cards, colourful paper and
written hopes and dreams for our
Kehillah. We will make beautiful and
functional storage boxes for our ritual
arks, and mini-arks. Cardboard boxes
also welcome!

Cath Goldstein is a visual artist who
leads community arts events.
The morning is followed by our annual
new members Kiddush & lunch ~
please bring vegetarian food to share

- **Additional Shabbat Service**
Everyone welcome on 10th November
for our next reflective and peaceful
Shabbat experience, followed by a
loud, noisy/noshy kiddush!. Led by
Claire and Joanna, and others from
our Ba'al Tefillah group.
10am Tea and coffee
10.20am Space for Reflection,
reading a meditation together
11am A meditative approach to
the Shabbat Morning Service
NB: no children's activities this day

- **Mitzvah Day 18th November**
Our community's contribution to this
day to be announced....

See our website at www.nlpjc.org.uk



On Sunday 17th June we celebrated our 10th anniversary with more than 100 members and friends, with a special service and tea party, featuring comedy from David Schneider and music from the community's own klezmer band. We officially announced our new Hebrew name 'Kehillah North London'. Attending dignitary Councillor Michael Desmond, Deputy Speaker of Hackney sent thanks after the event and spoke of Kehillah as "a warm, welcoming, non-judgmental community, an asset to the area, with influential and articulate members, likely to flourish for many years to come. More photos inside!

Vietnamese Cookery Workshop

Winter fund-raising evening led by Huong Falush

Friday 23rd November

Come & Cook
or just come and eat.....



Anyone who knows Huong always asks how she makes those delicious Vietnamese treats like tiny spring rolls with dipping sauce. This evening she will share her Vietnamese cookery secrets

Cost to cook and / or eat : £10 per person / £5 concs
6pm cooking, 7.30pm candles & supper ~ Please bring a bottle

It is essential to book in advance, by 16th November latest, for catering numbers
nlpjc@liberaljudaism.org / 020 7403 3779

Venue: The Community Rooms


liberal judaism

Kehillah North London is a constituent congregation of Liberal Judaism

A Sense of Permanence

I love the summer. Not for the sun, but for the long summer evenings, being outside, the way time itself seems to stretch. Yet even in the middle of this special time, maybe *because* we live here in England, I'm also aware that soon it will end. Autumn will come, and then the winter. It helps me savour the better weather, knowing as we do that these times can't last. Temporariness feels more special. I feel this too when I go camping, or more accurately perhaps, when it's time to go home. The tent is packed, and all the bags piled up. I look back on the ground where we have slept and see we left no trace. The grass springs back, and we are gone.

Most synagogues have a permanent building, some people even think of the building *itself* as the very essence of the synagogue. A permanent place can hold onto memories. The squeak of the floor, the smell of the polish, the feel of a wooden rail under the thumb. Hours spent chatting in corners. I don't know if the children growing up in our Kehillah will have memories like these, but I suspect they will, even though we don't own our building. Buildings are great for a sense of permanence, and they are also very convenient.

It's quite hard work setting everything up from scratch. Shifting chairs, tables, even the ark! Moving every piece into place and when the morning is finished, then putting everything back. Setting it right, so it's as though we leave no trace. The funny thing is how we have come to value this sense of a

living community-*kehillah*- over the buildings, and how the constant task of setting up and taking down continues to value the people who do it. Which is just as well, since this High Holidays there is a challenge ahead. As festival days vary from year to year, this coming Yom Kippur falls on a Wednesday. We cannot hold the day time service at the New Community Rooms, as Wednesday is a drop in for the Hackney Migrant Centre. This incredible service will see around 50 clients, 20 of them new, on that one day, specialist advice, English classes, a midday meal and training sessions for volunteers. This means we will move to our second venue for Yom Kippur day, at Defoe Road. We will need your help. Not just for shifting books and chairs, but more creatively perhaps, to create the space. It's hard to describe, but I think I mean a kind of 'holding space' where anything is possible, praying, thinking, remembering, relaxing. Defoe Road doesn't hold many of our memories (apart from the fantastic annual Seder), so I think we will need to try a bit harder to fill the space, to build the *ruach*, or energy, for which we are known. Should we pray harder, or sing more loudly? I don't know. But I think your attention to the simple act of being part of that day's community will make a difference.

Back to the community rooms. Although we've come to see the regular job of setting up and putting away as a communal virtue, the bit I know I dread is handling the ark. That heavy, 'portable' necessary but unbeautiful object, with us since our beginnings, difficult to move and easy

to be bashed by, too shallow for our Torah scrolls, and with a scary wobble. It's going to go. Ten years on, we have now acquired an essential symbol of our on-going seriousness, a beautiful, solid, permanent yet moveable *Aron ha-Kodesh*, or holy Ark. Our ark is just that bit more authentic, since like the original, it has been constructed to move. Though not quite as flexible as the ark that held the Ten Commandments, a wooden case permanently attached to its poles for carrying, our ark nevertheless, with careful handling, will sally into position as we need it. It takes up permanent residence in the New Community Rooms, so though we are there as welcome guests, our ark shows that we are also part of the fabric, and that this is our home.

Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu

Creating this ark from the original donated by our friends at Finchley Progressive Synagogue was a labour of love. Many thanks to FPS, Joanna Ryam who managed this project, Claire Helman, our fantastic carpenter Martin Shrive, and the North London Progressive Trust for their funding.

Thinking of joining us?

Why not do it now ~ we offer a pro-rata subscription rate for anyone joining part way through the year, and your High Holy Day tickets would be included.

You can contact our administrator, Julia Chalfen, at nlpjc@liberaljudaism.org for a membership pack or phone Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu on 020 7403 3779 to discuss membership options.

Reply slip for November Adult Learning Programme (see facing page)

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Kehillah Adult Learning Courses ~ November 2012

Name.....
 Address.....
 Telephone.....
 E-mail.....

I would like to attend (Please circle as appropriate):

'Controversies for the Sake of Heaven?' / 'The Fundamentals' / 'Beginner's Hebrew'

I am a member/non-member

I am waged/concession

I enclose a cheque made out to 'NLPJC' for £

Please return with payment to NLPJC, PO Box 42702, London N19 5WR Thank you



Kehillah North London Adult Learning Programme

Autumn 2012



Tuesday evenings
6th, 13th, 20th, 27th November
Teacher: Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu



8pm – 9.30pm **Controversies for the Sake of Heaven?**

This course tackles some of the key controversies we argue about as Jews; some of them are new and some of them date back to near the beginnings of the Jewish people. Each week, we will take a multi-faceted approach to each of the topics, through the lens of history, Jewish thought and skills with Jewish texts. By the end of the course, we will have tackled examples from the Talmud, codes and responses to literature. Course participants will be able to read and discuss these in the original and through translations, and people at all levels of Hebrew and Jewish knowledge are very welcome.

6th Nov	Once a Jew always a Jew?	What happens when a Jew converts to another religion? Do their children follow their parent's adopted faith, or do they remain Jewish? We will look at how contemporary Israeli law sees this issue, and compare approaches from rabbis of different eras.
13th Nov	Circumcision	Why did the early German Reformers try to ditch circumcision? Why do Jews circumcise their baby boys, and is this still necessary for adult male converts today?
20th Nov	Is there life after death?	What are the Jewish beliefs about life after death, and how have Liberal Jews broken with the customs of the past?
27th Nov	Progressive innovation, beyond the pale?	The early German Reformers tried to move Shabbat to a Sunday, end circumcision and abandon many 'outdated' Jewish rituals. Some of it worked, but quite a lot did not. Where are the boundaries, and what, today, is totally 'beyond the pale'?

6.50pm – 7.50pm **The Fundamentals – Jewish Living**

We will cover key ideas together with real hands-on practical learning, both in class time and at home, of the key fundamentals of Jewish living. No prior knowledge is required, but everyone is welcome. Two extra sessions will take place on Shabbat mornings before the services on December 1st and 15th, and there will be some reading and practical exercises for doing at home, and at our Chanukah party on Sunday 9th December. The course continues during 2013, with further units on 'Festivals of Freedom' and 'Jewish lives: Jewish life cycles'

6th November	13th November	20th November	27th November
Shabbat	Prayer or <i>Tefillah</i>	Prayer / <i>Tefillah II</i>	Torah

In addition:

1st Dec Shabbat 10-11am	9th Dec Chanukah 4-5pm	15th Dec Shabbat 10-11am
Liberal Judaism	Understanding Chanukah	Understanding the synagogue

6pm – 6.50pm **Beginner's Hebrew**

This course is for complete beginners and very rusty readers. Please call Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu to check this course is right for you : 020 7403 3779

Course Costs: (NB: there is no charge for extra Jewish Living sessions 1st, 9th & 15th December)

	Members of Kehillah	Members Concessions	Non-Members	Non-members Concessions
Cost for each 4 wk course	£40 per term	£20 per term	£60 per term	£30 per term

Venue: The Community Rooms, Spensley Walk, Stoke Newington Church St, London N16 9ES

PLEASE APPLY FOR COURSES BY COMPLETING THE TEAR-OFF SLIP ON THE FACING PAGE

Kehillah North London 10th Birthday Celebration in Pictures



Comedian & founder member Dave Schneider performing his "pick a matzo, any matzo, don't show me which one it is" "trick"



An appreciative and happy audience & congregation



LJ Vice president Rabbi Harry Jacobi with our own Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu



The 'unveiling' of the community's new name "Kehillah North London" at the celebrations on 17th June



Member Michael Lomotey (L) with Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North



Members Krisztina & Jeremy serving the best made Pimm's in North London!



The 'big enough to feed a community' celebratory chollah, baked by Rabbi Shulamit



Dancing to the music from our own home grown Klezmer band



Chair Claire Helman with Councillor Michael Desmond, the Deputy Speaker of Hackney (L) and The Mayor of Islington, Councillor Jilani Chowdhury (R)



Jo-Ann Myers (L), Director of Jewish Education at Leo Baeck College with founder NLPJC members Roberta Harris-Eckstein and Joanna Ryam (R)



Founder member Jackie Richards with LJ Officer Gillian Merron

Cheder Corner

Like all good Jews, the older Cheder students have spent our sessions discussing and arguing. We took as our texts the booklets put out by LJ, (and now being reprinted, I believe) all on controversial issues.

The Role of Women: Does LJ affirm the equal status of men and women? (Yes is the answer.) What language might we consider changing to make the liturgy more inclusive? What are the origins of other Jewish groups' separation of men and women? Who are some famous Jewish women who took an active part in their communities? What other possibilities are there for women to reclaim their Jewish heritage? (*Rosh Chodesh*, anyone?)

Ethical Eating: What does kashrut mean? How do we make sure animals are not being treated cruelly? How do we keep down waste? How do we avoid over packaged food in keeping with the principle of *Bal Tashchit* (Do not destroy – see the Environment below)?

The Environment: Does Judaism have concern for environmental well being in general? How is the responsibility of Jews towards the environment shown in Jewish writing? The phrase *Bal Tashchit* is also useful here – assaults against nature are also assaults against ourselves. How do we guard against these? What is the LJ view of population control? With a list of 23 ways of helping the environment, how many of these do we do?

Some areas took more time than others. Given the gender mix of the group (almost all girls and many weeks, only girls) the issues about women took two sessions.

How to choose clothing without using sweat shop labour was a particularly spirited class. Brought up as the theme of one of the Bnei Mitzvot, the sobering conclusion was that if the girls only used shops that didn't use sweat shop labour, they'd probably only be able to appear in underwear!

We also had four excellent speakers: one on the use of music in detention centres and the problems of immigrants (leading to a discussion of the problems of immigration and the history of Jewish immigration), two from LJY Netzer and one from our own Vicky on the historical differences between Judaism and Christianity.

And then, of course, there were the Bnei Mitzvot... Given that we only meet twice a month, with time out for school holidays and synagogue celebrations, we have had a packed year. I learned a lot from my students, as all good teachers should. And I certainly learned (as if I didn't know before) that our older cheder students are articulate, intelligent, learned, interesting and ethically profound. A teacher's dream.

Laura Miller

We Came A Healthy 7th!

On Sunday 10th June we had a very enjoyable afternoon at Elstree at the LJ Inter-Synagogue quiz. Our table had fun and just the right attitude! We got an average of 8/10 but even with this great input managed to reach 7th place with our heads held high! There were 10 teams. Clever clogs Elstree won and Kingston came second. Woodford came third and have agreed to host it next year to stop the ping-pong between Kingston, Elstree and LJS who keep winning!

The quiz itself was well conducted despite some rather strange topics (Assassins; Connections)! The funniest thing is that there is never a real chance to socialise with other teams as we are all colluding during the quiz rounds and food is brought to the tables. It is the most "anti-social" social imaginable! We have sent a message suggesting that in future it might be a good idea to have a buffet and encourage people to mingle with each other.

At one point we were dreaming and discussing ways to make it more active and social eg if a table got a certain mark, make them all have to move to other tables. Still, it will be years before we win and get the chance to host and experiment with ways to make it snappy!

We need some different team members next year so please think about joining in next year. It is fun! A team is eight people. Thanks for all who took part: Liz Reiner, Simon Lukes, Peter, Jackie & Eddie Richards, Michael & Sue Ellman.

Jackie Richards

The Kehillah Children's Song



"About our shul we sing this song, It's 10 years old and going strong, So join with us and celebrate it - **Mazal tov**

Feasting and fasting - singing and laughing, Meeting together - next to Clissold Park – **She-koach!**

Teaching and learning - helping and sharing, Supporting each other - **One big Noah's Ark**

Running round – upset the neighbours, Making friends - and eating bagels, Hurry – hurry to the table , **Mazal tov**

Reading and writing – laughing and smiling, Chatting and making – one big family – **We love you**

Sharing celebrations – birthdays and traditions, All Friends Together – **One – big – No-ah's Ark!**"

Performed by the children & musicians at the 17th June birthday celebrations

Kehillah Members News

A warm welcome to new members:

- ❖ Rochelle & Brandon Robshaw, Miranda, Rosalind & Frederick

Our 100 club winners

- ❖ Sue Lukes (July)
- ❖ August tba

It's never too late to join! Email Julia at nlpjc@liberaljudaism.org for details

In the event of the death of a Kehillah member, please contact the Funeral Directors Martin Broads on 020 8445 2797 and Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu on 020 7403 3779.

Kehillah North London 'Who's Who'

All officers and chair can be contacted at nlpjc@liberaljudaism.org or by post to PO Box 42702 London N19 5WR

Rabbi : Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu
Chair : Claire Helman
Hon. Secretary : Liz Reiner
Treasurer : Hannah Forbes
Education Chair : Sue Lukes
Head & Cheder Teacher : Dr Laura Miller
Cheder / Jewish Studies Teacher: Rachel Epton
Hebrew Teacher : Vicky Millan
Volunteer Creche Worker : Anna Sklair
Parent Representative: Leila Baker
Prayers & Spirituality Co-ordinator: Maria Egan
Senior Warden: Joanna Ryam
Administrator : Julia Chalfen
Fund-raising Coordinator: Joanna Ryam
Membership Secretary : Jackie Richards
Marketing & Promotion: Claire Helman
Social Action Co-ordinator; Dan Ozarow
Befriending Co-ordinator: Sheila Melzak
Vacant Posts:
Youth; Intergenerational

Advertisements contained in the Kehillah Newsletter are the sole responsibility of the persons that post the advertisement. Kehillah does not make any guarantee as to the accuracy, completeness, truthfulness or reliability of such advertisements.

Kehillah Newsletter is edited by Julia Chalfen. The deadline for the Dec/Jan/Feb issue is 15th November. Please send articles for publication to Julia at: nlpjc@liberaljudaism.org

If you are a member of Kehillah North London and are interested in joining one of the groups, or would like to fill one of the vacant roles, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Kehillah events calendar

September – November 2012

Most events are held at **the Community Rooms adjacent to St. Mary's Church, Spensley Walk, Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 9ES**, unless otherwise stated

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Venue</u>
Saturday 1 st Sept	10am 11am	Special HHD Singing Session <i>(see front page)</i> Shabbat Service	
Saturday 15 th Sept	10am / 10am 10.40am / 10.50am 11am	Torah Breakfast / Children's Hebrew Kol b'yachad service for children / Cheder (crèche-to be confirmed) Shabbat Service	
Sunday 16 th Sept Monday 17 th Sept	7.30pm 10.30am / 1.30pm	EREV ROSH HASHANAH ROSH HASHANAH (with cheder & crèche) / Lunch	
Tuesday 25 th Sept Wednesday 26 th Sept	7.30pm 10.30am	KOL NIDRE YOM KIPPUR (with cheder & crèche)	NB: YK Day venue: Defoe Rd Community Centre
Friday 28 th Sept	7.15pm / 8pm	Erev Shabbat Service & Pot Luck Supper	
Sunday 30 th Sept	5pm / 7pm	Decorating the Sukkah / SUKKOT SERVICE & supper <i>(see front pg)</i>	
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Saturday 6 th Oct	10am / 10am 10.40am / 10.50am 11am	Torah Breakfast / Children's Hebrew Kol b'yachad service for children / Cheder & crèche Shabbat Service	
Sunday 7 th Oct	6pm	SIMCHAT TORAH Service, Celebrations & Supper <i>(see front pg)</i>	
Saturday 20 th Oct	10am / 10am 10.40am / 10.50am 11am	Torah Breakfast / Children's Hebrew Kol b'yachad service for children / Cheder <i>(no crèche/toys available)</i> Shabbat Service	
Friday 26 th Oct	7.15pm / 8pm	Erev Shabbat Service & Pot Luck Supper	
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Saturday 3 rd Nov	10.45am – 11.45am 12pm – 1pm 1pm	Family & Community Service Intergenerational Art Workshop with Cath Goldstein <i>(see front page)</i> followed by WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS KIDDUSH and Pot luck lunch	
Saturday 10 th Nov	10am/10.20am/11am	Coffee / Meditative Space / Additional Shabbat service <i>(see front pg)</i>	
Saturday 17 th Nov	10am / 10am 10.40am / 10.50am 11am	Torah Breakfast / Children's Hebrew Kol b'yachad service for children / Cheder <i>(no crèche/toys available)</i> Shabbat Service	
Friday 23 rd Nov	6pm	VIETNAMESE COOKERY WORKSHOP fundraiser <i>(see front page)</i>	

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.....

Chanukah Party ~ Sunday 9th December at 3pm

Contact us at:

Kehillah North London (NLPJC), PO Box 42702, London N19 5WR.

Call Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu on 020 7403 3779

email nlpjc@liberaljudaism.org or visit our website www.nlpjc.org.uk