

May/June  
2014

Number 54

# Kehillah North London Newsletter



## Kehillah Events

Unless otherwise noted, events take place at St. Mary's

### Shabbat Morning Services

Shabbat services begin at 11am, with a Torah breakfast at 10am.

**3 May, 17 May, 7 June, 21 June, 5 July, 19 July, 6 Sep, 20 Sep**

Creche for all children from birth onwards takes place at 11 on 3 May, 7 June, 19 July, 6 Sep.

**Community Picnic in Clissold Park - 3 May**, bring picnic food and games for after the service

### Shabbat Meditative Services - 17 May,

11 am, led by Student Rabbi Danny Newman. (*see p3*)

Cheder children will be visiting Walford Road Synagogue.

**Exploring Spirituality - 21 June**, 11 am, with Lama Zangmo. (*see p3*)

**Children's Service – 5 July**, 11 am, A special children and community service celebrating our children's Year of Learning. There will be a welcoming blessing for children who joined our community in 2013-2014. Cheder will be Hebrew only at 10am, children join the service for the rest of the morning.

*Followed by a bring and share community kiddush and lunch.*

### Spiritual Journeys and Tikkun Olam –

**19 July**, 11 am, A special event celebrating the connection of our spirituality with action to mend the world. Sam Grant, Communities Outreach Youth Director for Liberal Judaism, and leader of the Living Wage Campaign for Liberal Judaism, plus other special guests, on acting to change the world.

**Ellul, a Time for Reflection, a Day of Play – 20 Sep**, 11 am, Charlie Kane gifted teacher and facilitator will lead adults and children in two separate workshops, using play, stories and music to reflect on our lives, as we enter the last few days before Rosh Hashanah.

## Rabbi's Letter

### *Year of Innovation Update*

22 adults and children joined together for a Pesach Retreat at the Belsey Bridge Retreat centre in Rural Suffolk. We had sunshine, great food, a fantastic children's programme led by Liberal Judaism's Sam Grant, and stayed up late into the night telling stories. A few of us made it to the seaside at the end of the Shabbaton. Will we go back next year, and will any of the adults venture into the freezing swimming pool?

### *Friday Night Hubs*

Come Shabbes with Me launched on 25<sup>th</sup> April, with Friday night dinners in Stoke Newington, Archway and Central Hackney. Walthamstow and Highgate will start theirs at the next Friday night date on the 30<sup>th</sup> May. There was a lot of laughter, great food, and thanks to the generosity and organisation of hub co-ordinators and volunteers, everyone who is unable to get out of the house on their own was able to come along. Were Stoke Newington's profiteroles better than the authentic Jewish Indian aubergine dish in central Hackney? That might be a question for Elijah, who like all our members and friends is welcome at our next Come Shabbes with Me.

*Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu*

## Shavuot – Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 7-10 pm

Shavuot celebrates a point of encounter and commitment. The Jewish people arrive at Sinai, and we accept our commitment to the Torah. Learning and encounter plays a big part in how we celebrate Shavuot at Kehillah, with an evening of study, a *Tikkun Leyn Shavuot*, late into the night. This year we will explore the theme of Exile. Joined by our members, including Sheila Melzak, and community musicians, we will look at the challenge of exile and the gift of creativity that lies within the experience of loss. There will be learning, talking, text, music and of course, lots of cheesecake.

See our website at [www.nlpjc.org.uk](http://www.nlpjc.org.uk)

  
**liberal judaism**  
Kehillah North London (NLPJC) is a constituent  
congregation of Liberal Judaism

## The Year of Innovation, a Genuinely New Year.

This Pesach marks a new beginning, a Year of Innovation, experiment and renewal for our community. This is also the seventh year in the seven year agricultural cycle, in Hebrew, the *Shmitta* year, where the land in Ancient (and for some Jews, Modern Israel) is allowed to rest. What should this experience of renewal look like for our contemporary inner city community?

Our biggest and boldest step began during Pesach. Rather than run a communal seder, as we have for the past ten years, this year saw 22 of us take part in a rural; Shabbat retreat for two days in Suffolk. We ate (lots, too much!), played games, told stories, sang, and talked together at the Belsey Bridge retreat centre. Sam Grant, youth and Communities Outreach Director for Liberal Judaism, led a fantastic two day children's programme, which stimulated the young people, gave them the freedom to really enjoy them, and to get to know each other even better. They even swam in a freezing swimming pool and lived to tell the tale!

Services and activities that will appeal more widely, not just to people who enjoy traditional services. This spring we welcome some very fine spiritual teachers from inside and outside our tradition, who will enable us to explore new experiences. Our regular Shabbat services will continue once a month, but with more opportunities to socialise, with lunches including picnics after the service. Cheder continues to meet as before, but with a range of trips as well.

This year will include days of learning for our whole community, adults and children, such as a trip to the British museum in December led by a leading teacher in the field of Ancient Near Eastern studies. On the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah we will hold an Ellul retreat, again for all ages, on our personal experiences of change, led by experts in play and storytelling

Adult education will move away from the evening class format. Although due to popular demand we will hold three special classes in May. Combining cookery and text study, these three hour classes are multi-sensory explorations of big Jewish ideas, and will end with a goody bag of food to take home.

One of our major aims is to reduce loneliness. Too many people, of any age, feel they are alone. Too many people are working so hard they have little time for a social life. Too many of our activities focus on what is happening within the synagogue and not in our everyday lives. April sees the launch of Come Shabbes with Me, local Friday night dinners hosted by our members in six neighbourhoods throughout North and East London. We personally contact every single member who lives in each area, and provide lifts for anyone who needs one. The first Friday nights saw 40 people come to dinner with their neighbours in three separate events. It's a work in progress, with three new groups set to launch in May.

A small community like ours has the potential to experiment and find out what we could be doing, to try things which are completely new. This means taking a step back from the cycle of the Jewish year, and finding the spaces to grow new possibilities. It's an exciting time and a new beginning.

### Thinking of joining us?

Why not do it now? Please contact our administrator, Melanie on 020 8123 5752 or by email at [kehillah.northlondon@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kehillah.northlondon@yahoo.co.uk) for a new member pack or phone Rabbi Shulamit on 020 7403 3779 to discuss membership options.

### Cheder Corner

**3rd May** 10am Hebrew with Regan for teenagers and Vicky for younger children  
11am Cheder with Regan  
Crèche with Anna begins at 11am

**17th May** Special trip for cheder children with Vicky to Walford Road synagogue, and for a celebratory pizza lunch afterwards. Please confirm you are attending with Vicky

**7th June** 10am Hebrew with Regan for teenagers and Vicky for younger children  
11am Cheder with Regan  
Crèche with Anna begins at 11am

**21st June** 10am Hebrew with Regan for teenagers and Vicky for younger children  
11am Cheder with Regan  
No crèche

**5th July** 10am Hebrew with Regan for teenagers and Vicky for younger children  
11am Special Children and Community shabbat service welcoming new children and babies and celebrating the year of learning for all the children in our community  
Crèche with Anna for part of the morning, then children join the service.

**Coming Up: 8-9<sup>th</sup> November.**

*Cheder weekend away to Bradford: Jews, Muslims and Christians work together in this Northern city, which is also the home to one of the oldest and finest progressive synagogues in the UK.*

## Shabbat Guest Leaders

**17 May, Meditative Shabbat led by Student Rabbi Danny Newman**



Danny is a rabbinic student at Leo Baeck College and is the Founder & Director of HaMakom: The Place for Wellbeing, Spirituality & Creativity. He read Jewish Studies at Oxford University and is a past President of the Union of Jewish Students. Prior to beginning at Leo Baeck College, he trained in psychotherapy and counselling, and worked as a corporate lawyer in the City. He has been practising meditation for over ten years.

**21 June, Exploring Spirituality with Lama Zangmo**



Lama Zangmo, a remarkable Buddhist teacher within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, directs the teaching programme at Kagyu Samye Dzung (Tibetan Buddhist Centre and Temple) in South London. She has studied this tradition for most of her adult life and has spent more than eleven years in retreat. She is the first person to be honoured with the title 'Lama' in the UK by her organisation. There are both fascinating overlaps and contrasts with Judaism, join us to learn about her journey, and to explore her teachings.

## Adult Education

**Talmud in the Kitchen: Cooking Up New Ways of Learning with Rabbi Shulamit**

These three sessions are a course in ideas. Ideas we explore through cooking food and discussing those ideas as they appear in Jewish texts and stories. All classes run from 6:30-9:30pm, venue to be confirmed. Charge: £10 to members, £5 member concessions, £15 non-members and £7.50 non-member concessions.

**20<sup>th</sup> May Ferment, The Yetzer Ha-Rah: a Necessary Evil**

The rabbis of the Talmud called the evil inclination the Yeast in the Dough, the *se'or ba-issah*. Yet without this creative irritant, there is no bread.

Yeast is, quite literally, a culture that allows us to go from place to place re-creating the taste of home. In this three hours session we will study the necessary evils in human nature in the Talmud, with hands on practice in handling sourdough cultures and making bagels and pretzels.



**17<sup>th</sup> June Feasting and Fasting**

They tried to kill us, we won, let's eat. Purim is all about survival on a knife edge. Yet how far should we go in remembering past danger, or in celebrating the downfall of our enemies? The Fast of Esther is a late post Talmudic custom, perfectly balancing the feasting of Purim. Yet the textual sources for this fast are conflicting and even ambivalent. In this three hour session we will integrate an exploration of these texts (in Hebrew and English) with hands on practice in making the food of the Jews of Persia; the community who identify with this fast most of all.

**1<sup>st</sup> July Preservation**

The preservation process takes food at its freshest and transforms it into something that will last (almost) forever. In this three hour session we will integrate an exploration of a Talmud page with hands on practical experience of making preserves from whatever fresh fruit we find in the market today. We will see how the Talmud itself preserves, transforms and brings to life old and new stories. Bring a selection of interesting jars to take your goodies home.