

The Newsletter of



# Liverpool Reform Synagogue

**December 2018 / Kislev 5779 - Tevet 5779**



**Liverpool Reform Synagogue Council Members  
November 2018**

Welcome to the second Liverpool Reform Synagogue Newsletter for 2018 / 2019 which we hope you will find interesting, entertaining, informative and useful. Inside you will find a mixture of news and regular columns on a wide range of topics. Thanks to those of you who have contributed to this issue as these contributions are essential to the newsletter's ongoing success.

In this issue we have included details of upcoming services and festivals and an update following the EGM and AGM which took place on Sunday 25th November.

Please let us know if there are any topics you'd like to see covered in the future. We would welcome your contributions so please contact one of the committee members if you would like to include an article or notice of forthcoming events in the next issue.

## **EGM and AGM**

The Annual General Meeting of the Congregation combined with an Extraordinary General Meeting took place on Sunday 25th November 2018. The EGM reviewed the Constitution and Rules of the Congregation and amendments pursuant to clause 17 were considered and agreed.

The AGM received the Chairman's Address, Treasurer's Report and Rabbi's Report with questions from the meeting being considered and answered. The Chairman expressed his thanks to all members of the synagogue who have given their time and helped with all aspects of synagogue life.

Election of Members of the Council was agreed and contact details are provided within this issue of the newsletter.

## **Chanukah – A Victory of the Past and Hope for the Future**

**Rabbi Warren Elf**

Chanukah is still one of my favourite festivals. My early memories are from when I used to get eight little presents, one each night after we had lit the Chanukah candles, to the songs and games, to doughnuts or latkes, to different stories and later to details of the festival observance. Even lighting the candles themselves each night evokes memories but also still has a special significance.

Over the years I have lit candles with my family, as a child and as a parent; with students at the Union of Jewish Students Conference, as a student and as a student chaplain; with groups of friends and other family members and with different groups in different synagogues at all sorts of gatherings. I have also lit them at interfaith gatherings in different settings and sometimes just with my wife and even on my own.

I still feel that there is something special about the Chanukah lights, something of hope, of light in the midst of darkness, of warmth in the cold winter. They convey a spirit and message of triumph over adversity, over oppression, over tyranny. The victory of the Maccabees with the rebellion, initiated by the priest Mattityahu (Mattathias) and his five sons, against the oppression and persecution of Antiochus, Emperor of the Seleucid Empire, was audacious and inspired. It came at a time when the people could take no more.

There is also the story of Hannah and her sons, who refused to be coerced into bowing to an idol or compromising their beliefs. Desperation, a refusal to give in to tyranny and to evil and to brutal power, to despots, to bullies, to dictators, to ...

There are two fairly modern stories of celebrating Chanukah that I also like. One is the story told by my teacher Rabbi Hugo Gryn z"l, written as a study passage in our High Holyday Machzor (page 500), of his father lighting a makeshift Chanukah in a concentration camp so that they and their fellow inmates could celebrate Chanukah. Hugo protested at the waste of their margarine ration to light the flame, His father's response was that they could live without that bit of their ration but they could not live without hope.

The other story I want to mention is one told by Anatoly Sharansky (now Natan Sharansky, recently the Chair of the Jewish Agency in Israel) in his book *Fear No Evil*. It is the story of him celebrating Chanukah with the other (non-Jewish) prisoners in the Soviet Gulag, telling them the story of the Maccabees and lighting candles in a wooden Menorah that the others had made him. The Menorah was confiscated on the 6th night but the story ends with the Camp Governor allowing him to light the candles in his office on the last night and even agreeing to say 'Amen' at the end of Anatoly's prayer.

So for me, Chanukah is still about a message of hope, of light, of promise for the future. When we look around the world and see terror, violence, oppression, poverty and evil, we can live up to the ideals of Chanukah and do everything we can to support those who work to overcome the negative and evil in our world. May I wish you all a very happy Chanukah and may we always strive together for goodness, justice, light, hope and peace.

***Rabbi Warren Elf***

**DETAILS OF SERVICES FOR CHANNUKAH, TU B'SHEVAT, PURIM AND PESACH and EVENTS TAKING PLACE AT LIVERPOOL REFORM SYNAGOGUE**

<b>EGM &amp; AGM</b>	
Sunday, 25th November	11am
<b>CHANNUKAH</b>	
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December	1 <sup>st</sup> Candle
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	Children's Chanukah Party - 4pm – 6pm (£6 per family)
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	8 <sup>th</sup> Candle (7 <sup>th</sup> Day)
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	8 <sup>th</sup> Day
<b>SPECIAL SHABBAT SERVICES</b>	
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	10.30am: Human Rights Shabbat Morning Service
<b>90th ANNIVERSARY PARTY</b>	
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	90 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party from 7pm
<b>2019</b>	
<b>HEALTH AND WELLBEING COURSE</b>	
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> January	7.15pm – 8.45pm run by Simone Cohen
<b>TU B'SHEVAT</b>	
Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	
<b>PURIM</b>	
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Erev Purim
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> March	Purim Morning
<b>PESACH</b>	
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Erev Pesach – 1 <sup>st</sup> Seder Night
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Pesach 1 <sup>st</sup> Day – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Seder Night
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> April	Pesach 7 <sup>th</sup> Day
<b>ADDITIONAL DATES FOR YOUR DIARY</b>	
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Yom HaShoah – Holocaust Memorial Day
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Yom HaZikaron – Memorial Day
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	Yom HaAtzmaut – Israel Independence Day
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> June	Erev Shavuot
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> June	Shavuot Morning
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> August	Tish'ah B'Av
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> September	Erev Rosh Hashanah
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Rosh Hashanah Morning

**Copy date** for the next edition **25<sup>th</sup> February 2019** for distribution **week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Don't wait for the deadline to send in your contributions! Email to:**  
[liverpool.reform.synagogue@gmail.com](mailto:liverpool.reform.synagogue@gmail.com)

**Liverpool Reform Synagogue 5779 – 2018-2019**

**Pesach edition - copy deadline 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019**  
**for distribution week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Early summer edition – copy deadline 27<sup>th</sup> May 2019**  
**For distribution week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Rosh Hashanah edition – copy deadline 26<sup>th</sup> August 2019**  
**For distribution week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

## CELEBRATIONS



### Sukkot:

Members of our congregation generously provided donations of foliage, fruit, vegetables and flowers and enthusiastic young members of the Shul got together to decorate our Sukkah.

### Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah:

This year's Kallat Torah was Kathy Inglis and the Kallat B'reishit was Nina Shackman Black. The service was well attended and enjoyed by all and was followed by a delicious kiddush.



### Special Birthday Celebrations

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October Anna Cohen celebrated a special birthday and provided an equally special kiddush which friends, family and the congregation enjoyed following the service.

We wish Anna a very happy birthday and hope she had a wonderful day.

### Bat Mitzvah Celebrations

On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October Rachael Stevenson celebrated her Bat Mitzvah. She is the daughter of Beverley and Richard Stevenson and has an older sister Hannah, younger brother Jacob and a younger sister Natalie. Rachael was taught by Martin Herr and Rabbis Jackie and Larry Tabick who are her aunt and uncle came to officiate, making it a lovely family occasion. She read from the Parsha "Lech Lecha" discussing Abraham's journey and her own journey to becoming Bat Mitzvah.

The ceremony was attended by many in our congregation, family, friends and guests with the guests travelling the furthest being her maternal grandfather Richard Keye who travelled from Ecuador. We were all treated to a fabulous kiddush from our very own Nina Shackman.

It was a joyous occasion for our Shul and Rachael and her family wish to thank you all for celebrating this day with them.

### Remembrance Service

On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November the Shul once again hosted a Remembrance Service on the Erev Shabbat before Remembrance Sunday. The service this year was led by Rabbi Warren Elf.

Even though the number of AJEX members is dwindling, the Council has made the decision out of respect to those who fought and gave their lives in all wars that, for the foreseeable future, LRS will continue the tradition of holding an Erev Shabbat Remembrance Service irrespective of whether AJEX is able to be represented on the night.

## Famous Liverpool Born Jews Frankie Huskisson

The city of Liverpool has long been known for the large number of famous people it has produced. This selection of famous people have two things in common, they were all born in Liverpool and were all Jewish.



Famous film maker Cecil Blount DeMille was the son of Matilda Beatrice DeMille (nee Samuel) who was born in Liverpool to German Jewish parents on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1853. She was known as Tilly Samuel. The family moved to New York in 1871 and she became a playwright, screenwriter and actor and played a part in founding Paramount Pictures. She died in Hollywood on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1923.

Herbert Louis Samuel, later 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Samuel was born at 11 Belvidere Road, Toxteth on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1870. He became the first practicing Jew to be a cabinet minister and also to lead a major political party, leading the Liberal party from 1931 – 1935. He was an ardent Zionist, which was influenced by him meeting Chaim Weizmann in 1914. Chaim Weizmann lived and worked as a chemist in Manchester from 1904 to 1934. Samuel went on to play a big part in the Balfour declaration in 1917. The Balfour Declaration was a public statement issued by the British government during World War I announcing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, then an Ottoman region with a minority Jewish population. He was later appointed High Commissioner for British Mandate Palestine from 1920 – 1925 and introduced Hebrew as one of the three official languages. He was the first Jew to govern the Holy Land in almost 2000 years. Many places in Israel have a street named after him. He died in London aged 92 years on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1963.



Singer, Frankie Vaughan, known as Mr. Moonlight, was born Frank Ephraim Abelson in Devon Street, Liverpool, on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1928. He had a very successful singing career and made films including 'Let's Make Love' with Marilyn Monroe. His stage name Vaughan came from the way his Russian grandmother pronounced "one". He was her 'number Vaughan grandson'. He was just 71 when he died on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1999. He was buried just six hours later. His Leeds born wife Stella donated scores and sheet music he had collected to Liverpool John Moores University in 2000.

Clive Swift, who is most famous for playing Hyacinth Bucket's (Bouquet) hen pecked husband Richard in Keeping Up Appearances was born to Abraham Sampson Swift and Lily (nee Greenman) in Wavertree on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1936. His brother David Swift played Henry Davenport in Drop the Dead Donkey.



Brian Epstein was born in Rodney Street, Liverpool, on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1934. He was the son of Harry and Malka (always known as Queenie). He saw potential in what became the biggest band the world has known. He made artists including the Beatles, Cilla Black and Gerry and the Pacemakers famous. Paul McCartney once said "if anyone was the fifth Beatle, it was Brian". Before they were famous the Beatles appeared at functions in Greenbank Drive and Allerton Synagogues. Brian sadly died in London aged only 32 on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1967. He was buried in Greenbanks Long Lane Cemetery in North Liverpool. At the family's request none of the Beatles attended his funeral. They did however all attend a later memorial service at the New London Synagogue, Abbey Road, which was led by Rabbi Louis Jacobs.

Edwina Currie (nee Cohen) was born in Liverpool on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1946. She is a former politician serving as a Conservative Party Member of Parliament from 1983 – 1997 and is now a novelist and broadcaster.



Actor Jason Isaacs, most famous for playing Lucius Malfoy in the Harry Potter films was born in Liverpool on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1963. The family moved to London when he was 11 years old.

If you still have football's 'Coming Home' ringing in your ears from the 2018 World Cup you can partly blame another Liverpool born Jewish singer songwriter and former King David boy Ian Broudie. He was most famous for the band 'The Lightning Seeds'. The Lightning Seeds twice took football anthem "Three Lions" (with comedians Frank Skinner and Jewish entertainer David Baddiel) to number one, with different lyrics for the Euro 96 and France 98 tournaments. He was born in Liverpool on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1958 and now lives in London but has a recording studio in Liverpool, so often visits his home town.

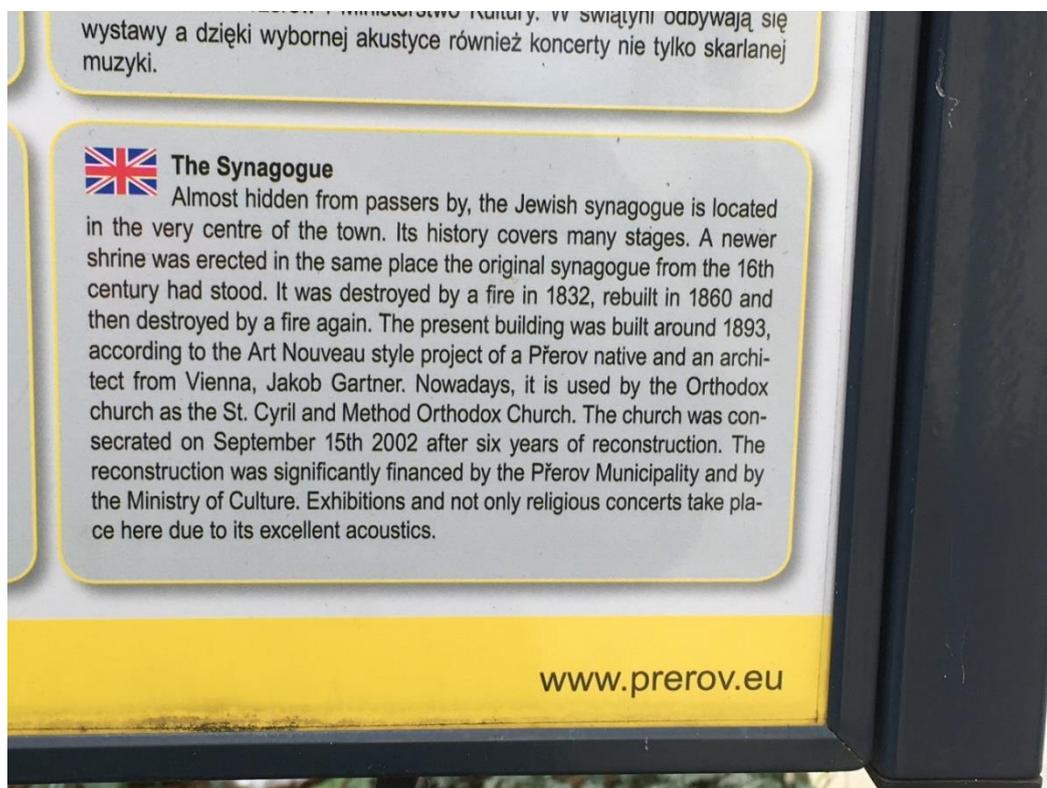


The Jewish community has made a major contribution to the development of the City of Liverpool. Many famous people, not born in Liverpool, have made the city their home.

## Our Visit to the Former Synagogue in the Czech Republic in Prerov where our scroll MST #67 came from

Jennifer Verson

The story of how Liverpool Reform Synagogue became the stewards of MST 67 has been told brilliantly by others: Hannah Stevenson and Hannah Levinson both spoke eloquently about the history during their B'not Mitzvah. If you want to know more head to the website of The Memorial Scrolls Trust <http://memorialscrollstrust.org/>



MST 67 comes from Prerov in the Czech Republic. Prerov today is a small industrial suburb of Olomouc, the fifth largest city in the Czech Republic and ancient capital of Moravia, about two hours by train from Prague.

The Jewish population of Prerov fluctuated with the restrictions on Jewish settlement in central Europe. From 1727 Familliants Laws restricted settlement in Bohemia and Moravia so only the eldest son could start a family in their home town. In 1724 there were 14 Jewish houses but after emancipation in 1848 the numbers rose until in 1921 there were 336 Jewish people living in Prerov.

### The Shoah and the Sifrei Torah

Beginning at the end of 1941 Jewish people from Prerov and Olomouc were sent to Terezin Concentration camp, at this point the ritual objects in the Prerov Synagogue were sent to the Central Jewish Museum in Prague <https://dbs.bh.org.il/place/prerov>

In 1964 the communist government sold 1564 Sifrei Torah to an art collector who brought them to the Westminster Synagogue. For more information go to the MST website. <http://memorialscrollstrust.org>

### The education pack from the Memorial Scrolls Trust

As a Cheder teacher in 2015 I attended a workshop from the Memorial Scrolls Trust encouraging teachers to use their new educational resource pack for B'nei Mitzvah students and we decided to use this resource for our older cheder class which I was leading. The stated aims of the education project (from the MST) were to:

1. Strengthen Jewish identity
2. Stir curiosity about the history, significance and meaning of the scrolls
3. Develop respect for the scrolls as bearing the words of the Judaic law and the enduring covenant between God and the Jewish people
4. Enable students to participate in the re-emergence, reinvigoration and revival of Jewish continuity and hope
5. Give students enough knowledge and understanding to discuss confidently the history and meaning of the scrolls

The final project of the module is a student led B'nei Mitzvah Project. Both 'Hannahs' did a special Dvar Torah on the Czech Scrolls and we debated what would be a proper personal project.

We considered raising money to lay a 'stolperstein' stumbling stones.



But this didn't feel like an answer to the bigger questions about our relationship with our Torah and the synagogue where it came from. In the end the B'nei Mitzvah, their families and I decided to travel to the former synagogue in Prerov.

### **Beginnings of PhD**

Several of the activities in the MST education pack caused me to think about how we teach the Shoah to our children impacts on their sense of Jewish identity. The Pirkei Avot 5:21 is the source of our ancient wisdom that for each stage of life there are appropriate types of learning:

He [Yehudah ben Teima] used to say: Five years [is the age] for [the study of Scripture, Ten [is the age] for [the study of Mishnah, Thirteen [is the age] for [observing] commandments, Fifteen [is the age] for [the study of Talmud, Eighteen [is the age] for the [wedding] canopy, Twenty [is the age] for pursuit, Thirty [is the age] for [full] strength, Forty [is the age] for understanding,

I wondered if we could honour our Torah and also honour the wisdom of Yehuda ben Teima? This became a very practical question about what would we do when we arrived in Prerov? What is the relationship between our congregation who are stewards of MST 67 and the congregation in the Czech Republic that are stewards of the former synagogue where our Torah comes from?

In May of 2017 I was awarded one of the first United Nations Association of Civilisations Studentships at the Centre for Trust, Peace, and Social Relations at Coventry University. My research called "Performing Peace: applied performance and scriptural reasoning as a peace building process" is using qualitative and participatory research to answer the big questions about inter-religious peace building that are central to this very practical question.

### **And Finally, Prerov**

In September the promise to visit Prerov was fulfilled when we walked the deserted streets from the train station to the former synagogue. We had the honour of meeting Father Libor Raclavsky.

The former synagogue is now an Eastern Orthodox Christian church. Orthodox Christians were heavily persecuted by the occupying Nazis and an exhibition in the former women's gallery tells the story of the assassination of SS General Reinhard Heydrich by the Czech Government in exile in the UK. The assassins took refuge in an Orthodox Church resulting in the execution of Bishop Gorzard, Cathedral Priests and lay officials, the closing of all Orthodox Churches and the Orthodox Church forbidden to operate. All in all 256 Priests and laymen were executed.

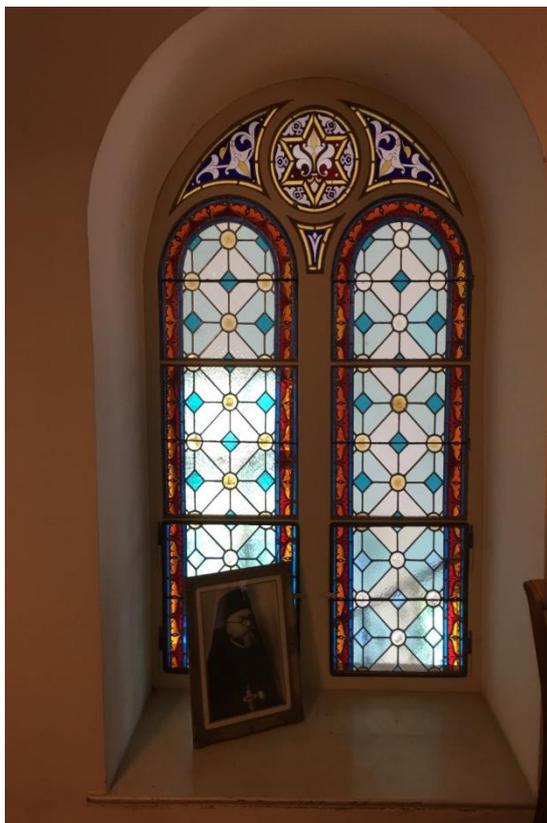
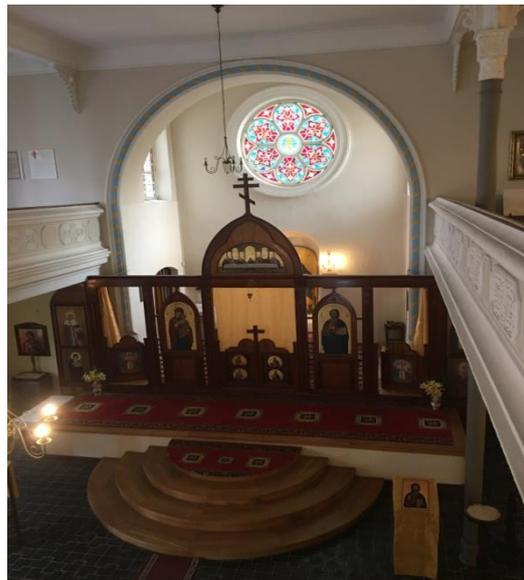
In the hall of the synagogue on a September Sunday morning we shared prayers and songs: a traditional Czech Orthodox Prayer, Ozi V'zimrat Yah and Shema Yisrael. Our voices echoing and mingling in the Victorian acoustics of the sanctuary.

The question remains, what can we do together in this holy space that honours the past, present and helps to build a future?

### Performing Peace: Get Involved

I have been talking to people in Olomouc, Prerov and Liverpool for the past few months about their religious practices: prayers, hymns, psalms, rituals, and mementoes (aka 'texts') that connect them to the place where they worship and to their own faith. In January I will present these 'texts' in a series of Shabbat sessions where together we will talk about their meaning and resonance and craft them into a performance.

This performance will be shared in Liverpool for Holocaust Memorial Day and then in Prerov on the Anniversary of the last transport for Olomouc to Terezin on 7 March 1945. You are invited to take part in creating and 'performing' this special event.





**LIVERPOOL REFORM  
SYNAGOGUE**

**90TH BIRTHDAY DINNER**



**8TH DECEMBER 2018**



**LIVE KLEZMER BAND**



RECEPTION DRINKS FROM 7PM

HOT BUFFET FROM 8PM

CARRIAGES AT 11PM



Tickets £20

**DRESS CODE SMART/CASUAL**

28a Church Road

North, Liverpool L15 6TF

Tickets must be purchased in advance  
via email [johnrablett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:johnrablett@yahoo.co.uk) or  
by calling 0771 7511887

# Inspired You

## **Healthy Eating and Wellbeing Guidance is coming to LRS**

*Inspired You* will be running an informal workshop to help us look at our  
health and wellbeing

Everyone is welcome to come along on Sunday 13th January 2019 at 7.15 p.m.  
to learn more about healthy eating, exercise, relaxation and better quality sleep

This will be a fun evening with opportunities to share our ideas in a friendly, social and  
non-judgemental setting.

For more details contact:

Simone Cohen (Elf) 0161 959 5562 or 07855 112 901

e-mail: [simone.cohen@ntlworld.com](mailto:simone.cohen@ntlworld.com)

## NEW ACTIVITIES FOR OUR YOUNGER MEMBERS

After months of consultation with parents, children and the Shul Council we have a plan. There are many things that we want to do, some can be done now, and others can be done within the next five years. They include a range of activities aimed at babies from 6 months up to 18 years olds.

To start things off we would like to recruit some new volunteers to run / support the following activities:-

- Kabbalat Shabbat (monthly to start, Friday 2:15-4:30pm in the LRS Shul hall, for families with at least one child being aged 3-11)
- Cheder teachers to cover one of the following areas one Sunday morning a month term time only. (Students aged 3-12):
  1. Hebrew Reading/writing
  2. Torah study
  3. Creative Arts/cookery

Party planners: we need to have 2-3 people to plan the Chanukah and Purim children's parties.

This volunteering could be used as part of the 'service element' of the Duke of Edinburgh programme, and anyone who volunteers for 6 months will receive a reference for uni/future employers.

All lead volunteers will be expected to have a valid DBS (which Shul will pay for).

**If you are interested then please call Zarah on 07990573652.**

## **We would like to welcome you to our services which are held each Shabbat**

**Erev Shabbat:** Once per month we gather for our Shabbat Evening service and Chavurah Supper, starting at 6.30pm. Usually this takes place on the first Friday of the month, but this may change from time to time. Dates will be published on the web site and members will be notified via e-mail.

**Shabbat Morning:** 10.30am.

The service ends at 12.30pm with a Kiddush where the congregation come together to share wine, challah and other foods.

## **Guidance following the death of a member of the Liverpool Reform Synagogue**

Liverpool Reform Synagogue appreciates how difficult the death of a loved one can be and in order to assist members at this time a booklet has been developed which provides guidance and relevant important information. The booklet can be found on the LRS web page at <http://www.lrshul.org/death-and-mourning/> . Paper copies are also available in the synagogue.

## **Liverpool Reform Synagogue – re-launched on the web**

The Web page has now been updated and can be accessed at <http://www.lrshul.org>  
The Web page will continue to be updated and new items of interest added on a regular basis. If you have any suggestions or wish to contribute to the web page please contact Stuart Becker at Email: [webmaster@lrshul.org](mailto:webmaster@lrshul.org)

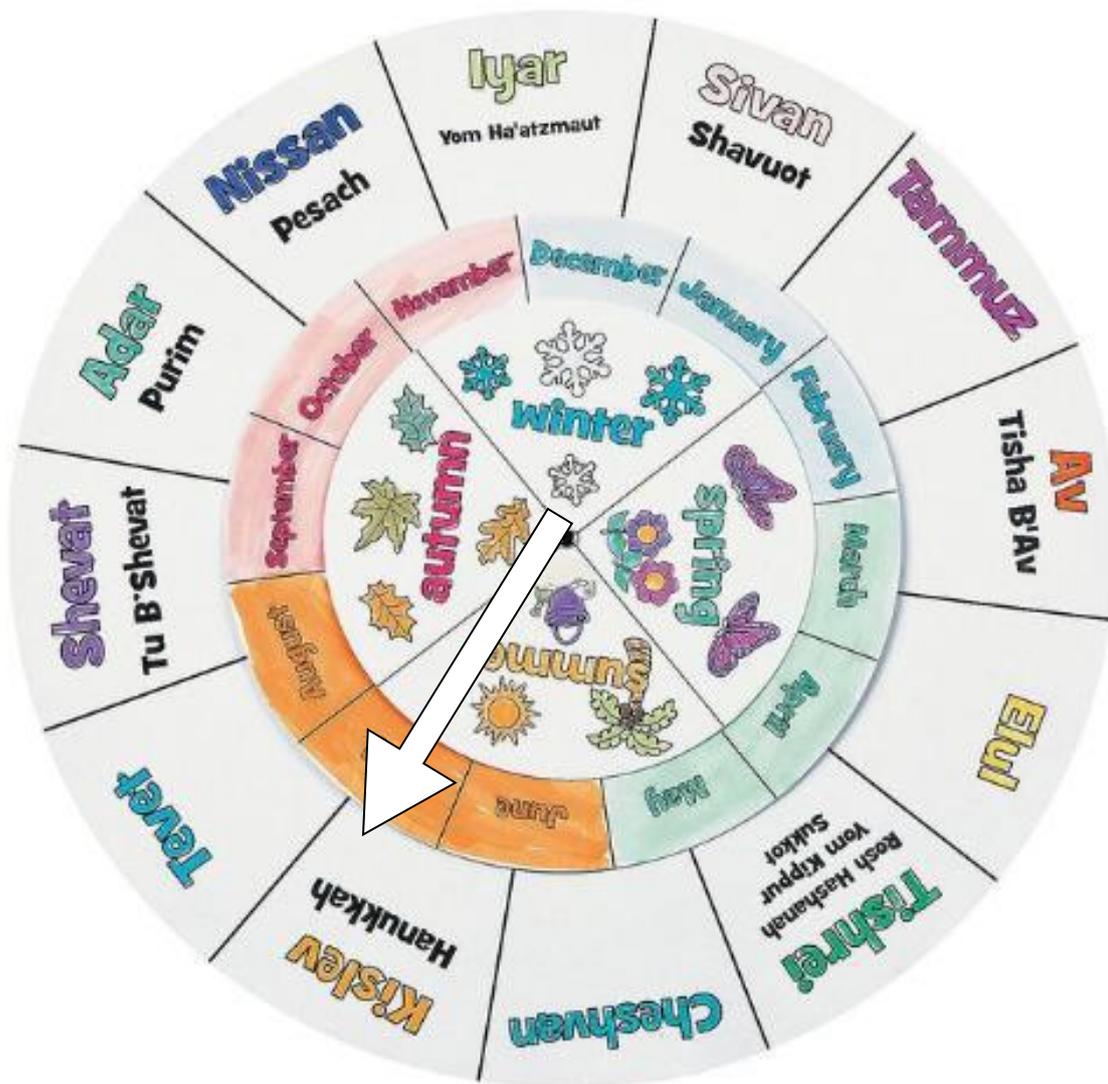
## CHILDREN'S PAGE

### Make your own Jewish festival calendar

This interactive calendar, shows the Jewish year at a glance. Interactive paper wheels allow children to tie in the months and seasons in English and in Hebrew.

#### Instructions

Cut out and decorate three circles and then use a split-pin to connect the circles together. You could include an arrow on top of the circles to indicate what time of year it is now, and rotate it as the year goes by.



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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**In case of emergency when the Synagogue is closed please telephone:  
07729 562 174**

**WE WOULD WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE NEWSLETTERS.**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH THE COMMUNITY OR WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE A REGULAR ARTICLE PLEASE E-MAIL US AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS.**

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