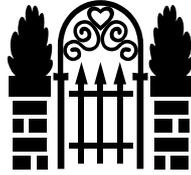


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M I G D A L

מגדל

The Newsletter of

**Blackpool Reform
Jewish Congregation**

Charity number 1148088

A Constituent of the
Movement for Reform Judaism

February 2021/Adar 5781

Dates for your Diary

Except where otherwise indicated, the dates refer to the first calendar day of the various Festivals. Festivals begin the evening before.

Purim	Friday	26 February 2021
Pesach	Sunday	28 March 2021
Shavuot	Monday	17 May 2021
Erev Rosh HaShana	Monday	6 September 2021
Rosh HaShana	Tuesday	7 September 2021
Kol Nidre	Wednesday	15 September 2021
Yom Kippur	Thursday	16 September 2021
Succot	Tuesday	21 September 2021
Simchat Torah	Tuesday	28 September 2021
Chanukah	Monday	29 November 2021

Erev Purim – Thursday 25 February 2021

A special Erev Purim service has been planned for 25 February when Cub Scouts are being invited to join us on Zoom to help fulfil their World Faiths badge requirements. It is expected the service will start at 6pm.

First Night Seder - Saturday 27 March 2021

A facility for congregants to view via Zoom a first night Seder service hosted by the Tax family is being planned. Timings will be advised nearer the time.

BRJC's Annual General Meeting Sunday 18 April 2021

BRJC's AGM is scheduled for Sunday 18 April 2021 starting at 11am, to be held using Zoom. It is important that as many members as possible attend, so please note the date in your diary.

MIGDAL

February 2021/Adar 5781

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The opinions expressed in MIGDAL are those of the contributors and do not necessarily imply endorsement by the Editor, the Executive or Council.

To contact the Editor, Gillian Cantor, you may phone her on 01253 724472, email her on alan.cantor@btinternet.com or write to her at the Synagogue. Readers' contributions, letters and items for "Mazel Tov" are most welcome and will be considered for publication. Anything for the next issue should reach the Editor by 16 June 2021.

Blackpool Reform Jewish Congregation, Charity number 1148088
Company registered in England and Wales, number 08091243
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From the Editor

It is over a year since the Covid pandemic broke out and what a change it has made to the life we live. The large number of restrictions have drawn a comparison with war, but things are very different from World War II as, for instance, today, for the vast majority at least, food is plentiful and internet ordering makes it possible to shop for most non-essential goods. Even Alan and I obtain on-line items from trusted outlets!

Celebration and commemoration

Despite Covid restrictions, the traditional celebrations have taken place, be it that attendance for community aspects have been on-line rather than in person. For Chanukah, for the first and last evening, using Zoom, it was possible to celebrate the lighting of the candles, reciting the blessings and singing Maoz Tzur. And there were plenty of commemorations of Holocaust Memorial Day. For one organised in the Fylde, please see page 17.

Good news!

Turning to congregational news, let me begin with happy tidings. Leigh-Anne Bunting, daughter of Angela Peake and granddaughter of Rita Stoll gave birth to her fourth child on 10 November last, a boy named Jacob Edward Moishe; and secondly on 10 January last Avril Mannino had a great granddaughter, Sofia. Mazel Tov to all those mentioned. And while still on good news, I would also like to mention the 2nd prize and certificate of merit won by Gloria Schofield in the Jim Barton competition for her poem Innocent Face, which we published in the last edition of Migdal. Not bad for an octogenarian! Mazel Tov to Gloria!

2021 marks the 60th anniversary of our Synagogue and Leslie Firth has written to me about those he can recall who have had the greatest effect on our community over the years, see pages 6 and 7. Clearly we have been blessed in our membership. Fortuitously I found in Migdal's archives an article by the late Mike Neiman of a communal Seder of many years ago, see page 13. You can read there many names also in Leslie's letter!

My thanks to all those who have submitted contributions to Migdal, and to all those taking Services, especially to Sara Tax and other members of the Tax family. They are all much appreciated. Finally my best wishes to all members and readers. We wish them Chag Semeach for Purim and Pesach.

Gillian Cantor, Editor

The passing of Captain Sir Tom Moore will be old news by the time you read this, but let us salute Sir Tom, hero who brought light to a very dark period.

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner at Reform Judaism

Last year, Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner left Reform Judaism for a very different role. Rabbi Mark Goldsmith took the opportunity to say a few words about her at RJ's annual fundraising dinner, which we have published below with kind permission of RJ and Rabbi Goldsmith.

It's one of those classic texts from Pirke Avot, the Sayings of our Sages, that many rabbis will have framed in their offices and try to live up to. "Aseh l'cha Rav, u'k'neh l'cha chaver." (Avot 1:6) Find for yourself or, literally, make for yourself a Rabbi and obtain for yourself a friend. In Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner's case this could not be truer, for her colleagues in the Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK, for Reform congregations, for Jews searching for Jewish life and meaning around the country and all those wanting to relate to our Judaism from every faith and none, the young people of RSY-Netzer and for our whole Movement for Reform Judaism.

Rabbi Laura's position as Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism was created newly by us all together in 2011 and she was the perfect person to succeed in this role. With her deep experience in training the world's youth leaders in Israel and her successful time as community Rabbi at Alyth Synagogue, Laura brought a deep relationality to her role, from generation to generation. She was at much at home at Mega Chalutz building unforgettable experiences for RSY-Netzer's trainee and seasoned Madrichim, as she was building strong relationships characterised by Laura's honesty and integrity for Reform Judaism with broadcasters and politicians. She was committed to all our congregations travelling the length and breadth of the country in her constant 'Have Tallit will Travel' campaign so that Reform Jews truly got to know their Senior Rabbi and she got to understand and help with their concerns and needs. She built partnerships with her rabbinic colleagues enabling us to give the best of ourselves to the Movement, notably with Rabbi Jonathan Romain with whom she brought the 'Nine reasons to be a Reform Jew and one reason for not' seminar to all of us. She enabled her colleagues, including me, to find their voice on the national stage.

We know that we have not lost our Chaver Rabbi, our friend and teacher, as Laura will still be one of the great rabbis of Reform Judaism and a woman we can all learn from to help us to grow as Reform Jews. We so look forward to continuing to learn from our Rabbi as she develops her insights into leadership with her new colleagues in her consultancy. Thank you Rabbi and Friend Laura Janner-Klausner.

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Notes from the President

Whilst 14 March 2020 seems so long ago, in other ways the time has flown by. What is so special about this date you may ask? Well this was the last time we were together in the Synagogue; on that day we struggled for a minian and opted for a shortened service, which unfortunately had become somewhat of the norm for a Shabbat Morning. Whilst we were forced to lock the doors of our beautiful building, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, many of us believed that it would only be for a few short weeks ...

Coming up to a year later and we are still unable to meet together as we would prefer, but I must say how delighted I am that most of you have now embraced our virtual services. We have regularly been getting more people joining us online than we got through the doors of the Synagogue and even getting members and past members joining from afar. We are also holding a weekly 'virtual' coffee afternoon where members come together and have a chat and whilst it would be nice to do in person, this is a really nice alternative. Also, who can forget the joint services that we have done, sometimes just joining another synagogue for a Shabbat morning service, but most spectacularly the joint service with 15 communities on 23 January 2021, where we had around 250 zoom screens, if you were to count the households with multiple people watching and then all of the people watching via multiple Facebook and website streams we estimate that there would have been in the region of 1000 people celebrating Shabbat together. So is this the future of our synagogue? Moving to be a 'virtual' congregation? I hope not!

Whilst we have enjoyed a lot of success in continuing to participate in services in this way, it is not really the same as being together. I have been discussing with Rachel and Michael about what to do when we return to the Synagogue and the potential for doing some virtual services. Whilst we feel we wouldn't want to do it all the time, perhaps we should be looking at options where we can continue to embrace those of our members who, for various reasons, are not always able to attend physically. Whether this will be to continue on Zoom, which would allow interaction, or whether we move to a more straightforward stream on Facebook or our website, we do feel that we do need to continue in some way to allow us all to share in what I believe is our wonderful synagogue community.

Whilst there is still so much uncertainty about when we will be able to come together, I do need to say thank you to you all for embracing our small community at this difficult time.

Sara

Letter to the Editor - 60 years of Life

Dear Editor

I think because you say I'm possibly the longest serving member of the congregation I would be able to write about the last 55 years – I'm afraid not quite 60 years - of history of the Blackpool Reform Jewish Congregation. Important names that emerge from my memory are the names of ministers and Rabbonim who served and serviced us.

I start with Rabbi Norman Zalud who weaved his way amongst the many years I write about, first as Reverend in training then "Semikhah" authority "the Rabbi". He has seen Rabbis Greenstein and Pereira and Doctor Haas serve us and leave. Rabbi Greenstein left and married the daughter of President Goldberg to settle back in the USA, one of Goldberg's sons became a rabbi, which enhanced the Cheder running at the time!

We were fortunate to have members who were able and knowledgeable to sustain and advance at that time between 8 and 15 children for many years. I am thinking of Thelma Gains and Max Kay who were the mainstays of the school for many years. Max was deputy head of Highfield school, he wouldn't take the headship, as he refused to take school prayers in assembly. Alas the day came when there was no-one to follow, at which point Southport Reform invited the children to attend their Sunday morning Cheder. There we were sponsored by Rabbi Sydney Kay.

Rabbi Kay, having retired from his family building company, had ambitions to take rabbinic order and studied at Leo Baeck College. Whilst a student we and Southport were fortunate to enjoy and share in his training, after which he was appointed Rabbi at Southport Reform. One of Rabbi Kay's "claims to fame" was that he was instrumental in assisting in the design and build of our Synagogue at 40 Raikes Parade. That was 60 years ago; we are now 60 years on.

At the start we were about 200 souls, we had dinner dances and charity festivals, coffee mornings and festival meals. Here we should mention Mrs Gene Kay, a most wonderful worker. She was treasurer, burial secretary, an executive and representative of our congregation within the national committee of our RSGB, our then umbrella organisation

and the predecessor of the Movement for Reform Judaism. Gene Kay's cry to the national executive was "We are a poor congregation and we can't pay the dues to London!" This plea was accepted by London for many years.

Editor, names and deeds float up to me, as I write this "story". I think of Doctors Capper, Thurtz and Raymond Lewis; Solicitor Ralph Cohen, in whose memory, along with his widow, the "old" upstairs room was named, and solicitor Martin Block; businessman, Sydney Hart, a silversmith, who stands out as a founding member of the congregation. I think of people who did their all for the benefit and improvement of our religious home. Basil Raven must not be forgotten. The Synagogue was his heart; his concern was evident in all that he undertook.

Two people, in particular, impressed me greatly. A shining light on everything he touched was Harry Perkins, Honorary Life President. Who else could take on the Russian army choir on behalf of the Synagogue, inviting all 50 of them and the congregation to his enormous home for a most significant afternoon, the echoes resounding far and wide? Harry did many wonderful things for the progress and prosperity of the Congregation he so much loved.

The second person and in my opinion the one who has had the greatest effect on our Congregation is the greatly respected Leon David Tax who was bestowed by Reform Judaism the honour of Hechever (Honorary Rabbi). I would say, although passed, he has left a living legacy, his hope to sustain and retain our Congregation for future years, for our members and families yet to come. It was Leon who inspired me to consider the change in style and make up of our building. It was Leon who dreamt of reshaping and the development of the residence and auditorium we have today, an income from rental and a room to play and pray!

As we wade through this pandemic and we retain our weekly prayers we think of the legacy I mentioned. It includes the knowledge and confidence to put together weekly and festival services instilled in his loving family who carry on in the faithful way he taught and so he looks forward through zoom.

The Late Lord Jonathan Sacks 8/3/1948-7/11/2020

Rabbi Lord Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi, has died at the age of 72. He had been diagnosed with cancer last month, having been treated twice before. In 2016 he was awarded the Templeton Prize in recognition of his "exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension." He had been described by the Prince of Wales as "a light unto this nation" and by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair as "an intellectual giant".

Rabbi Lord Sacks was Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth for 22 years, between 1991 and 2013, and was the author of over 30 books. His most recent, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times*, was published this year.

A theologian of extraordinary intellectual depth and moral conviction, Rabbi Sacks was a riveting orator and brilliant author who brought the timeless teachings of Jewish scripture to both Jews and non-Jews alike, fusing Jewish tradition with modern thought. Rabbi Sacks was knighted in 2005 and made a Life Peer in 2009.

Prince Charles, who was guest of honour at the tribute dinner when Lord Sacks retired as Chief Rabbi, expressed his "profound sorrow". He said, "With his passing, the Jewish community, our nation, and the entire world have lost a leader whose wisdom, scholarship and humanity were without equal. His immense learning spanned the sacred and the secular, and his prophetic voice spoke to our greatest challenges with unfailing insight and boundless compassion. His wise counsel was sought and appreciated by those of all faiths and none, and he will be missed more than words can say."

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis said the world had "lost a Torah luminary and intellectual giant who had a transformative global impact". On the BBC Sunday programme, Rabbi Mirvis described him as "a prince of G-d in our midst," a phrase the Bible uses of Abraham.

Rabbi Sacks was "an extraordinary ambassador for Judaism, helping many to understand and be proud of their heritage. He will be deeply missed, not just within the Jewish world, which benefited immeasurably from his teachings, but far more widely, by all those whose lives he enlightened with his wisdom, profundity and inspiration." Isaac Herzog paid tribute to the "legendary spiritual leader who was a proud Jew and an ardent Zionist." "He taught the world so much not only about Judaism, but also how to be better people. The Jewish people mourn the devastating loss of a spiritual giant. We know his legacy will live on for generations. May his memory be a blessing upon us all."

Source: thejc.com

Kosher Kookery Korner – Nutella Rugelach



A traditional kosher Jewish treat, this recipe adds a modern take to tradition rugelach, delectable mini Jewish croissants, by stuffing them with chocolate-hazel-nutty goodness. You can also add extra sweetness in cinnamon, powdered sugar, chopped nuts, and your preferred spread—such as butter, Greek yogurt, or traditional sour cream.

Ingredients:- 115g Unsalted Butter, at room temperature -115g Full Fat Cream Cheese, at room temperature -125g Plain Flour (plus extra for dusting) - Large Pinch of Salt - 2 Heaped tbsp Nutella - 20g Chopped Toasted Hazelnuts - 1 Egg Yolk - Granulated Sugar

To make the dough beat together the butter and the cream cheese until the two are completely combined and smooth. You can do this in a food mixer but I find that it is not too hard to do by hand. Mix in the flour and the salt until combined. Mould the dough into two rough balls and wrap them each in cling film. Refrigerate for 2 hours, but they can be left overnight.

Put the rugelach together in two batches, hence the two balls. To make a batch turn the ball out onto a very well-floured surface (if it is not floured enough the rugelach will stick when you try to roll them) and roll out into a very thin disk, but not so thin that it can easily be torn. Spread a heaped tablespoon of the Nutella onto the disk. Spread the chocolate out in a very thin layer all over the disk getting it as close to the edges as possible, then sprinkle over half the nuts. If you can't buy them ready toasted you can do this in a clean frying pan over a medium heat, just remember to toss them every few minutes and watch them like a hawk as they can turn from only just toasted to burnt in a matter of seconds, and ideally they should be half way between these two states.

With a very sharp knife slice the disk down the middle, horizontally so it is in quarters, then quarter each quarter. You should have 16 triangles starting from the centre. To roll the rugelach start at the outside of the disk and roll up into a scroll until you reach the centre. Space the rolls apart on a greaseproof paper lined baking sheet. To make a glaze beat together the egg yolk with a splash of cold water and brush over each scroll, then sprinkle generously with granulated sugar before putting into a 175 degree, 350 Fahrenheit, Gas mark 4 oven for 20-25 minutes until the ruglach are golden brown.

(Source: - forkly.com)

Jewish Connections

Here are two more articles in our Jewish Connection series.

Jewish entertainer Des O'Connor has died at 88

(12 January 1932 – 14 November 2020)



Jewish comedian, singer and TV host Des O'Connor has died at 88. His agent confirmed the death in a statement to the Jewish Chronicle.

The entertainer, born in East London in 1932 to a Jewish mother and Irish father, joked in his 2001 memoir *Bananas Can't Fly* that he'd inherited "the chutzpah of the Jews and the blarney of the Irish". Neither of his parents' respective families were "pleased by the match", he wrote, and he often joked that he was the only O'Connor to be barmitzvahed.

Mr O'Connor's agent, Pat Lake-Smith, paid tribute to the "ultimate entertainer" who was "talented, fun, positive, enthusiastic, kind and a total professional." "He loved life, and considered enthusiasm almost as important as oxygen. He adored his family; they were everything to him," she added.

He launched his career in 1963 with The Des O'Connor show and went on to front primetime programmes for more than 45 years. Career highlights included interviewing the likes of Robbie Williams, Whitney Houston, Frank Sinatra, the Beatles, Barbra Streisand, Robert Redford and Sean Connery. He hosted staples of British television such as *Des O'Connor Tonight*, Channel 4's game-show *Countdown* and *Today With Des and Mel* with his co-host Melanie Sykes. In an Instagram post on Sunday, Ms Sykes, who worked with him until 2006, said her former co-host will be "forever missed." "He had talent in every fibre of his being and was stubborn as a mule. He was the full ticket as a friend and colleague. "When he chose me to be his co-host on the *Today* daytime show it was one the greatest days of my professional life. It was an education and a privilege to work with him for the years that followed," she said.

Mr O'Connor, whose singing career saw him sell 16 million records, recorded hits such as *Careless Hands* and *No-one But You*. He was awarded a CBE by the Queen in 2008 for his services to entertainment and broadcasting.

He is survived by his wife Jodie, their son Adam and his four daughters, Karin, TJ, Samantha and Kristina.

Source: thejcc.com

Paddington Bear's Secret Jewish Heritage

Paddington Bear is one of the best-loved characters in children's literature, and he is also one of the most famous refugees in the world, albeit a fictional one. What many people don't know, however, is that he is Jewish ... sort of. In a *Daily Telegraph* interview in 2014, Bond explained that the small refugee from "Darkest Peru" was inspired by memories of Jewish children arriving at Reading station just before the outbreak of the Second World War. "I remember their labels round their necks, and then I remember going to the cinema and seeing on the newsreel that Hitler had moved into some new country, and seeing footage of elderly people pushing prams with all their belongings in them. Refugees are the saddest sight, I still think that."

Bond did not originally intend Paddington to come from Peru. In an interview on *Desert Island Discs* in 1976, he told Roy Plomley: "When I wrote the first book I wrote that he was from Darkest Africa, and my agent wrote back to me and said that he liked the book but PS there aren't any bears in Africa". Paddington is aware of his precarious refugee status. He has a suitcase containing all his important papers in a secret compartment. When he and Mr Brown first meet, he explains that he is a stowaway, having arrived in a lifeboat.

Mr Brown is worried: 'A stowaway?' Mr Brown lowered his voice and looked anxiously over his shoulder. He almost expected to see a policeman standing behind him with a notebook and pencil, taking everything down.' The Browns welcome Paddington into their home in spite of their misgivings, and despite the fact that their settled and comfortable upper-middle-class existence is considerably disrupted by this small ursine visitor, who inadvertently spreads chaos wherever he goes.

Paddington's refugee story echoes that of so many real-life ones, in that his success and safety relies on the kindness of the people in his new country. Paddington's great friend Mr Gruber, who is a Notting Hill antique dealer, was also inspired by a real life Jewish person. Bond said in the *Telegraph*: "He was based on my first agent [Harvey Unna], a lovely man, a German Jew, who was in line to be the youngest judge in Germany when he was warned his name was on a list. So he got out and came to England with just a suitcase and £25 to his name." Bond was disappointed when Jim Broadbent was cast to play Mr Gruber in the 2014 film adaptation of *Paddington* because in his mind the character was definitely not English.

Source thejc.com

Ask the Rabbi - When G-d is Hidden *Source:- aish.com*

The Scroll of Esther – the book that tells of the miracle of Purim – has the distinction of being the only book of the Bible that does not mention the name of G-d. It may seem strange for an entire book of the Biblical canon to avoid mention of the Almighty; after all, if the Bible isn't about G-d, what is it about? But that's the whole point. The message of the Book of Esther is that G-d is there even when He doesn't seem to be there. G-d's presence in History is felt not just when the sea splits or when divine fire descends upon a mountaintop in full view of an entire nation. These fireworks are nice, but they aren't the be-all and end-all of Divine influence in the world. G-d is present in the everyday workings of life and history as well.

G-d's Will is present not just when the laws of nature are suspended. To the contrary, the very workings of these laws are manifestations of the Divine. Every time a falling body adheres to the inverse square law of gravitational attraction; every time molecules dissipate in space in consonance with the second law of thermodynamics; every time a river flows downstream – every time these things happen, G-d's Will is done in the world. And so it is with history. It is not just when plagues free the slaves of Egypt that G-d works in history; G-d's influence is more subtle than that. He can be present, mysteriously, in the smallest and least obtrusive of ways.

Chekhov once said that if a rifle lies above the mantle in Act I of a play, it had better go off before Act III. The mark of a good playwright is that no plot element is superfluous. Everything, ultimately, gets used. And the same goes for the Great Playwright in the Sky. Everything we humans do "gets used" in the play we call life. But not necessarily in the way we imagine, or design. The king asks Haman how the man the king wishes to honour should be treated. Haman, thinking the king wishes to honour him, advises making a royal parade. Does that advice get used? It surely does. But it is used to honor Mordechai, not Haman. Haman constructs a gallows to hang Mordechai. Does that gallows get used? It certainly does. But not the way Haman imagined. He himself is hanged on those gallows.

We all have choices to make. The making of those choices is up to us human beings; that is how we cast our lots in life. But what happens *after* we cast our lot – that is no longer up to us. One of the messages of Purim, is that G-d is very much around, even when He remains behind the scenes. In the space between human choice and ultimate result, the Master of the Universe will yet have His say.

All Our Yesterdays – Seder Night by Mike Neiman

On Friday, 14 April, a near record number of congregants and friends enjoyed one of the best communal Seder nights our Synagogue has hosted.

The evening commenced with Harry Perkins taking the service in his usual warm, welcoming manner. Everyone then made their way upstairs for a "Musical Kiddush" sung by the Tax family. This was followed by a most interesting explanation of the reasons and meaning of this special night by Basil Raven.

We are indeed fortunate to have in our small congregation both our Honorary President, Leon Tax, and our Honorary Secretary, Basil Raven, who possess, not only an in-depth knowledge of Judaism and its history, but also the ability to communicate that knowledge so eloquently to others. Their joint efforts in conducting the service made the evening both enjoyable and memorable to all who attended.

The Seder concluded with the singing of traditional Pesach songs in a most "interesting" way, about four different tunes being sung at the same time!

As usual, Leslie Firth's catering was first class and, with the words "Next Year in Jerusalem" ringing in our ears, we all felt that Blackpool Reform Synagogue had fulfilled the traditional command to pass on and remember the story of the Ancestors' Exodus from Egypt.

Fagin's Sonnet *by David Whippman*

I am an outcast, most despised of all,
And yet the blood that flows within my veins
Flowed within those of David, Samson, Saul
When they led Israel on Judea's plains.

And now you think my faith is merely odd.
"How can *you* people be the chosen ones?"
But my ancestors heard the one true God
When yours were worshipping the trees and stones.

Usurer, thief - no, this was *not* my place,
For there was so much more that I could be.
But then...door after door slammed in my face
Till I became how you imagined me.

Two thousand years of prayer won't be in vain.
We were a nation: we will be again.

The Lake District Holocaust Project – *update*

This is taken from the LDHP Facebook page: "On 7 January 1946 the last of the Jewish child Holocaust survivors left the Lake District having arrived there with all their friends on 14 August 1945. These last children to leave had been placed in a sanatorium at Blencartha in the North of the Lake District. The other children had left Calgarth Estate, and other sanatoriums across the Lakes, throughout the previous Autumn and early Winter.

Trevor Avery, BEM Director, Lake District Holocaust Project, spoke and read aloud a very moving poem on their Facebook page on the 7 January 2021, to commemorate the day of the final departures exactly 75 years previously to that very day when Blencartha said goodbye to some really quite remarkable youngsters. The poem "Lost" was written by an unidentified Jewish child who was part of the transport from Prague to the Lake District and he wrote it in English, only 6 months after his arrival in the UK.

Note: A link to this poem being read aloud is on the BJRC Family Facebook page of 7 January 2021.

Estelle Blackman

Père *by Barry Bradshaigh*

And was Lord's tree of knowledge now perused,
When dressed to robe in fruit at pear's unfold,
Where theft fruit's sold did reap an Eden's brood,
And women's man did lust pluck's would hand hold.
So good and evil on a branch was grasp,
Where then two hands did clasp a fruit insight,
Which held a Sinless right in Serpent's rasp,
Though this bold pair did sin er Père's incite.
Yet 'fore a fig despair bore bitter grieves,
Eve did a rape in pare bear from this tree,
That made a pair in suit to prepare leave(s),
Which did a pair in wore now Ficus be.
Then was this pair a prune from this tree so?
Or be His pair in like and image lo!

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Pandemic *by Reverent Lynn Ungar*

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath-
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease for buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.

Centre Down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now).

Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love –
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

Reform Judaism's Pesach's Message

The story of Pesach is all about the delivery of the Children of Israel from slavery to freedom, the first step towards to the Promised Land. As many participants at the Seder will experience, though, the story takes longer than they might have hoped for. Moses and Aaron come to the elders of the people with a fresh message from the burning bush to say that they are here to deliver the Children of Israel from slavery. They even show some miraculous signs to prove that they really mean business. The elders are delighted at this news, eager to be freed from slavery. If anyone thought the deliverance would be simple, they were quickly proven wrong. Pharaoh is not keen to give up his useful workforce of Jewish slaves. After the first request is made he not only refuses, but orders the slaves to continue making their bricks without giving them the straw to do so. Some of the workers confront Moses and Aaron, wishing they had never brought this new curse on the Israelites. Whilst eventually the Israelites would get their freedom, the path to it would be hard.

The path to our own freedom today has many echoes of our exodus story. The news that several vaccines have been approved for use in the UK brought with it much rejoicing at the idea of us soon reaching freedom. We quickly realised, however, there would be some more tough times to get through to reach the light at the end of the tunnel.

Every community in our Reform Judaism family has inspirational stories from the past year about how people have gone the extra mile to offer support. We have been physically distant, but in spirit closer than ever before. Achieving freedom was a long road for the Israelites, as it is for us. When they achieved freedom, their experience shaped their future, G-d commands them "you shall not wrong the stranger, for you too were strangers in the land of Egypt". Whilst we yearn for life to return for normal, we hope our movement and our communities will continue to benefit from the lessons we have learnt in lockdown. We are inspired at Reform Judaism by the support communities have given to vulnerable members, the dedication given to connecting with those who are isolated, the collaboration between communities and the increased inclusion and accessibility we have seen over this period. We hope when we do physically return to our buildings, we will be using our freedom to build even stronger communities.

Chag Pesach Sameach from all of us at Reform Judaism.

Kol Nidre Donations

Thanks to the donations from members, we were able to send £300 to each of the Kol Nidre Appeal's three charities, these being Trinity Hospice, Blackpool, Magen David Adom UK and Technion UK. Each one thanked us warmly for our generous donation. The replies from Trinity Hospice and Magen David Adom set out what they would be doing with our donations and you will find below extracts from their letters of thanks.

Trinity Hospice: As you are aware we are facing unprecedented times here at the Hospice. Rest assured it is business as usual here caring for patients at end of life 24 hours a day. In fact we have increased our bed capacity by 50 percent to support the hospital and increased our support for patients out in the community, in nursing homes and of course our hospital nurses too. Your generous donation will make sure the care we give here continues and many more people living here on the Fylde coast can receive the end of life care they deserve whether here at the Hospice or out in the community with our Hospice at Home. Each year we need £9 million to ensure that local people over the Fylde Coast receive this care and your donation contributes toward this enormous amount for which we are very grateful.

Magen David Adom: Your contribution will help supply MDA with essential medical supplies and equipment that enable trained teams of medics to respond immediately to any emergency 24/7 throughout Israel.

Fylde's Holocaust Memorial Day Service

On the last Wednesday in January and organised by St Annes Hebrew Congregation, there was a dignified and reverent Holocaust Memorial Day service on YouTube. This was opened by Fylde MP, Mark Menzies, and Fylde Mayor, Angela Jacques, with St Annes' Rabbi Danny Bergson reciting a Memorial prayer. These were followed by some moving contributions by pupils at St Bede's Catholic College, Lytham, St Mary's Catholic College, Blackpool, Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic Primary School, Blackpool, and St John's Roman Catholic Primary School, Poulton, as well as an account by Holocaust survivor, Ivor Pert, and concluding with Robert Pinkus' recitation of the Kaddish. This service will have played its part to help ensure the world will never forget what happened under the Nazis.

Mazel Tov! and many happy returns on their birthdays to:
Alexander Bunting, 15 June; Gemma Douglas, 25 July;

Short Days Long Nights – My favourite Books

Short days Long Nights see me reading during the day and doing my writing of course. I enjoy going to the local library and choosing books. I like romance novels and biographies of celebrities and film stars. I enjoy reading about their lives. I also like art books. I study landscapes and portraits etc. by artists such as Leonardo Da Vinci, John Constable, Millais and the Pre Raphaelites and the different eras in which they painted... At the time of writing these short days are beginning to get lighter.

Gloria Schofield

The New Saleslady!

At the exclusive Uptown Bon-Ton in downtown Upton, Mass., one of the new salesladies was summoned to the front office by the sales manager. She was a new American, who had been given the job despite her strong accent.

"Miss Pechter," he began coldly, I was informed by Madam Van Groysafeese, who is one of our best customers, that you were discourteous to her this morning. Now you know perfectly well that we do not countenance rudeness to our customers. "What have you to say for yourself?"

"First of all, Mr Saperstein, nobody needs you should holler on me," snapped Miss Pechter. "Second of all, that person – that Groysafeese woman – she starts out by asking for a simple formal, so I showed her our best line. But nothing suited her fancy-shmancy taste. I showed her all kinds of others: strapless, form-fitting, floor length, mini, just about everything in stock. Then with boxes all over the place and samples covering the whole table, she asked me if she wouldn't look better in something flowing So I suggested the river!"

Martin Block, Solicitor, "For Your Legal Needs"

As my commitment to the local community, I will donate 10% of my legal fees for work introduced through readers of Migdal. For any enquiry, please email me on martin.block@roebuckslaw.co.uk or phone on 07715053015.

BRJC's Burial Assistance Scheme

On this page and the next, we have re-published for your information the Rules and Procedures of our Burial Assistance Scheme, following a number of enquiries. We would add that where requested we would be willing to arrange a mixed faith burial, in line with Reform Judaism guidelines. The Scheme Secretary (currently Sara Tax) would be pleased to help on this and other matters.

Burial Assistance Scheme: Rules at 1 January 2021

- 1 **Approval and Objects:** The Scheme has been approved by BRJC's Council with the objects of arranging Jewish funerals and providing a lump sum assistance with burial costs of Scheme members.
- 2 **Membership:** Any Full BRJC member may apply to become a member of the Scheme. Such membership must be approved by BRJC's Executive. Those who are not Full members of BRJC cannot join the Scheme.
- 3 **Benefit:** The Benefit under the Scheme after the first 2 years in the Scheme is a lump sum of £750 payable towards the costs of a funeral arranged by BRJC; the Benefit before the 2 years has expired is limited to the return of any Joining Fee and any Periodic Subscriptions to the Scheme. The family of the deceased is liable for all costs incurred in connection with the funeral in excess of the Benefit.
- 4 **Joining Fee:** A Joining Fee will be payable on joining the Scheme in accordance with the following scale based on the age of the member on joining the Scheme:

(a) Under 30 years old	£5	(e) From 60 to 64	£500
(b) From 30 to 39	£50	(f) From 65 to 69	£600
(c) From 40 to 49	£200	(g) 70 and over	£650
(d) From 50 to 59	£350		
- Note: No Joining Fee is payable for those who are members of the Scheme under family membership and wish to join the Scheme in their own right.
- 5 **Periodic Subscription:** The Periodic Subscription to the Scheme is £35 per annum, payable from the date of joining the Scheme, except for those aged 18 and under it is £2 per annum and for those aged 19 to 30 it is £5 per annum. The age is that on joining the Scheme and on each renewal.
- 6 **Minister:** BRJC will arrange for the funeral service to be conducted by a Minister, being a Rabbi or authorised official, as available.
- 7 **Withdrawal of Membership:** Membership of the Scheme may be withdrawn if the Periodic Subscription is overdue.
- 8 **Non-members:** BRJC is willing to arrange funerals of non- members of the Scheme, who are Jewish, whether or not BRJC members. In such cases a fee of £975 is payable to BRJC and there is no lump sum benefit.
- 9 **Change of Rules:** BRJC's Council may review and change the Rules annually.

Burial and Cremation Procedures and Other Information

1. **Burials:** Burials are held at our plot at Carleton, Blackpool.
2. **Cremations:** These may be held at Carleton or Lytham St Annes.
3. **Notification:** The family of the deceased will inform the Scheme Secretary (or other delegated person) of the death. The current Scheme Secretary is Sara Tax
4. **Early information:** The following information will be required:
 - (a) Full name, age and address of the deceased and where the body is resting
 - (b) When the body is not at home, whether the family wish to have it moved to home or to the Funeral Director's etc.
 - (c) Whether any extra cars will be wanted from the Funeral Director
 - (d) Whether a specific Rabbi or other authorised person is preferred.
 - (e) Whether the family wish the deceased to be buried or cremated.
5. **The Registration Procedure**
 - (a) A family member or delegate must obtain a Death Certificate from the doctor and take this certificate to the Registrar, from whom a Disposal Certificate must be obtained. This must be given prior to the funeral to the Funeral Director or to the Scheme Secretary, who will hand it to the cemetery authorities. No funeral can take place without a Disposal Certificate.
 - (b) The "tallit" of a male deceased must be handed to the Funeral Director for inclusion in the coffin, an option for deceased females.
 - (c) The funeral time and the number of the grave to be opened will be agreed with the Scheme Secretary who will then inform the Funeral Director and the cemetery authorities.
 - (d) The family may make arrangements with the Minister for services at home after the service.
6. **Cremations:** A cremation may be carried out when requested. For this two doctors' certificates must be obtained. A minimum of 48 hours and sometimes longer is usually needed to arrange a cremation.
7. **Memorial Plaques:** The Synagogue has a special Memorial Board available for its members to dedicate a suitably inscribed Plaque to deceased relatives. Details are available from the Treasurer.
8. **Stone setting:** This must be arranged by the family in conjunction with cemetery authorities and the Scheme Secretary. Please note the following:
 - (a) Blackpool Borough Council charge a fee for placing a stone on a grave, this is normally included in the stonemason's charge.
 - (b) BRJC can help to arrange for a Minister, being a Rabbi or an authorised official.
 - (c) The Hebrew wording must be checked by a person with the requisite knowledge before it is agreed with the stonemason.

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Synagogue Information

Hon. Life President	Mr Leslie Firth	01253 713619
President	Miss Sara Tax	01253 315700
Vice President	Miss Rachel Tax	07900 493065
Treasurer	Mr Alan Cantor	01253 724472
Custodial Trustees	Mr Martin Block, Mr Alan Cantor and Mrs Elizabeth Tax	
Burial Secretary	Miss Sara Tax	01253 315700
Migdal Editor	Mrs Gillian Cantor	01253 724472

Times of Services

Erev Shabbat: **8 pm** - Shabbat Morning: **11 am**
Festivals and Special Services, as announced

Website Address

The Blackpool Reform Jewish Congregation website address is www.brjc.co.uk . Its Webmaster is Michael Tax. You can send emails to the Executive using this website.

Rabbi Norman Zalud

An appointment to see Rabbi Zalud can be arranged through any member of the Executive or Council.

Important - Have We Your Latest Details?

It is Important we hold your up-to- date information. Have you told us about them? Have your family details changed, have you moved, changed a telephone number, landline or mobile, or had a new email address? Did you let the Treasurer know of any changes, so that he can update our records? If not, please would you let the Treasurer have the information at an early opportunity by phoning him on 01253 724472 or emailing him at alan.cantor@btinternet.com . Many thanks.

Blackpool Reform Jewish Congregation, Charity number 1148088
Company registered in England and Wales, number 08091243
Registered office: The Synagogue, 40 Raikes Parade, Blackpool, FY1 4EX