

Brighton & Hove Reform Synagogue

Sha'are Shalom

Brighton & Hove Reform Synagogue, Palmeira Avenue, Hove, East Sussex BN3 3GE
Tel: 01273 735343 * Email: accounts@bh-rs.org * Website: www.bh-rs.org
Office hours: Monday to Thursday 9.30am—3.30pm, Friday 9.00am—2pm, Closed Tuesday afternoons
Charity No: 1155461



Michael Harris, Joint Chair

I don't suppose anyone ever imagined we'd be living in "lockdown" conditions. But, here we are. Isn't it strange. I can see some advantages in isolation, but, if ever, you weren't clear on the importance of human contact on a fairly regular basis, surely you must be now.

Your Rabbi and Council have switched to on-line services. There has been an element of trial and error, but I do believe we have now achieved a fairly good protocol using the Zoom system. I fear that there may be some members who would give this a go but refrain or give up because it doesn't seem easy to work. Actually, it's not hard, but, as I've said previously, if you don't know the correct buttons to press, then it is virtually impossible. So, if you're in that position, please, please let the office know and someone can call you to help you with on-line access. My thanks to Rabbi and the choir for ensuring that services continue in the best possible way during this period of isolation.



Cheder teaching, and youth and several other activities have also moved on-line. My thanks to all those who continue to make sure that, so far as we possibly can, these activities do continue, albeit in a different way.

The Synagogue building itself has closed. No-one is allowed in without permission. There are very limited exceptions only. For reasons of safety and security no entry is allowed unless the person concerned has notified the office as to why entry is needed, (and there has to be a good reason, based on essential need), and this then has to be approved. This requirement applies to the office itself! Respecting these requirements, regular checks are being made to ensure that the building remains secure and to look out for any maintenance needs.

Although the building is closed, please remember that you can still contact the office by phone by calling 01273 735343 or by email on accounts@bh-rs.org or office@bh-rs.org.

The Council is now meeting on-line and doing so every week whilst the crisis situation persists. We have discussed the AGM and it is clear that we are very

unlikely to proceed with the planned date of 19 July. What is more likely is that we will try and hold the AGM in September before the High Holy Days. We'll review this in June and let you know what decisions we are able to reach on this.

As regards re-development planning, this is inevitably on hold. Let me assure you that this does mean "on hold". We will get back to this activity as soon as we can.

As regards support for members during the Covid period, we have joined in the effort being provided via the B&H Jewish Community Covid 19 Support Network. This initiative was launched by the Sussex Jewish Representative Council. This Support Group is providing support to all members of the Jewish community in the Sussex area. Supporters come from our own Synagogue and the other support group organisations. If you are getting support, the person doing that may, therefore, be a member of our Shul or from the other support group organisations. The form of support can be shopping, collecting prescriptions or a phone call to see how you are doing. There might be other support required, and the Support Group will do its best to respond. The Support Group has tried its best to publicise the support which is available and how to get it (further details are again provided with this edition of Sha'are Shalom). If you feel you need support, then, of course, do respond directly to the emails, flyers or social media messages inviting you to get in touch. Or simply contact our office. Please remember that it is difficult to give support if the organisers don't know that you need support! So, I do urge you to make contact as I've just said, should you want to see what might be available to help any needs you have. Like I said, just to have someone to chat to. That's what the Support Group is for.

We continue to pray that all members and their families remain safe and well. We encourage everyone to observe the government guidelines. I very much hope that by the time you read this we will have better news as to how the Covid-19 virus is being overcome and so we might gradually see some of the restrictions being eased. I wish you all well.





From Rabbi Andrea

Own your time, because you are free, so says the Rabbi.

I am going to be; now this is a difficult word, countercultural. We Jews have a reputation for being self-conscious and over anxious. We laugh at jokes like the Jewish telegram: "Start worrying, Details to follow". But you know what, courage is also a Jewish value, and we tend to forget that.

Think about our progenitor and model, Avraham. It takes a lot of courage to do what he did, to leave the comfortable existence in the city of Ur, and begin his journey towards a land never seen before, only because God had commanded him to do so - by the way without threatening any punishment if he did not.

We all exist; I mean we are all Jews because of that act of courage, of that middle age man, many many years ago. And so are Christians and Muslims, other monotheistic religions. And of course, one can find countless examples of courage and heroism in the history of the Jewish people, in WWII as well as during the history of the State of Israel.

Courage IS a Jewish virtue. I would say there is a specific kind of courage that we celebrate, or we are invited to think about, on Pesach.

Which is, indeed, the first commandment that the Israelites, as a people, received from God? In chapter 12 of Exodus, immediately after the plagues, the people are commanded to celebrate Pesach, with these words "This month shall be the first of the months for you lachem" (just to clarify, the beginning of the Jewish year is still on Rosh Hashanah, in the Fall. This New Year in the Spring, first of Nisan, was to count the years of the reign of the kings in Ancient Israel).



The Israelites mark their transition from slavery to freedom, by marking a New Year's Day, a festivity which is lachem, for them. This is a deep and profound teaching, because slaves do not own their time, free people do.

Slaves cannot decide what to do with their time. Their time belongs to their masters and they have no ownership of it, neither authority nor the possibility to decide what to do with their time. While free people, and free human beings, own their time, they, or rather we can decide what to do with it and sometimes even afford the luxury to waste it.

This is the deep and profound teaching enclosed in this little small word, lachem, for you. Now that you are free people, your time won't be that of the slaves, who belong to their masters, it will be your time.

It's a powerful message, and certainly a difficult one, and as such it needs to be repeated at least twice a year, on Pesach but also as part of the regular cycle of Torah readings during the year. It takes courage to venture into the desert like Abraham, and to venture as a group on a similar journey towards the Promised Land, but to be able to do this, to have such courage, such a Jewish courage, you must own your time, you must be a free person, not a slave anymore.

And now let me ask you one question. Do we own our time, during these days? Now that we are self-isolated, in quarantine and confined inside the safe boundaries of our homes. Are our days like those of the slaves in Egypt? One day after the other, always the same, with no end in sight, with no structure, no commitment, no freedom, no choice. Repeating one day after the other. I reckon the danger is there. It begins with a sort of complacency, today I can avoid shaving, or taking a shower, or changing my clothes, after all I am here by myself, who's going to complain.



Either if you are retired, or you now work from home, the social conventions do not work anymore, there's less pressure, less need to show a nice part of yourself, to answer, to comply.

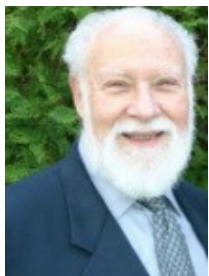
Yes, once my shift is over, I should do this, I should do that, but why now, where's the urgency, let's postpone a bit and be more indulgent, just another couple of hours on the couch in front of Netflix etc. etc. Before you realise, your days lose their structure, there are no societal demands anymore and every day looks like the other. With no end in sight. Like a slave.

Here's where prayer helps. Your days can acquire, a structure, a rhythm, if you pray three times a day (or even only once) in short, if you introduce a daily habit at a precise time. I can tell you, out of experience, that bringing yourself in front of the computer screen with Zoom



open and a prayer book in your hands, helps you to get out of that psychological trap of boredom and passivity, in which we all seem to fall into during these days of quarantine (and by the way if you do not have a prayer book at home let me know, I'll teach you a trick to obtain one).

(continue on opposite page)



As a conclusion of this article I want to mention Rabbi Robert Rothman, z"l, an extraordinary teacher and Rabbi who passed away a few days ago. As you perhaps remember I received the news of his death just a few minutes before the beginning of the 7th day

Pesach service.

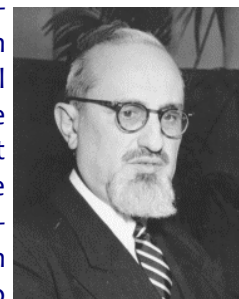
Rabbi Rothman knew how to use his time. He was born in 1931 in the Bronx, from a dynasty of mitnagedim (students of the Vilna Gaon). His immigrant grandfather was a rabbi but he went for a different profession, because America was not kosher enough. Young Rothman went to yeshiva, then to Yeshiva University, received ordination as an Orthodox Rabbi, then he became a psychotherapist and then moved to the Reform Hebrew Union College, and was ordained as a Reform Rabbi. That was his background. Meanwhile he managed to learn to play the drums and work as a military chaplain in Korea. And then, as a Rabbi, he gave the first sermon against the Vietnam War (and the Chair of the Synagogue was a military subcontractor!), marched with Martin Luther King, set up the first Inter-faith council in Rye, New York, volunteered as chaplain of the firefighters and of the police, went to the Soviet Union smuggling siddurim, and returned to Moscow to give the first sermon after the liberation from Communism, in the same synagogue, but this time with the police to protect him and not to take note of what he was saying. This extraordinary man, when retired, used to spend part of his time in Italy, helping the local Reform Congregations and as a constant pastoral presence in the life of many of us.

I was on the point of giving up on my dream of becoming a Rabbi, when I met Rabbi Rothman. Having then shadowed him I learnt so much - like never being afraid of talking politics from the pulpit (which he did, even when it was dangerous or just not popular, as synagogues could be classified as political associations and then lose part of their tax exemption - that was in

the Reagan years). But not on Yom Kippur, because on Yom Kippur people do not come to Shul to hear the latest column in the Guardian, or the New York Times, (he obviously said New York Times), but rather to find the courage to measure themselves against their own moral standards honestly, and the strength not to condemn themselves for failing to do so.

And so, on Kol Nidre Rabbi Rothman used to go down from the bimah to give his sermon walking around the Shul, between the pews, looking at his fellow Jews in the eye, with a friendly face, to support these souls in the journey that was about to begin. To encourage Jews to look into themselves, with honesty and be strong enough to forgive themselves, and finally let go, because that was the time of the year, and that time belongs to us. Because we are free people, and because there is a time for everything.

Over the last few days I have studied, the incredibly profound writings of Joseph Soloveitchik, where I have learnt, or even better re-learned this powerful teaching about the time of the slaves vs the time of the Jews, that is of the free human being. I have devoted hours of my time studying the writings of Soloveitchik, in memory of Rabbi Rothman who (obviously) had attended his classes at Yeshiva University.



Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik

And so, even though I cannot walk around the pews of the Shul right now, I want to invite you to make good use of your time, as Jews and as free human beings and to join our virtual minyanim during the week. It's an invitation from your Rabbi, in the name of a beloved, deeply admired, great teacher, Rabbi Robert Aron Rothman, may his memory become a blessing.

This link is a series of lectures of Meir Soloveichik about the Haggadah is a wonderful introduction in memory of his great grand uncle Joseph.

<https://tikvahfund.org/the-haggadah-a-political-classic/>



BRINGING LIMMUD ONE STEP CLOSER TO YOU

Limmud Together UK, the Limmud you know and love but from the comfort of your own home. It'll be virtually the same experience of a day Limmud, with outstanding presenters, discussions and learning.

Jewish learning and community is important to Limmud and we are using this opportunity to continue to bring people together even if we are physically distant. Being at home doesn't mean you can't get that same Limmud experience.

Limmud Together UK will be on **Sunday 3rd May** in our homes in the UK and across the world. It is one of a number of upcoming global Limmud events, curating accessible learning during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Go to www.limmud.org for more details.



Cheder Report

After coming back from half term break, Cheder children were busy with Purim celebrations. On March 1st they helped decorate and fill Mishloach Manot boxes and sign cards, which the parents kindly distributed to the older members of our community. The children also created Purim masks and groggers. On Monday, 9th March, we then celebrated Erev Purim together. The younger children had activities in the Rosenblum Room including a story and arts and crafts, while the parents joined in, had refreshments and a nice chat. The older children met in the AJEX Hall with Abi, our Youth Worker and her assistants, who had organised their activities, including creating sock puppets, for the characters of the Purim story. After food the children joined the multi-lingual reading of the Megillah in the Synagogue, and enjoyed cheering and booing.



On 15th March, we celebrated Joshua Berman's Tefillin morning. Everyone joined Joshua and his parents as he put on his Tefillin and Tallit for the first time, and led our morning prayers. We celebrated afterwards with fruit and cake. Sadly, due to the new restrictions to contain the coronavirus outbreak, his Bar Mitzvah had to then be postponed.

In the meantime, our Sunday classes too had to adapt to the new situation. Thanks to the great efforts of teachers and assistants since 22nd March, all classes have gone on-line via Zoom. We are proud to have reached out to the Cheder families, and each child accompanied by a responsible adult can easily have access to on-line Jewish learning. The support we have received from parents has been fantastic and most of all the response of the children, their positive learning attitude and ability to adapt have been amazing. They continuously motivate the Cheder staff to reach out and make up new and effective ways of teaching.



So far we have been able to offer to each class from Gan to Gimmel a 40 minute long weekly session, which includes Hebrew and some Jewish Studies topics. Students from Kittah Dalet and B'nei Mizvah Class have been working on a one-to-one basis mostly covering Hebrew and Tefillot (prayers).



During our last morning on line before Pesach break, classes were joined together into three different age groups and had a mini-mock Seder, watching preparing matzah, discussing how this Pesach celebration will be "different from all others" thinking about gratitude and hope in these difficult times.

After the Pesach break we hope to be able to offer for classes from Gan to Gimmel, two separate sessions each morning - Hebrew and Jewish Studies, which will cover our term topic, Israel. Kittah Dalet and B'nei Mizvah Class will continue to have one-to-one Hebrew sessions, as well as Jewish Topic lessons on alternate weeks.



The Cheder office is still fully staffed and working from home.

Please be in touch with any queries.

You can email us at chederbhrs@bh-rs.org

from Sara & the Cheder Team

KUDDLE UP SHABBAT

Parent and child playgroup ~ for 0-4 years olds

Kuddle Up Shabbat has had two sessions, so far, on line.

The children have very much enjoyed their time on their computers and seeing their friends.

It is a difficult time for everyone and confusing for the little ones, being kept in and not allowed their normal freedom to see their friends and to play.

They love that Sara leads the singing and movement, then hands over to Alison, who follows with a story, in exactly the same way as they are used to in Synagogue.



They even see that Dinosaur has come to stay at Sara and Hila's house, so can be there with them when we celebrate Shabbat. We finish setting up the Shabbat table with the candles, grape juice and the Challah.

Children also enjoy sharing Shabbat pictures on our WhatsApp group, while making challah or lighting candles to show to our friend the Dinosaur.

For details, please contact kuddleupshabbat@gmail.com

Sara & Alison



The Rosh Chodesh Women's group



As with other groups, Rosh Chodesh has moved over to meeting 'virtually' during the current circumstances. We shared our favourite Haggadah parts and more creative readings (and jokes!) about Pesach. We are expecting to continue with our monthly on-line meetings until it is safe to return to face to face meetings. If you would like to lead a meeting, or would like more information, please be in touch by writing to the Shul office.

A Poem for these times:

My hands are quite sore from scrubbing with carbolic

I'm trying not to overeat or become an alcoholic!

I try to vary all my walks so it's not like Groundhog Day.

Watch whatever's on TV, though my favourite program's gone away.

Do my crosswords, read a book, then some Yoga on the floor

See to the garden, feed the wild birds - but even that's become a bore.

At a two metre distance my son delivers all of my provisions

But no chance of a hug, or any kind of bodily collisions!

Staying safe has to be a priority and patience is the word

To banish this vicious virus, which is annoyingly absurd.

By Sylvia Eedy





SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS DURING THIS TIME

The Synagogue Welfare Team has joined forces with the Brighton & Hove Jewish Community Support Network, to provide support to our members in isolation, during this difficult time.

Anyone who has been advised to self-isolate by the government, should receive a friendly phone call from one of the Support Network volunteers. In addition to a weekly chat they can advise how to obtain help with shopping, collecting prescriptions etc.

If however you would like a call from our Rabbi, please let the office know, and he will be happy to call.

Community Support Network:

Tel: 01273 747722 / Email: hhcov19@gmail.com

Shul Office: Tel: 01273 735343



'Nosh for the NHS'

Our Emergency Services would love some extra treats to cheer them up during this crazy time.



'Extra Treats for our Emergency Services'



PLUS...

Care for our Carers

This week we are donating to staff and residents of Tikvah House, our local Jewish home for adults with learning disabilities.

As they are currently in 'lockdown' we would like to support them with gifts of sweet treats.



With these two ideas in mind, we are collecting confectionary goodies for the NHS & Carers, so if you go shopping please could you add an extra sweet little something to your basket for us to deliver.



We ask that all goods are vegetarian and pre-wrapped.

Drop off points can be found in three different locations in Hove.

If you are able to help with this project please drop off your goodies in the boxes provided.

Debra Goodman
106 Goldstone Crescent
HOVE, BN3 6BF
Box left in front garden



Beryl Sharpe
11 Hove Manor, Hove Street
HOVE, BN3 2DG
Box left outside south entrance

Sarah Wilks
3/80 Langdale Road
HOVE, BN3 4HP
Box left on front path

For further information please call Sarah 01273 327763 / 07711 689 583

Hello! If you are self-isolating, we can help.

We are the 'Brighton & Hove Jewish Community Support Network'

Our number is **01273 747722.**
Our email is **hhcov19@gmail.com**
Or join our Facebook page

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 we can help with:

- ⇒ Picking up shopping
- ⇒ A friendly phone call
- ⇒ Posting mail

- ⇒ Urgent supplies
- ⇒ Picking up prescriptions
- ⇒ Dog walking
- ⇒ Technical support



מזל טוב ל..

... Andrea Gardner, Vera Silver & Cyril Sugarman
on their **special** birthdays in **May**,
and to Lesley Kaplan, Susan Bloom, Virginia
Craig, Diane Caplin & Sarah Main on their
special birthdays in **June**.



Happy Birthday

....to the youngsters of our community, who include:
Annalise Andersen, Benjamin Buchalter, Florence Rajak
& Eden Schulster for **May**,
and Esther Graber, Tara Lissauer, Hila Zanardo, Toby Morrison
& Alicia Levene for **June**.



Condolences:

We wish long life to the families of
Tina Tack, Martin Gould,
Shirley Moss, Richard Harris & Alan Glynne z"l.

MARTIN GROSS

Funeral Director and
Funeral Consultant
to Jewish communities

01273 439792

07801 599771

07540 066566



Norman Grant Of Gary Green Memorials



The Recommended Mason for the
Brighton & Hove Reform Community
and all Jewish Cemeteries Countrywide
New Memorials, Renovations
and Additional Inscriptions
Home Visits by Appointment

01273 885874
Mobile: 07769 515 045
ngrant37@gmail.com



Erev Shabbat Services at 6.30pm

Join our service via the following link:

Go to: <https://zoom.us/join>

type 666-517-106 ~ password BHRS

or copy & paste this link:

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/666517106?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/666517106?pwd=T2x4WTdLZGdTNmcZk5pWFRSTWbrdz09)

[pwd=T2x4WTdLZGdTNmcZk5pWFRSTWbrdz09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/666517106?pwd=T2x4WTdLZGdTNmcZk5pWFRSTWbrdz09)

SERVICES ON LINE



Shabbat Morning Services at 10.30am

Join our service via the following link:

Go to <https://zoom.us/join>

type 729-324-760 ~ password BHRS

or copy & paste this link:

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/729324760?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/729324760?pwd=aW9seDZsY3lEcGpVK0RHc2N0UXJEUT09)

[pwd=aW9seDZsY3lEcGpVK0RHc2N0UXJEUT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/729324760?pwd=aW9seDZsY3lEcGpVK0RHc2N0UXJEUT09)



You don't stop being Jewish when you are at home!

Join in the virtual tefillah (prayer) led by Rabbi Andrea on 'Zoom'.

(download the app)

Many options available every day:

Shachrit every morning at 7:30am (not on Saturdays!)

If you want to lay tefillin, Rabbi is available to teach, feel free to ask!

Go to: <https://zoom.us/join> ~ type 790-285-615 ~ password BHRS

Mincha everyday at 2:30pm (not on Saturdays!)

Go to: <https://zoom.us/join> ~ type 571-620-138 ~ password BHRS

Ma'ariv everyday 9pm (Sundays to Thursdays!)

Go to: <https://zoom.us/join> ~ type 258-315-566 ~ password BHRS

'Rabbi I have a question, or maybe two.'

Join Rabbi Andrea on Zoom (where else?) on Tuesdays to Fridays at 5-5:30pm.

Go to: <https://zoom.us/join> ~ Type 967-848-265 ~ password BHRS

Contact rabbi.andreaz@gmail.com for the details.

He also offers a tutorial on how to use Zoom to join the crowd!

Do you want to join a musical performance?

Oliver Harris is planning to create a **virtual** concert for everyone and would like others to join him.

The plan is for members of the community to record themselves playing/singing and Oliver will compile the contributions into one video that will be broadcast at a particular time(s).

All genres are welcome from classical right through to electronic dance music (if you so wish!) but as a general theme, **Lunchtime Recital** should be the "vibe".

Everyone, regardless of age, ability or instrument is encouraged to participate including solo or group performances.

What are you waiting for?!

Contact Oliver at ojharris@outlook.com.