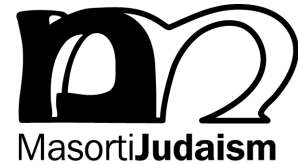


News from the AMS office
22nd May 2009



Community + General News

- Many of the communities are having their AGM's over this period. Congratulations on a superb job and happy retirement to NLS Chair Adrian Marks and EMS Chair Melvyn Sobell. MazalTov John Mitchell new joint chair at EMS and Alan Goldener at HEMS
- The Haringey/Stoke Newington group has continued with their planned activities: A matzo ramble, Shabbaton over 1st/2nd May [attended by 40 adults and 20 children] and monthly study sessions have all taken place. A camping Shabbat is planned for June and they are beginning to plan services for the Yamim Noraim
- Elstree and Borehamwood now has 40 adult members and last Shabbat welcomed Chazan Jacky Chernett to lead services and NOAM worker Avigail Roubini who ran activities for the younger members. Plans are well in hand for the Yamim Noraim – they have invited Laurence Jacobs to lead services.
- A new contact in Manchester is the presenter of a Jewish interest programme for BBC local radio. He understands that there need to be a small core group showing an interest to enable us to help them set up. He is using the programme to try and raise our profile –he has interviewed Jacky Chernett and Michael Gluckman over the past couple of months.
- Michael and Matt are working with our executive to establish a cabinet/ patrons' group for AMS, to provide leadership and fund raising for the movement. We see this as a key resource for the future to enable more stable funding and aim to launch the group in September.
- Michael met with Tony Feldman and Yonni Gottleib to discuss the annual Spring Study weekend. Tony has organised this for approximately the past 12years and is handing over to Yonni. Due to lack of advance support the event was cancelled for this year. methods of marketing were discussed to ensure this important event in our calendar continues
- The revised edition of Laws of Life is nearly ready to go to press.

Study

➤ **Masorti Tefila network**

Chazan Jacky Chernett and Matt Plen have completed plans for the Art of Shulmanship seminar to be held on June 7th. Please see fliers/AMS website for more details. All communities are encouraged to send representatives.

➤ **Adult education**

a. Lishma (www.lishma.org.uk)

Rina Wolfson, a professional Jewish educator and member of KNMS, is now in charge of the Lishma website. The first monthly Lishma email update has been sent to all members of the movement, Noam parents, and other contacts.

Rina will also be starting to work with the communities on planning their adult education programmes for the autumn, to be advertised in the next Lishma print brochure. We have held the first Lishma steering group meeting with reps from various shuls to strategise for the future.

b. Kollel

Initiated by Rabbi Joel Levy, the goal is to set up serious, extended (5+ hours a week) textual learning at a high level for a committed group, with the aim of creating a core of literate Jews for the movement. We're currently recruiting a core group and hope to hold an initial meeting during the week of June 14th (anyone interested or know someone who might be – please let me know). We aim to start in September..

➤ **Jewish Educators' Network**

Matt Plen has held meetings with around 16 educational leaders from across the movement and the wider community (the Jewish schools, UJIA, Leo Baeck College) to launch the project, brainstorm and generate ideas. There's excitement around the project and a sense that a genuine need is being addressed.

Matt has circulated a questionnaire to the communities and schools to gauge needs and build up a bank of trainers/mentors. An educator in Israel is working on building up resources for the website and Matt is beginning to work with a web designer. He is currently working on a Shavuot project with Akiva school is planning a new project with Clore Tikva before the end of the year.

NOAM

➤ **Summer programmes**

Summer Machaneh is full across all age groups and planning continues apace. In all, over 400 participants across six age groups (school years 5-10) will attend Machaneh in Wales and France. Staff, currently being interviewed and trained, include over 100 madrichim (leaders), plus a team of professional educators drawn from across the Masorti world, technical, welfare and support staff, and even "families in residence".

Israel Tour is full with three groups of around 45 participants each. The groups spend about a month touring the length and breadth of the country, and the entire programme is designed from the ground up to be a uniquely Masorti experience, including visits to the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem and to Masorti communities such as Kibbutz Hanaton and the fledgling Noam Olim group (a growing group of Noam members who have made aliyah).

Both Machaneh and Israel Tour have been highly praised by both parents and the UJIA, who judge Noam's success in very different ways.

➤ **Recent and upcoming events**

Poland trip - Noam and Marom took 24 young adults to Poland with an expert guide for a four-day trip, visiting Krakow, Warsaw and other sites. This year Noam was the only youth movement outside the ultra-Orthodox sector that took a group to Poland for longer than a day.

Social Action Week - from 24 May, Noam is participating in the UJIA-supported social action week, which will see Noam members involved in a variety of social action projects - including collecting food for the homeless in local areas.

Rashim (heads of Machaneh) Training - in June, all Rashim will be spending a week in intensive training to prepare them for their senior roles at the helm of teams of 15-25 madrichim in charge of groups of up to 100 young people at Machaneh this Summer. Training is delivered both by in-house experts and by external professionals from across the Jewish world, including educators, Masorti Rabbis and professionals in child protection and welfare.

➤ **The Press**

You may have noticed that Noam has featured in the Jewish Chronicle in recent weeks. This is part of a concerted drive to improve exposure in the Jewish media. Noam is now the second or third largest Jewish youth movement by size of membership and camps, yet has been disproportionately ignored by the Jewish media in recent years.

➤ **Redesigned website**

Noam's website at www.noam.org.uk has been redesigned with a fresh new look and is part of a very strong online presence that (along with the e-newsletters) provides information to Noam parents, leaders and young people. The website is used during Machaneh and Israel Tour to deliver live updates and photos from the programmes, and also to provide live travel information on departure and return days.

➤ **Next year**

Interviews for next year's Noam professionals have taken place. These are conducted by the Youth Director, the Chair of the Masorti Young People's Department, and a panel of senior movement members. There is a very impressive and dynamic team of graduates ready to take the reins of the movement in 2009-10. The current professionals are planning handover, which takes place shortly after all the Summer programmes finish.

- Below are links to the latest two Noam Parents' Network e-newsletters, which give good outlines of the work the Noam Office are doing in the run-up to summer *Machanot* (camps) and Israel Tour.

<http://madmimi.com/promotions/9442501668175/raw?fe=1&pact=80836061>

<http://madmimi.com/promotions/10937101932221/raw?fe=1&pact=97637403>

MAROM

- As part of the strategy to develop 'micro-communities' of young adults, Matt has been learning mishna with a group of Noam graduates in **Golders Green**. The group are planning a Friday night dinner soon.
- **Borehamwood** - an initial meeting is planned, to be led by Reli and some Noam graduates living in the area, to do non-shul Jewish content for young adults in Borehamwood.
- **Students** - we've held two strategy meetings for next year's student work, with Noam and Marom staff participating. Next year's field worker will be Jackie Gerber, a JTS graduate.
- Shira is excited to work at Noam camp this summer as Rosh Chinuch (head of education) for the France site and is busy organising a tefilah seminar and a program in which all of the madrichim will create a talit! Before camp, Shira will take seven uni students to Jerusalem to study at the Conservative Yeshiva for a month and looks forward to learning with them.
- Beit Noam - plans are moving ahead to establish a residential centre for the Noam movement workers, which will serve as a focus for Marom activities, beginning in September. The project will be led by Adam Berkley.
- We're currently recruiting participants for the **Open Talmud Project**, an intensive, pluralistic Beit Midrash to be taught by Rabbi Chaim Weiner and other educators. The Beit Midrash is aimed at young adults who want an introduction to - or who want to improve - their textual learning skills. Dates: July 30-August 2.

Israel

- Following very successful Yom Ha'Atzmaut events across the communities, Reli has begun focusing on Israel projects for the summer. Projects include Israel Tour and smaller yet meaningful projects such as bringing a delegation of 6 children from UK's partnership areas in the north of Israel to experience a Noam camp, to meet new friends and to help camp participants develop a better understanding of what it is like to be a young person in Israel. Another project that is aimed to raise the level of Israel education on camp is *Yom Yisrael* (Israel Day). This summer, for the second time, every age group will have a special educational and exciting day all dedicated to Israel. Reli is full of anticipation towards the summer, now all we need is a bit of sun...

External

- Over the last two months the movement has been represented at several outside events:
 - Lambeth Palace Reception
 - Board of Deputies reception for the outgoing Archbishop of Westminster
 - Launch evening for the UJIA Lead Now programme
 - Belsize Square 70th anniversary service – Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg was guest speaker
 - JCoSS groundbreaking
 - Yad Vashem Yom HaShoa ceremony

- **Maple Street Group** [of Reform, Liberal and Masorti movements]. At the recent Meeting we reviewed the Cross Communal Committee meeting. We all felt that the meeting had been positive and a good atmosphere was being engendered. It was agreed that we should follow up the principle of other religious streams participating in cross communal events sponsored through the BoD. For example the Chanukah candle lighting at the Foreign Office. We also discussed areas where the three movements could collaborate e.g. the Mikveh on the Manor House site, work with students and primary schools. These will be taken forward to future agendas.

- **London Citizens – community organising and congregational renewal**
Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg spoke at a rally of 20,000 people on May Day bank holiday in Trafalgar square on the issue of asylum seekers, alongside MPs and Christian and Muslim leaders. The London Citizens organisation offers huge potential for congregational renewal work and for connecting Jews and Judaism with wider social issues. AMS is spearheading moves to involve the Jewish community in this exciting initiative.

Don't Miss:

- The major conference entitled Living with Darwin: Religion and Science to mark 150 years since the publication of the Origin of Species. This will take place on **Sunday 29th November 2009 10am-4pm** at Ivy House, North End Road, NW11
As modern, non-fundamentalist Jews, we accept evolution as a convincing explanation of the origins of life. Join top scientists, rabbis and educators to explore the impact of Darwin's earth shattering discovery, and how contemporary Judaism might respond to it.
Professor Geoffrey Cantor has accepted our invitation to give the keynote lecture. He is retired from Univ. of Leeds, and has written on the connections between Darwin and Judaism and also lectured at Limmud.
Sessions to include:
 - Creationism and intelligent design in Judaism, Christianity and Islam

- Social Darwinism, racism and genocide
- Evolution in modern Jewish philosophy
- The Dawkins debate: science, God and atheism
- Evolution and the legacy of Louis Jacobs

Please ensure that this is entered in communal diaries.

Shabbat Shalom

Direct Dial numbers and Telephone Extensions.

FAX 020 8349 2743

Michael - Executive Director	020 8349 6651	20	Jessie - NOAM	020 8349 6652	25
Matt - Movement Director	020 8349 6656	21	Ben - NOAM	020 8349 6653	26
Reli - Shalichah	020 8349 6657	22	Adam - NOAM	020 8349 6654	27
Shira- Students	020 8349 6658	23	Leonie - NOAM Mazkira	020 8349 6655	28
NOAM Administrator Tracy Landsberg All day Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings	[Via switchboard only] 020 8349 6650	30			

Assembly of Masorti Synagogues
 Alexander House, 3 Shakespeare Road
 London N3 1XE
 020 8349 6650
enquiries@masorti.org.uk www.masorti.org.uk

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