

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775



Shirei Chagigah

A celebration of music and prayer
incorporating the MRJ Choirs Festival



PROGRAMME

Thursday 9th July at Alyth, Alyth Gardens, NW11 7EN

15:15-16:00	Coffee & registration	Foyer
16:00-16:30	Opening <i>tekes</i> (ceremony)	Synagogue
16:45-18:45	Repertoire session: Learn new repertoire that we will be using throughout the conference while also getting to know our teachers; bring your voice and a sense of fun	Synagogue
19:00-20:15	Dinner & mini <i>shira</i>	Leo Baeck Hall
20:30-21:15	Ma'ariv – Evening Service Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T'fillah L'dor vador (Prayer for every generation): Rabbi Noam Katz & Merri Lovinger Arian • Nusach & niggun: Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller & Cantor Zöe Jacobs • Creative liturgy: Noah Aronson & Judith Silver 	Synagogue Library Youth Hall
21:15-21:40	Learning from & discussing t'fillah (prayer services) in small groups: Having chosen the type of <i>t'fillah</i> that most interests you, take the opportunity to hear from the service leaders how they went about crafting that specific service. Bring your questions and your challenges to the table, and discuss them with the <i>sh'lichei tzibbur</i> (service leaders) and fellow conference attendees	In service rooms
21:45-22:00	Closing ritual	Synagogue
22:00	<i>Lailah tov</i> (good night)	

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

Friday 10th July at Alyth until 16:30, then at FRS

09:45-10:00	Coffee	<i>Foyer</i>
10:00-10:30	Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller and Noah Aronson A taste of t'fillah	<i>Synagogue</i>
10:45-12:15	Workshop 1	
	Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller Tradition - a time and place: What is <i>nusach</i> ? What does it sound like? When might I use it? Can I weave it within an otherwise progressive service? We will explore these questions and more together	<i>Youth Hall</i>
	Rabbi Noam Katz Song-leading from the campfire to the classroom (Part 1): There is both an art and a science to song-leading, built on a sturdy foundation of skills, repertoire and instincts to bring out your best self. Whether you song-lead at camp, school, <i>shul</i> , <i>cheder</i> , or in your youth movement, you consider yourself a beginner or an ol' timer, this session will focus on how to teach and share great Jewish music across a wide variety of settings. Includes some fresh new tunes, hot off the press!	<i>Synagogue</i>
	Cantor Zöe Jacobs Singing for the sake of heaven: If you just love to sing, come and learn some simple rounds and harmonies for both new and well-loved repertoire that you could easily introduce into your own communities. There's no ulterior motive, and we may not talk very much, but we'll surely create a joyful noise together	<i>Leo Baeck Hall</i>
	Rabbi Josh Levy What the <i>sh'liach tzibbur</i> who needs to break wind should do and other much more important questions about leading services: In this session we will look at textual sources about leading <i>t'fillah</i> . We'll study the core responsibilities of the <i>sh'liach tzibbur</i> and try to uncover the values that should shape our service leading	<i>Library</i>
	Noah Aronson Music theory: Have you ever wondered how some people can just start playing a song without having learned how to do so? Some people call it 'playing by ear' but I call it having a firm grasp of how to employ the rules of music theory. In this workshop I will break down the key elements of music theory into a usable, workable language, and will leave out all the stuff you don't need. (You don't need to know how to analyze a Bach Chorale or sight-read a Beethoven symphony, but understanding how scales and chords work can give you the tools to figure out how to play virtually every song you'll encounter in song-leading context)	<i>Meeting Room</i>
12:30-13:30	Lunch & mini <i>shira</i>	<i>Leo Baeck Hall</i>

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

Friday cont....	Workshop 2
13:45- 15:15	<p>Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller <i>Youth Hall</i> Mindful prayer leading - becoming a vessel to give and receive: It is so easy to take for granted the leading of the service. How might I pay more attention to <i>t'fillah</i> and my role within it? We'll explore techniques of listening to and tuning into the congregation, preparing oneself to lead, and beginning and ending communal prayer</p>
	<p>Merri Lovinger Arian <i>Synagogue</i> From the port of Tel Aviv to a summer camp in Wales: how to integrate new melodies emerging from Israel into your camp services: Come and learn new melodies that will surely enrich your services at camp. In addition to learning these melodies, we will discuss how to be prayer leaders, rather than song-leaders, as you use these settings within our prayer services</p>
	<p>Noah Aronson <i>Leo Baeck Hall</i> Niggunim: Creating instant harmony from a simple melody line: This session will feature more than a dozen <i>niggunim</i> (melodies without words) that are meant to be sung without the use of instruments. We will explore how to create instant two and three part harmonies to enhance and enrich any singing community</p>
	<p>Rabbi Noam Katz <i>Kindergarten</i> Jamming through the Jewish year: Great tunes for young communities that teach core Jewish texts and values. We will learn alternative repertoire for the Jewish Year - primarily for holidays and lifecycle - that's a little off the beaten path</p>
	<p>Rabbi Miriam Berger <i>Library</i> Turn it & turn it from dull to delight: Making Torah interesting for under 10's: Will the Torah service inevitably change the energy of a service? Does it need to be less participatory than the rest of the service? What am I bound by and what freedom do I have to make it accessible and creative for young people?</p>

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

Friday cont...	Workshop 3
15:30- 16:30	<p>Viv Bellos & Cantor Cheryl Wunch <i>Kindergarten</i> Teen choirs: Have you always wanted to set up a teen choir in your community? Come and hear from Cheryl and Viv who have run exactly that for many years at Alyth. Learn about repertoire selection, how to retain members, and how to combine fun and great music</p>
	<p>Judith Silver <i>Meeting Room</i> Composers' contingent: Join extraordinary British Jewish composers as they invite you to share music you have written, as well as offering some of their own</p>
	<p>Student Cantor Sarah Grabiner <i>Library</i> Retro-Israeli playlist: Israeli folk music is an amazing treasure trove of songs for all different situations and moods with beautiful texts and melodies. However, with our drive towards new music and our inspiration from America, we might have lost some tunes along the way. Come and sing and learn old favourites, and reenergize the Israeli classics together</p>
	<p>Rabbi Josh Levy <i>Synagogue</i> Be the <i>sh'liach tzibbur</i> you wish to see in the world: Join together with Rabbis Josh Levy and Laura Janner-Klausner as you plan a service for the <i>Shirei Chagigah</i> community, which you will lead together on Sunday morning. We'll discuss everything from nuts to bolts, from set up to style, from intention to technique. This is a great opportunity to workshop as well as develop your own skills. NB: You need to be at both workshop 3 and 5 to lead the service</p>
16:30- 17:30	Move to Finchley Reform Synagogue (FRS), 101 Fallow Court Avenue, London N12 0BE
By 17:30	Arrive at FRS
17:30- 18:15	<p>A musical reception for welcoming Shabbat <i>Synagogue</i> Join us as we welcome Shabbat – this session will be open to the community and will continue to teach music we will use during Shabbat</p>
18:30 – 19:45	<p><i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> service (Welcoming Shabbat) <i>Synagogue</i></p>
20:00	Dinner <i>Synagogue</i>
21:30	<p>Shabbat shira <i>Synagogue</i> As we share in '<i>oneg Shabbat</i>' (the joy of Shabbat), let's do so by singing songs we love, both new and familiar, together as one community</p>
22:30	<i>Lailah tov</i> (good night)

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

Shabbat 11 July at FRS

10:30 - 12:30	<i>Shabbat Shacharit</i> (Shabbat morning service)	<i>Synagogue</i>
12:45 - 13:30	<i>Kiddush</i> & lunch	<i>Youth Centre</i>
13:30 - 14:30	Shira Britannia team Shira Britannia share their repertoire	<i>Synagogue</i>
14:45 - 16:45	Workshop 4	
	Noah Aronson The art of crafting a service: How do we turn our services from a set list of greatest hits into meaningful prayer? Too often we fall into the trap of thinking of our services as one song after another, but there is an art to crafting a service flow. This course will help break down the moments in between the music that serve as the glue for our service cue sheets. It's when these moments are fine-tuned that the art of crafting a service truly comes alive	<i>Synagogue</i>
	Rabbi Noam Katz Song-leading from the campfire to the classroom (Part 2): Ok, I know loads of songs, and now I can teach them with some confidence...but how do I weave them together to create a radical <i>ruach</i> (energetic) experience for my community? In other words, how do I go from a list of <i>shirim</i> (songs) to a well-crafted <i>shira</i> (song-session)? We will learn how to shape song sessions with respect to key, tempo, theme, and audience, and start to transfer that song database from your head into a ready-to-use <i>shira</i> as soon as you walk out the door	<i>Youth Centre</i>
	Merri Lovinger Arian Singing new life into the liturgy of your services: Congregants love “their” prayer melodies. New melodies can be met with resistance. How does one create a community that welcomes new interpretations of the liturgy? How do you select these new melodies, and why? And finally, how do you teach these melodies within the service, in a way that enhances the prayer moment, rather than interrupts the flow? We will sing through some new melodies, and together think through the answers to some of these challenging questions	<i>Small Hall</i>
	Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller Five places of awareness: How does Jewish tradition define what it is to live a life of sacred awareness? How might we bring this awareness toward our daily lives? Through study, song and story we will explore five rabbinic paradigms of mindful living	<i>Upstairs office</i>
17:00- 18:00	Se’udah shlishit (the third meal) A fabulous <i>se’udah</i> experience led by dynamic leaders of RSY-Netzer (Includes delicious tea, in case you’re still hungry)	<i>Synagogue</i>

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

Shabbat cont...	Workshop 5	
18:15–19:15	<p>Jess Gold <i>Upstairs office</i></p> <p>Composers' contingent: Have you ever written a song? Perhaps you've not yet been brave enough to try? Together we'll explore how to set a text to a melody as we compose at least one new song</p>	
	<p>Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner <i>Synagogue</i></p> <p>Be the sh'liach tzibbur you wish to see in the world: Join together with Rabbis Josh Levy and Laura Janner-Klausner as you plan a service for the Shirei Chagigah community, which you will lead together on Sunday morning. We'll discuss everything from nuts to bolts, from set up to style, from intention to technique. This is a great opportunity to workshop as well as develop your own skills.</p> <p>NB: You need to be at both workshop 3 and 5 to lead the service</p>	
	<p>David Hoffman <i>Downstairs office</i></p> <p>Instrumental group: An opportunity for musicians who have brought their instruments to play some of the new music we've learned together so far during the conference</p>	
	<p>Cantor Cheryl Wunch <i>Youth Centre</i></p> <p>Using music with our littlest ones: Join Cantor Cheryl as we explore repertoire and techniques for teaching music to the youngest members of our communities. We will explore how to teach music to kids who haven't yet mastered the art of reading, and how music can be a powerful tool in teaching Judaism and Hebrew to this age group. N.B. due to copyright restrictions, sheet music will not be distributed (although we will discuss where to find resources)</p>	
	<p>Rabbi Dr. Dalia Marx <i>Small Hall</i></p> <p>New Rituals for New Opportunities: One often hears that the Jewish tradition has a special blessing, prayer or ritual for everything we do. Is it so? In this workshop, we will deal with the need for new rituals to mark life passages, consider criteria and envision the elements of such rituals. Our task will be theoretical and at the same time practical</p>	
19:30–20:30	Dinner & mini <i>shira</i>	<i>Synagogue</i>
20:45–22:00	<p>Melave malka: (Accompanying the bride back out as Shabbat departs...)</p> <p>Stories and songs to help us hold on to that Shabbat feeling for as long as possible. Listen, relax, sing, laugh... as we prepare to greet the new week</p>	<i>Synagogue</i>
22:00	<i>Havdalah</i>	<i>Outside</i>
22:30	<i>Lailah tov (good night)</i>	

Shirei Chagigah Programme

2015/5775

Sunday 12 July at Alyth - Shaded sessions for Choirs' Festival

09.15	Coffee & welcome / Choirs' Festival registration opens	Foyer
09:30-10:15	Morning t'fillah (Choirs' festival participants welcome to join us) Led by participants from Workshop 3/5: 'Be the sh'liach tzibbur you wish to see in the world'	Synagogue
10:30-12:00	Workshop 6	
	Noam Katz: Song-leading masterclass - Part 1: Need some fresh eyes and ears to bring you to that next level? Bring a song you know and love, teach it to our group, and receive direct and supportive feedback, as you hone your craft and go deeper into the art of song-leading. We will review the basics of teaching a song, learn a proven method for giving constructive feedback, and add new tools with the support of your colleagues	Kindergarten
	Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller: Joining the dots to make it whole - creating cohesion in the service: Can there be momentum and flow within a service in which we sing a wide variety of melodies, <i>nusach</i> , chants, etc.? Is there a way to facilitate more of a sense of connection from the beginning to the end of prayer?	Library
	Merri Lovinger Arian: Re-imagining the role of the choir in the congregation: Many of you either lead choirs, or are yourself a member of a choir, who participates in prayer services regularly. Yet to some congregants, these choirs can be seen as a "separate entity." How might you envision the choir as a tool for congregational engagement? How might the congregants partner with the choir? How can choir members be seen as <i>sh'lichei tzibbur</i> ? How can you help develop a consciousness of choir members as interpreters of texts? These are some of the questions we will be grappling with as we sing through some choral examples (THIS SESSION IS JOINT WITH CHOIRS' FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS: ALL WELCOME)	Youth Hall
	Noah Aronson: Hallel: The <i>hallel</i> service has within it a treasure trove of musical gems from various Psalms of praise. <i>Hallel</i> is typically sung on holidays and on <i>Rosh Chodesh</i> (the new month) but its songs can be extracted and used in countless other settings. Come to this workshop if you're interested in learning lots of great Hebrew songs that may be unfamiliar to one who may not have grown up in a traditional prayer community. The goal of this workshop will be breadth not depth, so we will sing through as many melodies as time will allow	Beit Midrash
	Viv Bellos: Massed Singing: Come and learn some new tunes for your synagogue choir and pick up a few vocal tips while you're there. All voices and abilities welcome	Leo Baeck Hall
12:00-13:00	Lunch & mini <i>shira</i>	Leo Baeck Hall

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

Sunday cont....	Workshop 7
13:10-14:40	<p>Rabbi Noam Katz: <i>Kindergarten</i> Song-leading masterclass - Part 2: You'd like to teach the world to sing...in perfect harmony? Another opportunity to bring a song you know and love, teach it to our group, and receive direct and supportive feedback, as you hone your craft and expand your song-leading toolkit. Duos or small groups are also welcome to present a piece to support your work with a co-song-leader</p>
	<p>Cantor Zöe Jacobs: <i>Library</i> Show me the way to go home: We've learned new music, techniques, and strategies together, we've sung in 120-part harmony, and prayed with a community of musicians and other <i>sh'lichei tzibbur</i>. But how do we take this work home with us? Let's talk together about how to continue the change already being seen in the life of British Jewish communities. This session is particularly aimed at those involved in musical leadership within their communities.</p>
	<p>Noah Aronson: <i>Youth Hall</i> The accidental bandleader: As song-leaders, music teachers and prayer leaders, we're constantly put in situations to lead bands and work with other musicians. This course will teach you the language of how to communicate your needs to other musicians by showing you how to create quick and effective band charts and lead sheets. This will help you build confidence when working with other musicians and will get you started on creating great musical moments in your communities</p>
	<p>Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner <i>Beit Midrash</i> But what about me? If you find yourself overwhelmed at the idea of integrating your newly learnt service-leading skills into the reality of your home congregation, come along to join the conversation. This session is aimed at shlichei tzibbur from smaller communities.</p>
13:10-14:10	<p>Viv Bellos: <i>Viv's office</i> Vocal technique: Led by Viv Bellos a singing teacher with 40 years' experience of coaching young and old, talented and vocally challenged she will gently guide you through exercises to develop the correct posture, breath control, resonance and vocal control</p>
	<p>Cantor Cheryl Wunch: <i>Leo Baeck Hall</i> Choral blending:</p>
	<p>Mich Sampson: <i>Meeting room</i> Sight singing: An introductory, practical workshop exploring how some principles from Dalcroze (learning music concepts through movement) and Kodaly/solfa can be used to learn to sight-sing from scratch. Suitable for complete beginners and for people who can read music but not (yet) sight-sing</p>
14:15 – 15:15	<p>Cantor Cheryl Wunch & Viv Bellos <i>Leo Baeck Hall</i> Masterclass: Feel free to join the choirs' festival for a masterclass if you are part of a choir.</p>

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

14:45- 16:15	Time to relax!	
	<p>Dan Nichols' film: 'Road to Eden' British premiere <i>Youth Hall</i></p> <p>Road to Eden documents beloved Jewish musician Dan Nichols' journey through the deep South to celebrate the Jewish festival of Sukkot and explore its deeper meaning and relevance to modern Jewish life. On the road, he confronts issues of homelessness, immigration, interfaith relations, environmental concerns, Middle East turmoil and civil rights, reminding us all that we are still trying to reach the 'Promised Land' together</p>	
	<p>Drumming workshop <i>Kindergarten</i></p> <p>If you always wondered how a simple beat becomes a complex rhythm this workshop is for you. Learn drumming skills to take home and use, whether for fun or in your community. Build the beat together!</p>	
	<p>Judith Silver <i>Meditation Room</i></p> <p>Move your body; rest your voice! At this point in the conference we may feel that our heads are overflowing with music and our bodies are needing to move. If this speaks to you, join Judith Silver to either take a walk over to the Heath together (weather permitting), and/or do some easy and informal movement</p>	
15:15- 16:00	<p>Rehearsal – A rehearsal opportunity for those participating in the choirs' festival concert <i>Synagogue</i></p>	
16:15- 17:00	<p>Concert by participating choirs <i>Synagogue</i></p>	
17.00- 18.00	<p>Closing Tekes (ceremony) of the conference <i>Leo Baeck Hall</i></p>	
18:00- 18:30	<p>Bagel break <i>Hallway</i></p>	
18:30- 20:00	<p>Finale - Concert <i>Synagogue</i></p> <p>Noah Aronson & Rabbi Noam Katz in concert: An evening of contemporary Jewish music that inspires joy and awe. (If you would like to invite family or friends tickets will be available for them to purchase on the door)</p>	

Shirei Chagigah Programme 2015/5775

A handy Hebrew guide for *Shirei Chagigah*

שירי חגיגה	<i>Shirei Chagigah</i>	"Songs of Celebration", the name of our conference!
שליח ציבור שליחי ציבור (ש"צ)	<i>Sh'liach Tzibbur</i> <i>Sh'lichei Tzibbur</i> (plural) <i>Shatz (acronym)</i>	Lit. "messenger of the public" Service leader
שירה בריטניה	<i>Shira Britannia</i>	A collective of British, Jewish musicians composing great new music, who first came together at our inaugural conference!
תפילה	<i>T'fillah</i>	Prayer (referring to a service, a particular passage, and the idea in general)
שירה	<i>Shira</i>	Song session
שיר שירים	<i>Shir</i> <i>Shirim (plural)</i>	A song
שירון	<i>Shiron</i>	Songbook
נוסח	<i>Nusach</i>	'Traditional' modal prayer chant
ניגון ניגונים	<i>Niggun</i> <i>Niggunim</i> (plural)	Wordless melody
רוח	<i>Ru'ach</i>	Spirit/energy/oomph!
שחרית	<i>Shacharit</i>	Morning prayer service
מנחה	<i>Minchah</i>	Afternoon prayer service
מעריב	<i>Ma'ariv</i>	Evening prayer service
הלל	<i>Hallel</i>	Lit. "praise"; A collection of psalms read on certain festivals, and the new moon
בוקר טוב	<i>Boker tov</i>	Good morning
לילה טוב	<i>Lailah tov</i>	Good night
שבת	<i>Shabbat</i>	Sabbath/Saturday
קבלת שבת	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i>	Lit. "welcoming/accepting Shabbat"; Special prayers to start Shabbat in the first half of the Friday night service
עונג שבת	<i>Oneg Shabbat</i>	"The joy/pleasure of Shabbat", a phrase we have used to describe our Friday night song session
סעודה שלישית	<i>Se'udah shlishit</i>	The third meal eaten on Shabbat, intended to make it a particularly luxurious and joyous day.
מלווה מלכה	<i>Melaveh Malkah</i>	A session of stories and songs on a Saturday night (Lit. "accompanying the queen", referring to the Shabbat queen's departure)
הבדלה	<i>Havdalah</i>	Lit. "separation"; The ceremony that marks the distinction between Shabbat and the week, usually on a Saturday night.
קידוש	<i>Kiddush</i>	The blessing over wine
ברכת המזון	<i>Birkat Hamazon</i>	Lit. "the blessing of the food" Grace after meals
ראש חודש	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i>	The beginning of a new lunar month
טקס	<i>Tekes</i>	Ceremony
קהילה	<i>Kehilah</i>	Community
שלום	<i>Shalom</i>	Peace/hello/goodbye
תוכנית	<i>Tochnit</i>	Programme/timetable
סיכום	<i>Sikkum</i>	Ending

Shirei Chagigah Programme

2015/5775

Biographies

Noah Aronson is an energetic and soulful composer/performer whose unique musical style propels his music into communities across the country and in Israel. Noah earned a degree in Jazz Composition and Piano from Berklee College of Music in Boston and held the position of Composer-in-Residence at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Noah conducted the Manhattan HaZamir Choir from 2008-2010 and his choral music received an honourable mention for the 2009 GTM Young Composer's Award. Noah released his first solo Jewish album in May 2011 and the title song 'Am I Awake' was a winner in the NewVoices song competition in July 2011. Noah's latest full length album entitled 'Left Side of the Page' sets to music some of the poetic selections from the Mishkan Tefilah Prayer Book. He had the distinct honour of leading over 5000 people in Shabbat worship at the 2013 URJ Biennial. Noah serves on the faculty of the annual Hava Nashira workshop in Okonomowoc, Wisconsin and the Shirei Chaggiah workshop in London England. Noah's music is now sung in progressive communities worldwide and has been included as part of the cantorial curriculum at the Hebrew Union College Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music in New York City where he currently resides.

Vivienne Bellos trained at Dartington College of Arts and the Royal Academy of Music. After a short career in opera, in 1980 she became director of music at the NW Reform Synagogue. Here she founded choirs and drama groups for all ages, most notably the Alyth Choral Society, the Alyth Chamber Choir, the Alyth Youth Singers and the Alyth Academy of Performing Arts. For years Vivienne has run many choral workshops and seminars throughout this country and in Europe and is well known locally as a teacher of singing. From 1996 to 2000 she was the first and only female music director of the Zemel Choir. In 2007 Vivienne was awarded the Lady Hilary Groves Prize for outstanding contribution to music in the community. In 2009, supported by a Heritage Lottery award, Viv's anthology *Reflections* was published. This volume was the culmination of four years of research, collecting and annotating *seder* melodies from around the world and accompanying them with stories of how they had found their way into this country. In the 2015 New Year's Honours list she was appointed MBE for services to music.

Rabbi Miriam Berger (née Bayfield) was given *smichah* from Leo Baeck College in 2006 and was appointed as associate rabbi to a 500 family Reform, community in Finchley. In 2008 with the help of her now husband Jonni she became Miriam Berger and later that year became the principal Rabbi of Finchley Reform Synagogue - now a community with almost 800 families, which they contributed to the growth of, by producing Ben in 2011.

Jess Gold formed her first band Red Sea Blue and recorded her first album after being inspired by Debbie Friedman at Limmud. With Red Sea Blue she toured her contemporary Jewish music in America for three summers. She wrote and recorded an album of songs about climate change and sustainability in 2011 that she toured around England. On this tour she experimented with working with a live artist and so the Animated Earth Show was born. Over the last five years she has toured this show in schools and turned her latest album into Project Earth Rock, a multi media resource about sustainability for primary schools which was launched last year.

Shirei Chagigah Programme

2015/5775

Biographies

Sarah Grabiner has been keenly involved in Reform synagogue life since starting Alyth kindergarten at age 2 and the kids' choir at age 5! She continued to sing, learn and pray at Alyth whilst getting involved in RSY-Netzer as a teenager. After spending a year in Israel on Shnat-Netzer, Sarah studied Hebrew at Oxford University, although she seemed to spend the majority of her time at RSY events. After graduating Sarah worked for RSY-Netzer, and at FRS, where she helped to create and sustain ways to engage young people and families in the musical and religious life of the shul. She has just finished her first year studying to become a cantor at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem and is continuing this journey in New York.

David Hoffman is a part-time Jewish rock musician, singer and songwriter (and works as a lawyer the rest of the time). He runs Shir Chadash, a musical Friday night at Manchester Reform Synagogue once a month, and the Shir Chadash band has also performed gigs and recorded a CD. David recently recorded his third Jewish rock album, Ancient Inspiration, which can be found on Amazon and Oysongs. Jointly with Judith Silver, he started Shira Britannia, a collective of British Jewish composers and songwriters, and performs with Judith, Dean Staker and others from time to time. More information at www.themagicif.org

Cantor Zöe Jacobs fell in love with Judaism and Jewish music while sitting in concentric circles both on the floor of FRS and at RSY-Netzer Shemesh, as well as at NFTY's Kutz camp in New York. She is the Cantor at FRS and also works for the MRJ. Zöe was ordained in 2009 from Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, having studied in Jerusalem and New York and is incredibly grateful for and enthusiastic about any opportunity to teach, learn, and discuss the intersection between prayer and music. It was her dream that we should have our own version of the renowned Hava Nashira Music Conference in England, which led to the creation of Shirei Chagigah, about which she is extremely enthusiastic!

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner was born in London and brought up in an Orthodox synagogue, moving to the Reform Movement in her teens in order to be more active in services and in communal life. After her degree in Christianity, she moved to Jerusalem where she lived for 14 years. She met her partner, David in Israel and they are blessed by three lovely children all born in Jerusalem. Laura worked in education in Israel, with Jews at the Machon, the Institute for Youth Leaders from Abroad and at Melitz, where she worked as the Director of the Centre for Christian Encounters with Israel and in training Israeli-Palestinian dialogue facilitators and Palestinian tour guides in Bethlehem. Laura has post-graduate degrees in Community Centre Management from the Hebrew University and an MA in Jewish communal service and education from Brandeis University, Massachusetts. The Janner-Klausners returned to London in 1999 and Laura completed her rabbinic studies in 2004. She worked at Alyth (North Western Reform Synagogue) from 2003 until 2011 and is now Senior Rabbi to the Movement for Reform Judaism

Rabbi Noam Katz A longtime songleader at URJ Eisner and Kutz Camps, Noam has performed at the URJ Biennial, CAJE, BBYO International, Limmud - England, NFTY Convention, and countless summer camps and congregations. He completed the rabbinic/education program at HUC-JIR in Los Angeles and is now Dean of Jewish Living at the Leo Baeck Day School.

Shirei Chagigah Programme

2015/5775

Biographies

Rabbi Josh Levy is a rabbi at Alyth (North Western Reform Synagogue). He is passionate about developing innovative and engaging tefillah, and has built a number of new style musical services during his rabbinate, as well as helping Alyth's Friday night service to become one of the largest in the UK through the thoughtful use of liturgy and music. Josh teaches Service Leading at the Leo Baeck College. He is also Vice-Chairman of the Assembly of Reform Rabbis UK.

Merri Lovinger Arian serves on the faculty of the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. She teaches both cantorial and rabbinic students, offering courses in Music Education, Conducting, Congregational Singing, Worship, and Contemporary Congregational Repertoire. Merri also supervises rabbinic and cantorial students in creating worship collaboratively at the College-Institute. Merri previously served as Director of Music for Synagogue 2000 (S2K), a leading trans-denominational institute developing models for revitalizing synagogue life, and more recently served as Synagogue 3000's consultant on liturgical arts at HUC-JIR in New York. Merri holds an MA in Teaching, a BFA in Music Education, and a Certificate in Music Therapy. Merri edited *R'fuah Sh'leimah: Songs of Healing*. Her recordings include *Nefesh: Songs for the Soul*, a CD for Synagogue 2000, and *NFTY in Harmony*, an album with an accompanying songbook of original choral arrangements. She has written on "Music, Prayer and Sacred Community," on the educational value of youth choirs, and was a contributing writer in *Who By Fire, Who By Water: Un'taneh Tokef*, edited by Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman.

Rabbi Dalia Marx (PhD) is an Associate professor of liturgy and midrash at the Jerusalem campus of Hebrew Union College-JIR, and teaches in various academic institutions in Israel and Europe. Marx, tenth generation in Jerusalem, earned her doctorate at the Hebrew University and her rabbinic ordination at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem and Cincinnati. She is involved in various research projects and is active in promoting liberal Judaism in Israel. Marx writes for academic and popular journals and publications. She is the author of *When I Sleep and when I Wake: On Prayers between Dusk and Dawn* (Yediot Sfarim 2010, in Hebrew), *A Feminist Commentary of the Babylonian Talmud* (Mohr Siebeck, 2013, in English) and the co-editor of a few books. Marx lives in Jerusalem with her husband Rabbi Roly Zylbersztein (PhD) and their three children.

Mich Sampson is Director of Music at Finchley Reform Synagogue, and also conducts Brentwood Choral Society and the Just Kidding Chorus. Previously she taught choral singing and musicianship at the Academy of Live and Recorded Arts, ensuring young actors developed music 'survival skills'. As a solo singer, she specialises in oratorio, operetta, and Jewish liturgical music, and also performs and records with folk duo Playing Rapunzel. More information on Mich can be found at www.mich-sampson.com

Shirei Chagigah Programme

2015/5775

Biographies

Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller is Professor of Cantorial Arts at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music. Her work involves training cantorial and rabbinical students to bridge the gap between performance and spiritual leadership. She serves as cantor of Bet Am Shalom Synagogue of White Plains, New York with her husband, Rabbi Lester Bronstein. Cantor Schiller is a nationally known composer of Jewish music. She serves as a part time teacher at the Institute for Jewish Spirituality and the North American Jewish Choral Festival.

Judith Silver is a composer, teacher, music leader and performer, working with a wonderfully eclectic mix of people both within and outside the Jewish community. She regularly leads the singing at services for Westminster Synagogue and Finchley Reform Synagogue. Other shuls, both Liberal and Reform, invite her from time to time to teach and inspire their congregants: one of her main passions is encouraging and enthusing less confident singers. She directs the SOAS World Music Choir at the University of London and North Watford Community Choir. She also leads a Singing for the Brain group for people with dementia and their carers at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in St John's Wood, London. In January 2014, Judith founded a project called Companion Voices – for singing at the bedsides of those who are ill or dying. Groups of singers meet monthly to learn songs and techniques, preparing for the sacred task of accompanying those who are about to die and these groups are ready to sing at the request of anyone needing our voices. She is deeply committed to interfaith work and dialogue attending the annual JCM conference in Germany every spring and getting involved with local projects whenever possible. Judith's recordings include 5 solo albums in a variety of styles and another two with the vocal harmony trio, Anam Cara. In 2014 she published her first songbook: Jewish songs for harmony singing – 20 of her original songs, with an accompanying CD produced in 2015.

Cantor Cheryl Wunch has been cantor at Alyth since the beginning of 2014. Born and raised in Toronto, Canada, Cheryl worked in Child and Youth Work before expressing her love for Jewish music by embarking on cantorial studies at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, where she was ordained in 2011. Cheryl has worked as a teacher, b'nei mitzvah tutor, music specialist, and director of education, and she has worked at a number of summer camps as a counsellor, canoe specialist, song-leader, staff-in-training director and staff supervisor. Cheryl wrote her Master's thesis on the theme of love as it appears in liturgy and bible, and she enjoys exploring how our ancient texts can continue to speak to us today. Cheryl is passionate about education for all ages, and finding new ways for all people to engage in our rich Jewish heritage.

