

Yom Masorti 5786

It's time to celebrate our songs and stories,
traditions and prayers, our complexity and
culture, our Torah and texts.



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10.00	Opening Rabbi Joel Levy and Rabbi Lara Haft Yom-Tov			
10.40	An Interactive Persian Shabbat Music Experience. Eitan and Bina Youth Room	A closer look at the diversity of Tzitzit traditions. Rabbi Joel Levy and Hila Bram Beit Tefillah B	What our neurodivergent members need our communities to know. Dr Daniella Shaw Beit Midrash	Cold War II ? or World War III? A geo-economic overview Professor Michael Ben-Gad Beit Knesset
11.40	Break			
11.50	On tefillin. The how and the why behind this embodied mitzvah. Rabbi Natasha Mann Beit Tefillah A	From the Blood Libel invented in Norwich, to a 21st century resolution Rabbi Roderick Young Beit Midrash	Israel, Jews and Politics, Jews and Geopolitics Professor Colin Shindler, Rabbi Jeremy Gordon and Miriam Farbey Beit Knesset	From the Shulkhan Aruch to sex education: the mitzvah of onah (pleasure) Rabbi Lara Haft Yom-Tov Beit Tefillah B
12.50	Lunch in the foyer			
1.30	Azamra – I will sing! Learning how to bring true delight to our Tefillah Chazan Rebecca Blumenfeld Beit Tefillah A	Staying alive the Jewish way: Poems in spite of everything Senior Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg Beit Knesset	Cutting Edge Reviving the Jewish Art of Papercutting Dr Eva Frojmovic Youth Room	Turning historical research into performance: the scientist/musicians behind Kodachrome. Professor Michael Berkowitz Beit Midrash



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2.30pm	Break with refreshments in the foyer Mincha led by Chazan Rebecca Blumenfeld in Beit Midrash			
2.50pm	Shir HaShirim, the ultimate erotic Megillah Rabbi Jeremy Gordon and Rabbi Adam Zagoria-Moffet Beit Tefillah A	Masorti and MERCAZ in Israel - where we are today, and where we hope to be Rabbi Joel Levy and Dan Kyle Beit Knesset	Yoga through a Jewish lens Dr Naomi Coleman Beit Midrash	Jewish Joy: Finding Delight in Mitzvot Rabbi Yael Jaffe Youth Room
3.55pm	The Judaism We Need Today with Senior Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg How Masorti Began and What Comes Next: Conversations with our Founders Chazan Jaclyn Chernetz, Ivor Jacobs, Dinah Rose and Susan Rose Upstairs			

Session 1

10:40-11:40

Session	Details	Venue
An Interactive Persian Shabbat Music Experience Eitan and Bina	This uplifting and interactive session brings to life the stories, memories and traditions behind a selection of unforgettable songs from the Persian Jewish community, weaving together music, culture and community. Inspired by the symbolism of the 12 Tribes of Israel, this session invites participants to sing along and share in the experience together.	Youth Room
Beyond the fringe, the essential Tzitzit Rabbi Joel Levy and Hila Bram	Taking a closer look at Tzitzit and the diversity of traditions woven into it this essential garment. During the session you will have a chance to tie tzitziot yourself on handmade tallitot from Ethiopia. There will be a stall in the foyer during the day with Meketa merchandise.	Beit Tefillah B
Cold War II? or World War III? A geo-economic perspective Professor Michael Ben Gad	<p>A growing alliance of authoritarian regimes, led by China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea (CRINKS), is steadily intensifying its challenge to the Western-led post-war order.</p> <p>Much like in the 1930s, when Western democracies failed to deter the Axis powers, the question arises: Does the West possess the will and economic strength to ensure that deterrence does not falter once again? What lessons can be drawn from the recent conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East and what are the economic implications for the US, Europe, Israel and the world's other democracies?</p>	Beit Knesset
Belonging for All: What Our Neurodivergent Members Need Our Communities to Know Dr Daniella Shaw	What does it take for neurodivergent members and their families to feel they really belong in Masorti communities? This session shares findings from the Belonging for All project, designed by neurodivergent members from across the movement. Drawing on survey data and lived experience, we will explore what good inclusion looks and feels like, what gets in the way, and the practical steps community leaders can take to make a lasting difference.	Beit Midrash

Session 2

11.50-12:50

Session	Details	Venue
How to lay tefillin Rabbi Natasha Mann	A practical, welcoming session. Learn the how, the why, and the meaning behind this embodied mitzvah. No experience needed. We have Tefillin to share so just bring your curiosity.	Beit Tefillah A
From the Blood Libel invented in Norwich, to a 21st century resolution Rabbi Roderick Young	Echoes of the blood libel surrounding the murder of William of Norwich in 1144 reverberate to this very day in my work as a Rabbi in Norwich. 10 years ago the cathedral infuriated the Jewish Community with a strange exhibition, 10 years later they are working with us on a heartfelt apology after 900 years. It has been quite a journey!	Beit Midrash
Jews and Politics, Jews and Geopolitics Professor Colin Shindler and Rabbi Jeremy Gordon	Join a Rabbi and an expert Emeritus Professor of Israel Studies and they process the challenges of Jewish life here, in Israel/Palestine and with a view across the Middle East. Expect some limited Q&A and an inability to solve complex problems simply.	Beit Kneset
From the Shulkhan Aruch to Sex Education: the mitzvah of onah (pleasure) Rabbi Lara Haft Yom-Tov	What does the Talmud have to say about enthusiastic consent? How do the rabbis think about pleasure in intimate relationships? Explore sexual ethics through a deep dive into the laws of Onah (pleasure) in Jewish marriage. Caution: may lead to mixed dancing.	Beit Tefillah B

Session 3

1.30-2:30

Session	Details	Venue
<p>Azamra - I will sing! Learning how to bring true delight to our Tefillah</p> <p>Chazan Rebecca Blumenfeld</p>	<p>Join me for a session of joyful, simcha-filled singing and text study, as we "trim the husks from around our hearts" and learn how to bring true delight to our tefillah.</p>	<p>Beit Tefillah A</p>
<p>Staying alive the Jewish way: Poems in spite of everything.</p> <p>Senior Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg</p>	<p>Rabbi Wittenberg will bring a selection of poems by some of his favourite authors, translated into English, that have sustained and accompanied him through dark days. We'll explore how poetry can offer consolation, perspective and moments of unexpected beauty, helping us find language for grief, hope, resilience and the quiet courage to keep going.</p>	<p>Beit Kneset</p>
<p>Cutting Edge: Reviving the Jewish Art of Papercutting</p> <p>Dr Eva Frojmovic</p>	<p>Papercuts used to be a popular art form in the Jewish communities. In this session, Eva Frojmovic, medieval art historian, will show some of the intricate works from the past, some contemporary pieces by Jewish artists, and finally give you a chance to create your own papercut.</p>	<p>Youth Room</p>
<p>Turning historical research into performance: the scientist/musicians behind Kodachrome</p> <p>Professor Michael Berkowitz</p>	<p>Leo Doulton, Jacob Dorfman, and Michael Berkowitz have created a musical based on Berkowitz's research on Jews and photography (premiering February 2027 at The Cockpit). It focuses on the inventors of Kodachrome color film, first marketed in 1935. The talk includes historic and original music.</p>	<p>Beit Midrash</p>

Session 4

2:50-3:50

Session	Details	Venue
<p>Shir HaShirim- the ultimate erotic Megillah</p> <p>Rabbi Jeremy Gordon and Rabbi Adam Zagoria- Moffet</p>	<p>Rabbi Jeremy Gordon will be teaching Shir HaShirim, drawing from the newest publication from Izzun books for which Rabbi Gordon wrote a commentary. Dr Sarah Lightman, who created the cover art, will share her reflections on illustrating one of Judaism's most sensual and symbolically rich texts.</p>	<p>Beit Tefillah A</p>
<p>Masorti in Israel and MERCAZ: where we are and where we hope to be.</p> <p>Rabbi Joel Levy and Dan Kyle</p>	<p>Who can ensure that our values of pluralism, inclusion, egalitarianism, and responsibility for each other are represented by the Israeli government? Who can lobby so that the Egalitarian Kotel stays open in Jerusalem and that Masorti rabbis can officiate at weddings, and Masorti conversions count? Many of you recently voted for MERZCAZ in the elections in the World Zionist Congress. This is your chance to see what your vote achieved.</p>	<p>Beit Knesset</p>
<p>Yoga through a Jewish Lens</p> <p>Dr Naomi Coleman</p>	<p>A gentle and grounding workshop centred around reconnecting with the light we carry within and opening space for greater grounding, resilience and joy. This session offers a taster of practices that support wellbeing through breathwork, movement and meditation. Suitable for beginners and all are warmly welcome. Yoga mats will be provided. Please wear comfortable clothing</p>	<p>Beit Midrash</p>
<p>Jewish Joy: Finding Delight in Mitzvot</p> <p>Rabbi Yael Jaffe</p>	<p>What role does joy have to play in our religious and spiritual lives? In this session we will take a deep dive into the concept of "simchah shel mitzvah" - the joy of performing God's commandments. Through close text study and shared conversation, we will explore Jewish joy in all its complexity, power, and potential.</p>	<p>Youth Room</p>

Speakers

Professor Michael Ben-Gad

Michael Ben-Gad is Professor of Economics at City St George's, University of London, and a widely respected economist specialising in macroeconomics and public policy. His research explores issues including fiscal policy, public debt, immigration, defence economics, geoeconomics, econometrics and economic growth. Alongside his academic work, Professor Ben-Gad frequently contributes to public discussions on Israel, economics and geopolitics, bringing analytical depth and clarity to complex political and social questions. He is also known for his pithy responses to a harassment campaign from antisemitic hooligans last year. Michael and his wife Meira are committed members of Kol Nefesh Masorti Synagogue.

Michael Berkowitz

Michael Berkowitz, a native of Rochester, New York, is professor of modern Jewish history at University College London. He is the author, most recently, of *Hollywood's Unofficial Film Corps: American Jewish Moviemakers and the War Effort* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2025). His forthcoming book, *Revolutions in Color*, will appear with Princeton University Press in 2027. In February (2027) a musical based on his research about the inventors of colour photography premieres at The Cockpit (London).

Chazan Rebecca Blumenfeld

Chazan Rebecca Blumenfeld is a cantor, performer and teacher celebrated for bringing warmth, musicality and creativity to Jewish prayer and song. With a background spanning traditional liturgy, contemporary Jewish music and communal singing, she helps communities connect emotionally and spiritually through music. Rebecca is especially passionate about participatory prayer, vocal empowerment and creating inclusive musical experiences rooted in Jewish tradition and joyful communal practice.

Hila Bram

Hila Bram was the Community Development Officer for Oxford Jewish Congregation for many years. She taught at the Jewish school in Gondar and co-founded Meketa in 2013 which supports Jews still living in Ethiopia. Local Jews produce hand made tallitot and kippot in Gondar, and Hila is involved in marketing them in the UK and worldwide, and regularly ties the tzitzit for these tallitot. During the session you will have a chance to tie tzitzit yourself on these hand made tallitot. There will be a stall in the foyer during the day with Meketa merchandise (www.meketa.org.uk)

Naomi Coleman

Dr Naomi Coleman is a Clinical Psychologist and Yoga Therapist who brings together psychology and mind body practices in a warm, compassionate and evidence informed way. Through her work at Mind Body Medicine Consultancy, she integrates approaches including yoga therapy, breathwork and mindfulness alongside psychological understanding to support resilience, wellbeing and connection.

Speakers

Dr Eva Frojmovic

Eva Frojmovic is a medieval art historian with a strong interest in medieval manuscript illumination, cultural diversity, transcultural relationships, intersectionality. She has another strong interest in museology and heritage studies, especially in Jewish Museums. Paper cutting has been a hobby since childhood; imagine how thrilled she was to discover later on that papercuts also had an eminent place in Jewish folk tradition. She has previously led papercutting at Limmud-in-the-woods.

Rabbi Lara Haft Yom-Tov

Rabbi Lara Haft Yom-Tov (They/Them) is a Jewish educator, activist and rabbi at New North London synagogue and also works with young adults in the Masorti movement. Rabbi Lara has worked as a Jewish educator for the past eight years, learning Torah with elementary school students, elders, and everyone in between.

Rabbi Yael Jaffe

Rabbi Yael Jaffe is a Masorti rabbi and educator at New North London Synagogue. Known for her thoughtful approach, she helps congregants connect Jewish texts with their lived experience. Rabbi Yael is particularly interested in how ritual, study and community can deepen Jewish meaning. R. Yael is also an experienced ba'alat Tefillah, having regularly led services in communities across New York and London.

Dan Kyle

Dan is the Head of Religious Services, and Vice Chair, at Kehillat Or Tzion, the newest Masorti community in Manchester. A former BoD Deputy, he's now involved in Mercaz in the UK - and studying with EAJL, under Cantor Brian Mayer.

Rabbi Joel Levy

Rabbi Joel became the rabbi of Kol Nefesh Masorti in September 2001. He lives in Jerusalem and is at Kol Nefesh roughly one Shabbat each month, as well as each year for the Yamim Nora'im and Shavuot. Rabbi Joel is Director of the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem, where he is also active in inter-denominational and inter-faith work.

Rabbi Natasha Mann

Rabbi Natasha joined New London Synagogue by herself as a teenager. She was born in Hertfordshire to a lively interreligious and intercultural family. She serves as a rabbi at New London Synagogue. As of September 2025, she is also working toward her PhD in the University of Manchester. Her project title is: The Impact of the Prophetic Harlotry Metaphor on Second Temple Sources and Rabbinic Law.

Speakers

Rabbi Jeremy Gordon

Rabbi Jeremy Gordon has served as Rabbi of New London Synagogue since 2008. A graduate of Cambridge University, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem, he is known for his engaging sermons, nuanced teaching and thoughtful writing on Jewish ethics, spirituality and contemporary life. Rabbi Jeremy is a leading figure within Masorti Judaism UK and a passionate advocate for inclusive, intellectually serious Jewish community.

Rabbi Roderick Young

Rabbi Roderick Young studied English Literature at Oxford University and Jewish studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Ordained at Hebrew Union College, New York, he then became Assistant Rabbi at Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in New York; Rabbi to Neve Shalom in Leicester; Associate Rabbi at West London Synagogue and Principal Rabbi of Finchley Reform Synagogue. He is now a member of the Rabbinical Assembly of Conservative and Masorti Rabbis and Rabbi to Kehilat Meir in Norwich Synagogue.

Dr Daniella Shaw

Dr Daniella Shaw is a sociologist, facilitator and strategic consultant with over 20 years' experience working at the intersection of inclusion, community engagement and organisational change. She holds a PhD in the sociology of community, belonging, diaspora and identity, is based at Birkbeck, University of London, and runs a global social change programme. Through Daniella Shaw Consulting, she supports faith, community and third-sector organisations to embed inclusion into strategy rather than treat it as an afterthought. Daniella has consulted on Masorti Judaism's Inclusion and Belonging work since 2021 and is the facilitator of the Belonging for All project, a co-production with neurodivergent community members supported by Masorti Judaism and the European Union of Jewish Students.

Professor Colin Shindler

Emeritus Professor of Israeli Studies at SOAS, University of London, and one of Britain's leading commentators on Israeli politics and modern Jewish history. His work explores Zionism, the Israeli left and right, and the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora. A frequent media contributor and acclaimed author, he combines academic depth with accessible analysis, helping audiences navigate the complexities of Israeli society, identity and political change. His latest book 'A Forever War' was published by Swift in February.

Speakers

**Rabbi Adam
Zagoria-
Moffet**

Adam Zagoria-Moffet is the rabbi of St Albans Masorti Synagogue and the Director of Strategy for Masorti Judaism. He was ordained from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York where he also received an MA in Jewish Thought. He grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, and has lived in America and Israel before moving to the UK. He co-edited the first Hebrew/English egalitarian Sephardi siddur and runs the independent publisher Izzun Books. He often teaches about Sephardi halakha and culture as well as mysticism, mythology and ethics.

**Senior Rabbi
Jonathan
Wittenberg**

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg is Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism UK and one of Britain's best-known Jewish thinkers and writers. Emeritus Rabbi of New North London Synagogue, he is widely respected for his work on interfaith dialogue and environmental responsibility. The author of numerous books, he combines deep traditional learning with poetic sensitivity and moral clarity.

Bina

Bina was born and raised in Tehran/Iran, studied computer science and later got an MSc in Business. She is classically trained in piano & violin, and post-covid changed career to pursue her childhood dream of becoming a music producer. Bina is now an independent producer, and song-writer and also a liturgical music enthusiast, and leads Shabbat and high holiday services by her singing at Manchester communities and most specifically, Manchester's only Masorti community.

Eitan

Eitan was born and raised in Tehran/ Iran, studied electrical engineering and later got a PhD in artificial intelligence. Eitan has studied classical Persian music for 5 years and can play Iranian string instrument, Taar, and has a good knowledge of Persian Dastgaah music. Eitan is currently working as an engineering consultant and in parallel, is studying at EAJL under rabbi Moriah's guidance. He also leads Shabbat and high holiday services at Manchester's Masorti community with a distinct Sephardic/ Persian style of singing.

**Martha
Limburg**

Martha grew up at New North London Synagogue and as an active member of Noam. After working in publishing, she joined the Masorti team in 2020. Her focus is on developing leaders, and supporting our communities and Masorti Judaism's programming. If you're interested in getting involved in Masorti Judaism's work, she'd love to hear from you!

Beyond Yom Masorti

Enrich your Masorti life all year round

EAJL	Thinking about learning to lead services? Talk to people from EAJL, the European Academy for Jewish Liturgy, that teaches committed lay people the skills to lead services. Visit www.eajl.org
Louis Jacobs Foundation	Find out about what's planned for the newly acquired Louis Jacobs Foundation. There are Torah learning opportunities for all levels and interests with Rabbi Louis Jacobs z"l written materials online, ongoing podcasts and a new Louis Jacobs Beit Midrash. Chat to Rabbi Adam Zagoria-Moffet to learn more.
MERCAZ and Masorti in Israel	Come to the session with Dan Kyle and Rabbi Joel Levy at 2:50pm and pick up a leaflet explaining how it all fits together.
Marom	Marom is the international young adult movement of the Masorti world. It creates Jewish communities, learning, activism, leadership programmes and social spaces for students and young adults, usually after Noam through to their 30s. Talk to Eden Berman, our Noam and Marom Shlichah, who will be there to answer your questions. eden@masorti.org.uk
Meketa	Have a look the array of beautiful handwoven Tallitot and Kippot made in Ethiopia, and brought to the UK by Meketa, a project that supports Ethiopian Jews.
Shema Koleinu	Meet the people from Shema Koleinu, our brilliant Masorti prayer skills website that teaches something new about Jewish prayer every time you visit, and enriches the way we take part in tefillah together. Visit masortiprayer.org.uk