CELEBRATING 150 YEARS
1876 - 2026

ST JOHN'S WOOD SYNAGOGUE

31st October 2026 **20th Cheshvan 5787**

וירא
VAYERA

SHABBAT BEGINS 4.23PM | SHABBAT ENDS 5.24PM

MINCHA & KABBALAT SHABBAT 4.50PM
SHACHARIT 9.30AM | MINCHA 12.13PM | MAARIV 5.24PM

THOUGHT ON THE PARSHA

by Rabbi Mendel Cohen

THE RABBI SACKS METHOD: HOW GREAT TORAH IDEAS ARE BORN

Something remarkable is happening to the way we socialise. We are becoming less willing to invite people into our homes.

A recent article by Derek Thompson, The Death of the American Host, revealed that in 1975, 42% of Americans hosted friends or family at least once a month. Today, that figure has fallen to just 12%—a staggering 70% decline.

Britain is not immune. A YouGov poll published this October found that only 40% of British adults had invited someone outside their family for dinner within the previous six months. Astonishingly, 15% said they had never done so.

We are more connected digitally than ever, yet increasingly disconnected socially.

This week's parashah, Vayeira, offers a very different approach.

The Torah describes Avraham sitting "petach ha'ohel", at the entrance of his tent, in the heat of the day (Bereishit 18:1).

Rashi explains that Avraham was sitting outside specifically to look for passers-by whom he could invite into his home. Remarkably, this was just days after his circumcision, when he was still recovering. Yet rather than retreating into the comfort of his home, Avraham was actively searching for opportunities to welcome others.

For Avraham, hospitality was not an occasional gesture. It was a way of life.

And hospitality benefits more than the guest. Opening our homes creates friendships, strengthens community, breaks down barriers and brings warmth and meaning into our own lives.

In a couple of weeks, families in our community will open their homes to Israeli veterans through the Peace of Mind programme, giving them the space and support to process their combat experiences.

What makes this hospitality so special is its simplicity. Families are sharing their kitchens, dining-room tables and spare bedrooms. They are welcoming someone into the everyday rhythm of family life, sharing conversations over breakfast, meals around the table and the warmth of a Jewish home.

Often, what begins as an act of generosity develops into something much more meaningful. Friendships are formed, connections deepen, and both guest and host discover how much they have gained.

That is the beauty of hachnasat orchim (welcoming guests). We think we are making room for someone else, but in doing so, we enrich our own lives.

Jewish life has always been built around the open home, the Shabbat table, the extra chair and the invitation extended to someone who might otherwise be alone.

As descendants of Avraham and Sarah, hospitality should come naturally to us.

Next Shabbat, consider inviting someone new. It need not be an elaborate meal or a carefully planned occasion. A simple invitation, a spare chair and a willingness to make room for someone else may be all it takes to begin a meaningful connection.

Sometimes, the simplest invitation can make the greatest difference.

SHABBAT SHALOM

SERVICE TIMES

SHABBAT	
Shacharit	9.30am
Mincha	12.13pm
Ma'ariv	5.24pm

SUNDAY	
Shacharit	8.30am
Mincha/Ma'ariv	4.15pm

MONDAY	
Shacharit	7.15am
Mincha/Ma'ariv	4.15pm

TUESDAY	
Shacharit	7.25am
Mincha/Ma'ariv	4.15pm

WEDNESDAY	
Shacharit	7.25am
Mincha/Ma'ariv	4.15pm

THURSDAY	
Shacharit	7.15am
Mincha/Ma'ariv	4.15pm

FRIDAY	
Shacharit	7.25am
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4.10pm

NEXT SHABBAT	
Shacharit	9.30am
Mincha	12.14pm
Ma'ariv	5.13pm

All services, other than on Shabbat morning, take place in the Steinfeld Beth HaMedrash.

Chumash shiur before the Shabbat service at 9.15 am

FRIDAY NIGHT

Pre-Davening L'Chaims sponsored
Leiluy Nishmat Rabbi Lord Sacks OBM
Kabbalat Shabbat led by Rabbi Mendel Cohen
Dvar Torah after the service
given this week by Professor Michael Fertleman

SHABBAT DAY

Elie Elmalem will lead the Services
Ralph Goldstein will read the Haftarah
Rabbi Mendel Cohen will give the Sermon
Ori Roukin will sing Anim Zemirot

Koren 107, 1419 - Kaplan 52, 1061 - Artscroll 78, 1134 - Hertz 63, 76

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Candida and Zak Gertler
on the birth of a grandson.
Mazel Tov to parents Raphael and Hadar Gertler.

Mazel Tov to the Feldman and Wine families on the upcoming wedding of Sasha and Adam.

Shabbat Kiddush

The Kiddush is not sponsored this week.

If you would like to sponsor future kiddushim or donate towards the Communal Kiddush Fund please contact Lynda Dullop at ldullop@shulinthewood.com

Forthcoming Kiddushim

We kindly ask you to support the Communal Kiddush Fund - even a small contribution can make a difference. Our weekly kiddush is a special time for the community to come together. Please see the dates below where we don't yet have a sponsor.

Shabbat 7th November	Kiddush sponsored by Nigel & Emma Kattan in celebration of Sienna's Bat Mitzvah
Shabbat 14th November	Kiddush sponsored by Boris and Rimma Bronfentrinker in celebration of Abigail's Bat Mitzvah
Shabbat 21st November	Kiddush sponsored by Barrie and Susan Roukin in celebration of Ori's Bar Mitzvah
Shabbat 28th November	Kiddush sponsored by Keith and Lauren Breslauer in celebration of the engagement of their son Aaron to Tara.
Shabbat 12th December	**Opportunity available for sponsorship**

If you have a forthcoming simcha, birthday or yahrzeit and would like to sponsor or partly sponsor the kiddush, please contact Golan Cohen secretary@shulinthewood.com.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS / SIMCHAS

Shabbat 7th November	• Sienna Kattan Bat Mitzvah
Tuesday 10th November	• The Gillian Burr Luncheon Club
Thursday 12th November	• Live Podcast Recording Dame Maureen Lipman in Conversation with Jonathan Harounoff
Friday 13th November	• YP Friday Night Dinner 7.30pm
Shabbat 14th November	• Annual Remembrance Service • Abigail Bronfentrinker Bat Mitzvah
Wednesday 18th November	• Technion UK - Taste the Future - 7.30pm
Shabbat 21st November	• Ori Roukin Bar Mitzvah
Wednesday 25th November	• Ladies Guild visit to The National Gallery - Renoir & Love - 2.15pm
Friday 27th November	• Friday Night Ruach Kabbalat Shabbat
Thursday 3rd December	• 6.30pm | 150th Anniversary Gala Dinner
Saturday 5th December	• 150th Anniversary Ceremony & The Induction of our Senior Rabbinic Couple Rabbi Mendel and Rebbetzen Chai Cohen, by Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis KBE.

WEEKLY EVENTS & CLASSES/SHIURIM

SUNDAYS
after Shacharit

Start of the Week Shiur

SUNDAYS & TUESDAYS

Mimi Dwek Hebrew School
offers an upbeat, inspiring, and interactive Jewish educational experience for children from Nursery to year 7.
Contact us at hs@shulinthewood.com
Register online at www.shulinthewood.com/hs

MONDAYS
11.45am- 12.45pm

"I Believe – Faith in Challenging Times"
with
Rebbetzen Chai Cohen

MON - THURS
8.00am - 6.00pm

FRI
8.00am - 12.00pm

St John's Wood Synagogue's Kindergarten is a loving, creative, vibrant, and nurturing school for 6 months to 5-years-old. We foster curiosity and growth for all children using Jewish values.

Contact Mary Da Costa
nursery@shulinthewood.com

MONDAYS
12.45pm - 4.00pm

Duplicate Bridge
Under the direction of Matthew Hendrickson.
Donation: £12 including refreshments.
Please contact Janet Weisz on 07789 864 054 for further information.
Bridge closed on Bank Holidays.

MONDAYS
11.00am - 12.00pm

Babies in the Wood
A chilled and relaxed space for mums to bring their tots for singing and social.
Book online at www.shulinthewood.com/babies

TUESDAYS
10.00am - 12.15pm

Art Classes run by Hampstead School of Art.

Please contact Lucy Collins
ladiesguild@shulinthewood.com
for further information.

FRIDAYS
9.00am 10.00am

Parsha of the Week
Shiur by Rabbi Yisroel Fine on zoom. Please email rabbi.fine@live.co.uk for link.

SHABBAT
before Mincha

Gemara Shiur
with
Alex Grunfeld

Follow us on **social media** for updates on our events!

@shulinthewood

facebook.com/groups/shulinthewood

If you have any Welfare issues please contact
Lucy Collins 07881 838 657

Yahrzeits

Chayim Aruchim to the following members who are observing yahrzeit this week:

Saturday 31 October - 20 Cheshvan 5787
Frances Feder for her father, Michael August
Gary Lewis for his mother, Fay Lewis
Helen Rothstein for her father, Alfred Harris
Anne Rubin for her mother, Ada Townsley
Lady Elaine Sacks for her husband, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks
Merle Sassoon for her father, Charles Blaiwais
Gillian Weldon for her husband, Peter Weldon

Sunday 1 November - 21 Cheshvan 5787
Alejandra Cicurel for her mother, Fanny Katz-De-Dolfino
Michael Earl for his mother, Edith Earl
Hannah Geller for her Stepfather, Stanley Freedman
Andrew Mainz for his brother, Daniel Mainz

Monday 2 November - 22 Cheshvan 5787
Evelyn Singer for her father, Baron Harry Kissin of Camden
Ian Weider for his brother, John Weider

Tuesday 3 November - 23 Cheshvan 5787
Richard Beecham for his mother, Elsa Bischheim
Linda Harris for her partner, Martin Beth
Susan Roukin for her mother, Minnie Weintrob
Philip Stein for his father, David Stein

Wednesday 4 November - 24 Cheshvan 5787
David Crystal for his father, Jack Crystal
Edward Lee for his mother, Helen Lee

Thursday 5 November - 25 Cheshvan 5787
Edward Atkin for his mother, Klari Atkin
Malcolm Dagul for his first wife, Jenifer Dagul
Michael Solomon for his grandfather, Bertram Solomon

Friday 6 November - 26 Cheshvan 5787
Judith Goldsmith for her mother, Elsie Lewis
David Green, Edward Green and Philip Green for their father, Joseph Green
Michael Magid for his father, Philip Magid
Dame Benita Rayne for her father, Gerald Ronson

CONSECRATIONS

Henrietta Rita Morris	Bushey Old	12.00pm	1st November 2026
Marcelle Lewis	Bushey New	12.00pm	22nd November 2026

CONDOLENCES

Chaim Aruchim, long life to Ofra Hunter on the passing of her sister Tova Rachel, in Israel.

Chaim Aruchim, long life to Nigel Burstein and Sharon Abrahamson on the passing of their mother, Jacquelyn Burstein.

Chaim Aruchim, long life to Alex Zadah on the passing of his mother.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FORTHCOMING EVENTS

THIS SHABBAT 31ST OCTOBER 10.45AM

Tots Service in the Saplings Classroom with Musia Cohen
Ages 4-7 Children's Service in Blossoms Classroom with Allegra Crystal
Ages 8-11 Children's Service in the Lord Sacks Office with Gabriella Abraham
Breakfast Club for year 7+ in the Carter Club
Shabbat Morning Coffee Club with Leah 11.15am - Year 10+ Girls

FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER

Kids Shul Magic Shabbat

SHABBAT 7TH NOVEMBER

Years 7-8 Teen Friday Night Dinner

FRIDAY 13TH NOVEMBER

Years 9-10 Teen Friday Night Dinner

SHABBAT 14TH NOVEMBER 10AM

Teen Minyan

SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER 12-2PM

Chanuka Wonderland