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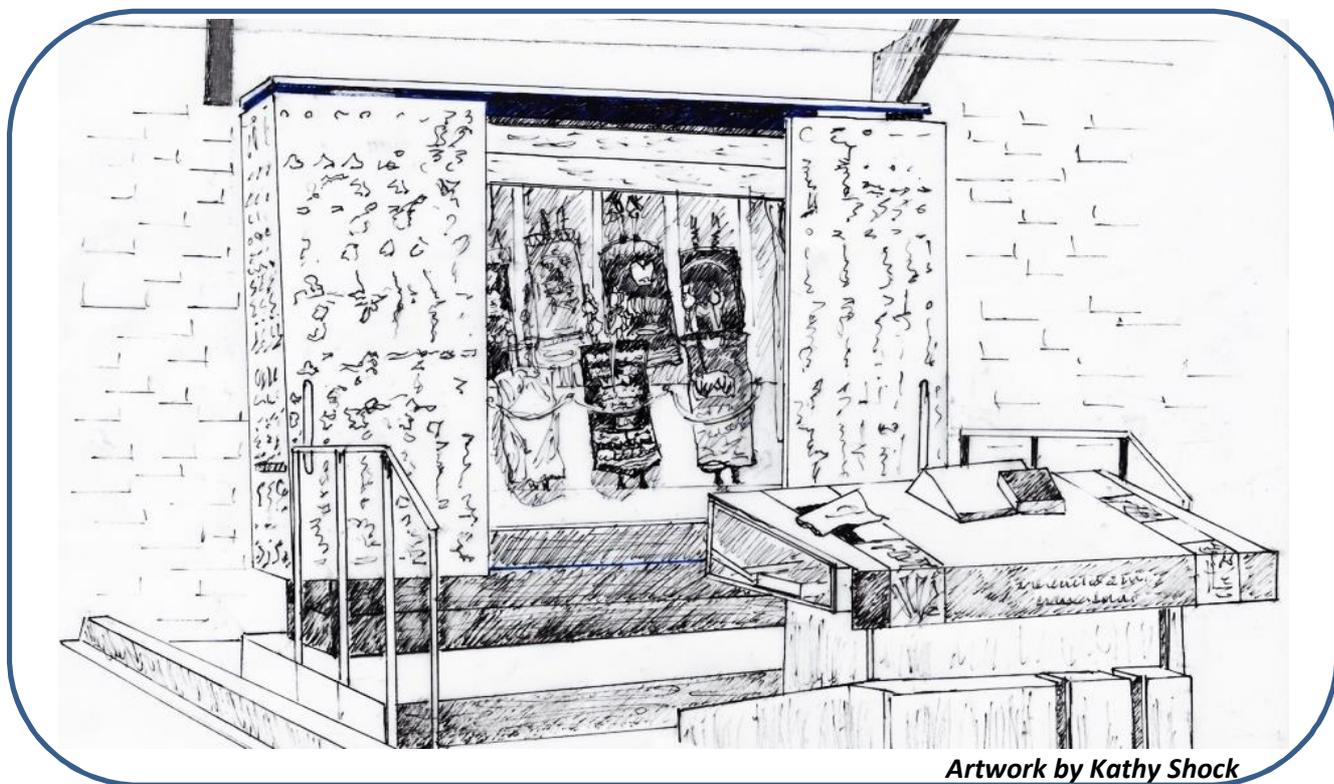


**Oxford·Jewish**  

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**CONGREGATION**

**ORDER OF SERVICE**  
**on the occasion of the Congregation's**  
**175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
**& dedication of the new Ark**



*Artwork by Kathy Shock*

**25 February, 2018**

**10 Adar, 5778**

The story of our new Ark can be traced back to the summers of 1990, 1995 and 1997 when summer temperatures sometimes soared above 35°C. We noticed that the cladding covering the Ark was bulging in places and that it was also coming away at the edges. It was then that many of us realised that the cladding was, in fact, Formica and not the hammered metal we all admired from afar.

To remedy the problem, we started to pin back the cladding with brass tacks but when this did not solve the problem, the possibility of replacing the Ark became a subject for discussions. So here we are today, with a visually-stunning, new Ark that will serve this community for generations to come.

Many of you have enquired about the significance of the patterns on the walnut wood, a design inspired by NMA Architects.

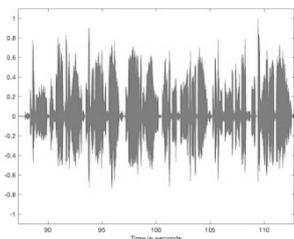
Sound recordings were made of two familiar key chants that are sung at the points when the Ark is opened and when the Ark is closed:

חדש ימינו כקדם, חדש ימינו כקדם and ויהי בנסע הארן ויאמר משה

*Vaihi binsoa ha'aron vayomer Moshe & Chadesh yamenu kekedem, Chadesh yamenu kekedem*

The recorded visual representation of a 25-second segment of the Hebrew prayer words **חדש ימינו כקדם** is shown below but for engraving on the Ark's wooden panels, a more attractive design came from using a visual representation of sound called a *spectrogram*.

### Extract of Chadesh Yamenu Kekedem (side panels)



For this spectrogram, the sound sample was turned into short chunks and a *frequency spectrum* produced computationally for each in graphical form. This mirrors the way our own hearing system works and displays the sound in terms of a musical pitch (i.e. a frequency) that varies in time to make up the tune.

In the two spectrograms we have created, time runs vertically, upwards from the bottom. Frequency runs along the horizontal axis.

To produce a design that could be carved into wood, the spectrograms had to be reduced to their essentials in black and white. When copied to computer software and enlarged to full size, this is the design used by Robin Furlong, the cabinetmaker, to rout out the wooden panels.

Up the left hand side of the plot you can see a bright, wiggly, fragmented line. This maps out the musical score of the singer's primary melody: the line moves to the right when the pitch rises, and to the left when it falls. A section that is approximately vertical shows a steady note. The series of lines that are more or less parallel to this left-most line are the harmonics of the singer's voice. This ornamentation makes the line wiggle around in various interesting ways. A similar approach was also used from the familiar opening chant **ויהי בנסע הארן ויאמר משה** to carve out the two Ark doors.

## **FOREWORD**

Projects of this size and significance are rare, the last being in 2004. Being President at such a time is both a responsibility and an honour.

It is my pleasure to thank members of the OJC for a true community effort. Without the Commissioning Group, whose task it was to manage the process, this Ark would never have left the drawing board.

It began with a Working Group back in late 2015, who established the need to replace the existing Ark. After a series of open meetings, fundraising began. Making the leap from paper plans and ideas to a 3D reality began around March 2017, and was largely down to Oxfordshire-based specialist cabinet maker, Robin Furlong. His pragmatic approach and minute attention to detail and close liaison with the Project Managers during the design process, allowed the job to progress to fruition smoothly.

Special mention goes to Professor Jim Matthews from Cambridge University for his work on the Ark's wave patination, which appears etched into the doors, and written in the more conventional Hebrew script on the sides. Please see the more detailed explanation on the inside cover of this booklet.

Finally, this project could never have succeeded without the generosity of OJC members, alumni, and others. Fundraising is a tricky job, and while the costs were far beyond the original estimate, we managed to get there. We are duly appreciative for all their donations and to the fundraising team members who have made it all possible.

A moment to be proud of and an Ark for future generations.

**Alison Ryde, President, OJC**

1. *Blowing of the Shofars calling congregants to prayer.*

תקיע, שברים, תרוע ... תקיע, שברים, תרוע.

*Leo Appel & Benjamin Kochan*

2. *לא עליך המלאכה לגמר - Lo alecha - Children's Choir*

You are not expected to complete the task, but neither are you free to avoid it (*Ethics of the Fathers, Ch. 2 v.16*)

3. *Welcome & Shehecheyanu - Alison Ryde (President)*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
שֶׁחַיָּנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and enabled us to reach this season.

4. *The synagogue is called.... - Sandra Dwek & Sally van Noorden*  
(from *Siddur Lev Chadash*)

The synagogue is called a **Beit Keneset**, a house of meeting.

May we meet here in friendship, to share our joys and sorrows and to renew our common memories and hopes.

The synagogue is called a **Beit Midrash**, a house of study.

May we meet here to know our heritage, to understand its values and to consider how they apply to our daily lives.

The synagogue is called a **Beit Tefillah**, a house of prayer.

May all who come to worship here find inner peace, and know that they have been in God's presence.

May the door of this synagogue be wide enough to receive all who hunger for love or friendship.

May it welcome all who have cares to unburden, thanks to express and hopes to nurture.

May this centre always be a place for Jews of all persuasions to share and rejoice in.

May this synagogue be, for all who enter, the doorway leading to a richer and more meaningful life.

5. *Psalm 100 (vv.1-4) - OxfordShir (music by Charles Salaman)*

הָרִיעוּ לַיהוָה, כָּל-הָאָרֶץ.  
עֲבֹדוּ אֶת-יְהוָה בְּשִׂמְחָה; בָּאוּ לִפְנֵיו, בְּרִנָּה.  
דַּעוּ- כִּי יְהוָה, הוּא אֱלֹהִים:  
הוּא-עֲשָׂנוּ, וְלוֹ אֲנַחְנוּ עִמּוֹ וְצֹאן מִרְעִיתוֹ.  
בָּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו, בְּתוֹדָה, חֲצִרְתָּיו בְּתִהְלָה; הוֹדוּ-לוֹ, בְּרָכוּ שְׁמוֹ.

Shout unto the Lord, all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord He is God;

it is He that hath made us, and we are His people, and the flock of His pasture.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; give thanks unto Him, and bless His name.

6. *Psalm 84 (vv.2-4) - OxfordShir (music by Charles Salaman)*

מַה-יְדִידוֹת מְשֻׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת.  
נִכְסְפָה וְגַם-כָּלְתָהּ, נַפְשִׁי, לְחֲצֵרוֹת יְהוָה:  
לְבִי וּבִשְׂרֵי יִרְנָנוּ, אֵל אֱלֹהֵי.  
גַם-צִפּוֹר מְצָאָה בַּיִת, וְדָרוֹר קֵן לָהּ, אֲשֶׁר-שָׁתָה אֶפְרָחֶיהָ:  
אֶת-מִזְבְּחוֹתֶיךָ, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, מֶלְכִי, וְאֱלֹהֵי.

How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

My soul yearns, yea, even pines for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and my flesh sing for joy unto the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young:

Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God.

## 7. Address - Isaac Garson

During a recent trip to South Africa I stumbled upon the Zulu word 'Ubuntu' which in essence means "we are because of others" but that also encompasses the importance of working together. It's a powerful word.

1842 is a very long time ago but we would not be here today without the dedication and commitment of those who have come before us - 'Ubuntu' "we are because of others"....

As a nation we have a contemporary fascination with anniversaries and we seem to honour and mark past events with enthusiasm. Perhaps in the case of the OJC, it's because anniversaries give us a common ground that unifies us all in the way the present often does not, and because commemorative events and a nod to the past, reflect the self-confidence of the Community.

The Jewish religion, like most world religions, builds its nostalgia around past events simply because the past and the present are so deeply inter-related.

We are here today to mark the community's 175<sup>th</sup> year-long presence in Oxford because we share a deep sense of connectedness across space and time and because we feel that a healthy relationship with our history is part of our personal and communal identity.

But we are also here today to dedicate a striking new Ark to replace the 1974 Ark. The decision of 2015 to do this was followed by a truly community-wide initiative.

In Chapter 25 of the Book of Shemot (Exodus), Moses is instructed:

וַיִּקְחוּ-לִי תְרוּמָה: מֵאֵת כָּל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לְבוֹ, תִּקְחוּ אֶת-תְּרוּמָתִי.

וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֵתָם: זָהָב, וְכֶסֶף וְנְחֹשֶׁת.

*Speak unto the children of Israel, that they take for Me an offering; of every man whose heart makes him willing, shall you take My offering.*

*And this is the offering which you shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass.*

These offerings made possible the construction of the Tabernacle, the Ark and much more. And similarly today, we acknowledge the generosity of so

many donors to our own Ark project: OJC members, past members, non-members, foundations and alumni.

But from among them, I would like to pay special tribute to Rev. Bruce Kinsey and other college Chaplains as well as the University Church, the Convent of the Incarnation, St. Columb's Church, Oxford Buddha Vihara and the Quaker Society of Friends in Oxford.

Their unprompted contribution was not only astounding and unexpected but also reflects the positive state of inter-faith relationships here in Oxford. Whilst the majority of Chaplains had a diary clash tonight, we are extremely pleased to see Bruce, Judith Maltby and other Oxford faith groups represented here tonight.

Our new Ark's design was inspired – both outside and inside – by the architect Niall McLaughlin, but his original ideas for the patination on the Ark's panels you see today, were re-interpreted and translated into a workable reality by Professor Jim Woodhouse from the University of Cambridge. We are also very pleased to welcome Jim and his wife Claire here tonight.

In the same way that the much-relieved, biblical Moses was able to delegate the task of building the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant to the artisans Betsal'el and Aholiav, so was the OJC's Ark Rebuild Committee able to delegate the work of building craftsman. Robin is also with us tonight with his our own Ark – and indeed the new Bimah – to Robin Furlong, a highly-skilled, local wife Philippa. Thank you, Robin, for an outstanding job.

I would also like to express the Community's gratitude for the incredible work of the fundraising committee – Jonathan Bard, Penny Faust, Tony Samuel, Sarah Sheppard, Mark Simon and Sally Tarshish – who spent many hours drafting documents and stuffing envelopes. Thank you all.

But I'm sure we would all recognise that a project of this size cannot be developed without the on-going commitment of those who are prepared to drive it and to see it to fruition.

Whilst the support of the OJC's Company, Management Committee and Council and President Alison Ryde's passionate involvement, has been much appreciated, it is the commitment of the members of the Ark Rebuild Committee – Ros Diamond, David Hyams, Jon Rowland and Simon Ryde –

who have made this a reality. Under Simon's leadership, they have given up much of their valuable time to work closely with Robin and to bring the project home. We are sincerely indebted to you all.

As our 175<sup>th</sup> programme of events draws to a close we reflect on how much we have packed in since October. So my final thanks goes to the 175 Committee, composed of John Dunston, Penny Faust, Jane Appel, Louise Rahmanou, Alison Ryde and Tony Samuel under the leadership of Jesmond Blumenfeld who unfortunately, has not recovered sufficiently to be with us today. We wish Jesmond 'Refua Shelemah' and a speedy recovery.

If I have accidentally left anyone out, please forgive me; there's just not enough words to adequately express the community's gratitude to you all – Kol haKavod. I am truly fortunate and privileged to be a part of this community.

'Ubuntu' – "*we also are because of each other*".

## 8. Psalm 118 (vv. 21-24) - Miriam Kunin & Congregation

**x2 אוֹדָךְ, כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי; וַתְּהִי-לִי, לִישׁוּעָה.**

*Odecha ki anitani, vatehi-li lishua*

I will give thanks unto Thee, for Thou hast answered me,  
and art become my salvation.

**x2 אָבֶן, מֵאֲסוּ הַבּוֹנִים; הֵיטָה, לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה.**

*Even, ma'asu habonim, hayeta lerosh pinah*

The stone which the builders rejected  
is become the chief corner-stone.

**x2 מֵאֵת יְהוָה, הֵיטָה זֹאת; הִיא נִפְלְאֹת בְּעֵינֵינוּ.**

*Me'et Adonai hayeta zot, hi niflat be'enenu*

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

**x2 זֶה-הַיּוֹם, עָשָׂה יְהוָה; נִגִּילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בּוֹ.**

*Ze hayom asa Adonai, naguilah venismecha vo*

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

9. *Prayer for the Dedication of the new Ark –*

*Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon*

• תְּפִלָּה לְחֲנֻכַּת הָאָרוֹן •

רְבוֹן הָעוֹלָמִים - הִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ כְּיוֹם בְּנֵי עֵדוֹת שׁוֹנוֹת

מִנְחַלְתֶּךָ אֲנָשִׁים וְנָשִׁים וְטָף עוֹמְדִים לְפָנֶיךָ

”שֶׁבֶת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד”

לְרַגְלֵי חֲנֻכַּת אָרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּמִבְּקָשִׁים בְּרַכְתֶּךָ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ.

אָנָּה, הַשְׁקִיפָה מִמַּעוֹן קֹדֶשְׁךָ

וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תְּפִלוֹתֵינוּ.

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ עַל כָּל הָאֱמֶת וְהַחֶסֶד שֶׁהִשְׁפַּעְתָּ עָלֵינוּ. נָא,

אַל תִּסְרֹךְ מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת בְּרַכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ, תִּגַּן עַל קְהֵלנוּ וְזַכֵּנוּ לְשֶׁבֶת

בְּאַחְוָה וְרַעוּת בִּירְאָתֶךָ

לְהִתְעַסֵּק בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ וּלְקַיֵּם מִצְוֹתֶיךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה הַטּוֹב וְהַמְּטִיב. אָמֵן.

10. *Prayer for the Dedication of the new Ark*

*Dr Wendy Fidler MBE*

Lord of the Universe!

We stand before You today, “brethren who dwell together” (Ps, 134:1), men, women and children of our varied congregations, as we dedicate the Holy Ark, and seek Your blessing on the work of our hands.

Look down upon us from Your holy habitation. Accept our prayers readily, with mercy. Do not deprive us of Your blessing of peace.

We thank You for the truth and kindness You have showered upon us. Do not remove from us Your blessing of peace.

Safeguard our community. Enable us to live in brotherhood and friendship, in awe of You, to engage in your Torah, and to fulfil Your commandments with love.

Blessed are You, good and performing good deeds.

May you be blessed in your coming and blessed in your leaving.  
Amen.

### ***11. Address - Professor Raymond Dwek CBE, FRS***

When the Jews resettled in Oxford in 1842, they brought with them the centuries-old traditions of Judaism. That Judaism has survived and flourished in Oxford, is a tribute to both of the Universities, the civic authorities and to the citizens of Oxford who have preserved the traditions of freedom throughout the centuries.

It is also a tribute to the faith of successive congregations.

In fact, the survival of Judaism here owes much to individual Jews and their families who have worked tirelessly and selflessly to keep the lamp of faith alight.

I am told that there are 15 past Presidents of the Congregation here today, which is a remarkable tribute to our continuity and commitment.

But today would not have happened without the inspiration, imagination and creativity of Isaac Garson, who has been a dedicated leader and guided religious services for the community for an amazing 40 years.

Thank you Isaac from all of us and Kol Hakavod.

Some 45 years ago, the Jews of Oxford chose to build this house of God on a site which had been used for continuous worship by our predecessors since 1893. It was consecrated as a place to be set aside for prayer and study.

The first mention of a house of God in the bible is found in the story of Jacob. His dream, with the wonderful imagery, of a ladder bridging the gap between earth and heaven made a profound impact on him. When he awoke the next morning, he took the stone on which he had been sleeping, and set it up as a pillar and anointed it with oil.

In this way, he marked a sacred place dedicating it with the words Hebrew:

**מה-נוֹרָא, הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה:  
אֵין זֶה, כִּי אִם-בַּיִת אֱלֹהִים, וְזֶה, שַׁעַר הַשָּׁמַיִם**

*“How awesome is this place, this is none other than the House of God and this is the gate of heaven.” Jacob named that place “Beth-El” or “the House of God”.*

According to the Bible, Solomon’s temple was the Israelites' first permanent 'house' of God, built specifically to house the Ark of the Covenant. The temple was dedicated during the joyous festival of Succot, the Autumn Harvest festival.

In the richness of what was probably one of the most magnificent buildings ever constructed, there was a remarkable ceremony, called the Illumination of the Temple.

On the evening of every day of the festival, a lamp was erected at each corner of the Temple Court. Each lamp was in the form of a lofty pillar about 70 feet high, supporting huge golden cups. The pillars were so tall that the cups rose high above the walls of the temple court. Four lads, sons of the priests, climbed ladders placed against the pillars carrying jars of oils and filled the cups.

When they lit the wicks, the blaze was so brilliant, that not only was the whole of Jerusalem resplendent with the glow, but the illumination was seen far into the Hebron valley beyond.

As the dawn broke, the eastern gates of the temple were opened and the people entered and watched the sun come up over the horizon. The power of the Middle Eastern Sunrise is awesome, and its brilliance was so great that it dimmed even these most powerful of man-made lights.

But the high priest would deliberately and dramatically turn his back to the sun and facing the people, would proclaim the words from Psalm 27, Hebrew:

**יְהוָה, אֹרְי וְיִשְׁעֵי-מִמִּי אִירָא.**

*“The Lord is MY light and MY salvation whom shall I fear”*

And the people understood that however bright the man-made lights are, however bright the natural sun is, the brightness of the Lord is greater.

In Judaism, light is a symbol of God's presence. Light also symbolises Judaism's commitment to clarity rather than mystery, to openness rather than concealment and to study rather than blind faith.

No doubt with this symbolism in mind, the University of Oxford, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, chose as its motto, *Dominus Illuminatio Mea*, the Lord is my light. The symbolism of the light which inspired the writer of the Psalms and Oxford University is the same light by which we live our lives today.

In this house of God, above the ark we have a light burning constantly to remind us of the Menorah in the Temple and as a symbol of God's presence, illuminating our minds and our actions.

Since the destruction of the second Temple, the Synagogue has been the spiritual home of the Jews. As we heard, not only is it a place for divine service, but it is also a centre for charity, social work and learning. But our activities and our learning must be inspired by wisdom and the search for wisdom, if our insights and decisions are to be just and righteous.

As it says in the Book of Wisdom: "The beginning of wisdom is the most sincere desire for instruction."

When people are inspired to embark on the search for wisdom there are a number of consequences. All of us live in the darkness of preconceived ideas, prejudices and inherited assumptions.

Into this darkness comes a penetrating light. As wisdom lights up the foundations on which we think our lives are securely built, we can feel pain and disorientation as we question our prejudices and preconceived ideas.

While it is important for the individual to pursue wisdom, it is also important for communities to do the same. A community needs the courage to proclaim its collective insight to the rest of the world. It is important for Jews to make their contribution to the religious search.

In Judaism, religion and morality blend into one. The love of God is meaningless without the love of our kindred human beings who are made in the image of God.

The common goal of all humanity must be to eliminate misery and suffering, prejudice and war, tyranny and social inequality.

It is Micah who sets out for us the perfect ideal of religion when he says:

הָגִיד לְךָ אָדָם, מֵה-טוֹב; וּמֵה-יְהוָה דּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ,  
כִּי אִם-עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד, וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לְכַת, עִם-אֱלֹהֶיךָ.  
“It has been told to you O man what the Lord requires of you only to do  
justice, to love mercy and walk humbly with your God”.

We are privileged to be here in Oxford in this University City of light. As Jews, we are privileged to have been able to contribute to the wider community of which we are part.

We are proud of our inheritance as others here today are proud of theirs. We hope that through our different traditions all of us, being inspired by wisdom, will live up to the words of Micah.

Wisdom taught us to value the written word and our traditions. It was wisdom that King Solomon valued above all else.

Let our collective wisdom be such that we will not dwell without planting.

Just as others have planted for our benefit, so we must plant in our turn.

A recurring phrase in the Hebrew liturgy is *L'dor vador*- “from generation to generation”. This service today, marking the continuing celebrations of the 175<sup>th</sup> year of the Oxford community and the dedication of the new ark links the history behind us with the path forward.

## 12. *Opening of the Ark - Barry Freilich*

אֵין-כְּמוֹךָ בָּאֱלֹהִים אֲדֹנָי, וְאֵין כַּמְעֻשֶׁיךָ.  
מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל-עֲלָמִים וּמְמַשְׁלֶתְךָ בְּכָל-דָּר וָדָר.  
יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.  
יְהוָה עֲזָ לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.  
אֲב הַרְחֵמִים, הֵיטִיבָה בְּרִצּוֹנְךָ אֶת-צִיּוֹן, תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָּיִם. כִּי  
בָךְ לְבַד בְּטַחְנוּ, מֶלֶךְ אֵל רַם וְנֹשָׂא, אֲדוֹן עוֹלָמִים.

### Congregation stands

וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעֵ הָאָרֶן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה, קוּמָה יְהוָה  
וַיִּפּוּצוּ אֵיבֶךָ וַיִּגְסוּ מִשְׁנֵאֵיךָ מִפְּנֵיךָ.  
כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלָּיִם.  
בְּרוּךְ שְׁנַתֵּן תוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ.

Ark stewards: *Mark Simon, Michael Spira,  
Jonathan Tammam & Ruth Cohen*

### 13. Taking out of scrolls

#### GROUP A

Scroll 1 – Barry Freilich	Scroll 2 – Sally Paskett
Scroll 3 – Michael Ward	Scroll 4 – Simon Ryde
Scroll 5 – Jonathan Morris	Scroll 6 – Jonathan Bard
Scroll 7 – Hilary Curtis	Scroll 8 – Jill Shatz
Scroll 9 – Baruch Gilinsky	
Alexandrian scroll – Rachel Appel	School visits scroll – Aholiav Yadgar

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד.

Listen, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ, גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵנוּ, קְדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ.

One is our God, great is our master; holy is His name.

גְּדְלוֹ לֵי יְיָ אִתִּי, וְנִרְמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו.

Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.

לְךָ יי הַגְּדֹלָה, וְהַגְּבוּרָה, וְהַתְּפָאֶרֶת וְהַנִּצָּח וְהַהוֹד. כִּי כָל  
בְּשָׂמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ, לְךָ יי הַמְּמֹלָכָה וְהַמְּתַנַּשֵּׂא לְכָל לְרֹאשׁ.

רוֹמְמוֹ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְהַדָּם רַגְלָיו קְדוֹשׁ הוּא.

רוֹמְמוֹ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְהַר קְדָשׁוֹ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

Circuit of the Scrolls.

### 14. Special Prayers

#### a. *The Royal Family - Penny Faust*

He who gives salvation to kings and dominion to princes, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom – may He bless

*Our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth,  
Philip, Duke of Edinburgh,  
Charles, Prince of Wales*

May the Supreme King of kings in His mercy preserve the Queen in life, guard her and deliver her from all trouble and sorrow.

May He put a spirit of wisdom and understanding into her heart and into the hearts of all her counsellors, that they may uphold the peace of the realm, advance the welfare of the nation, and deal kindly and justly with all the House of Israel.

May God bless and protect Her Majesty's Armed Forces and all those who work to maintain the safety and security of the nation.

In her days and in ours may our Heavenly Father spread the tabernacle of peace over all the dwellers on earth and may the redeemer come to Zion and let us say, Amen

b. *The State of Israel - Sarah Montagu*

מִי שֶׁבָרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת־  
מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, רָאשֵׁיהָ, וְיוֹעֲצֵיהָ, עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר  
נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ לָתֵת לָנוּ. תֵּן בְּלִבָּם אֶהְבֵּתְךָ, וְיִרְאָתְךָ,  
לְסַעֲדָה בְּמִשְׁפָּט וּבְצִדְקָה, וְנִזְכָּה בְיַמֵּנוּ לְדַבְרֵי עֲבָדֶיךָ  
הַנְּבִיאִים, כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תּוֹרָה, וּדְבַר ה' מִירוּשָׁלַיִם.  
אֲבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׂמִים, פְּקוּד נָא אֶת חֵילֵי צְבָא הַהֲגָנָה  
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מִגַּנֵי אֶרֶץ קִדְשֵׁנוּ, שְׁמֵרֵם מִכָּל־צָרָה וְצוּקָה,  
וְשִׁלַּח בְּרָכָה, וְהַצְלָחָה, בְּכָל־מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיָהֶם. שֵׁים שְׁלוֹם  
בְּאֶרֶץ, וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם עַל־כָּל־יְוֹשְׁבֵיהָ, וְשֵׁב יַעֲקֹב וְשָׁקֵט  
וְשָׁאֲנוּ וְאִין מַחְרִיד. וּפְרוֹשׁ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ עַל־כָּל־יְוֹשְׁבֵי  
תֵּיבַל אֶרֶץְךָ. וְכֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן. וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן.

May He who blessed our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless the State of Israel, its leaders and advisors in the land which He swore onto our fathers to give us. Put into their hearts the love and fear of You to uphold it with justice and righteousness, and may we be worthy in our days to witness the fulfilment of the words of your servants, the prophets: "for out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem". Heavenly Father: remember the Israel Defence Forces, guardians of our Holy Land. Protect them from all distress and anguish, and send blessings and success to all the work of their hands. Grant peace in Your Holy Land and everlasting happiness to all its inhabitants, so that Jacob shall again have

peace and tranquillity, with none to make him afraid. Spread the tabernacle of Your peace over all the dwellers on earth. May this be Your will and let us say, Amen.

### *Congregation sits*

**c. *The Universities - Jemma Silvert (Magdalen College)***

May salvation from heaven and all those blessings which enhance both mind and body be given to the members of the two learned universities which grace our City. May these extend to all teachers, their current students and future students, and to all those who are concerned with all branches of learning, so that they do not break with the truth nor neglect the words of the law. We ask that all who teach and all who learn benefit from Your mercy, loving kindness and help from heaven, so that they can achieve higher enlightenment, bodily health and a long life.

May the supreme King of the universe bless them, prolong their lives, increase their days, and add to their years. May they be saved and delivered from every trouble and mishap. May our Lord who is in heaven be their help at all times and seasons, and let us say, Amen.

**d. *City and County Councils - Tony Samuel***

Lord of all creation, long ago our rabbis enjoined us to pray for the safety and well-being of the authorities but for whom, "men would swallow one another alive". Their wisdom is even more needed now, when we are surrounded by forces, man-made and natural, which threaten our daily lives.

On this special day in the history of the Oxford Jewish Congregation, we turn

- to our civic leaders who devote themselves to the just and fair ordering of our everyday lives,
- to our religious leaders who guide us in our values and conduct,

- to the forces of law and order and the emergency services who protect us at daily personal risk, and
- to the leaders of commerce who guard our economic interests.

We welcome the representatives of those bodies who have joined us today and express our gratitude to them all. We pray O Lord, that you strengthen their resolve to carry out their appointed tasks faithfully. Bless them and protect them, so that in occupying themselves with our needs they may be assured that the Father of all human kind is also mindful of their needs. Amen.

*e. Founders & Leaders of the Community - Jesmond Blumenfeld*

Father of mercy in whose hands are the souls of the living and the dead, we recall on this day with reverence and abiding gratitude, the founders of our congregation who, succeeded by devoted leaders, have guided our destinies and enabled us to reach this time. Whether cleric or lay, university or town, of all persuasions within our faith they have given us unstintingly of their time in ages and substance so that today we may stand proud of our cohesion as a congregation in the fellowship of Israel. Father in heaven we thank you for their lives and for all we have received from them. We shall not forget them. Their good deeds are their eternal witness. May God remember them also as we recall them in our hearts. Amen.

**15. Handover of the Scrolls**

Ark stewards: **Andrew Silver, Joel Kaye, Jonathan Tammam  
Ros Diamond & Ruth Cohen**

**GROUP B**

<b>Scroll 1 – Rebecca Blumenfeld</b>	<b>Scroll 2 – Jane Appel</b>
<b>Scroll 3 – Jon Rowland</b>	<b>Scroll 4 – Joel Goldstein</b>
<b>Scroll 5 – Tony Samuel</b>	<b>Scroll 6 – David Hyams</b>
<b>Scroll 7 – Naomi Clayden</b>	<b>Scroll 8 – Nick Usiskin</b>
<b>Scroll 9 – Dov Boonin</b>	
<b>Alexandrian scroll – Maya Tammam</b>	<b>School visits scroll – Oriel Rosenfeld-Schueler</b>

*Return of Scrolls to the Ark - Rebecca Blumenfeld*

Congregation stands

**יְהַלְלוּ אֶת-שֵׁם יְהוָה, כִּי נִשְׁגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ.**

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is sublime.

הוֹדוּ עַל אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם. וַיִּרְם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ,  
תְּהִלָּה לְכָל-חַסִּידָיו, לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קְרוּבוֹ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

**16. Psalm 24 - Congregation**

**לְדָוִד, מִזְמוֹר:**

**לַיהוָה, הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ; תִּבֶּל, וַיֹּשְׁבֵי בָהּ.**

*LeDavid mizmor: l'Adonai ha'arets umloa, tevel veyosheve vah*  
A Psalm of David. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;  
the world, and they who dwell therein.

**כִּי-הוּא, עַל-יַמִּים יִסְדָּהּ; וְעַל-נְהָרוֹת, יְכוֹנְנָהּ.**

*Ki-hu, al Yamim yesadah, ve'al neharot yechoneneha*  
For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

**מִי-יַעֲלֶה בְּהַר-יְהוָה; וּמִי-יִקּוּם, בְּמִקּוֹם קֹדְשׁוֹ.**

*Mi ya'aleh behar Adonai umi yakum bimkom kodsho*  
Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place?

**נְקֵי כַפַּיִם, וּבַר-לֵבָב: אֲשֶׁר לֹא-נָשָׂא לִשְׂוֹא נַפְשִׁי;  
וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמַרְמָה.**

*Neki chapayim, uvar levav: asher lo nasa lashav nafshi; velo nishba lemirmah*  
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;  
who hath not taken My name in vain, and hath not sworn deceitfully.

**יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה, מֵאֵת יְהוָה; וּצְדָקָה, מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ.**

*Yisa veracha me'et Adonai; utsdaka me'elohe yisho*  
He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

**זֶה, דּוֹר דּוֹרְשָׁו; מִבְּקֵשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה.**

*Ze dor doreshav; mevakshe fanecha Ya'acov, Selah*  
Such is the generation of them that seek after Him, that seek Thy face, even Jacob. Selah

**שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרֵיכֶם, רְאֵשֵׁיכֶם, וְהִנְשָׂאוּ, פְּתָחֵי עוֹלָם;**

**וַיָּבֹאוּ, מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד.**

*Se'u she'arim rashechem, vehinaseu pitche olam; veyavo Melech hakavod*  
Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;  
that the King of glory may come in.

**מִי זֶה, מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד: יְהוָה, עֶזְרוֹ וְגִבּוֹר;  
יְהוָה, גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה.**

*Mi ze Melech hakavod; Adonai izuz veguibor; Adonai guibot milchamah*  
'Who is the King of glory?' 'The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.'

**שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים, רְאֵשֵׁיכֶם, וּשְׂאוּ, פְתָחֵי עוֹלָם;  
וַיָּבֹאוּ, מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד.**

*Se'u she'arim rashechem, us'u pitche olam; veyavo Melech hakavod*  
Lift up your heads, O ye gates, yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors;  
that the King of glory may come in.

**מִי הוּא זֶה, מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד: יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת -  
הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד סֵלָה.**

*Mi hu ze Melech hakavod; Adonai tseva'ot – hu Melech hakavod. Selah*  
'Who then is the King of glory?' 'The Lord of hosts; He is the King of glory.' Selah

**וּבִנְחָה יֹאמֵר, שׁוּבָה יְהוָה רַבּוֹת אֱלֹפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
When the Ark came to rest. (Num. 10:36)**

**17. עַץ-חַיִּים הִיא – Children's choir followed by the  
Congregation**

**עַץ-חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ, וְתִמְכֶּיָהּ מְאֹד. דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי-  
נְעִים, וְכָל-נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שָׁלוֹם.  
הִשְׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה,  
חֲדָשׁ יְמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם. חֲדָשׁ יְמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.**

It is a tree of life to those who grasp it, and those who uphold it are happy. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace. Turn us back O Lord, to You and we will return. Renew our days as of old.

*Congregation sits*

## 18. *Al Shelosha D'varim - OxfordShir - (music by Haim Tsur)*

Upon three things the world stands: on Torah, on Worship and on Loving Deeds  
(Ethics of the Fathers (Ch. 1 v.2))

עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד.  
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים  
(פְּרָקִי אֲבוֹת א:ב)

*Al shloscha devarim ha'olam omed:  
Al haTorah, ve'al ha'avodah, ve'al gemilut chasadim*

## 19. *Address - Kathy Shock*

I think most people here know that the Oxford Jewish Congregation is unique in the way that we organise ourselves. If you go into any other synagogue in Britain you will find that it is of one denomination or another - in the UK, they may be Orthodox, Liberal, Reform or Masorti. The OJC has always been an independent orthodox congregation run, for the most part, by lay members of the Congregation.

However, for nearly 50 years we have encouraged all normal denominations of British Judaism to pray under one roof. Not always in the same service, though that does happen, as with this particular celebration, but everyone attending the form of worship that best suits them and their families.

How did this unique arrangement come about?

You may have already read the history of Oxford's synagogues by Jesmond Blumenfeld in your programme for this service. The rebuilding of the Synagogue and Jewish Centre on a greatly enlarged site in the early 1970s gave the Oxford Jewish Congregation an opportunity to design a building that would not only meet its own particular requirements, but also the Congregation's long standing historical commitment to hosting the community of Jewish students in the city, providing both a place of worship for them and a source of practical support.

There have always been regular Orthodox services on Friday evenings and Shabbat mornings and for all the Festivals. But at that time there were also several Liberal families living in the area. There wasn't room in the old synagogue for more than one service, so most of the time the Liberals held

Shabbat services in people's homes and went back to their original synagogues in London for the High Holy days.

However they were an integral part of the community of Jews that lived in or near Oxford. They were members of social groups such as B'nai Brit, they participated in events raising money for charities both in the UK and in Israel, and took full part in the growing social and cultural life of the community. And unlike many other communities in Britain, everyone mixed across all the denominations and strong friendships had been formed.

Building a new synagogue and Jewish Centre in Oxford provided an opportunity for the Liberals to establish their religious position formally as part of the Oxford Jewish Congregation along with Orthodox members. Led by Michael Cross, father of Marian Roiser and Ruth Cohen, they approached the Synagogue Council to ask if room could be made in the new Centre for their monthly Shabbat services.

After much discussion, a special general meeting of the entire Congregation was called. The Liberals explained their position and said that they did not want to split the Congregation as had happened in other places where Liberal Groups had arrived in towns with orthodox synagogues. There were at least three University Cities in Britain where the Orthodox and Liberals, or Orthodox and Reform barely spoke to each other.

That special general meeting decided that they would try to achieve a totally new arrangement for religious services. The new building would have an alternative hall which could be used for a second Shabbat service when required. And there would be kitchens and a dining room providing Kosher meals for Jewish students during term time.

And as Jesmond explains at the end of tonight's service booklet, the new building and underlying properties were invested in a non-profit charitable company which would ensure equal access for the Oxford Jewish Congregation and for the student body. And built into the constitution was an unalterable clause which guaranteed that all forms of Judaism, orthodox and non-orthodox alike, would be accommodated.

And so it was. The Lounge of the new building provided the second venue with a cupboard containing the second Ark and room for enough chairs to accommodate services for either denomination in normal circumstances.

When there was a particular celebration such as bar or bat mitzvahs, involving visitors from outside the Congregation, the celebration took place in the main synagogue.

The Oxford Jewish Congregation had become bi-denominational. It wasn't necessarily easy but with a mixture of goodwill, tolerance and the determination of most members to make it work, difficulties were overcome.

During the ensuing decade, occasional orthodox women's services were introduced, initially as a student-led initiative. And there were infrequent Reform Services too.

And then in the mid-1990s there was a request from a third denomination to introduce monthly services to Oxford. During the previous 20 years, American Conservatism had come to Britain under the name Masorti. They were more traditional in their practice and theology than Liberals and Reform but more egalitarian than traditional Orthodox. By 1996, there were enough people within the Congregation who wanted to start Masorti services here too. And nowadays we also have regular children's services.

In the early part of this millennium the Centre was rebuilt not only with extended classrooms and youth and student facilities, but also with a much bigger second Hall with its own Ark. This provides accommodation for the second Shabbat services, whichever denomination is using it. And it's also used for Liberal High Holy Day services so that they no longer have to use an alternative venue in Oxford.

So on any Shabbat morning you will always find an Orthodox service and more often than not there will be a Liberal or Masorti service too.

And there's a special Oxford touch. In most synagogues after the Shabbat morning services, the Congregation eats, drinks and talks together at what is called a Kiddush. In Oxford, however long each service is, the Kiddush takes place as a whole Congregation. We don't always finish our services at the same time but we wait for each other so that we can be together.

As the community has grown over the past 25 years, so have the activities which are enjoyed by members, regardless of denomination. There is a thriving Cheder for educating our children, an extensive adult education programme, a Sunday morning café for socialising, the choir, and clubs for the young and for older members of the Congregation.

The underlying reason for our first venture together - that friendships had been built across the whole Congregation and we like each other - has become even stronger as we enjoy social, cultural and educational events together as a whole community. But we also appreciate the opportunity to pray in the way that suits us best as individuals.

We think it's the perfect solution.

## 20. Children's Choir - וּפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמָךְ

*Ufros aleinu sukkat shelomecha – 'Spread over us Your shelter of peace'*

## 21. Prayer for the Children - Jeremy Montagu

Tallit holders: **Renée Aronson Annie Bessey**  
**Cyril Levicki David ElBaz**

“We, this Jewish Congregation of Oxford, are one hundred and seventy five years old and more. People like me are our past – People like your mothers and fathers are our present – You are our future.

And just as we bless you every week, here in our shul, and your parents bless you every Friday night at home, saying to the boys:

**יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה**

*May God make you like Ephrayim and Menasheh*

And to the girls:

**יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה רִבְקָה לֵאָה וְרָחֵל**

*May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel,*

Today it is my privilege to give you the traditional blessing, which God told Moses to do: “This is how you will bless the Children of Israel, and I shall put My name upon them:

**יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ יְיָ אֱרֵךְ יְמֵיךָ וַיְחַנְּנֶךָ**

**יְשָׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.**

*May God bless you and look after you. May God shine His face upon you and be good to you.*

*May God show His love to you and give you peace.*

And one day, you will grow up to bless your children too.”

22. *Community blessing - Lionel Wollenberg*

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵנוּ אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת־  
הַקְהָל הַקְדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה, עִם כָּל קְהֵלוֹת הַקְּדוֹשׁ, הֵם, וּבְנֵיהֶם,  
וּבְנוֹתֵיהֶם, וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם. וּמִי שֶׁמִּיְחַדִּים בְּתֵי כְנִסְיוֹת  
לְתַפְלָה, וּמִי שֶׁבָּאִים בְּתוֹכָם לְהַתְפַּלֵּל, וּמִי שֶׁנוֹתְנִים נֵר  
לְמָאוֹר, וְיִין לְקְדוּשׁ וּלְהַבְדֵּלָה, וּפֶת לְאוֹרָחַם, וְצַדִּיקָה  
לְעֲנִיִּים, וְכָל־מִי שֶׁעוֹסֵק בְּצַרְכֵי צְבוּר בְּאַמוּנָה, הַקְדוֹשׁ  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁלַם שְׂכָרָם, וְיִסִּיר מֵהֶם כָּל־מַחֲלָה, וְיִרְפָּא  
לְכָל־גּוּפָם, וְיִסְלַח לְכָל־עוֹנָם, וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה וְהַצְלָכָה בְּכָל־  
מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם, עִם כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֵיהֶם, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

23. *Community blessing Rev. Malcolm Weisman, OBE, MA (Oxon.)*

May He who blessed our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, bless all holy congregations but especially the Oxford Jewish Congregation on this special 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation.

In particular, may He bless all those who come here to pray, all who faithfully occupy themselves with the needs of the community, those who provide lamps for light and wine for Kiddush and Havdallah, and those who offer charity to the poor.

May He especially bless this community of Oxford for embracing its members whatever their particular approach to our heritage. May He also protect our student community.

May He therefore, bless all this community, heal their bodies of all sickness, forgive their sins and send blessings and success on all their activities together with all Israel and let us say, Amen.

On this special day,

*"May the Lord bless you and protect you;*

*May He make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;*

*May He turn His face unto you and give you peace."* Amen

## 24. Adon Olam – Children's choir to lead

Eternal master, who reigned  
supreme,  
Before all of creation was drawn;  
When it was finished according to  
His will,  
Then "King" His name was  
proclaimed to be  
When this our world shall be no  
more,  
In majesty He still shall reign,  
And He was, and He is,  
And He will be in glory.  
Alone is He, there is no second,  
Without division or ally;  
Without beginning, without end,  
  
To Him is the power and  
sovereignty  
He is my God, my living Redeemer  
Rock of my affliction in time of  
trouble  
He is my banner and refuge  
Filling my cup the day I call  
Into His hand I commit my spirit  
When I sleep, and I awake  
And with my spirit, my body  
The Lord is with me, I will not fear

*Adon olam, asher malach,  
beterem kol yetsir nivra  
Le'et na'asa vecheftso kol,  
Azai melech shemo nikra  
Ve'achare kichlot hakol  
Levado yimloch nora  
Vehu hayah vehu hoveh  
Vehu yihyeh betifarah  
Vehu echad ve'eyn sheni  
Lehamshil lo lehachbirah  
Beli reshit beli tachlit  
Velo ha'oz v'hamis'rah  
Vehu Eli vechay go'ali  
Vetsur chevli be'et tsarah  
Vehu nisi umanos li  
Menat kosi beyom 'ekra  
Beyado afkid ruchi  
Be'et ishan ve'a'ira  
Veim ruchi geviyati  
Adonai li velo ira*

אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ  
בְּטָרָם כָּל יִצִיר נִבְרָא  
לְעֵת נַעֲשֶׂה בְחֻפְצוֹ כֹּל  
אֲזִי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא  
וְאַחֲרֵי כְכֹלֹת הַכֹּל  
לְבַדּוֹ יִמְלֹךְ נוֹרָא  
וְהוּא הָיָה וְהוּא הוֹה  
וְהוּא יִהְיֶה בְּתַפְאָרָה  
וְהוּא אֶחָד וְאֵין שְׁנֵי  
לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה  
בְּלִי רְאשִׁית בְּלִי  
תְּכֵלִית  
וְלוֹ הָעֵז וְהַמְשָׁרָה  
וְהוּא אֱלֹהֵי וְחֵי גּוֹאֲלֵי  
וְצוֹר חֻבְלֵי בְּעֵת צָרָה  
וְהוּא נָסִי וּמְנוּס לִי  
מִנֵּת כּוֹסֵי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא  
בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחֵי  
בְּעֵת אֵישׁוֹן וְאַעִירָה  
וְעַם רוּחֵי גְוִיָּתִי  
אֲדַנִּי לִי וְלֹא אֵירָא

## 25. Blowing of the Shofars

תְּקִיעַ גְּדוּלָה

*Leo Appel & Benjamin Kochan*

**Please join us at the Reception immediately after the service.**

Jesmond Blumenfeld's history of Oxford's  
synagogues can be found overleaf.

## Oxford's Synagogues: a brief history

*Jesmond Blumenfeld*

Prior to the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290, there was a small, but significant, mediaeval Jewish presence in Oxford, concentrated in the area around the present St. Aldates - known then as Great Jewry - with a synagogue close to the present site of Tom Tower, and a cemetery in what is now the Botanic Gardens.

Following the re-admission of Jews in 1656, a handful of resident families reappeared in Oxford, but it was not until 1842 that an embryonic congregation was formally established. In 1847, a small synagogue was established in Paradise Square. This lasted for an indeterminate - but probably very short - period, and there appears to have been no formal public place of worship for some years until a 'room' was opened in St. Aldates in 1871.

There followed a period of modest growth, not unrelated to the passing of the 1871 University Tests Act, which finally removed the legal bar on admission of professing Jews to study at the University. From 1874 to 1884, the congregation occupied a small but highly unsatisfactory, 41-seat synagogue above some stables in George Street. In 1884, more commodious and satisfactory premises were leased in Worcester Place, around the corner from the present site, and arrangements were made to provide kosher meals for Jewish students. Even so, there were still too few residents for regular services to be held outside of University terms. In 1893, a recently erected building (intended originally as a 'mission' room in Nelson Street was released and subsequently purchased. It was dedicated (to God, the Queen and the University) by then Chief Rabbi Adler.

Congregational records for the early decades of the 20th century are sparse, but it is clear that the resident community stagnated, even declined. The continuing reluctance of Oxford Colleges to employ Jews in senior academic positions, and the relative absence of economic and industrial development in the Oxford area, inhibited the growth. The 'University Section' fared somewhat better with the active involvement of a small core of undergraduates, who became increasingly dominant. The late 1930s/early 1940s brought an influx of some 500 refugees from Germany, and at least a similar number of evacuees from London. Jewish life in Oxford flourished; new synagogues emerged in East Oxford and Headington. However, the expansion proved temporary and after the war the community shrank dramatically again.

The rapid post-1945 growth in student numbers meant that the undergraduate element became a far more substantial proportion of the Anglo-Jewish student body

than the resident community was of Anglo-Jewry. Although 'town-gown' relations were often strained, the mutual dependency between the community's two small elements encouraged cooperative behaviour. In particular, a tradition of pluralist (orthodox and non-orthodox) usage of the Synagogue building was established early on, and the forms of service used in the synagogue were varied. The provision of kosher meals for students expanded greatly.

By the 1960s, the synagogue building was in a state of serious disrepair. The now-growing resident population, led by a London-based committee including several prominent Oxford alumni, began to raise funds for a new synagogue and community centre to be built on the site of the existing building, augmented by several adjacent sites. The new building and the underlying properties were vested in a non-profit charitable 'Company Limited by Guarantee', with special protection given to student and non-orthodox interests. Both the Oxford Jewish Congregation and the Oxford University Jewish Society were granted assured use of the building, and an unalterable constitutional clause guaranteed that all forms of Jewish worship would be accommodated – a unique provision in Anglo-Jewry. The building, which included substantial facilities for providing kosher meals for students, was completed in 1974, although a shortage of funds resulted in a late - and significant - scaling down of the construction plans.

After a quarter of a century of intensive usage, and increasingly irremediable roof problems, the Congregation was forced to confront the need for a major refurbishment of the Centre. On this occasion, with a resident membership now totalling some 300 family units, it was felt possible to run an Oxford-based fundraising appeal. Although generous contributions were received from members, University alumni, friends and foundations, the rebuilding, extension and refurbishment programme greatly exceeded - in scope, time and cost! - anything originally envisaged. Although the financial challenges for the next few years were thought to be daunting, the community felt assured that it now had a religious, educational, social and cultural centre capable of meeting both residents and student needs for the next generation.

*(With acknowledgements to David M Lewis, the Jews of Oxford, Oxford Jewish congregation 1992)*

## ***175<sup>th</sup> Programme Committee***

Jane Appel   Jesmond Blumenfeld (Coordinator)   John Dunston  
Penny Faust   Isaac Garson   Louise Rahmanou   Alison Ryde   Tony Samuel

## ***Ark Development & Fundraising Groups***

Jonathan Bard   Ros Diamond   Isaac Garson   David Hyams  
Sarah Montagu   Jon Rowland   Simon Ryde (Chair)   Tony Samuel  
Sarah Shephard   Mark Simon   Sally Tarshish

## ***OxfordShir***

***Conductor: John Dunston***

Renée Aronson	Susie Dunston	Phyllis Levicki	Olga Samuels
Judith Baker	Matthew Faulk	Lizzie Maisels	Pippa Thynne
Sandra Dwek	Wendy Fidler	Jonathan Morris	Ulrike Tillmann
Helena Harper	Thea Gomelauri	Allie Noel	Penny Toff
Mike Harper	Evie Kemp	Marian Roiser	Hilary Wainer

***Accompanist: Susan Wollenberg***

## ***Children's Choir***

***Conductor: Rebecca Blumenfeld & Lisa Clayden***

Dylan Akarlilar	Zeke Clayden	Ayla Salle
Tabby Appel	Izzy Davison	Isaac Salle
Eva Clayden	Davita Pila	Alex Watson
Shifra Clayden	Shalva Rosenfeld-Schueler	

We are grateful to Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon  
for his work on the Prayer of Dedication for the new Ark.

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