

# THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

20 North Avenue, Riviera

✉ P.O. Box 87406, Houghton, 2041

☎ 011-646-6020 📠 011-486-2214

🌐 [www.oxfordshul.com](http://www.oxfordshul.com) 📧 [info@oxfordshul.com](mailto:info@oxfordshul.com)

📘 [facebook.com/oxfordshul](https://facebook.com/oxfordshul)

June 2013

Tammuz 5773

### SHABBAT TIMES

🔊 Parasha - 🕯 Candle Lighting  
🕯 Shabbat ends (Maariv & Havdalah)  
For service times see page 2

14 & 15 June – 7 Tammuz

🔊 Chukat

🕯 5:05 – 🕯 5:57

21 & 22 June – 14 Tammuz

🔊 Balak

🕯 5:06 – 🕯 5:58

28 & 29 June – 21 Tammuz

🔊 Pinchas

🕯 5:08 – 🕯 6:00

5 & 6 July – 28 Tammuz

🔊 Matot & Masei

🕯 5:11 – 🕯 6:02

12 & 13 July – 6 Av

🔊 Devarim

🕯 5:14 – 🕯 6:05

### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear fellow Oxfordians

It's been a busy few weeks at Oxford. First was the Shavuot dinner which was superbly attended. The food was good and the company great. Sheceiach to the Rabbi for putting together a very interesting learning program. It was interesting to hear the viewpoint from people in different professions on how their profession links in to Judaism.

The Shavuot dinner was followed by the Choir festival. This is the second

one we have organised and sheceiach to Dawn Nates who, under very difficult circumstances, pulled it off yet again! There were about 700 people in attendance with 8 or 9 choirs. The vibe and talent was really good and a fun evening was had by all, even Lance Cohen and Amir Livneh who stood security outside for the evening. Thanks guys and also to everyone who helped out to make the evening a success.

Mazaltov to the Rabbi and Rivky on their son Mendel's engagement in America. AND also mazaltov to the Chaikins on Shmuel's becoming a Rabbi!

Chazan Tzvi will be on leave for the next three weeks. He's off to the States for his brother's wedding and we wish him, and his family, mazaltov and a safe holiday.

We are planning an AGM in the next few weeks, with some important decisions which need to be taken. Please keep your eyes out for the AGM announcement.

Wishing you a good Chodesh

Regards

Brian Levy

### RABBI'S MESSAGE

*iJEW*

The last few weeks feel like I've spent more time on airplanes and in airports than on terra firma. TG, all for good things: flying off to New York for the celebration of Mendel's engagement and the next day to South Florida for the ceremony on Shmuel becoming a rabbi. Still, it was hectic.

One of the challenges when travelling is the daily Shacharit, Mincha and Maariv. It has to be done at a fixed time, and when crossing time zones it becomes quite tricky to do this correctly. Along came a small piece of technology that proved to be an invaluable aid: my iPhone.

On those long-haul transatlantic flights the airlines have taken to dimming the lights and ordering the windows obscured with shades, irrespective of whether it is day or night. (Not sure if this is to make it easier for us to sleep or to give the crew a rest... whatever.) Recently they have allowed the use of smartphones in flight. The

iSiddur app, with its own backlight, is great for davening in the dark.

What direction to face? Fortunately the screens designed for inflight entertainment also serve as a “mizrach” sign. A flight map shows the location of the aircraft as well as its path. It is easy enough to locate Israel and to work out which direction it is in relation to the course of the airplane.

Well this works while in the air, but which way to daven when in a windowless airplane terminal? I recall being in transit at Cairo airport, trying to tactfully ascertain the way to Jerusalem. I tried every language I knew and finally managed to convey to an airport employee that I needed to pray. He duly removed a prayer carpet from a cupboard, rolled it out facing Mecca and showed me I how should bow. I think he has never yet worked out why I then ignored his mat, faced a nearby wall, turned several degrees counter clockwise and recited my Tefilah.

Without his help I would have been forced to follow the ruling that says that if one is unable to ascertain which way to turn, one should point his heart to Jerusalem. No longer. Today with the help of iKotel, an app that uses the phone’s compass feature, an

arrow points you in the direction of the Western Wall within seconds. No more guesswork.

But what time to daven? Shacharit, for example, must be said between sunrise and the first quarter of the day. Under extreme circumstances (like when catching a 6 a.m. flight), one is allow to recite this prayer around 72 minutes before the sun rises—the exact time varies by season and longitude. But how to know if it is late enough, if it is still pitch dark?

To the rescue comes CalJ. This app locates where you are, with the smartphone’s built-in GPS, and immediately calculates the appropriate Halachik times. Handy, isn’t it?

Of course, my iPhone can also make calls, send and receive sms messages and check my email. What it cannot do, fortunately, is daven for me. That still happens the old fashioned way, moving my lips and gently swaying my body. Wherever, whenever.

*Rabbi Yossi Chaikin*

SHACHARIT (A.M.)	
Sunday and Public Holidays	8:00
Monday to Friday	7:15
Shabbat & Festivals	9:00
08/07 (Rosh Chodesh):7:00	
MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)	
Sunday to Thursday	5:15
Friday	5:20
Shabbat	5:00

## FROM THE REBBETZIN

This Shabbat we took a long walk after shul to Glenhazel where my cousins were celebrating their son’s Bar Mitzvah.

The walk isn’t as hectic as it sounds. There are a few steep inclines, lots of uneven pavements and some passing trucks. I was also sure we would be stiff and cranky the next day, and we weren’t! We spent a happy afternoon celebrating among friends and family. Unfortunately the world is full of so much hardship and suffering, it is important that when there are reasons to celebrate we must make a supreme effort to do so.

Our lives are often like that walk. Hopefully most of it is pleasant and easy, but every so often there are steep hills – and you wonder how you will make it to the top. You wonder if you are crazy to even try. You also know there is no choice, and you just have to plod on.

Sometimes you look out for a place to stop, but you know that it is cleverer to just keep on going. You look for shade, and try to figure out which pavement is better – but you keep on walking. When you get there it is really worth it

It is good to celebrate! May we all have lives that are easy to walk!

Have a good month.

*Rivky*

## DVAR TORAH

### A POUND OF CANDLES

Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin  
(chabad.org)

In his youth, the famed Maggid of Zlotchov, Rabbi Yechiel Michel, lived in a certain town, where he would sit all day in the local Beit Midrash (study hall and synagogue) and pursue his studies.

In that town there lived a simple Jew who earned his livelihood by transporting travelers and merchandise in his wagon. One day, the wagon driver came to the local rabbi in a state of great distress. "Help me, Rebbe!" he wept. "I have committed a terrible sin. I have desecrated the holy Shabbat. How can I atone for my transgression?"

"How did this come to pass?" asked the Rabbi.

"Last Friday," the man explained, "I was returning from the marketplace with a wagonload of merchandise when I lost my way in the forest. By the time I found my way to the outskirts of the city, the sun had already set. So preoccupied was I with my worry over the merchandise, that I failed to realize that the Shabbat had arrived until it was too late..."

Seeing how broken-hearted the man was, the rabbi comforted him and said: "My son, the gates of repentance are never closed. Donate a pound of candles to the synagogue and your transgression will be forgiven."

The young prodigy, Rabbi Michel, overheard this exchange, and was displeased by the rabbi's approach. "A pound of

candles to atone for violating the Shabbat?" he thought to himself. "The Shabbat is one of the most important mitzvot of the Torah. Why is the rabbi treating the matter so lightly?"

That Friday afternoon, the wagon driver brought the candles to the synagogue. As Rabbi Michel watched disapprovingly from his table against the back wall, he placed them on the lectern for the synagogue beadle to light in honor of the Shabbat. But this was not to be. Before the beadle arrived, a stray dog carried off the candles and ate them.

The distraught penitent ran to report the incident to the rabbi. "Woe is me!" he wept. "My repentance has been rejected in Heaven! What shall I do?!"

"You're making too much of the matter," the rabbi reassured him. "These things happen -- there's no reason to deduce that G-d is rejecting your repentance. Bring another pound of candles to the synagogue next week, and everything will be alright."

But when the beadle lit the candles on the following Friday afternoon, they inexplicably melted down, so that by the time Shabbat commenced, nothing was left of them. And upon his third attempt on the week after that, a strong wind suddenly blow out the candles just when Shabbat began and it was not possible to relight them.

The rabbi, too, realized, that something was amiss, and advised the wagon driver to seek the counsel of the great Chassidic master, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov.

"Hmm..." said the Baal Shem Tov, upon hearing the man's story. "It seems that a certain young scholar in your town finds fault with the path to repentance that the rabbi has prescribed for you. Never mind. Next week, donate another pound of candles to the synagogue. This time, I promise you that everything will be alright. And tell Rabbi Michel that I would be honored if he could trouble himself to come visit me."

Rabbi Michel wasted no time in abiding by the Baal Shem Tov's request. But no sooner had he and his coachman set out that all sorts of troubles beset their journey. First, the wagon tumbled into a ditch. Then, an axle broke many miles from the nearest town. After which they lost their way altogether. When they finally found the road to Mezhibuzh it was late Friday afternoon and the sun was about to set. They were forced to abandon the wagon and continue on foot.

Rabbi Michel arrived at the Baal Shem Tov's door an hour into Shabbat, weary and traumatized by his near-violation of the holy day. "Good Shabbat, Reb Michel," Rabbi Israel greeted him, "come in and warm yourself by the fire. You, Reb Michel, have never tasted sin, so you did not comprehend the remorse a Jew feels at having transgressed the will of his Father in Heaven. I trust that you now understand something of the agony that our friend experienced. Believe me, his remorse alone more than atoned for his unwitting transgression..."

**MAZAL TOV**

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

**BIRTHS**

- David & Samara Rivkind on the birth of a daughter
- Phillip and Rilla Jacobson on the birth of a great granddaughter in Israel
- Philip and Aileen Shiffren on the birth of a granddaughter in the USA

**ENGAGEMENTS**

- Frank & Irene Salomon on the engagement of their son, Gary, to Lisa Katz
- Chaikin and Bacher families on the engagement of their son and grandson, Mendel, to Tzippy Rivkin

**BIRTHDAYS**

- Joe Pollack on his 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on 13<sup>th</sup> June
- Melanie Mograbi on her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday on 29<sup>th</sup> June

**ANNIVERSARIES**

- Alan & Fernes Zev on their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 3<sup>rd</sup> June

**REFUAH SHLEMAH**

We wish a Speedy Recovery to:



- Mirah Wilks
- Sandra Sher
- Maureen Meyerson
- Colin Bliss

**BEREAVEMENTS**

Our condolences to the following who have suffered bereavements recently:




- Valerie Bloom on the death of her father, Lewis Freeman

May Hashem comfort them and their families among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and grant them long life.



Have you visited the Shul's page yet?  
[facebook.com/oxfordshul](https://facebook.com/oxfordshul)

Make sure to click on the  button at the top of that page and Oxford notices will start appearing in your own news feed.



## FAST OF 17 TAMUZ

**Tuesday 25 June 2013**

Fast Begins: 5:42 a.m. – Fast ends: 5:43 p.m.

Shacharit 7:00 a.m.; Mincha 5:00 p.m.

## FAST OF 9 AV

**Monday 15 July & Tuesday 16 July 2013**

Fast Begins: Monday 5:30 p.m. – Fast ends: Tuesday 5:57 p.m.

Mincha (Monday) 5:15 p.m.; Shacharit (Tuesday); 7:00 a.m.; Mincha (Tuesday) 5:00 p.m.

