

HONORARY OFFICERS' REPORT - 2026 AGM

TO THE MEMBERS OF YESHURUN FEDERATION SYNAGOGUE

Dear Members,

We are pleased to present our report for the past year, a period marked by significant developments in the life of Yeshurun.

Services: The primary purpose of any shul is to provide meaningful and reliable services, and we are pleased that Yeshurun has continued to do so throughout the year.

Services held regularly included:

- Shabbat & Yomim Tovim: two Shacharit services, Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv
- Sundays: Shacharit, Mincha and Maariv
- Weekdays: two Shacharit services, Mincha and Maariv.

Almost all the 1,400 or so services achieved a minyan, though on occasion a few weekday services required waiting for a tenth man. We really would appreciate all who attend to arrive on time.

Our thanks go to the dedicated volunteers who help the smooth running of the services — Seth Belson, Lenny Lowy, Alan Finlay, Rafi Cohen, Aron Carr and Miriam Baigel — and give their time generously.

Rabbi: This is the first full reporting period with Rabbi Czitron in post, and we are delighted with the energy, warmth and learning that he has brought to Yeshurun.

His presence, the quality of his sermons, and his shiurim have enriched our community. In recent months he has made regular cameo appearances in the Yamlet children's services accompanied by the song "*The Rabbi of the shul...*". Despite many demands on his (part-)time (employment), he has also hosted members regularly for Shabbat and Yom Tov meals, strengthening personal connections across the community. We thank the Rabbi for his commitment to Torah learning and community building.

The Rabbi's learning and educational initiatives this year included:

- Weekly Seuda Shlishit with a shiur during the summer
- A shiur between Mincha and Motzei Shabbat during the winter months
- Weekly Gemara shiur
- Weekly women's shiur

In addition, there has been learning initiated by or led by members of YAM, including:

- Weekly Chabura given by David Baigel on Shabbat mornings

- Monthly Shiur Klali
- Lomedet programme in the summer (learning by women for women)

Interim Meeting: At the meeting on 28 February, Rabbi Czitron presented his ambitious and inspiring vision for Yeshurun's future, including:

- A welcoming and personalised experience for new members
- Opportunities to strengthen ties between Yeshurun and YAM
- Positioning Yeshurun as a leading, vibrant community in Edgware.

We then heard from Miriam Baigel, who presented the results of YAM's internal review and their proposals for the next three years. There were some strong opinions expressed by members about the interaction between the main Shul and YAM. Although the focus of these comments was joint services this was not the only concern. Some of the feedback during the meeting was robust and inadvertently confrontational and the meeting ended with some tension. Many issues would have to be brought back to the Board together with the YAM Committee. We all want what is best for the whole community and acknowledge that all members have their own opinions and are free to express them in a respectful manner.

Since that meeting the HOs have had several meetings with the YAM representatives (Oscar Koslover, Miriam Baigel and Rafi Cohen) with the sole aim of trying to move the whole project forward. These meetings were constructive and positive and have led to a schedule for joint services and kiddushim up to and over Succot (three of which have already taken place). The new structure of the single tier Board which we hope will improve the running of all aspects of the Shul, is a sign of these positive moves.

There was no comment during the Interim Meeting of other proposals that are both positive and uncontroversial which will help move the community forward. These include:

- A vision reflecting the views expressed by many members during a survey in 2024 "to provide a thriving Modern Orthodox and Religious Zionist community..." which is inclusive, caring and forward-thinking — growing spiritually together with inspired leadership and engaged members.
- A forward-planned calendar will improve organisation and help members diarise events well in advance.
- Removing the blurred age distinction between the two Shabbat morning minyanim which would be open to all, with different start times, and would come together periodically for joint kiddushim.

Security: We thank Daniel Ufland and all our volunteer security teams, comprising both older and YAM members, for their vigilance and dedication throughout the year. Sadly, their commitment and diligence are even more important these days. Following the

arson attack on the Hatzola ambulances in Golders Green, we increased security at Yeshurun over Shavuot.

Shavuot: Most recently we celebrated Shavuot. Simone Mire and Cheryl Colletts took it upon themselves to decorate the shul beautifully.

We also had wonderful shiurim delivered at the Tikun Leil and Tikun Yom by: Rabbi Czitron. David Baigel, Seth Belson, Rafi Cohen, Michael Deutsch, Aryeh Dworkin and Netanel Kleinman. The last two together with the Rabbi had the additional challenge of speaking in a room where several young children were enjoying an ice-cream party, organised by Emma Gordon.

Changes to the Honorary Officer team: This year saw several important changes to the team:

- Adam Tash stepped down after ten continuous years as an Honorary Officer, including serving as Chairman. We thank him for his extraordinary dedication.
- Michael Kleiman kindly agreed to serve as interim Chairman until the AGM.
- Netanel Kleinman, a member of YAM who made a tremendous effort to get to know the shul community after becoming a gabbai, stepped down as an Honorary Officer. We thank him for his contribution.
- At the beginning of the year, Avi Grossman stepped down after 3 years as Financial Representative with Benjamin Mire returning to the role he held since July 2015 when Avi took over the financial reins. Avi remained part of the HO team.

Thank you to those, both older and YAM members, who have worked for the community:

- Those who leyn for us and those who lead our services
- Those who helped change the shul over for the Yomim Noraim and then change back after Shabbat Bereshit
- Floortje Moffie who modernised our newsletter and now takes a well-earned break; and Naomi Sheer who has been running the website from Tel Aviv
- Anton Halpern who generously donated a new website, now ready for use
- The Yeshurun Cares team, led by Hilarie Ifield, for their vital work
- The volunteers who have taken on the supervision of the building, cleaners and general hygiene
- The gifted members who run the Yamlets children's services which bring a wonderful buzz to the building
- The team who ran two Friday Night Cocktail Club evenings

- Those who put up the double-sized Succah, amazingly, all done at night
- The members who put up the Israel decorations in shul from Yom HaAtzmaut to Yom Yerushalayim
- The inspired, single-handed, running of our first ever Yom Yerushalayim Kumzits
- The members of the team who prepare the weekly kiddushim and serve cholent and kugel
- The member who updates the Yahrzeit and sedra boards — even when reaching the end of the top row requires trapeze artist balance and nerves of steel
- And everyone else who has helped run the shul and its events.

We look forward to the results of the new self-nomination system for Board positions with defined portfolios. Thank you to Rafi Cohen in particular, for his energy and creativity in developing this new structure. Thank you to all those who have come forward to volunteer to work for the community.

Later this year we will celebrate our 80th anniversary. The new Board will consider an appropriate way to mark this occasion.

Concluding remarks: Yeshurun is your shul. Rather than asking what the shul can do for you, we encourage every member to consider what they can contribute. The HOs and Board of Management cannot possibly do everything you would wish for to make Yeshurun the shul of your dreams: we need your help.

Yeshurun is one of many shuls in Edgware. People choose to come here — to daven, to learn, to meet friends, to feel part of something meaningful. We cannot compel attendance, but together we can all do our best to ensure that our services and programmes are welcoming and inspiring.

Michael, Avi, Ben and John

Honorary Officers