



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Speaker at our AGM in July last year was the Revd Patrick Moriarty who is a Parish Priest, Headmaster at the JCoss Jewish School and, as Honorary Joint Secretary of CCJ was very well placed to talk to us about a most suitable topic - 'Israel at 70' and its effect on Jewish Christian relations.

In August we had an interesting talk from Imam Mansur Ahmed from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community at their Mosque in Uxbridge, whose outlook is epitomised by their slogan - 'Love for All, Hatred for None.' In January 2019 I was invited, together with our Vice Chair, Rabbi Kathleen Middleton, and Hon. Treasurer, Neil Drapkin, to the annual New Year's Dinner at the Mosque where we were able to meet and converse with people from various denominations of the three Abrahamic faiths. I was invited to say a few words on that occasion and took the opportunity to tell everyone about CCJ.

We did not meet in September last year due to the Jewish High Holydays, but in October we got together again at Eastcote Methodist Church to hear a talk from Esther Aronsfeld which was entitled 'A Jew in the Pew'. Esther told us all about her work as an ordained Interfaith Minister.

The topic at our November meeting was 'Forgiveness' - from both the Jewish and Christian viewpoints, discussed for us by The Revd Tim Carter and Rabbi Mark Solomon who presented us with much food for thought.

In December we held our now traditional Tea Party, enjoying afternoon tea with appropriately festive kosher refreshments. There were some lovely raffle prizes to be won and Neil Drapkin again tested our knowledge of the Scriptures with his 'easy' Quiz! Our guest Speakers, Rabbi Andrew Goldstein and Fr. Nicholas Schofield, kept us well entertained with their tales of memorable celebrations of Chanukah and Christmas. We ran out of time before they ran out of reminiscences so we were quick to invite them back for this year's December meeting to give us Part II of their talk! The entry fee at our December meetings includes donations for the local Food Bank and we are always grateful for the generosity shown by our members which is greatly appreciated by the recipients.

At our commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day in January this year we welcomed Bob and Ann Kirk who talked about the Kindertransport and amazed us with the inspiring memories of their early life in such dreadful times. The meeting was very well attended and it was so good to hear from them first hand. We are full of admiration for survivors who spend their time talking to younger generations in the hope that we will all learn from their experiences and never allow such circumstances to occur again.



One of our Committee members, William Haines, had stepped into the breach at short notice previously when a Speaker was unable to attend due to illness. William gave an excellent talk then and we were therefore glad to prevail upon him to speak to us again in February this year, his subject this time being 'My Journey Through Life', based on his newly published book.

'Judaism despite Christianity' was the intriguing title of the talk given by Dom Alexander Bevan at our meeting in March. He gave us a study of the work of Franz Rosenzweig, a philosopher, on the Jewish-Christian relationship and his correspondence with Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy whom he nearly followed into Christianity.

In April we were welcomed to Ruislip United Synagogue where Rodney Curtis gave us another erudite talk on Lewis Way, the first Christian Philo-Semite to petition for Jewish Emancipation in Europe in 1818.

May saw us listening to an interesting talk given by Robin Moss, Director of Strategy UJIA, entitled '80 years since the White Paper on the UK and Israel' and our June meeting was ably conducted by Rabbi Kathleen Middleton in my absence when Rabbi Naomi Goldman spoke about the Encounter at Sinai.

So we have enjoyed another year of most interesting talks and discussions given by some very knowledgeable Speakers and our thanks are due to them all for their work and their time. We would be pleased to receive any new thoughts on topics of interest or for Speakers – all ideas welcome.

Thanks are due to our hard-working Committee members, Cynthia and Neil Drapkin, Rabbi Kathleen Middleton, Fr. Timothy Gorham, Tom Crosby, William Haines and Sue Soloway. Sidney Moss has continued to supply us with our wonderful four-fold publicity leaflets and we thank him for his work and his imaginative illustrations. Fiona Holding and Christine Piper have been of great assistance with the refreshments each month and our website is taken care of by Matthew Bennett who has managed to keep it updated despite at the same time coping with exams. We are also grateful for the various Churches and Synagogues which provide the venues for our meetings.

So, another year has gone by and I hope you have all enjoyed our monthly meetings and the opportunities they give for socialising, for learning and for friendly discussion. Planning is already taking place concerning the programme for the next few months, so I hope you will continue to support us, tell your friends about CCJ and ask them to join us.

The Reverend Wendy Graham
Chair of Hillingdon CCJ