



WESTMINSTER
SYNAGOGUE

An Engaged Community

Volunteering Opportunities
for Members of the
Westminster Synagogue

November 2009

But when Moses' father-in-law saw how much he had to do for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing to the people? Why do you act alone? ... The thing you are doing is not right; you will surely wear yourself out ... For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone ... You shall also seek out from among all the people capable men who fear God..."

Exodus 18:14,17-18,21

Members contribute to every aspect of Synagogue life. Many have served the Community throughout the full term of their membership; others dip in and out as their lives permit. It is fair to say that without members' support, the community would function in a very limited way.

There are many opportunities for you, our members, to help or serve. It may be that you have a new idea or you have a skill that would benefit your fellow members. Please don't be shy. The rewards of service often far out-weigh the time and effort involved.

If you are interested in "giving something back" to your community, there are many opportunities available. These are outlined in this booklet. By filling out your preferences on the attached sheet, it will help us match the synagogue's needs with our membership's talents and interests.

Your spirit of generosity and your commitment to community are greatly appreciated. Each individual member, no matter what age, provides our synagogue with its best support!

Rabbi Thomas and Renee Salamon

Aims of Volunteer Committees

- Managing the Synagogue's affairs (Executive)
- Helping the leadership create and sustain a vision for the synagogue that motivates and inspires members to be involved, overseeing the Synagogue's affairs (Council)
- Giving direction and guidance for adult and children's educational programmes (Education)
- Providing a variety of programming to serve the diverse needs and interests of our members (Hospitality; Events & Fund-Raising)
- Making our new members welcome and helping them to settle into our Community (Membership)
- Providing opportunities for acts of care and concern, social justice, and interfaith (Welfare, Social Action, Interfaith)
- Providing opportunities for members to become involved in the spiritual life of the community (Rites & Practices; Czech Scrolls)
- Communicating regularly with the membership, and the wider Jewish community about all aspects of community life (Communication; Publicity)

Synagogue Committees

By its nature, a synagogue is a community. To be most effective, a congregation must be inclusive and welcoming. An excellent way to do this is through committees with specific roles.

Management and Oversight

- Executive
- Council

Westminster Synagogue is run by its volunteer members in a manner broadly similar to many charitable organisations. Its constitution, updated in March 2004, provides for both a Council and an Executive Committee. For the purposes of charity law the elected members of the Executive are the Trustees of the Synagogue.

The Executive

The Executive has up to eight voting members; the Chairman, Vice Chairman, up to two Treasurers, up to two Honorary Secretaries; a Senior Warden and one other Warden.

The constitution gives the Executive the general control and management of the congregation's financial affairs and its day-to-day administration. It is accountable under Charity Law, and to the Council which has the power to dismiss the entire Executive. Council is therefore kept apprised of work of the committee and its opinion noted.

Both Council and Executive seek help from the Members and often appoint sub-committees to carry out particular projects, while always retaining full responsibility.

2008/9 Executive & Trustees of the Synagogue

Howard Leigh	<i>Chairman & Fund-Raising</i>
Valery Rees	<i>Vice-Chairman</i>
David Connick	<i>Treasurer</i>
Menasche Banit	<i>Treasurer</i>
Raymond Fischer	<i>Hon Secretary & Security</i>
Jeffrey Ohrenstein	<i>Hon Secretary & Membership</i>
Belden Menku	<i>Senior Warden & Rites and Practices</i>
Miles Laddie	<i>Warden & Health and Safety</i>

In addition to helping the Executive do its work, a functioning committee structure provides a training ground for future Synagogue leadership.

Sub-Committees

- Education
- Events & Fund-Raising
- Health & Safety & Risk Management
- Hospitality
- New Member, Outreach & Welcome Team
- Rites & Practices and Czech Scrolls
- Welfare
- Social Action & Interfaith
- Communication & Publicity

The Council

The Council comprises the President and up to twelve members elected for a period of three years. There may also be up to seven Vice Presidents, who for long and distinguished service are elected to serve for a period of five years.

The members of the Executive are also members of Council but, to ensure proper checks and balances, Executive votes at any meeting may never exceed half of the total of the Council members present. The Council's consent is required in connection with decisions on religious matters; purchase and sale of capital assets; any proposal for reorganisation, and various other significant issues. Council member may have special interests or bring particular areas of expertise to the body.

2008 Council Members

Edward Glover
Ivor Connick
Cynthia Landes
David Raphael

President
Vice President
Vice President
Vice President

Angela Charatan (Hospitality)
David Connick (Wardens' panel)
Shirley Fischer (Hospitality)
Sylvie Hammerson (Hospitality)
Orit Schreiber (Fund-Raising)
Linda Shire (Fund-Raising)
Robert Stillman (Warden)

Claire Connick (Appurtenances)
Neville Conrad (Risk Management)
Peter Goldsmith (Legal Counsel)
Julia Levy (Communications)
Yolande Glasman (Events)
Julien Sallmard (Young Members)
Ellen Miller (HHD Prayer Book)

Education

Purpose: To ensure that educational programmes meet the needs of our members and their children; encourage involvement in educational programmes; enrich and enliven the mix of educational offerings

Tasks:

- a) To assist and support the educational staff team in formulating annual educational strategies for both children and adults
- b) To act as a liaison between parents, members and the staff team.
- c) To offer teaching skills to the Community

Volunteer Opportunities:

Education Committee Members: Attending meetings, generally once a term

Other opportunities: teaching Hebrew and/or Jewish Studies at Or Shabbat; giving one-off lectures in specialist subjects; speaking with the Or Shabbat group on a subject of interest to you; participating in “pilot” educational activities where we are testing out new approaches

Support: Sarah Derriey(Chairman) Jean-Paul Rabin; Rabbi Rebecca (Director of Education); Jem Stein(Youth Director); Daniela Rotbande(*Or Shabbat* Administrator)

Events & Fund-Raising

Purpose: To encourage community involvement; to ensure that programmes are provided that meet members' needs or interests; to meet the financial obligations attendant on providing these events

Tasks: a) To establish a calendar of events to attract various groups of members and their families
b) To raise the required funds as identified by the Treasurers in the calendar period

Volunteer Opportunities:

Fund-Raising & Events Committee Members: attend meetings twice a year; become a team leader on a fund-raising or Synagogue event

Other Opportunities: Volunteer to perform in the Purim Spiel (singing/dancing/production); assist with catering or other administrative tasks on the day of events; help to sell advertising space in programmes; help to sell tickets to coordinate a raffle or auction;

Support: Linda Shire, Yolande Glasman, Renee Salamon

Health & Safety & Risk Management

Purpose: To ensure that the Synagogue complies with its own H&S policy and that it operates within the law

Task:

- a) To establish a Health & Safety (H&S) Committee which will give support to the House Manager
- b) To perform a General Risk Assessment every two years

Volunteer Opportunities:

H&S Committee Members: Meet twice a year with all the tenants in the building to review H&S issues and to communicate updates on internal H&S procedures;

Other Opportunities: service on a Risk Management committee which review RM strategy once every two years.

Support: Miles Laddie (H&S), Jeffrey Ohrenstein (H&S), H&S consultant

Hospitality

Purpose: To encourage involvement and participation in community life events; to ensure that functions are provided to meet members' needs

Task: To re-establish the Hospitality group which will organise and manage an annual calendar of *Oneg*, *Chavurah*, and festival celebrations such as the Communal *Seder* and the *Shavuot* Supper

Volunteer Opportunities:

Hospitality Committee Members: Attend meetings twice yearly; host one event each year at one of the major festivals; organise volunteers for events

Other Opportunities: act a *bnei mitzvah Kiddush* coordinator; volunteer help at a *Kiddush*, *Oneg* or *Chavurah*; organise catering for an event; organise a festival *Kiddush*; support team leaders at festival;

Support: Chair (to be appointed); Adoree Harari (*Kiddush* Coordinator), Renee Salamon

New Membership, Outreach & Welcome Team

Purpose: To encourage involvement in the community and to ensure programmes are provided that meet members' needs; to make members feel welcome and to offer a friendly first hand experience of the WS; to attract new members to the community.

Tasks:

- a) To establish a New Membership group which will create activities to make new members welcome
- b) To visit prospective new members in their home and explain the benefits and costs of WS membership;
- c) To maintain contact with a new member family during their first year of membership;
- d) to establish a WS welcome team and/or be a part of the team at times of celebrations

Volunteer Opportunities:

New Membership Committee Members: Attending meetings twice yearly

Other Opportunities Act as a Meet and Greeter on *Shabbat* and Festivals; attend and assist New Member events; adopt a new member family for a year and provide support

Support: Chair (to be appointed); Jeffrey Ohrenstein, Robert Stillman, The Rabbis; Renee Salamon

Rites & Practices & Czech Scrolls

Purpose: To contribute to and help sustain the spiritual life of the Synagogue

Tasks:

- a) Serve on the Warden Panel for either Main or Family Services
- b) Elicit assistance to manage ritual appurtenances including silver, scrolls, binders, covers, *Chuppah*, etc.
- c) Establish a WS Czech Scrolls Committee

Purpose: To contribute to the spiritual life of the Synagogue

Volunteer Opportunities:

R&P Committee Members: Attending meetings, generally three times a year

Other opportunities: Participate in services as a reader in main or family services; serve on the Wardens' Panel; assist in the care of appurtenances; act as an usher on High Holidays; create an annual programme in honour of the two Westminster Synagogue Czech Scrolls

Support: **Belden Menkus**(Senior Warden), Claire Connick (appurtenances), Evelyn Friedlander (Scrolls); Valery Rees (RS Prayer Book); The Rabbis

Welfare

Purpose: To keep in contact with our elderly and sick members and to establish how we can be of assistance to them, to support, listen and show that the Synagogue cares

Tasks: To support the Rabbi in maintaining contact with the sick and elderly of the community

Volunteer Opportunities:

Attend a meeting to establish the group; attend a training session with the Rabbi; one or two calls or visits to an elderly member of the community; visit sick members of the community as requested by the Rabbi

Support: Rabbi Thomas; Cynthia Landes, Gwenneth Stone, Janet Davies, Hilary

Social Action & Interfaith

Purpose: To help tackle prejudice and discrimination through awareness raising and educational programmes; to promote peace in our local community

Tasks:

- a) To set up a social action group which can make a difference and help heal the world through acts of loving kindness (*Tikkun Olam*);
- b) To help organise activities with the Westminster Three Faiths Forum and nearby churches and mosques

Volunteer Opportunities: Assist in setting up a Social Action group; coordinate a *Tzedakah* project for *Or Shabbat*; organise an Interfaith activity for the Westminster 3 Faiths Forum;

Support: Lionel Derriey and Colette Price (Interfaith)

Communication & Publicity

Purposes: to establish Westminster as a leading progressive synagogue in the wider Jewish community; to communicate to our members on a regular basis

Tasks:

- a) To establish and implement short and medium term public relations aims;
- b) To review our methods of communication with our membership
- c) To administrate the Westminster Website
- d) To act as Editor of the WS Quarterly
- e) Take responsibility for the printing requirements of a fund-raising brochure

Committee Members: Attend twice yearly meetings; take responsibility to meet the aims of the PR programme for members and/or the wider Jewish community

Volunteer Opportunities: Administrator of the Website (half day per week); Member's Only Editor (one day per month); Fund-Raising Brochure (two-month project);

Support: Chris Rees, Julia Levy; Valerie Singer, Renee Salamon

Here is a sample list of special projects and activities for member volunteers. It is not exhaustive. Some require membership of a specific committee, others are on an “on call”, “as needed” or “as available” basis.

EXAMPLES OF VOLUNTEER PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES
Advertise our Community to friends and family – bring them along to our activities and services
Assist in Or Shabbat classes on Saturday morning
Archives – assist with filing of Synagogue files and publications
Annual Pesach clean in the kitchen
Bake for special events or fundraising events
Become a Warden
Clean the silver cutlery
Computer and telecommunication assistance
Fund-raising: help to collect prizes for auctions & raffles; contact companies who might give to charities
General office help at Kent House Assist Hilary for Half day a week, Day a Week, Days a Month
Head a Committee for a year in 2008 (Hospitality, New Members, Marketing)
Help with the monthly/quarterly mailing of newsletter
Health & Safety & Risk Assessment – share your expertise by joining this Committee
Join a Committee or the Synagogue Council – in 2008 we need an HON SEC – training provided
Lead a team for a fund-raising event (Supper Quiz, Jewish Care Fun Day; Film Nights)
Lead a team for a hospitality event (Friday evening <i>Chavurah</i> ; Saturday <i>Oneg</i> lunch)
Lead a shabbat service or read the <i>Haftorah</i>
New members – be part of a welcome team; run coffee morning/evening; spend time with one new member family to help them settle into the community
Organize or work on a <i>tzedakah</i> project
Organise or work on an interfaith project
Organise Synagogue trips abroad (2008 – Berlin & Israel)
Play guitar for Family services
Play guitar for select Friday evening services, or assist
Shop for <i>oneg</i> and/or office supplies
Public Relations – help to develop a PR plan, write press releases, develop media contacts,
Run programmes for children such as Orbit Club or Reading Scheme
Security – join a small team which organises security at festivals and special occasions
Share your Skill – talk to our children about it, organise a lecture evening or seminar
Spring clean the kitchen at pesach
Teach Hebrew to adults or children at Or Shabbat
Teach <i>Torah trope</i> (how to chant <i>Torah</i>) to adults or Or Shabbat students
Transportation – offer to bring in members to a shabbat or festival service
Update and/or Administrate Website
Volunteer for the annual Hanukkah Fair
Visit a sick person at home or in hospital
EXAMPLES OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS
High Holy Days Main Service: Assist Senior Warden with logistics for High Holy Day services.
High Holy Day Family Service: Be a warden, Usher, Reader, help to organise
High Holy Day Crèche Facilities: Organise crèche, plan activities for children, shop for food
<i>Sukkot</i> (Festival of Booths): Plan the celebration and decorating of the <i>sukkah</i>
<i>Simchat Torah</i> (Rejoicing with the <i>Torah</i>): Plan the Supper and celebration.
<i>Chanukah</i> (Festival of Lights): Plan the <i>Chanukah</i> celebrations and participate in the <i>Hannukah</i> Fair
<i>Tu B'Shevat</i> (New Year for Trees): Plan the Or Shabbat communal <i>seder</i> , help with shopping, etc.
<i>Purim</i> (Feast of Lots): Join the <i>Purim Spiel</i> troupe (singers, actors); help with food or celebration.
Passover (Feast of Unleavened Bread): Plan the communal <i>seder</i> ; help with shopping, help on the night
<i>Shavuot</i> (Festival of Weeks): Find a speaker, help to plan the supper; help on the night

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES - TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Name _____

Phone
:(Day) _____ (Mobile) _____

When/where do you prefer to be contacted

E-Mail Address: _____

PROFESSION AND SKILLS

INTERESTS

CURRENT OR PAST VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE (AT WS OR OTHER ORGANISATION WITH DATES AND OFFICE HELD)

VOLUNTEER AVAILABILITY

Weekly Monthly Ad Hoc

TELL US HOW YOU THINK YOU CAN HELP THE COMMUNITY, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE THE COMMUNITY TO PROVIDE A PARTICULAR SERVICE WHICH IT IS NOT CURRENTLY OFFERING

Signed: Date

RETURN THIS FORM TO RENEE SALAMON AT THE SYNAGOGUE OFFICE OR BY FAX ON 020 7581 8012. IF YOU PREFER AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF THIS FORM, CONTACT RENEE AT renee@westminstersynagogue.org

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