

## Editorial:

**Welcome to the 1st issue of News and Views for 2020 and a new decade!**

As you will see this edition is packed full of articles and we have contributions from four staff members which include a report of the very first CMJ

display at the Church of England Synod in February at Church house, Westminster.

Many of you reading this News and Views will also have received recently the CMJ Spring Appeal letter and hopefully these two items will

complement each other and will help to give a fuller picture of what we are doing and what we hope to do in the months ahead.

Shalom,

*Alex Jacob*

# Synod February 2020

Church House, Westminster



Attending General Synod to represent CMJ UK was a great opportunity to showcase the unique and important work that we do. It was an eye-opener to see how the inner workings of the Anglican church 'parliament' operates. So much careful thought and discussion takes place with lawyers present to advise on the legality of every official statement made which ultimately creates church law. As one of only six ministries invited to attend, our team consisting of Ray Lockhart, Alex Jacob, my husband Paul and myself were very pleased to have a presence in the resources area with our colourful and attractive display.

Although we were not over-run with visitors we did have some significant conversations - I share a few of mine here:

One visitor was very enthusiastic about hosting a Bible Comes To Life Exhibition but expressed concern that she'd want to bring a group of deaf people, but how would we effectively communicate with them? I told her that we very were blessed to have a qualified British Deaf signer as part of our team which amazed and thrilled her - she took away all the information.



Alex Jacob chats with a visitor

A receptionist at Church House a Roman Catholic spent a long time asking about the exhibition and was moved to tears by some of the testimonies I told her of people impacted by it's message. She also took lots of information on the exhibition and the rest of our work - including the cheese wine tour to Israel that Paul and I are hosting!



Janey Hames and CMJ President, Ray Lockhart meet Andrea Minichiello Williams

Another visitor was Andrea Minichiello Williams, the founder of Christian Concern, a lobby group.

**Andrea voiced her strong support for what she called 'the vital work of CMJ**

Andrea took armfuls of information away with her. The following day we were blessed to receive a donation to our work from Christian Concern! After such a good experience at our first Synod event we're very keen to be able to attend the General Synod in York during July - God willing we will!

*Janey Hames*



Janey Hames introduces Synod member, Lisa Battye to the Bethlehem Bride!

# Go West Middle Aged Man!

## *Alex Jacob writes about his travels to the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church*

On Monday 3rd Feb I had the opportunity to travel to the West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church to lead a study day for Church Ministers, Church related community workers, ordinands and others.

I had been invited to do this by the Synod Training and Development Officer – Rev Stuart Scott. This invitation largely came about due to good promotional work by Fran Waddams who volunteers regularly in the CMJ Office at Eagle Lodge.

The training day took place at the Synod offices in Birmingham. I spoke in the morning on the theme of “Knowing Jesus in His Jewish Context” and in the afternoon on “Exploring Theological Models within contemporary Jewish-Christian Relations”. Both sessions were followed by times of lively and significant discussion.

This teaching day was the first time the Synod has had any input from CMJ and although many parts of the United Reformed Church appears to be signed up to a largely Palestinian narrative with a commitment to the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanction) agenda against Israel, my teaching was well received with a number of leaders thanking me for the clarity and care of my presentations. Three ministers present spoke to me about their good connections with Jewish communities in their areas and two spoke of Messianic Jewish Believers being active members of their congregations. I hope follow up teaching and wider ministry opportunities may flow for this day and these conversations.

On a personal note it was good to be back in the West Midlands as I was ordained in 1985 in Lichfield, and my first pastoral ministry was based in Lichfield from 1985 to 1989. I also met the URC Minister from Malvern Link and I was able to tell him that I was baptised in his Church back in 1962! If you are part of a Church leader’s group/fraternal or training college please consider inviting me to share with your group or college. I can offer a range of teaching themes and I have a range of dates available, especially post my sabbatical which ends on June 14th.

*Shalom, Alex*

## *What is the Chief Cause of anti-Semitism?*

*By our Community Based  
Evangelist in London*

I spent time recently with an elderly Jewish gentleman debating the nature of antisemitism. He talked about the antisemitism he had encountered over the years: being called “Christ-killer” at school and the more subtle forms encountered in adult life - being ignored, slighted or deliberately overlooked in various situations. Like many people, he believes there is a rational explanation for this ever-changing phenomenon - jealousy of the Jewish people’s success, particularly their prosperity.

I agreed with him that jealousy is a key factor but it is not simply related to material prosperity.

We discussed how antisemitism is a hatred that has morphed over time and is widespread. Largely religiously-based antisemitism existed from pagan antiquity through to 19th century Christian European. Then racial anti-Semitism came to the fore with pseudo-science initially lending respectability to Nazi political theory. Today, it has another politically respectable form: anti-Zionism. Each form is justifiable in its day the minds of anti-Semites.

As to the cause, academics have tried to pinpoint one definitive reason for antisemitism in all its forms, but no single theory works.

The only explanation that makes sense – one that academics will never publish - is that it is a spiritually inspired hatred.

The Jews are hated because they are the people of God whose presence testifies to his existence.

Their survival after so many attempts to destroy them demonstrates God’s faithfulness and his triumph. But why do the powers of darkness wish to destroy the Jewish people? Because it is to God’s regathered people that God’s Messiah Yeshua has come and will come to claim his rightful throne.

The elderly gentleman, although intrigued, as a committed atheist could not accept my explanation, but it made for a lively debate!



# Join us!

## for a late Summer Holiday with CMJ UK



September – School's back and the weather is warm. For many people in Britain September is holiday time. If that's you and you're wondering what to do this year, CMJ has the perfect holiday and it's in the UK.

This year is the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower. This wooden ship was between 80 - 100 x 25 feet and sailed a speed of 2-3 mph – a modern yacht is 300 feet long! Due to setbacks the Mayflower had missed the season deemed fit for Atlantic crossings and so encountered atrocious weather. It's amazing anyone made it to the New World. There were 30 crew and 102 passengers. The passengers lived in cramped conditions on the second deck, which was only 5'5" high, for 66 days and with no privacy - they couldn't even get washed. Nearly all the passengers were sea-sick, forty-five people died, and one baby was born during the voyage. The baby was named, Oceanus and not Mayflower, which you may have been expecting!

**So why did they do it and what's this got to do with CMJ?**

Join Chris & Jane Moxon this September to tour the UK in search of the Pilgrim Fathers and CMJ's origins. Learn about these founding fathers of America and discover also the founding fathers of CMJ Worldwide. Find out what these two groups had in common and listen to experts in their field as we visit North Nottinghamshire, Cambridge, Plymouth, London and many places in-between.

*...After the Tour - Relax by the Thames*

We are sure that after the tour, packed with exciting places and experiences never to be forgotten, the four nights in Hurley on Thames at an old Coaching Inn is just what you will need to unwind and absorb what you've seen. Every afternoon you will be free to explore the area and the many riverside walks or relax in the hotel gardens. The well-known towns of Henley on Thames and Marlow are a short bus ride away and are near enough for those who love a good walk. There's even a golf course, Temple Golf Club, a mile away.

The Keshet Course (keshet means connected as in connected to the Jewish roots of our Faith) examines the beginning of Christianity and ends after the Holocaust with a look to the future. The course will be led by Robin & Sue Aldridge and each day there'll be optional Hebrew classes led by Chris Moxon.

**This residential course will quite simply be the perfect way to end the tour and a finish summer with a flourish!**

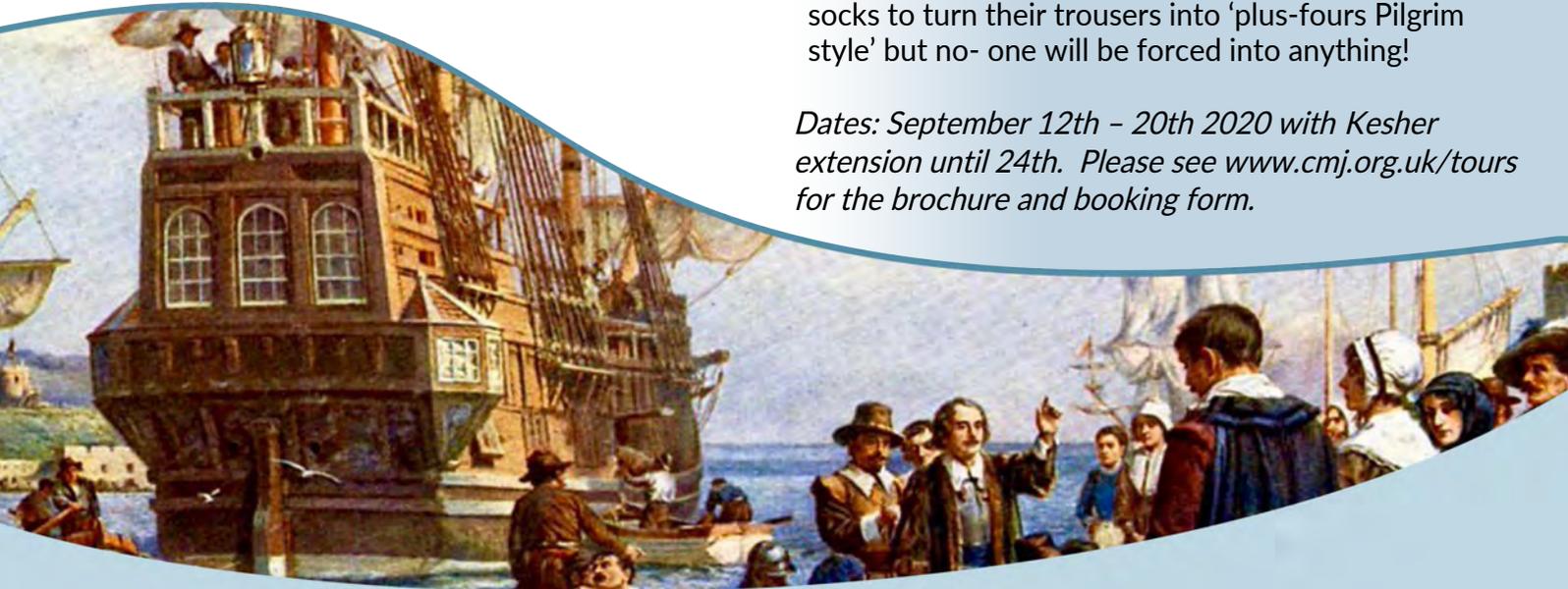


Jane Moxon

NB Please don't worry about dressing up in Pilgrim clothes. I have a supply of cuffs and collars, aprons, hats and bonnets.

Women need only a long skirt and the men some long socks to turn their trousers into 'plus-fours Pilgrim style' but no- one will be forced into anything!

*Dates: September 12th – 20th 2020 with Keshet extension until 24th. Please see [www.cmj.org.uk/tours](http://www.cmj.org.uk/tours) for the brochure and booking form.*



# Thinking Aloud *by Alex Jacob*

Having finished the biography of Saul Bellow (see my Thinking Aloud article published in News and Views, issue 4, 2019) I am now reading the biography of Leonard Cohen by Sylvie Simmons. This book accompanied me on a recent few days away in Malaga and Granada. I often find intended holiday reading gets neglected in the 'ebb and flow'



of a family vacation; yet on this occasion I did not leave the book untouched in my case, but rather I often had to put my paella eating 'on hold' as this book gripped me. Leonard Cohen was a fascinating person, a strange mix of the public performer and the deeply private individual. Leonard was certainly full of contradictions and his music and poetry touches the depths of human emotion and experience. Leonard described the path of his life as "infinitely wide and without direction". I was particularly intrigued by the outworking of his Jewish identity as he grew up initially as part of a Jewish community in Montreal. His Jewish name is Eliezer which means 'God is (my) help'. In tracing his upbringing I could not help to see the many similarities with the upbringing of Saul Bellow. At one point Leonard is quoted regarding his understanding of Jesus "I love Jesus, always did, even as a kid, although I kept it to myself, I didn't stand up in Shul and say "I love Jesus". Sadly there is little evidence of this love for Jesus being worked out in what we would understand as Messianic Jewish/Christian discipleship and his later journeys into New Age Spiritualities, austere forms of Zen Buddhism and drug culture testifies too much unfulfilled longing. However, at times something of God's faithfulness, truth and love breaks forth; perhaps most significantly in his liturgical writing and in his best known song 'Hallelujah', which took Leonard over five years to complete.

Alex

Leonard Cohen's song 'Hallelujah' can be heard on our YouTube Channel. Go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search for CMJ UK



## AGM 2020 & Nominations for Trustees

The AGM of the Vincent Society (the legal name of the charity known as CMJ) will be on Friday 3rd July 2020 at 9.00pm at the Derbyshire Hall, The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire DE55 1AU. All members are very welcome to attend and vote - in particular to vote on the election of trustees. Nominations for new trustees must be received by 31st May 2020 - for more details of how to make a nomination see our website [www.cmj.org.uk](http://www.cmj.org.uk) or call 01623 883960 if you do not have internet access.

## British Empire Medal for former CMJ Staff Member

The Church's Ministry among Jewish People are delighted to share the news that the Revd John Fieldsend was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to Holocaust education in the New Year's Honour list.

John is a former staff member and contributed greatly to the ministry over many years. His warmth and wisdom was a great blessing to many. I personally found his book Messianic Jews - Challenging Church and Synagogue (Monarch Publications, 1993), to be an excellent introduction to Messianic Jewish identity and it was full of Biblical insight, historic perspective and personal testimony.

John himself aged 7 escaped the horrors of the holocaust (Shoah) as a beneficiary of the Kindertransport project in 1938. His parents died in Auschwitz.

We rejoice with John in this award which rightly recognises his significant contribution to Holocaust education.



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