



North Western Reform Synagogue
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20 November 2020

Dear Member

It has been a year like no other. 2020 has been filled with challenges and sadness, but also with unexpected opportunities and joy. In December, as we always do, we will come together to review our financial position and to approve the subscriptions for the coming year. It will also be an opportunity for us to reflect on the difficulties and the successes of a unique year in the life of our community.

We invite you to join us for a **General Meeting of Congregants** which will be held on Zoom on **Sunday 13 December 2020** at 10:30am. The Agenda, resolution for your approval and Notice of Meeting are included in this communication.

As if there wasn't enough happening in 2020, this year we have also been working on updating some aspects of our financial systems to ensure that they reflect the needs of the community. Since February we have been working with accounting firm HW Fisher to put in a place a cloud-based financial package that integrates with the ShulCloud database that we are now successfully using. We have taken the opportunity of this move to make two other important changes to improve our financial management.

For a number of years, we have also discussed moving the financial year-end from December to August and have decided that this can no longer be delayed. The change of year end to August enables us to budget in advance of the beginning of the Jewish and academic years, thus ensuring that the financial year of the shul reflects the 'lived' calendar. It has the additional advantage that from next year we will not have to prepare the annual budget at the same time as running the High Holy Days. Looking ahead, we have prepared budgets for the coming 18-months in order to clearly reflect the change of year-end. The 9-months to August 2021 show a surplus primarily due to the cost of a 'normal' High Holy Days being budgeted for only in the 2021-22 budget. This is something that we have all been thinking about and will of course be part of our discussions at the meeting.

Alongside this change, you will see that we have also changed the way that the Budget is presented. We have used the same format for many years which no longer reflects the operational realities of how Alyth is run. We have therefore chosen this year to restate our accounts in a different format. You will see that the accounts reflect the 'pray with us', 'learn with us', etc strands of our work. We want to be clear about our biggest expenses: salaries, our payment to Reform Judaism and the High Holy Days costs, which are now more clearly shown. This restatement makes it difficult to make direct comparisons to the 2020 income and expenditure agreed at the Annual Budget meeting last December. The Trustees felt that the benefits of these changes will ensure that we have a stronger set of accounts on which to build our financial reporting and oversight.

The attached Notice of Meeting and the related Agenda and resolution are available on the website.

In addition, in the coming week we will be adding an analysis of the trends and assumptions that have shaped this year's forecast and the proposed budget for 2021-22. Please go to www.alyth.org.uk/agm_ to access all the information related to the upcoming General Meeting of Congregants.

We hope that you will join us online on Sunday 13 December 2020 to approve the synagogue subscriptions for the coming year and to hear more details about our financial position. We look forward to being able to share reflections of this past



year and speak about how we move forward in the wake of the uncertainties and hopes that living through a pandemic has had on our lives and our community.

The Clergy and Lay Leadership remain grateful to all our members for your support. Without it we would not have come through this unprecedented year in the way that we have, able to continue to care for one another and to be the inspiring, thriving and caring community that we are.

Wishing you Shabbat Shalom.

Best wishes.

Noeleen Cohen & Russell Baum
Co-Chairs

Rabbi Josh Levy
Principal Rabbi

Adam Martin
Company Secretary



Notice of General Meeting of Congregants
Sunday 13 December 2020 @ 10:30am
This meeting will be held online due to Covid-19 Restrictions

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN of a General Meeting of the members of the Synagogue to be held at 10:30am on Sunday 13 December 2020, online via Zoom.
Full details of how to join the meeting on Zoom will be sent out with the Alyth Online email on 8 December 2020.

AGENDA

Item	Matter	Note
1.	Welcome by The President, Jon Epstein. The meeting will be chaired by The President	
2.	D'var Torah: Alyth Clergy	
3.	Principal Rabbi's Report – Rabbi Josh Levy	
4.	Finance Report – Russell Baum & Noeleen Cohen	
5.	To confirm the recommendation from the Trustees that the Synagogue annual subscription for 2021 (net of basic rate tax) be increased by between £26 and £34 depending upon the tax status of the single Member, this being equivalent to an increase of 2%. Please Note: The Jewish Joint Burial Society have increased their fee to £52p.a (2020: £50) This amount cannot be covenanted and is additional to the basic subscription.	i
6.	Any Other Business	

Please send any items of AOB to adam@alyth.org.uk by Tuesday 8 December 2020 and any questions ahead of the meeting to chair@alyth.org.uk