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Dear Members and Friends of Alyth

I am writing to let you know that after 15 years, Rabbi Josh Levy will be leaving his role as Alyth's Principal Rabbi to take up the role of CEO of the Movement for Reform Judaism and to lead the creation of a united Progressive Jewish movement with Liberal Judaism CEO, Rabbi Charley Baginsky.

Bringing the Reform and Liberal Movements together comes at an exciting time for Progressive Jews in the UK, enabling us to amplify our voice and representation in the wider communal world. Alyth has long been committed to a vibrant, flourishing Reform Judaism in this country, and we can think of nobody better equipped than Rabbi Josh to lead the transformation in our movement that this moment calls for.

I bring this news to you with a mixture of very real sadness at Rabbi Josh's upcoming departure and genuine excitement and support for what his unique skills and leadership will make possible for the wider Reform community of which we are all part.

Rabbi Josh's decision has not been an easy one. We know that he would not leave our flourishing synagogue unless there was a unique opportunity to serve Jewish life and community in a way that has much wider long-term reach. I am confident that this is such an opportunity and is an expression of the very same dedication and vision that has led Rabbi Josh to serve Alyth with such commitment for the last 15 years. Rabbi Josh will continue to lead the Alyth Clergy and Professional team through to his departure on 31 October 2023.

Rabbi Josh's departure will be no small thing for Alyth, and it will take some time to get used to his absence from the day-to-day of our communal life. We are fortunate to have a thoughtful and committed Board of Trustees with great confidence in Alyth and dedication to its long term future. We intend to be patient and deliberate and take exquisite care in making good plans now and for the months and years after Rabbi Josh leaves. We do not need to rush this. And we remain supported by an excellent Clergy and Professional team who will take care of communal and organisational continuity along with the Trustees. As we celebrate 90 years of Alyth we recognise this moment as an opportunity for genuine renewal to accompany the possibilities that will be brought by our new building (work on which has now officially begun).

Rabbi Josh will be with us for this year's High Holy Days, and we will have the opportunity to formally thank and honour him as a community before he leaves. There is still much to be worked out over the coming weeks as we make arrangements for the various changes that are underway. We will let you know as plans are confirmed and about opportunities for the community to share their thoughts over the coming weeks.



As an expression of our support for the important and time-critical work of creating a new movement, Alyth will release Rabbi Josh to MRJ for two days of his working week from 1 May 2023. From July, when Rabbi Hannah and Cantor Tamara begin their maternity leave, we will be arranging additional support alongside Rabbi Elliott so that we continue to deliver outstanding care and support in the many ways in which the Clergy team serve the community.

There is no doubt that this summer and into the autumn following Rabbi Josh's departure will be a stretching time for our Clergy and Professional team, and I know they will be enormously grateful for your support and understanding. It will also be a time that will call on all of us who are involved in Alyth life to bring our care, thoughtfulness, creativity, patience and wisdom as we imagine together the long-term opportunities and possibilities for the future that a moment like this presents.

The official announcement from both the Movement for Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism about Rabbi Josh's new role and the plans for a new movement will be made this morning. We will make the MRJ letter to communities available on the Alyth website later today.

With warmest wishes,

Justin Wise
Chair of the Alyth Board of Trustees