

Shabbat Va-yeira

17 Cheshvan 5786 / 7 & 8 November 2025

Erev Shabbat

18:30 ‬‬ ‬Erev Shabbat Service (in the Beit Tefillah)

Led by Rabbi Hannah and Rabbi Elliott.

Shabbat Morning

9:15 ‬‬ ‬Shabbat Shiur (in the Leo Baeck Hall)

Please join Rabbi Nicola for this morning's Shiur where we will discuss the story and character of Lot, Abraham's nephew.

10:30 ‬‬ ‬Shabbat Morning Service (in the Beit Tefillah)

Led by Rabbi Hannah and Hannah Kieve with guitar.

The Torah will be read by Stella Portner.

The Sermon will be given by Rabbi Hannah.

There will be an unsupervised kids corner.

10:30 ‬‬ ‬Kollot (in the Cecil Rosen Hall)

Our informal, unaccompanied, participatory minyan.

Led by Rabbi Elliott and Justin Wise.

The Torah will be read by Gordon Smith.

The Dvar Torah will be given by Keith Maynard.

There will be an unsupervised kids corner.

Alyth’s Lecture Series

Thursdays from 13 November (20:00)

We are delighted to be bringing you a series of lectures throughout November and December, bringing together people from the arts, legal world and charity. For further information, please email sam@alyth.org.uk. Speakers include:

Thursday 13 November: Tim Franks in conversation with Peter Hyman.

Thursday 20 November: Laura Marks with Dr Zaza Johnson Elsheikh, on how Mitzvah Day 20 years on has been impacted by, and contributed to, Jewish-Muslim relations.

Thursday 27 November: Nigel Leskin and Sonia Routledge to host a Q&A session around immigration and the myths surrounding the subject.

Thursday 4 December: Carolina Guiloff, criminal defence specialist, will talk about her career.

Actor Elliot Levey will join us in the New Year to talk about his role in Giant.

Shabbat Services at Alyth

Throughout Jewish history, Shabbat has been at the heart of Jewish life, a distinctive and special time, different from the working week. At Alyth, we strive to uphold this holiness of Shabbat, with learning and multiple services to meet the needs of the community. Please help us to ensure that everyone can pray and participate by thinking about the needs of those around you. If you need to leave the service to avoid disturbing others, please note that the service can be watched on livestream, this week in the kindergarten.

In case of an emergency, evacuation of the building is either through the main entrance doors, congregating on Temple Grove, or via the kindergarten into the cemetery. Please do not gather on Alyth Gardens as this may block emergency services access.

Shabbat Shalom.

Additional Songs and Readings for Shabbat

Hava Nashirah

Music: Josh Nelson

הָבָה נְשִׁירָה שִׁיר הַלְלוּיָהּ

Hava, Hava Nashirah; Shir Halleluyah, Shir Halleluyah

Let us sing a song of praise

Ya’aloz Sadai

Words: Psalm 96:12

Music: Yoel Sykes and Navot ben Barak

יַעְלֹז שְׂדֵי וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־בוּ אֲזוּ יִרְנְנוּ כָל־עֵצֵי־יִיעָר:

Ya'aloz sadai v'chol asher bo, az y'rann'nu kol atsei ya'ar.

Let the field be glad and all within it, let all trees of the forest sing out

Or Zarua

Words: Psalm 97:11

Music: Jeff Klepper

אור־זֶרַע לְצַדִּיק וּלְיִשְׁרָיִ־לֵב שִׁמְחָה:

A harvest of light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the constant heart

Or zaru'a la-tsaddik, ul'yishrei leiv simchah

Blessing on lighting Shabbat candles

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת:

Baruch attah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidd'shanu b'mitsvotav, v'tsivvanu l'hadlik neir shel shabbat.

Blessed are You, our Living God, Sovereign of the universe, whose commandments make us holy, and who commands us to light the Sabbath candles.

Hashkiveinu

Music: Dan Nichols

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ יְיָהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ שׁוֹמְרֵינוּ לְחַיִּים

Hashkiveinu Adonai eloheinu l'shalom, v'ha'amideinu shomreinu l'chayyim

Spread the shelter of Your peace over us; Guide us in wisdom, compassion and trust

Save us for the sake of Your name; Shield us from hatred, sorrow and pain

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָהוָה. הַפּוֹרֵשׁ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹם עַלֵינוּ וְעַל־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־כָּל־הָעוֹלָם:

Baruch attah Adonai, ha-poreis sukkat shalom aleinu v'al ammo yisra'el, v'al kol ha-olam
Blessed are You God, spreading the shelter of peace over us, over Your people Israel, and over all the world.

A Prayer for the Return of those Lost

Eternal God, we continue to pray for all those held in our captivity. We remember in our hearts those families who are still waiting in uncertainty for their loved ones to be returned without the knowledge of where they are, still unable to grieve fully. We pray that the eventual return of their loved ones will give them closure and in time they are able remember their loved ones for the joy of their lives, rather than the tragedy of their deaths.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם מְתִיר אֲסוּרִים:

Baruch attah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam matir asurim.

Blessed are You our Living God, who frees captives.

Hineh Ma Tov

Words: Psalm 133:1

Music: Elana Arian

הִנֵּה מִה־טוֹב וּמִה־נָּעִים שָׁבֶת אַחִים גַּם־יַחַד:

Hineh ma tov uma na'im shevet achim gam Yachad

How good it is (How good it is);

How sweet it is (How sweet it is);

To be together on this day

Shalom aleichem, salaam aleikum

How good it is and how pleasant when brothers live in unity together.

Torah Portion for Shabbat Va-yeira

Genesis 19:1-21

א וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סְדֹמָה בְּעֶרְבַּ וְלוֹט יֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־סֹדֶם וַיְרֹא־לוֹט וַיָּקָם לִקְרֹאתָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ אִפְּסִים אַרְצָה: ^ב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה גֹא־אֲדֹנָי סוּרוּ נָא אֶל־בֵּית עַבְדְּכֶם וְלִינוּ וּרְחֻצְנוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁכַּמְתֶּם וְהִלַּכְתֶּם לְדֶרֶכְכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא כִי בְּרוּחַב נָלִין: ^ג וַיַּפְצֵר־בָּם מֵאֹד וַיִּסְרוּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתֶּה וּמִצּוֹת אָפֶה וַיֹּאכְלוּ: ^ד טָרְחַם יִשְׁכְּבוּ וְאִנְשֵׁי הָעִיר אֲנֹשֵׁי סֹדֶם נִסְבּוּ עַל־הַבַּיִת מִנָּעַר וְעַד־זָקֵן כָּל־הָעָם מִקְּצֶה: ^ה וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֶל־לוֹט וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אֵיךְ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ אֵלֶיךָ הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה וַיֹּצִיאֵם אֵלֵינוּ וַנִּדְּעָה אֹתָם: ^ו וַיֵּצֵא אֲלֵהֶם לוֹט הַפֶּתַחַה וְהִדְלֹת סָגַר אַחֲרָיו: ^ז וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־גָּא אַחִי תִרְעֵנוּ: ^ח הִנֵּה־נָא לִי שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ אִישׁ אוֹצִיְאָה־נָא אֶתְהֶן אֲלֵיכֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶן כְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם רַק לֹאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵל אֶל־תַּעֲשׂוּ דָבָר כִּי־עַל־כֵּן בָּאוּ בַּצֵּל קִרְתִּי: ^ט וַיֹּאמְרוּ גֹשְׁהֲלָאָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאָחַד בְּאִלְגּוּר וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שְׁפוֹט עֲתָה נִרְעֵ לָךְ מֵהֶם וַיַּפְצְרוּ בְּאִישׁ בְּלוֹט מֵאֹד וַיִּגְשׁוּ לְשִׁבָּר הַדָּלֹת:

¹The two messengers arrived in Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to greet them and, bowing low with his face to the ground, ²he said, “Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant’s house to spend the night, and bathe your feet; then you may be on your way early.” But they said, “No, we will spend the night in the square.” ³But he urged them strongly, so they turned his way and entered his house. He prepared a feast for them and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. ⁴They had not yet lain down, when the town council [and] the militia of Sodom —insignificant and influential alike, the whole assembly without exception—gathered about the house. ⁵And they shouted to Lot and said to him, “Where are the ones who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may be intimate with them.” ⁶So Lot went out to them to the entrance, shut the door behind him, ⁷and said, “I beg you, my friends, do not commit such a wrong. ⁸Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you please; but do not do anything to the others, since they have come under the shelter of my roof.” ⁹But they said, “Stand back! The fellow,” they said, “came here as an alien, and already he acts the ruler! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” And they pressed hard against that householder —against Lot—and moved forward to break the door.

י וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶת־יָדָם וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־לוֹט אֲלֵיהֶם הַבַּיִתָּה וְאֶת־הַדָּלֹת סָגְרוּ: ^{יא} וְאֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־פָּתַח הַבַּיִת הֵכוּ בַסַּנְגִּירִים מִקֹּטָן וְעַד־גְּדוֹל וַיִּלְאוּ לְמִצָּא הַפֶּתַח: ^{יב} וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶל־לוֹט עַד מִי־לָךְ פֹּה חָתָן וּבָנֶיךָ וּבְנֹתֶיךָ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ בְּעִיר הוּצָא מִן־הַמָּקוֹם: ^{יג} כִּי־מִשְׁחָתִים אֲנַחְנוּ אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי־גִדְלָה צִעֲקָתָם אֶת־פָּנָי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלַחְנוּ יְהוָה לְשַׁחֲתָהּ: ^{יד} וַיֵּצֵא לוֹט וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־חֲתָנָיו לֵקְחִי בָנְתָיו וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי־מִשְׁחִית יְהוָה אֶת־הָעִיר וַיְהִי כַּמִּצְחָק בְּעֵינֵי חֲתָנָיו: ^{טו} וַכְּמוֹ הַשַּׁחַר עָלָה וַיֹּאצִּצוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים בְּלוֹט לֵאמֹר קוּם קַח אֶת־אִשְׁתְּךָ וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי בָנְתֶיךָ הַנִּמְצָאֹת פְּרִי־תַסְפָּה בְּעוֹן הָעִיר: ^{טז} וַיִּתְּמַהֲמָה וַיַּחְזִיקוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בְּיָדוֹ וּבִיד־אִשְׁתּוֹ וּבְיַד שְׁתֵּי בָנְתָיו בְּחִמְלַת יְהוָה עָלָיו וַיִּצְאָהוּ וַיַּנְחֵהוּ מִחוּץ לָעִיר:

¹⁰But the agents stretched out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹And the people who were at the entrance of the house, low and high alike, they struck with blinding light, so that they were helpless to find the entrance. ¹²Then the agents said to Lot, “Whom else have you here? Sons-in-law, your sons and daughters, or anyone else that you have in the city—bring them out of the place. ¹³For we are about to destroy this place; because the outcry against them before the Eternal has become so great that the Eternal has sent us to destroy it.” ¹⁴So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the Eternal is about to destroy the city.” But he seemed to his sons-in-law as one who jests. ¹⁵As dawn broke, the messengers urged Lot on, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two remaining daughters, lest you be swept away because of the iniquity of the city.” ¹⁶Still he delayed. So the agents seized his hand, and the hands of his wife and his two daughters—in the Eternal’s mercy on him—and brought him out and left him outside the city.

יז וַיְהִי כְהוֹצִיאֵם אֹתָם הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמַּלְט עַל־נַפְשְׁךָ אֶל־תִּבְטֵשׁ אַחֲרֶיךָ וְאֶל־תַּעֲמֹד בְּכָל־הַכֶּכֶר הַהָרָה הַמַּלְט פְּרִי־תַסְפָּה: ^{יח} וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹט אֲלֵיהֶם אֶל־גָּא אֲדֹנָי: ^{יט} הִנֵּה־נָא מִצָּא עַבְדְּךָ חוֹן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וַתַּגְדֵּל חֶסֶדְךָ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי לְהַחְיֹת אֶת־נַפְשִׁי וְאִנְכִי לֹא אוּכַל לְהַמְלִט הַהָרָה פְּרִי־תַדְבָּקַנִי הָרַעָה וּמָתִי: ^כ הִנֵּה־נָא הָעִיר הַזֹּאת קִרְבָּה לְנוֹס שָׁמָּה וְהוּא מִצְעָר אִמְלִטָּה נָא שָׁמָּה הֲלֹא מִצְעָר הוּא וְתַחִי נַפְשִׁי: ^{כא} וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה נָשְׂאתִי פָנֶיךָ גַּם לְדַבָּר הַזֶּה לְבִלְתִּי הַפְּכִי אֶת־הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ:

¹⁷When they had brought them outside, one said, “Flee for your life! Do not look behind you, nor stop anywhere in the Plain; flee to the hills, lest you be swept away.” ¹⁸But Lot said to them, “Oh no, my lord! ¹⁹You have been so gracious to your servant, and have already shown me so much kindness in order to save my life; but I cannot flee to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me and I die. ²⁰Look, that town there is near enough to flee to; it is such a little place! Let me flee there—it is such a little place—and let my life be saved.” ²¹He replied, “Very well, I will grant you this favour too, and I will not annihilate the town of which you have spoken.

Haftarah for Shabbat Va-yeira

Ezekiel 18:20-32

²⁰Only the person who sins shall die. A child shall not share the burden of a parent’s guilt, nor shall a parent share the burden of a child’s guilt; the righteousness of the righteous shall be accounted to them alone, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be accounted to them alone. ²¹Moreover, if someone wicked repents of all the sins that were committed and keeps all My laws and does what is just and right, they shall live; they shall not die. ²²None of the transgressions they committed shall be remembered against them; because of the righteousness they have practiced, they shall live. ²³Is it my desire that the wicked shall die? —says the Eternal God. It is rather that they shall turn back from their ways and live. ²⁴So, too, if someone righteous turns away from righteousness and does wrong, practicing the very abominations that the wicked person practiced, shall they live? None of the righteous deeds that they did shall be remembered; because of the treachery they have practiced and the sins they have committed—because of these, they shall die. ²⁵Yet you say, “The Eternal’s way is unfair.” Listen, O House of Israel: Is My way unfair? It is your ways that are unfair! ²⁶When someone righteous turns away from righteousness and does wrong, they shall die for it; they shall die for the wrong that was done. ²⁷And if someone wicked turns back from the wickedness that is practiced and does what is just and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they took heed and turned back from all the transgressions that they committed, they shall live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the House of Israel say, “The Eternal’s way is unfair.” Are My ways unfair, O House of Israel? It is your ways that are unfair! ³⁰Be assured, O House of Israel, I will judge each one of you according to your own ways—declares the Eternal God. Repent and turn back from all your transgressions; let them not be a stumbling block of guilt for you. ³¹Cast away all the transgressions by which you have offended, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit, that you may not die, O House of Israel. ³²For it is not My desire that anyone shall die—declares the Eternal God. Repent, therefore, and live!

Coming up next weekend

Special Visitor Rabbi Ron Kronish from Israel, Friday 14 November (17:15)

We look forward to welcoming Rabbi Ron Kronish on Friday 14 November. Founding Director of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI), Ron is now an independent scholar, educator, speaker and writer. He has lived in Jerusalem since 1979.

New Members Breakfast, Saturday 15 November (9:15)

We are delighted to have welcomed over 100 new members since January 2025. Thank you for being with us. This will be an opportunity to meet one another and members of the Alyth team and lay leadership. Contact sam@alyth.org.uk for more information.

Eco Shabbat, Saturday 15 November (10:30)

Alyth is a proud member of Eco Judaism, leading the Jewish Community’s response to climate change. This Shabbat will be marked with a guest sermon from a member of the Alyth Green Team and a special kiddush.

Secret Cinema - Years 5 & 6, Saturday 15 November (17:00)

Join us for an evening of games, adventures, dinner, and immersive cinema. This is a social event where you can expect to see friends old and new. The movie is a secret for now but look online at the flyer to get some clues and to sign up if you would like your child(ren) to participate. Contact eszter@alyth.org.uk for more information.

Mitzvah Day Concert, Sunday 16 November (15:00)

To celebrate Mitzvah Day’s 20th anniversary, we are excited to announce a week of activities in the lead up to Sunday 23 November. We start the week with a concert celebrating all the Alyth choirs, including the Community Choir, ACS, Singing for Pleasure, Refugee Choir, AYS Alumni, and interfaith choirs joining us from St Marys and the Ismail Community Ensemble, as well as performances from our drama groups.

And the weekend after

Mitzvah Day, Sunday 23 November

To celebrate Mitzvah Day’s 20th anniversary, we are excited to announce a week of activities in the lead up to Sunday 23 November.

Throughout the week, there will be opportunities to donate to a food bank, cooking for our Winter Shelter and attend one of our lecture series culminating on Sunday 23 November with intergenerational activities.

Community News

Alyth is built on a foundation of mutual care, in which we share one another’s joys and sorrows, and accompany one another through our life journeys.

On this Shabbat we celebrate with:

Stella Portner, who is reading Torah for the first time in our Shabbat morning service to celebrate becoming Bat Mitzvah

We regret to announce the death of:

Barbara Kulick, mother of Andy Lennard, Richard Lennard, John Lennard and Landon Kulick

Tracia Walsey, sister of Peter Susman

We join with those marking the anniversary of the death of a loved one:

Henriette Abbey, mother of Anthony Abbey

Darren Ali, son of Barbara Calmon

Joan Benson, mother of Nicola Rosenfeld

Aaron Cohen, father of Rosalind Black

Harry Coussins, father of Denise Sloane

Gerard De Botton, father of Leonie Eisenberg

Fay Deckers, mother of Linda Ferrer

Rebecca Delman, mother of Melvyn Delman

Samuel Dywien, father of Susan Burns

Felicia Epstein, mother of Rosalind Leigh

Sara Freedman, daughter of Brenda Freedman

Esther Futerman, mother of Anthea Yamey

Olga Gafson, mother of Anthony Gafson

Arnold Gould, father of Tessa Thier

Phoebe Gould, mother of Tessa Thier

Philippa Grant, mother of Stephen Grant

Fay Green, mother of Denise Blane

Frank Green, father of Mark Green

Colin Haley, father of Linda Sansom

Hettie Harris, mother of Brian Harris

Harry Hausman, father of Deborah Putsman

Philip Joseph, father of Jeremy Joseph

Elliott Kulick, father of Andrew Lennard

Suzanne Laniado, mother of Maurice Laniado

Violette Laskowska, mother of Anouska Conway

Lucy Lennard, cousin of Katie Lennard

Bill Levy, mother of Mike Levy, Nena Sofier, Judith Spector, Elizabeth Marks and Richard Levy

Felix Levy, father of Mike Levy, Nena Sofier, Judith Spector, Elizabeth Marks and Richard Levy

Lester Levy, father of Rosalind Sheldon

Sarah Lewis, mother of Trudy Taylor

Rose Lyons, mother of Irene Rose

Cyril Margolis, father of Stephen Margolis

Barney Myers, husband of Margaret Myers, father of Ian, Philip and Alec Myers

Aida Nathan, sister of Darla Rosen

Michael Nyman, husband of Angela Nyman

Yacobeth Reubens, mother of Elizabeth Berman

Stefan Rose, father of Deborah Grabiner

David Roseman, father of Rolfe Roseman

Philip Rosen, husband of Sheila Rosen

Miriam Salaman, mother of Jenny Manson

Ziporah Segal, mother of Ilana Mocatta

Richard Sherrington, father of Donna Sherrington, former husband of Gloria Sherrington

Betty Simon, sister of Janet Bloch

Bernard Sinclair, father of Frances Sinclair and Hilary Marks

Vera Somen, sister of Andrew Gellert

Alfred Spector, grandfather of David Bloom

Jacqui Sunderland, sister of Roy Sunderland

Morris Tapper, father of Carole Latter

Steven Wolfson, father of Emily Grabiner-Wolfson

Sydney Woolfson, father of Diana Kaye