

HONEYCOMB PROJECT



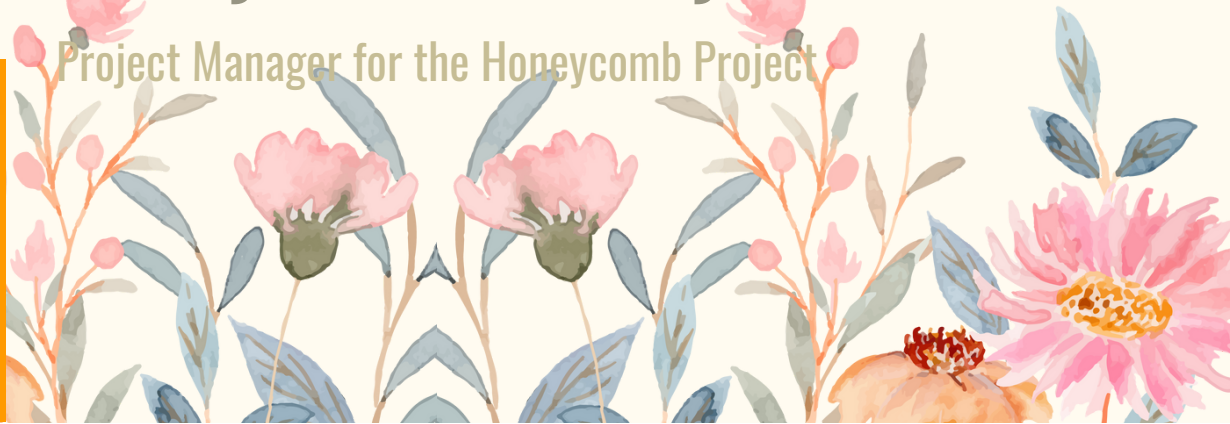
Shavuot

Companion

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liberal judaism  THE REFORM JUDAISM



Counting Toward Change

There is always a set number of days and weeks between Jewish holidays, but it is only between Pesach and Shavuot that there is an actual counting out loud of those days.

These 49 days are marking the transition from who we were when leaving Egypt to who we were as a people when receiving the Torah.

Way back, at the time of the exodus from Egypt they did not count the days, they were living them, not necessarily knowing what would happen or when. I'm sure that some days were hard and painful, and others were probably quite uneventful - with a smattering of happiness along the way. Despite this, this time was bookmarked with two major, life changing, miraculous events.

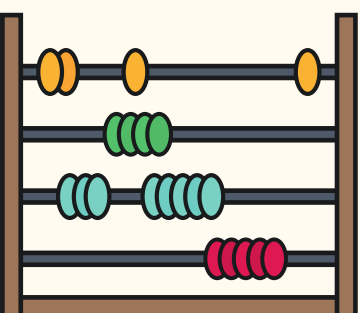
It is only after the fact that we can look back and count. Now looking back we can see who we were and how we have changed.

Let us take this time of communal change and to reflect on ourselves.

Where do you feel you are today?

Are you at the beginning of a journey? The middle? The end?

How are you feeling?



Shavuot: A Time to Examine Our Loving Kindness

In the Mishna in Tractate Pe'ah (chapter 1, mishna 1) there is a list of objects and actions that 'have no measure', one of which is Gimilut Hasadim, sometimes translated as acts of loving kindness.

I would like to think that in terms of Gimilut Hasadim, what 'have no measure' means is that it is something that we can always be working on and always be doing better. We should be taking time to evaluate how we as individuals and as a community are doing in terms of showing and acting with loving kindness. We should celebrate what we are doing well, where we are meeting people's needs, where people are feeling welcomed, loved and cared for, where people feel like they are being respected and brought into the community. And we should also take the time to see where we can do better - who is getting lost between the cracks, who is not able to participate or be part of the community, where have we got stuck in our ways, and where can we grow and change in our acts of loving kindness.

The Book of Ruth, which is read on Shavuot, is seen as a story of acts of loving kindness. The way Ruth takes care of her mother-in-law Naomi, how Naomi takes care of Ruth, and how Boaz takes care of both Ruth and Naomi.

Perhaps Shavuot can be our time to examine how we are doing in terms of Gemilut Hasadim. We can think of the story of Ruth, and ask questions of ourselves.

Who was looking out for Ruth and Naomi when they first arrived? Who made them feel welcomed? Who brought them into the community so they did not feel like an outsider? What was needed so they were able to feel part of the community?

When we look at ourselves and our communities let us ask:

Who is being left out and how?

What can we do to be more inclusive?

When we say that we are 'welcoming' - what do we mean by that?

And how do we act on that?

What can we do better to help people not feel like an 'outsider'?

How do we create space not only for new people coming in, but people who have been with us for a while but who feel on the outside?

Kindness
MATTERS





Care Conference 2023

Sunday, 11 June 2023

9:30-15:00

Edgware and Hendon Reform Synagogue

Join MRJ , LJ, and the Honeycomb Project in a day of learning and skill-building around the topic of well-being and care in our communities.

With workshops on:

Bereavement support

Chronic and long-term illness

Loneliness and isolation with older adults

Neurodiversity and inclusive communities

Perinatal mental health

Personal story collecting

**Keynote Speaker:
Barbara Altounyan
founder of Stories
for Life**

£25 for MRJ and LJ members

£40 for non-members

£10 for rabbinical students/student

To Register: <https://ti.to/MRJ/mrj-lj-honeycomb-care-conference-2023>

We would like everyone to be able to attend the conference. If the cost of the conference or travel from outside London is prohibitive, please email Eryn, ELondon@rjuk.org or ELondon@liberaljudaism.org as we have some subsidies available.



The Honeycomb Project is a joint project between The Movement for Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism, increasing volunteer training and wellbeing resources across the movements.

For more information email honeycomb@rjuk.org OR honeycomb@liberaljudaism.org