Rosh Hashanah message to the Community - October 2016

May I wish you all a Happy New Year and well over the fast.

It has been an interesting 6 months. We would like to thank everyone for their support.

Ours is a vibrant, engaged, and engaging community which is the envy of other Jewish communities, and other local minority communities. It is large enough to matter, and small enough to care.

We remain in a dialogue the President's of the 4 largest shuls to discuss how we may be able to work better together. We are delighted that the Chief Rabbi will be spending Shabbat in Leeds shortly, the Senior Rabbi of the Reform Movement did so recently, and the President of the Board of Deputies (BOD) was here recently. It is a mark of the respect in which we are held. Ruth Green of the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) Shul Vitality Project is visiting Leeds early in 2017 to see how she may assist us all help each other and the smaller shuls in our region.

We remain very much in touch with the BOD and JLC and have had lengthy meetings with them regarding issues that affect us all and how we may help each other more.

We are building on the interfaith work developed by so many over so many decades especially with the Muslim communities in Leeds and Bradford.

Our private meetings with elected representatives have continued. We intend to expand our team significantly, have training, and develop a much wider engagement programme building on existing relationships and developing new ones. If you are interested in joining, please let us know that you can attend the meeting on 30 November 2016.

We intend to reform the Speakers Panel as a significant part of our work will involve reaching outside our community to explain who we are to schools and community groups. If you would like to be on the panel, whether or not you have been on it before, and have a little free time please let us know that you can attend the meeting on 6 December 2016. This is particularly important given the work we are doing with leaders of the Muslim communities in Leeds and Bradford who are looking for partners in peace.

We must approach the new political and social landscape with confidence and vigour.

The project to enable children in Leeds learn more about the Holocaust continues.
We have begun a project to write a book specifically remembering those who died fighting in the World Wars so we may be free. If you have any pictures of those who died, or are related to any of them, or know anyone who is please get in touch.

We continue to discuss with the West Yorkshire Police and local Universities how our students can best be protected on Campus.

We are helping outlying communities to reach in and have better relations with us and each other.

We want someone to join us who can help with grant applications and general fundraising. We want to strengthen the Board of Directors of the LJRC to ensure each of the 4 large shuls has at least 1 LJRC Director and there is at least 1 female director. Only the Sinai does not have a Director. There are no female Directors. We are the poorer and weaker for a lack of both. It must be remedied.

We are aware that not everyone agrees with every decision we take. We understand that. We listen to all points of view. The more you are involved with the LJRC, the greater will be your influence. Ours is not an appeal for money, but for time.

As a community, we can be as good as you enable us to be.

Laurence Saffer
October 2016
presidentljrc@mail.com