

Gaza and the Future of Progressive Judaism

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SPEAKERS

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D

David Keys 00:20

Hello, everybody. My name is David Keyes and I'm a member of progressive Jews for justice in Israel Palestinians organising group. So thanks very much to you all for attending this very significant event dedicated to Jewish youth perspectives on the graph on the Gaza tragedy. Our first speaker is one of Britain's youngest rabbis, Gabrielle Cantor Webber, Rabbi of Brighton and hope progressive synagogue. So without any delay, over to you, Rabbi Gabriel.


R

Rabbi Gabriel Kanter-Webber 00:59

Thank you. I'd like to start by taking us back to 1914 and 1914, in some ways, not so different to right now. There was a bitter and bloody geopolitical conflict, and dues often fell on suspicion of being more loyal to the enemy and to Britain. And in a moment of patriotic fervour in 1914, a prominent kosher caterer decided to sack all of the Germans from among get started. His own Rabbi gave a sermon condemning that decision as racism unworthy of the Jewish people. And just to prove that nothing ever gained is a congregant. You heard that sermon, a furious letter to the Jewish Chronicle, demanding that their rabbi be heckled muscles, discipline, you name it. But now prepared to hear just how different 1914 was from the current day, the editor of the Jewish Chronicle published a lengthy, impassioned defence of the rabbi's right to free speech, even in a time of war. And it said, If a minister is to be dictated as to how he must think of 2000 keys, we're talking about 100 years ago, and what he should say, then, if he is a brave man, he will resign his post. And if he is not, he will become a hypocrite in a Tallis. Besides, if one is to set up censorship over the minister's opinions, various the process to begin and there was still fit to end. Nor do we agree that the opinions expressed by a minister and necessarily though it's obvious block, probably in most instances, this less so than among the critical and highly argumentative persons who make up a Jewish congregation. How things have changed. That time has long been and the Jewish Chronicle would go out on a limb to defend the rights of communal leaders to have opinions not shared by the mainstream. And nowadays, fear of what

will be printed in an increasingly right wing DC, and the consequent impact on Google search results on donors and on membership levels, is one of the biggest factors inhibiting free speech within Anglo Jewry. And there's no standard example of this than the treatment of my colleague Rabbi Laura Haft young Paul from New North London Marathi synagogue, they wrote an essay referring to certain members of the Israeli government as war criminals, and they were almost immediately summoned to an extraordinary general meeting of special 3000 members to be publicly excoriated in the great sin of expressing an opinion rooted in Jewish values. And NLS is shortboard emailed every single member to announce that Rabbi Laura had been found guilty of serious misconduct. And to add insult to injury. The JC route, the particularly hostile article about story is gendering Laura 13 times. Now, my own congregation is fantastically protective of my right to free speech, but it's an outlier. Many community leaders choose or are impelled to adopt the toned down approach, eating statements very general, very nonspecific, almost bland, stressing the general need for peace without explicitly identifying the barriers to peace. And most of the statements we've seen from our national movements are fitted into this category. Even though statements have been fiercely debated by some fairly spicy messages on the rabbinic mailing list. And I don't mean this as a criticism. The Balancing Act acting the national leadership of liberal and Reformed Judaism is incredibly hard. Comments which are seen by a significant number of progressive Jews as being too pro Palestine or too critical of Israel carry a real risk of splits and schisms and an exodus of members who disagree. But the risk of schism of course runs both ways. Failure to speak out and cause just as much upset at speaking out. And that's where we come to the real and significant generational issue. There are countless exceptions, but the generalise it does seem to be younger people in work, which I don't necessarily include myself anymore, who would prefer it rules and our movements to be more vocal and explicitly pushing for justice in Israel Palestine, and pushing for justice in ISRAEL PALESTINE means in practice making demands of the Israelis, and explicitly acknowledging that until those demands are met, Palestinians will continue to suffer abuses. The fact that a younger generation is taking a prosthetic approach should impart give us hope. It means that the tide will gradually turn as the basic former students and youth movement leaders become tomorrow's rabbis and broadcasts. But it's also a cause for concern. Because if the younger generation is put off by bad movements, lack of prophetic vigour, maybe they won't become tomorrow's rabbis and your chairs. Maybe they will just melt away and disengage. Young people need to be inspired now in order still to be around in decades to come. Yeah, this is by no means a simple question of young versus old. It's about what is in fact, right. It matters not what the majority think what the minority think and their respective average age is. What matters is the actual moral moral picture. And we rabbis and Jewish leaders are not MPs. When we speak, we're not purporting to represent our members beliefs. We are purporting And admittedly, we're fallible human beings. So we're only purporting to represent Judaism and its ethical values as understood by ourselves. And that inevitably means sometimes saying things that our audience will disagree with. Once this principle is clearly understood by the political and highly argumentative persons of our community, then our movements will be free to do what they should be doing. And that is speaking out on the greatest ethical challenge currently facing the Jewish people of all Israel's actions in Gaza. Rabbi John de Reyna as if we're now live, Raha gave a sermon at the liberal Jewish synagogue in 1982, during the Lebanon War, in which he lamented how our children are being burnt by Jewish bombs. I'm astonished that he got away with saying that to the LGs in 1982, but he did and good on him he was right. And the leadership of the liberal and reform movement should be using same line word for word today. And if there are some members of the Jewish community progressive or not, who are or would be angered by that. And frankly, those people have to find some way of coping. To conclude, there is a toxic environment in Anglo Jewry, which stifles free speech, communal discourse is so filled with noxious smog that we're in danger of seeing young people move further and further away, just so they can catch a breath

of fresh air. And when they do that, and they discover how pure and clean the areas elsewhere, are clearly they can then see the moral rights and wrongs OF ISRAEL PALESTINE, why would they choose to come back into the smoke. So it's a fantastically important conversation you're going to be having tonight, and I'm really pleased to see so many of my former Israel tonics here, learning and in Beijing in this most important that this use. And so unfortunately, I'm gonna have to leave you in a little while to do your regular Thursday evening, adult education class. I'm really happy to spend a few minutes taking your questions. And I know that you're going to have a fascinating evening with the other speakers as well. Thank you so much. Yeah,

 David Keys 08:22

thank you very much. Rabbi Gabriel. That was a really inspiring, talk, really inspiring presentation. If I could invite everybody to fasten questions that you that would be great. And obviously, you've got to be leaving before before seven records. We've got another appointment. But let's start with some questions. Thanks very much. Yes,

 Claire Jackson 08:49


thank you. That was very inspiring. I can't at the moment, I can't see any questions.

 08:54

There's one there's one hand up from Linda, there's a physical hand, not a virtual hand up from Linda.

 Claire Jackson 09:00


Ah, yes. Go ahead, please. Linda,

 Linda Albin 09:03

Rabbi Gabriel, you indicated that there was a risk if you will have younger progressive Jews leaving because they're not hearing condemnation and ethical condemnation of Israel's actions in Gaza. And yet, within our community in Norfolk, in terms of JSOC at UVA, we have literally I have been told by the President, that there are individuals will not come to an invitation that's been put forward, because they take issue with one of the members of our community who is also part of the Student Union, who they feel who they describe as and I hate this pro Israel pro Palestinian, but as they described as Pro Palestinian. So I wonder, you know, where is your evidence for that? Or in fact, are Is there is there a group within Jewish youth who actually take exception into this and that we're in danger of, of losing? How do we get those people on board?

 Rabbi Gabriel Kanter-Webber 10:09

Thank you, it's a really, it's a really good question you've raised and student life and J socks are a very, very complicated space when it comes to all of this. J Sox have always been a complicated space or progressive Jews, because they can be by no means always are that they can be a fairly orthodox aligned, and they can be relatively conservative when it comes to matters of Israel. But I think a lot of the scene has changed since October 7, because students, unlike those of us who are not students live in what can be a very closed environment. And so anti Israel protests that we might walk out in the street without giving them a second glance, and feel very oppressive to Jewish students who are young away from home for the first time and impelled to walk past them to get to lectures on a daily basis. And I think that then gives a very different picture. But at the same time that Victor, I'm certainly getting from students at Sussex and Brighton universities, is that they're not finding that they'd be soccer necessarily catering to them in the same way I'm describing the National Jewish community, not necessarily catering to them, I think the socks are taking a very traditional line, if I can put it like that on conflict. And I really do understand that because they're not there to. Please literally everyone, that's impossible. But at the same time, I'm finding progressive Jewish students who do actually want to come to spaces where they're allowed to have conflicting emotions about what's going on, where they're allowed to express their hurt about what's going on in both sides. All right, and I mean, the fundamental point you've raised, Linda, is that you're not going to please everyone and two Jews have at least two opinions, and there's no denying that.

 Jenny S 11:50

Yes, Jenny, I have been at a number of non non wood events recently. And I can certainly say that there are a lot of younger Jews, I actually felt very old. I felt like I was about 20 to 30 years older than most of the people that attended the induction, many of whom were extremely concerned about the lack of alternative views being expressed. And in recent weeks, I've been on a couple of induction webinars. We're including one on Jewish identity, where it was attended by about 50, and really painful. Comments are highly confused. A lot of concern about not really understanding how we got to this point. So I'm in no doubt that there are a significant number of both younger and unaffiliated Jews, who are deeply concerned about the line being taken by the establishment. And as one who heard John Rainer give a number of sermons, but I particularly remember the one in 1982. With great courage, can I just say that the community the LDS community, were extremely careful about enabling both him and the late David Goldberg to speak. And I remember the sermon after the Sabra and Shatila massacre, where you could actually hear a pin drop in the sanctuary. And for anybody that wants to read any of those Sherman's they are available online, verbally about college, I probably said enough.

 Claire Jackson 14:01

So So Thanks. Thanks, Jenny. So flirt please your question.

 14:07

Oh, hello. Hello, there. And hello, Gabrielle. You know who I am from Payless? Um, I think young. Certainly a lot of young people are feeling and some not so young people are trying to cope with something called cognitive dissonance. And I think you know, where you're you're

sort of thinking that you ought to be following a certain line and it doesn't feel right to you. You know, that you feel you're you're letting letting the side down. And I think there needs to be some kind of I don't know some kind of approach to address that. Particularly for young people. I don't know whether I can imagine Gabrielle that you probably are working on some sort of Continentals thing for that. Be interesting to hear. Because I know you have a lot of ideas.

F

Fleur Standring 15:08

Yeah, I mean, I think you're absolutely absolutely right. And the cognitive dissonance partly arises from the sense the sense that there is some sort of party line we should have, and then departing from it. But also, I think there is a real disjunct between how Jewish people of all stripes are feeling and how the rest of the world is reacting. So I noticed this, particularly in kind of the days following October 7, when the new cycle moved on much quicker, and the Jewish community's emotional processing moved on. The Jewish community was really shaken by what had happened, of course, and really stirred by what had happened and really grief struck by what had happened. But electrons from ages much quicker than it vanished from the front of our minds. And I think a similar effect has happened in an ongoing way, when, what is the line that should be at any one time whether that's a line about the hostage rescues or about rap, or whatever it is, it doesn't necessarily align with our own emotions. And the only thing that I've been able to do commonly is provide spaces for people to talk and share and give their feelings where there's nothing right. And there's nothing wrong, and how you're feeling is a judicially appropriate way to be feeling. But that really relies on a space that's safe, where people are going to be respectful of each other's differences. I'm no, I'm very lucky to have one of those.



Claire Jackson 16:30

Thank you. Back to merles. Now, please. Hi,

M

Merle Favis 16:36

in South Africa, and from a distance, I think, in the United States, what we certainly seeing is a lot of secular Jews who have in the past not had any connection to Jewish communal institutions. Responding to the human rights issues, in Palestine, Gaza, by coming to things like Shabbat tots, against genocide, and other and other events that are connected in some way to Jewish ritual. And some of these people are saying things like, you know, we haven't been connected to Jewish institutions before. And we're finding a lot of really beautiful, beautiful spaces and beautiful rituals that we really are appreciating.



Claire Jackson 17:50

That I'm sorry to interrupt. Could you come to your question? Yes.

M

Merle Favis 17:54

So my question is, is that happening in the UK to any extent, so that you actually getting a

So my question is, is that happening in the UK, to any extent, so that you actually getting a parallel? You know, outside of institutions, you having a sort of a parallel, do Deus Judaism that is emerging?

 Rabbi Gabriel Kanter-Webber 18:16

So I think certainly it is, to some extent, there. I mean, first of all, this organisation progressives use for justice and ISRAEL PALESTINE, is that to some extent or another, it's not an official art of liberal or Reformed Judaism. It's a group of people who've come together for that reason. But certainly on a local level, we're seeing lots of things like that in Brighton Hove, there's a duty against the obligation group as a US against apartheid group as not a mod branch. I'm not sure how much they interact or not, or whether it's a People's Front of Judea situation, but there are a lot of these parallel groups that are there. And I think for the most part, that is a positive, that's a positive thing. People being engaged, you might not otherwise be engaged, can only be good in the long term. Suzie do?

 Claire Jackson 19:01

How would you feel this next?

 19:04

Ruth Dolby?

 19:06

Would you like to?

 Ruth Dolby 19:08

It's a question of, how do we actually pull a space that's safe? For both sides to talk because it does feel like there are two sides. I don't think it's an age thing. I think we're losing people at all ages, from progressive Judaism, who are sort of putting themselves into factions in a very small community.

 19:36

I think that's right. And I think what I've tried to do in a synagogue space, first of all, we've got the advantage that people already knew each other and so already have some level of respect for each other, which is obviously important. But also the space for talking is just that it's a space for talking. It's not a debating chamber. It's not the UN Security Council. It's not for people to talk about what should or should happen is when people talk about their own feelings and their own reactions. And that requirement, you know, the requirement almost that people start their sentences with, I have not imposed that literally. But that sort of emotional

bounding, I think has been effective in letting people express themselves because ultimately, if someone says how they feel, no one else can disagree that that's how they feel. It might feel differently, but there's an emotional honesty that can be fostered in that way. I think I've probably got time for one more question before my adult education boss start wondering where their Zoom Room is.

R

Rabbi Jeffrey Newman 20:33

I want to ask through a couple of websites, for the first time, I have discovered there are 160 organisations in Israel, Israel, Palestine, that how humanitarian peacebuilding organisations. And there are one website, which has been giving a number of those links is the our Jewish values website, which at the moment looks in it's going to go down. And the other is something I just came across through that called the allowance for Middle East peace, which is completely new to me. And I wondered if you think that highlighting that work, is something that might be in the longer run useful in terms of what you've been speaking about?

R

Rabbi Gabriel Kanter-Webber 21:34

Absolutely. I mean, using voices from the ground from the region is really important, if only because they're far more informed, and they've got far more emotional buy in, but particularly those projects like the ones you described, and the bereaved families forum, in particular, are such absolutely vital exemplars of how people can join together and get along. But yeah, we should be doing all we can to promote them and post them.

D

David Keys 21:58

Well, thanks very much. Rabbi Gabriel for answering all the questions. You know, Benny, by the way, I know that you were you were waiting for some time, if you could be hopefully be given priority for the next set of the next question. q&a session, which will be shortly. And now I would like to introduce our next speaker, Tamara Stanton, a former reform Rs, why nets a volunteer youth leader. So over to you tomorrow.

T

Tamara Stanton 22:40

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak. My account is quite personal. First, a bit a bit about myself so you can more easily see where I'm coming from. I grew up within three shores at the same time. My dad who passed away recently was orthodox. So we went to Habad, where I was taught for my bat Heil. I also went to a reformed synagogue where my mom felt more comfortable. But we also belong to a united synagogue as a compromise, where I went to Haider. I later became a hated teacher. For many years at a reformed synagogue, which I love so much, I eventually became a primary school teacher in mainstream education. I was also a youth leader for RSI nets, which sowed the seeds of the social justice values that guide me today. On the summer camps, I learned about the dark or genocide and child soldiers in Uganda. These are my earliest experiences of tikkun olam building a better world. Judaism has always run through my veins, and it's been a joy to share this with my husband who converted five years ago. We are members of a progressive synagogue and we're active within our

community until about eight months ago. Like many people reading the news, the last eight months have made me grapple with what the meaning of being a human actually is. Like so many others, the war in Gaza has made me feel numb, lost and broken. I feel as if humanity has lost its way and that we've entered a new dark realm. How is it possible for us to fully enjoy doing normal things like going to a cafe or reading a book, our children burn alive in tents after a refugee camp is but is bombed, and a man holds up his headless baby, whilst 1000s shelter in hospital that no longer function while people eat grass, and others destroy eight trucks while people police and the rest of the world stand idly watching. Working in a primary school has provided a mild distraction from the news but the sounds of children playing quickly became harrowing. And watching my school filing for assembly I couldn't help. Just kind of think about the numbers. The school's worth of children had been had been wiped out mainland, orphaned and starved. The only comfort I felt was going on weekly marches, surrounded by others who also saw the insanity the horror, and also felt like this was a battle for humanity. I was and still am motivated by the idea that surely, if British Jews could effectively mobilise, we could potentially help convince more MPs to vote for a ceasefire. In the first month, I felt my synagogue handle things sensitively making space for what for us to grieve the horrors of October 7, as well as the horrors of what Israel was beginning to do to Gaza. But quickly, I perceived that my show perceived so quickly, I realised that my show perceived itself to be in a bind. They thought that expressing too much solidarity with Gazans would alienate the majority of members. So the Jewish blog on the Palestine marches became more of a home. I didn't leave my synagogue, but I didn't go for almost eight months. This silence from them felt deafening. The times that Gaza was acknowledged was either in passing or in my view inadequate. Although I realised that my show was one of the more progressive ones for even acknowledging accusations of war crimes and genocide. I found it difficult to be in a Jewish space where the priority wasn't trying to use our power as Jews to try to at least to try to help end the violence and save lives. While all this is happening, my dad was dying in Jerusalem where he lived. I flew back and forth to spend last moments with him, which gave me an insight to the into the political landscape there. He passed away three weeks ago, and I have been back to my shoulder say Kaddish and the community has been amazing and I have a lot of love for the congregation. Recently, I've been struggling with wanting space to grieve, but also feeling like I can't stop thinking about the ongoing slaughter of 10s of 1000s in Gaza. Most of our Jewish community leaders nationwide have not criticised Israel's leaders for what they've been doing. Indeed, that failure has added to my feelings of sadness, and anger. But it has also made me feel compelled to focus on trying to help protect the living in Gaza, and ISRAEL PALESTINE as a whole. Because Jewish leadership's in the UK and not stepping up for them not leveraging, not leveraging our power as Jews to try to help protect them. The relative silence of progressive Judaism is alienating substantial members of young British Jews, the very generation that progressive Judaism will need to safeguard its longer term future. We feel betrayed, that Jewish institutions including progressive Judaism, have not yet spoken out to condemn the clearly morally wrong, mass slaughter currently happening. I gathered some thoughts from several showing friends from my generation. And after long conversations with them I've I've condensed and paraphrased what they told me. Here is one friend's perspective. Before October attempts to even start conversations about Palestine was shut down by members threatening to withdraw their membership. I was seen as an agitator who wants to destroy the synagogue, whereas actually, I was trying to have these conversations because I care about our communities. And I want them to be places that are welcoming to people with different ideas, and ultimately, places that embrace the idea of justice for all. It's jarring that progressive Judaism is progressive on some things, gay rights, women disability, but not progressive regarding the fundamental human rights of Palestinians. For a generation of Jews who have sometimes met and interacted with Palestinians and want their rights to be respected. It's more and more untenable, to be within a framework where those rights are often

disregarded. And from another friend, I find it difficult to be in a community where many people are, who are supposedly progressive are also tacitly supporting what's happening with their silence. Why would I want my children to grow up around people with so little empathy, who make no acknowledgement of the suffering of a huge amount of people? Are these really the people I want to rub shoulders with all the major life events in my life? We need to ask ourselves, what well do we think we're building? Where do we want to go in the 21st century as human beings? The only way the actions of the Israeli government can be defended from this from the far right. It's no surprise that Tommy Robinson and his crew turn up at pro Israel rallies. Today's progressive shows are unwittingly sharing platforms with the same groups pushing climate denialism, disinformation campaigns and anti immigration rhetoric. And, sadly, these are the bedfellows that progressive Judaism is is making through a relative silence. And then a final final friends, thoughts. I've definitely begun to disengage from Jewish community life. My Jewish identity is very connected to my sense of how I want to live and act morally in relation to the world around me. It doesn't sit right to be in community. Sorry to be in a space that's either ignoring or engaging in adequately with what's happening, especially one that describes itself as progressive. At the very least, there needs to be space for me and others to be allowed to express our opinions on an equal footing. Most of my time is spent in majority non Jewish spaces, the disconnect between how they actually are and the way that they're described is huge, which which makes many progressive Jewish institutions feel insular, which pushes me away further. To regain and retain my generation, progressive Judaism must be couched clearly and unambiguously a against what's happening and be in favour of an immediate end to the fighting. It must set an example It must do more to inform and inspire. Their son Yahoo says that he anticipates that his war against Gaza will continue for another six months. From a youth perspective, it would be totally unforgivable. If progressive Judaism betrays its own name, and continues with its relative silence. My generation is increasingly unwilling to be associated with such silence, and does not wish to be seen as complicit in that silence. Thank you.

D

David Keys 31:29

Thank thanks, Tamara, for such an insightful and moving and inspiring talk. I really think that you spoke in the last 10 minutes, really, on behalf of a substantial chunk of young Jewish people in the UK. And a huge thank you for being so brave in doing so. I'd now like to introduce our next speaker, Rosa Slater, a former Liberal Judaism, youth LJ, why nets a movement worker. So over to you, Rosa.

R

Rosa Slater 32:11

Hi, everyone. Hope you can hear me. Okay. Um, wow. I mean, that's, yeah, that was very hard to follow up from Tamara, that was really, really moving. I think I speak for everyone on the call when I say that, I guess I'm just going to speak a bit about a lot of similar feelings that I have had, and that I've heard about from other people, the last seven, eight months. So I guess just to give a bit of background about myself. I grew up in North London, as part of liberal Judaism, and attended synagogue and then went on to attend Israel tour where I was led by the incredible Rabbi Gabriel Weber, he was not a rabbi at the time. But yeah, and that was like the beginning of like, a very big journey in the youth movement space for me, where I then went on to lead Israel for myself, five years later. And then after that, I spent a year working full time as a movement worker, just before and during the pandemic. And so that's a bit about me, I now.

Yeah, just work in politics in my day job. And, you know, not in the youth movement anymore left a couple years ago, but I'm going to speak a bit more about the other ways that I engage in Jewish life. And so yeah, I guess to start, I just wanted to, like think a bit about what it is that has happened and why and how we have got to this point. And what when we're talking about these shifts, what shifts have actually taken place? So I think, you know, obviously, I'm speaking from my own experience, also, from my peers experience, people that I've spoken to, as I said, I have like a lot of different friends who are from Lt. Y net, So previously, or currently, or from other movements and other denominations as well. And yeah, I just think that we can't homogenise young people, we all obviously, like any age group, or generation have loads of different opinions and beliefs. But that is a big shift that is happening based on, you know, what has happened the last eight, nine months, and there's a lot of arguments that previously might have been used by our communities to cover up the actions that the Israeli government have taken and all the examples now. I mean, it's always been horrific, but they're, they're so strong, they're so clear, that they're just not none of these arguments are holding up in favour of the Israeli government. It's not really like it doesn't feel at all substantial to say that the actions that have been taken are being done Have a Jewish safety or to just get the hospitals home. And what young people are experiencing is a huge amount of content on social media, which is like flooding, like everything that we see, showing the sheer devastation of what's happening in Gaza. So that's kind of where I feel we're at. And in terms of like, what the outcome of that is, well, I mean, for me, I think I speak for a lot of young people that being Jewish is obviously part of my heritage. But a huge part of that is Jewish values. And it's about like living and like being like tomorrow said, like the change that we want to see in the world and being like a shining light to everyone about, like, different morality that we've gained from our religion. And I think, you know, whilst that is the case, and whilst that was, like, drilled into me, from my progressive Jewish upbringing, it is really hard to see that like, that huge chunk of what it is, and like without it, my Judaism feels like the bare bones. Without it. Without this, like bold leadership that's needed from progressive Judaism, I don't really know, what it is that is like that is that is being created, that is still the cutting edge of Judaism as technically a phrase from liberal Judaism specifically have always said, I felt like there was a time where I did feel really, really proud of progressive Judaism as a organisation as like, like to, you know, make a change and make and be really inspirational. So, for example, when I led Israel tour was during one of the wars, and this was in 2018. And we took on a leader who had been kicked off tour for being outspoken about the occupation. And the sad thing is, I just don't see that that would happen right now, anymore, which is really, really sad, because that was such an important moment during such a time of like, really, really toxic discourse in the community. And I just, I'm not convinced if that happened, again, now that that would necessarily be the case, it took a lot of bold leadership for that to happen. And so that's the kind of like, things that I want to be seeing. Not like a one off after thought, you know, not as like a, you know, a slight thing. Oh, and we've got to mention our to get aid into Gaza, it's like, this should be shaping the entire way that we talk about what has been happening. And, you know, in the autumn, I like, I feel like I have tried to engage quite a bit with, you know, the, with the movement and to talk about things. So I mean, some of you might have been involved in this. But I wrote an open letter to the leaders of progressive Judaism, asking them to call for a ceasefire. And, you know, that was like, that was amazing that like, over 150 people signed it. But then in the response, although I was like praise for my leadership and talking about it, that felt like pretty empty words, because then it didn't actually address the fact that, you know, we do need a ceasefire and all this talk of peace. But what is peace, without a ceasefire, what is like peace as a Jewish value without ending the needless, endless amounts of deaths of civilians in Gaza. So I think we are seeing a shift. And I guess, just in terms of like, the impact that this is going to have on the movement as a whole, I think I'd like to talk about quickly before we finish about the different changes we're seeing anyway, and how young people engage in Judaism. And, you know, for

me, I've seen, like, as I've like, approached my mid 20s, as like a lot of different ways that you can be involved without having a synagogue membership. And obviously, you know, there's incredible communities across the country, and that are doing important work. And it's amazing, but I don't really know how welcome or like young people are going to feel they're going to feel quite alienated if there's not these like clear values that are being set out. And in terms of like, the different things that you can do. I set up moisture house in East London, where we used to host fine like dinners and events for young Jewish people and in their 20s so that's like a way you could engage in Judaism. There's also run a new which is like, organisation that's just been a like small group that's been set up by I think it was Rs y alumni, which is all about are, you know, running different camshafts like peer led for each other. And then as Josh is going to speak about in more detail, there's also now mod which are doing amazing work. So with all that together, it's like that is you can live like a very fulfilled Jewish life also, then have my family and my friends. And it's like, I just think that there needs to be a bit of a moment of reckoning from the leadership of progressive Judaism, about how we're going to bring young people in, and not like push them away. And it is just, I think, also, it's not a one size fits all approach. But it is different than it is different for progressive Judaism. Because a lot of young people are very, very involved in their community, but also live very full lives outside of it as well and will have a lot of non Jewish friends will be having a lot of conversations with people outside the community. And I think sometimes this is underestimated. And, you know, other, like more orthodox movements might have a bit of a different experience, because it's a bit more insular. But I think, you know, young people are going on campus, they're seeing all this and if we can't address properly, what's taking place and why people are expressing all these opinions and going on marches, then I don't really know. Yeah, where that leads us. So yeah, and I just wanted to say before I finish like, this is like, I've had conversations with other people. So obviously, these are my own opinions, but I know that there are others. And, you know, where people have previously felt very, very proud of being part of the movement and feeling like we've properly called out oppression, apartheid occupation before and had support to do so. But that actually, recently, there's been such a lack of response, and that it's only been like little pockets, where it's been engaged. And it feels like the progressive Jewish leadership is trying to, like pander to more right wing sections of the Jewish community. And it doesn't really feel like we're aligning as much. And people were saying they would not likely want to go and be part of this show as much at the moment, which I think is really, really disappointing. So again, not to make this sound really doom and gloom. I think there is a light, and there's a lot of people that see, you know, we're all here today for a reason, because we all care, which I think is amazing. But yeah, there's like a lot to think about in terms of how we can not lose this generation, and especially considering the fact that the people that are going to be the most engaged in, you know, running communities in the future are the ones that are also most engaged in Jewish values. And the ones that most engaged in Jewish values are the ones that are most likely going to turn away and say, Wait, this isn't matching up. So I think that's also a big moment to be like, we don't need to turn away the biggest leaders of the future generation. Through Yeah, through what's happening. So anyway, thank you, everyone, for listening. I'm going to be around for a bit longer. I am running to get a train at a certain point, I will just need to log off. But thanks for taking time to listen.

D

David Keys 43:20

Thanks very much, Rosa, for a really superb talk. And obviously, what you were saying is hugely important. And what Tamara was saying was hugely important. And what Rabbi Gabriel was also saying hugely important. And I just hope that the powers that be in the emerging are emerging new denomination progressive Judaism will take every all these thoughts on board, to

make sure that our denomination can move forward as successfully as possible. I would now like to introduce our next speaker, Josh Cohen, from the Jewish UK anti occupation movement Nahmad, which has a large number of young people amongst its members. So over to you, Josh.

J Josh Cohen 44:16

Thanks very much, David. Yeah, thanks a lot to Tamara and Rosa. And also Gabriel. He's not aware here for everything they've said. Because it's been really powerful to listen. Just I don't know, before we get into what I'm saying, apologies if I start staring off into the middle distance have been quite ill this week, and found out today that I've got COVID. So I'm a bit underprepared and overwhelmed, but hopefully, I'll still make some sense. But yeah, I guess, to introduce myself. I grew up in northwest and then I went to new funding synagogue, which is obviously in the news currently because of Rabbi Laura And I went to Jefferson School. So kind of in a, I don't know, arguably more traditional Jewish experience, but I think my experience of growing up within Judaism is very similar to how Tamara Rosa described it of, you know, seeing it as a really positive ethical force in my life. And in 2019, I joined the Ahmad, which is, which now has the tagline of Jews, the UK, against occupation and apartheid in Israel, Palestine. And our main aim as an organisation is to mobilise our community, you know, the Jewish community as a whole in the UK, towards, you know, building a just future for for all in Israel Palestine. And, yeah, I guess a couple of things that might be useful to know is like, we're, we're a non Zionist movement. We accept Jews from across the religious political spectrum. And yeah, we're just kind of trying to help different people advocate for, for for justice. I kind of had a couple of notes here about the current war in Gaza, just to kind of underline how this is a particularly exceptional time. There's obviously been a string of a very long string of Israeli leaders, giving clear genocidal language, you know, at the beginning of the war, and throughout, you know, Netanyahu invoking emelec you know, the commandment to destroy Hamelech, even male, female, young and old, and animals, I found very disturbing to hear about President Hertzog, who's, you know, supposedly, slightly to the left of Netanyahu said very early on that it's an entire nation that's responsible. And, you know, Likud MKS have said that they want to do another Nakba that is even worse than 1948. The ambassador to the UK was able to Valley has claimed on LBC that every civilian building Gaza is a legitimate target. And the Defence Minister, you have Colin, you know, very early on said that you want to complete siege, no electricity, water, no food, no fuel, we're fighting human animals and we act accordingly. I kind of bring all of this up, because I feel that then when we look at the stats of what's going on there. According to the UN, between 75 and 85%, of the Gaza's population, probably about 1.9 million people have been internally displaced. Approximately 37,000 people have now been killed. With estimates that over half of women and children. Every hospital in Gaza is either damaged or destroyed, or our service due to lack of supplies. And all 18 universities in Gaza have been destroyed. Nine out of 10 schools destroyed or damaged. And I just looked actually today at a report that UN released that they released yesterday, where they make clear that it seems that the Israeli government has given their forces blanket authorization to target civilians civilian locations widely and indiscriminately. They also concluded that Israel as you starvation as a method of war, affecting the entire population of the Gaza Strip for decades to come with particularly negative consequences for children. There's a war crime. At the time of writing this report, children have already died due to acute malnutrition and dehydration. And they also list a number of clearly documented times that civilians have been shot. And they include that this indicates the permissive practice of shooting to kill without first ascertaining who the targets are and whether they pose a threat. Just think all of these things are useful to know, just before delving into some of the things I'm talking about, just because I think, I mean,

we've got a mod we were kind of the first Jewish organisation in the UK to call for a ceasefire. And I think in the context of all of these things, a lot of young Jews, a lot of Jews, I mean, there's been a lot said already about how young Jews are joining not a lot, but I can tell you, there are a lot of young boys, Jews joining that mode. There are a lot of middle aged and older dudes running that mod as well. There is a tendency towards the young, but by no means is that only since September. You know, since the outbreak of the war we've we've doubled or more than doubled in size. We've, we've been holding rallies and vigils and protests since the war began. And we've seen enormous want for these things, you know, Jews in the UK, especially the young Jews have just really wanted to come. And we've been part of the Jewish block at the, you know, kind of big London ceasefire, rallies and marches. And it's been clear, like, every time I've gone there, there have been kind of young Jews turning up not part of an organisation, but wanting to chat and kind of meet other, meet other Jews who share their opinions. And, you know, I've been wearing a lot of one t shirt, and people have been, I don't know, just really wanting to connect. And I've seen this out of vigils and rallies as well, where people just really wanted to find a community that speaks to them. Kind of in response to that Nahmad has been, you know, very soon after October 7, no more started holding some reflective spaces. Were not just members, but other Jews have a similar persuasion could kind of get together and discuss, you know, their feelings about the horrific Hamas attack. And then also the kind of instant response, Onslaught, we've been holding these Friday night dinners, we've had freedom, Crusader nights, and Holocaust Memorial Day events and Hanukkah events, all of which we've kind of created very intentional spaces for people to talk with each other. And, you know, around kind of a shared vision of justice. And all of these events have sold out really, really quickly with hundreds of attendees, mainly young, but not only, I mean, at the other side of the satellites, I was really struck by though how many young families I went to the one on a Sunday afternoon. And there were not just young people, but young families with toddlers running around. And we had the founder of we are not numbers of Palestinian organisation who tries to tell the stories of, you know, Palestinians on the ground. And he was talking about we're just children, I don't know, it was it was just quite beautiful that we've become this community space for multiple generations of the Jewish community to gather, have experienced their Jewishness in a way that speaks to their ethics. And, yeah, I mean, that there's some interesting statistics as well, that, I guess, show the the generational aspect of this, the iapr did some research about the 2021 War in Gaza. And they found that respondents aged 16 to 39 were 20% less likely to approve of Israel's conduct in the 2021 War, compared with people aged over 40, which is really quite a significant difference. 20% That's a fifth. The the 2021 War in Gaza lasted just two weeks. 256 Palestinians charged that we lost, lost their lives, but which is really very little in comparison to now. But the iapr also had a research paper that came out today that came out, really in 2024 that showed that at least 43% of young British Jews in their 20s Now don't consider themselves speech, Zionists compared with Jews in their 50s for which it's 22%. So that means that there's 21% more Jews in their 20s who don't consider themselves Silas than in their 50s. And only 32% of Jews in their 20s consider themselves very emotionally attached to Israel, compared to 48 in their 50s. And what's interesting about this as well as in the JPR Oh, you can see some of the reasons that people give for their answers. A lot of the reasons for the decrease in in Self professed Zionism is because of people seeing the injustice that's happening in Israel Palestine and not wanting to identify with that anymore. And there's also some research from the US pew research that shows that 42% of 18 to 34 year old American Jews regard Israel's current war on Gaza as unacceptable, compared to 20%, above 50. So you can really see there is this generational divide. And yeah, it's, it's just a lot more than is now been. We're starting to hold sessions for Jews on the 30 to discuss their experiences. As put their own organising, that's yet to happen. It's happening at the end of this week, for the first time. But what we're finding is that there's just a massive appetite for spaces where young Jews with, you know, inclusive politics with

liberatory politics, progressive politics can feel at home. And, yeah, just so many people are joining the board with stories about how appalled they are by their institutions, the communities they grew up with their Jewish leaders, either supporting or not standing against, or kind of only very slightly subtly speaking out against the war. And they're flocking to organisations like metamod. We are not a synagogue, we are not the denomination, we don't want to be but it is just people are asking, asking for this. And science just gotta give it at some point. But I've run out of time. So we're gonna stop speaking, I'd like to hear people's questions.

M

Maurice Naftalin 56:53

Thanks very much, Josh. That's that was that was really very, very informative and useful, especially for people who haven't heard about not mod before. I mean, I've in Edinburgh, I've been really impressed by now mods presence and their effectiveness of their effectiveness here in Scotland. I'd like to thank you, also Costa. Thank Rosa, Tamara, for very powerful contributions, and Rabbi Gabriel, who's not here to hear my thanks. But I'm sure I'm sure he knows it. So before we go on to the before we go on to the q&a, the speakers, I just want to make a very brief, I want to make a brief appeal. We, of course, in PJ Jip are very keen to get members to build a voice for, for solidarity with the Palestinians for equal rights and justice, and peace for the UN peace in the region. And, and membership, although membership of P JJ IP is only open to members of progressive synagogues, liberal liberal and reform, we want to stay in touch with everyone who's who's come tonight, we can't do that unless you will connect with us. So if you if you feel able to, if you feel able to join the qualification for joining, it's only that you have to just agree with our with our statement of intent, and to be and to be a member of a synagogue, then please, then please do if but if you simply if you can't if for one reason or another, you don't want to You can't join, then please fill in the form that I'm about to put on the chat. It's a very brief contact form. And, and allow us to remain last remain in contact with you. Because otherwise, we can't connect with you. And we can't tell you about what we're doing because of the because of the limitations of privacy. And so I'm now going to I'm now going to put a link into the into the chat. And I'm going to hand over to Claire to take questions from to take questions



Claire Jackson 59:00

to the speakers. Row. Rose was going to leave first. So we'll ask questions to her first. And then we need to hear from Ben Ross and Rebecca SK because I'm sorry, you get waiting so long last time if you've got more questions. So Rebecca, would you like to ask you a question for Rose please?

R

Rebecca SK 59:22

Well, it My question is a general question to all of the speakers. But Raisa can certainly answer it. Well, Rachel, can you address it? I've heard the word hostages once this evening. And I haven't heard anything about how Israel are supposed to live in within secure borders following the horrifying events of October the seventh. I've been very impressed with the passion and the commitment of the speakers. But I've really been struck by the lack of nuance, in terms of thinking about the hostages and The need for Israelis to live in security as well. And I think

what what has happened in terms of where? Where is the lack of education, that our young people today are not taking a nuanced view? And only talking about one side, and not referring to our own people who have been brutally murdered, raped, and kidnapped?

R

Rosa Slater 1:00:31

Okay, so I'm happy to speak a bit about this. Thanks, Rebecca, for your question. Um, I think obviously, the talk was advertised as being about the fact that we are seeing the progressive Jewish leadership talk very well about about the hostages. And that's and that's like a reality of like, the way that we've seen the progressive Jewish leadership speak out really well about about the hostages and the safety and the need for them to be returned home safely. But obviously, we're here today because of how they've not been able to speak the same way about the people of Gaza. And so I don't really think it's necessarily as much about sides, but about thinking about the context of where, where, where we are in with our community. And also just the fact that it's, it's also about how like bringing the hostages home will be done best by that being a ceasefire, because it feels like it took you know, last week, everyone was overjoyed to hear the news that three hostages were brought home safely. But at the at the same time, hundreds of people in Gaza were killed as a result, and there were there were children that died as a result. And so I think the way that me and potentially the other speakers I don't want to speak on their behalf is as looking at this is the best way that we could get the hostages home safely is by having a peace process and a deal that will bring them back rather than it being a military operation.

R

Rebecca SK 1:02:13

So that you will take care of it, then that you are calling for a ceasefire, which includes the return of all of the hostages, not a unilateral ceasefire without

R

Rosa Slater 1:02:23

well, so a ceasefire immediately, and negotiations to occur. Because the operation that the Israeli government has conducted the last eight months, it doesn't feel like that's even managed them. So it feels like there's more to it.

R

Rebecca SK 1:02:39

But you're you're you're you're advocating for effectively what Biden and and, you know, the Americans are advocating for which is a hostage, a deal, which involves a ceasefire and a hostage return?

R

Rosa Slater 1:02:52


Yeah, I mean, I think there's phonies, fire comes immediately, and then everything out hope that they and then

 Rebecca SK 1:02:59

we hope that they returned the hostages. We just suddenly have a nice thought and go actually, let's give them back now. So completely.

 Rosa Slater 1:03:10

Yeah, exactly. It's like a hostage deal. Is, is part of the ceasefire process. Immediately there needs to be a halt to this operation. Because, you know, that's, that's my perspective and understanding. And I don't really think it's like, again, I feel like a lot of what the problem is, is like seeing as like these two things as like, not combined and like as two things are at odds with each other when really like the safety of the Palestinian people and the safety of the hostages comes hand in hand. And you know, it's about not for me, my perspective is it's not valuing like certain lives over the other so, so, so important. All the hospitals are home also so important that the Palestinian people are safe and not living in Israeli people are safe as well. Safe and safe.

 Claire Jackson 1:04:08


I'm going I'm sorry, but this is so inspiring.

 Rebecca SK 1:04:11


Thank you very much. Thank you for your answer, Rosa.

 Rosa Slater 1:04:13

I'm so I've got to head off now. But thank you so much, everyone. And I'm always happy to speak if anyone wants to reach out by Thank you.

 Claire Jackson 1:04:25

Thank you again. You're wonderful. Well, good. So I'm glad that point was raised. But Susie, who's next to ask a question. So Sam, me then. Please. Your question. Oh, hi. That was it. That's me.

 Sami Walbury 1:04:43

Yeah. Sorry. It was Sammy not says it was something that I kind of made me think about while Tamara was talking. And the question isn't necessarily for an answer to the question, but maybe to the thought, but so my relationship with Esther rel and Zionism very loosely has changed a lot since October. And I'm kind of I'm fairly aware of kind of the general history over the last kind of 100 years. And the more I learn about kind of what's happening now, but I'm

quite not in favour of what's happening now. And what I am sort of grappling with is actually how far back am I unhappy with it? Is there you know, there have been turning points in Israel's history. And, and sort of the bit that I'm grappling with, is, you know, am I not? Am I uncomfortable with how Israel's acting now over the last few decades, or actually forever?



Claire Jackson 1:05:46

So, right, so that's a question for tomorrow is,



Sami Walbury 1:05:49

yeah, not necessarily for the historical answer. But for the grappling bit?



Tamara Stanton 1:05:55

That's a really, that's an interesting question. I guess I mean, my kind of thoughts for this talk have been more focused on the on the last eight months. And that kind of wider, sort of existential kind of questioning of, of Israel, I haven't I just haven't really been haven't been kind of front and centre, my thoughts a bit, it's been more kind of the kind of immediate kind of violence happening. I guess, something that I, you know, I strongly believe in the self determination of both of both peoples, both both Jews and Palestinians. And I think that both groups of peoples, their, their, their fates are intertwined. And neither will be kind of free until the other is free. And I think, I think, yeah, that's, and I guess, in terms of my own kind of journey, you know, I was raised as a, as a kind of, in a very Zionist household. And even seeing, just seeing the Palestinian flag brought, you know, as I'm sure it has been, any of your experiences brought huge amount of emotion and, and fear, predominantly. And I've had to do a lot of unlearning a lot of kind of a lot, a lot of kind of reading around the area and reading and reading novels by Palestinians. And just to really kind of understand where that, you know, that perspective and what my own kind of fear was, was kind of grounded in. I don't know if that answers your question.



Sami Walbury 1:07:57

It was, it was a very vague question. Yes, it did, and food for thought. And thank you.



Claire Jackson 1:08:02


Thank you both. So was it Ben Ross sick again,



Benny Ross 1:08:07

particularly to the rabbi's. Those rabbis who have spoken out in favour of human rights for Palestinians, and have criticised yourself, have faced a very, very severe backlash, either from their congregations or from the the bodies that hold power. Is there anything we can do? What

can we do to protect? Those are those who feel the need to speak out? And to give more leadership? If anything?

 Josh Cohen 1:08:35

I don't really have a good answer to that. But I would love there to be a good answer to that. I think that's maybe something that this this organisation progressive Jews, for justices, or Palestine, at least, could maybe hold ground on for at least, reformed, liberal, progressive, progressive rabbis. I mean, I think what we've seen in the synagogue that I grew up in with Rabbi Laura, is that, you know, these connections do need to be made the least I don't know, if there's a union who looks after rabbis, I've not been that involved in synagogue life, to be honest, for a while, so I'm not sure how these things work. But there definitely does need to be protection for people to be able to speak on matters of conscience. I don't know maybe other people have ideas that they can come up with. I wish that I don't know tomorrow if you if you've got any thoughts. I wish. I wish. Rabbi Gabriel was here, because I'd be interested to see what he told Rabbi

 Rabbi Elli Tikvah Sarah 1:09:39

Ellie's here so great. First of all, we're supporting one another and talking to one another, so the signature is letters or call outs for those who do speak out which include Gabriel and myself. Also have connect sins where we support each other. People are embedded in congregations if they're congregational rabbis and their first priority, as they see it is to their congregations. And, you know, so the majority are not going to be speaking out. But those who are speaking out, are speaking to one another. And so I don't, there's more that anybody else can do. To be honest.

 Linda Albin 1:10:24

I was just going to say that after this at eight o'clock, there's an open house, where you have both Josh, and Charlie from LJ and RJ, and this is the sort of thing that can be fed back to the leadership, if you will, of what is allegedly going to become this one progressive movement. So if everybody feels or many people feel that the statements that have been coming out, have been too wishy washy or haven't taken an ethical stand, there is a platform in which one can be back and say, Hey, we're not happy with this. You've not gone far enough. You haven't, you know, you you're prevaricating.

 Claire Jackson 1:11:08

Okay, thank you. Actually, I confess to having forgotten the name of our last speaker. Ben Shlomo was meant to be Yeah, could I don't have to be the last question, I'm

 Yoav Ben-Shlomo 1:11:22

afraid. So. My question is pitch to Josh about not a mod. And there was a bit of chat, which I wrote something. Yeah, you described yourself as an anti-Zionist, and I've read the FAQ on the

wrote something. Josh, you described yourself as an anti Zionist, and I've read the FAQ on the unarmoured website, which essentially, though it says they welcome you welcome. Zion is an anti Zionist, and says, Well, it's up to Palestinians and Israelis to decide their future, but essentially says that the State of Israel is inconsistent with the rights of Palestinians, which is something I don't agree with. I think the Palestinians have absolutely the right of self determination in their own state. But I don't think that is to the exclusion of the State of Israel being allowed to exist. So I found it very when I read it, I was still confused. I wonder if you could comment on the view of Narmada as to the right of Israel's existence?



Josh Cohen 1:12:12

I think Well, I think there's been a miscommunication there. I said, I said non Zionist, is maybe doesn't help explain things any further. I guess, I think non Zionism as an amorphous position is kind of a clarification as a slight clarification from previous position that we had, which is not to take a position on Zionism at all. But we found that non Zionism was better, better to to enable us to say that we recognise the harm that Zionism as a movement has caused for Palestinians. And, you know, we are just not a Zionist movement. What non Zionism means is just not being a Zionist, you know, like not identifying as a Zionist. I personally, would identify as a non Zionist, I guess what I would personally, I mean, I can't speak for the entire movement, you know, normal is abroad through we have many different many different viewpoints. You know, we have liberal Zionists, we have anti Zionists, you know, from my own perspective, the question is to like whether or not Israel has a right to exist, or, or any such question like that, it's very complicated, because, I mean, I don't identify as a Zionist partially because I don't even understand what sign is means It means like 1000 different things to 1000 different people. And I see it as a bit of a political non starter, I don't see it conducive to like a constructive conversation to have and use the framework of Zionism. I don't think it enables clarity. When it comes to like, if you're saying, Okay, the question is, does Israel have the right to exist? Well, what is Israel and what is exist? You see what I mean? These are very complicated questions. If Israel is to be a Jewish supremacist ethno state, that does not allow the return of refugees who are expelled or fled in the Nakba. I don't think that's a good thing. I think that refugees should be allowed back to where they're from, or, you know, regardless of if they were expelled or if they fled. I think that's that's a that's a human right. I think that all people I think that if if a government is to occupy or have control or de facto Annex A bunch of land, then all the people who live there should have equal democratic rights of everyone else, you know, if you end up with a situation where there are these checkpoints, lack of freedom of movement, lack of ability to vote, some people living on the military law, some people living under civilian law, you know, that's apartheid and and that should stop. Whatever you call that stopping, maybe it becomes, you know, some people when some people say Palestine should be free what they mean is a multi ethnic, multi religious, flourishing multicultural democracy, in which case I say great, you know, call it Israel call it Palestine personally, I don't really care. That's not my decision, I would just like freedom democracy. For all like, to me, those kind of endpoints of universal justice are the key thing. I personally don't care what anyone calls the country. I don't live there. I'm not gonna live there. I've got all the family there. I want to be very safe. I've got a lot of friends today who wanted to be very safe. That's all I can say. I don't know if that answers your question.



Claire Jackson 1:15:42

Thank you, Josh. Thank you very much. Thank you for all your all your questions, and for all
..... had his hand up for a long time. And these are all Yes

your cases naa nis nand up for a long time. And these are all yes.

D

David Keys 1:15:55

Yeah. Thanks very much, Claire. Our final speaker is Rabbi le TIG Becerra, Rabbi emeritus at Brighton and Hove progressive synagogue. And Rabbi le has kindly agreed to sum up this evening's talks and contributions, especially in terms of how they might be useful to our denomination or emerging denomination progressive Judaism as a whole in the future. So over to you, Bailey. Thank you.

R

Rabbi Elli Tikvah Sarah 1:16:30

Thank you, David. And I can see that actually, we've got five minutes, and I'm coming. So I'm going to be quick. And first of all, I want to thank the people who have spoken on to thank Gabriel and Rosa and Tamara and Josh, it's actually been a real privilege to have the opportunity to listen to young people, be the ones that are the main speakers, which doesn't happen very often. But before turning to their particular contribution, I just want to make the obvious point, that for Judaism, to thrive into the future, the movement has to listen to the younger generation, which is not doing now, what's interesting about Rabbi Gabriel, who's my successor at Brighton hope progressive synagogue is that he's a part of a new generation of rabbis who for whom a just resolution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict is an absolute priority. And so, you know, there there are among Jewish leaders that view it's not the case that the whole Istat Jewish establishment isn't Not to mention, other rabbis have been here at this evening. I haven't seen everybody but I've seen Rabbi Jeffrey Newman, who has been incredible leader on Israel, Palestine, and Rabbi Margaret Jakobi. And, you know, fantastic. Now, he's part of that generation. He's also as I was, for 20 years, his liberal Jewish chaplain at Sussex University. So he's his hearing students, and he's very real about the what they go through on a daily basis, and how hard it is. So it's not just a question of all young people have got the same view, young people have different views. Nevertheless, what we're hearing this evening, and I think one of the most powerful things is the testimony of tomorrow, Rosa, they believe been immersed in progressive Zionist ideology of the liberal on the reform movements. They've also been educated in progressive Jewish values, which include a firm commitment to ethical engagement and social justice. So they take it as read that progressive Judaism, which has an ethical stance on refugees, racism, poverty, environment, gender and sexual orientation, people with disabilities should also apply those values to Israel, not least Israel's oppressive policies towards the Palestinians. And it is, you know, an old fashioned Yiddish word, it's a complete Shunda a shame that, in fact that that is not the case that we have this isolated area of Israel, Palestine is sacrosanct, that cannot be questioned everything we can question and apply our values to everything but not to that. So that came out over very powerfully from both Tamara and Rosa. And of course, Joshua is part of a new generation of young Jews, who feel alienated from the Anglo Jewish establishment altogether, as represented by all the major Jewish terminations. And this is chiefly because of the uncritical attitude towards Israel, and the refusal to speak out against the oppression of Palestinians. So we've got a very powerful message. And I was interested to hear there's going to be an open house with Rabbi Charlie begins at the end. And Josh, leave it Rabbi Josh levy this evening, because they've got to start listening. I know from my own, there are a number of colleagues or at least 30, liberal reform rabbis who are speaking out, but that is that's just over about a third. So you know, we have got a problem. And I hope that the lesson of this evening is going to be in it's going the recording is going to be made available is that there is not going to be a future progressive

Judaism. Young people are finding other places left. Are they not a mod Mike, they're building Moshe houses, they're doing a whole range of other things having full Jewish lives without needing to fill up parts of liberal and reformed congregations and progressive Judaism when it emerges fully. And so progressive Judaism is in a crisis, and that crisis is going to build more and more. Of course, there are places and I'm very proud to say that bright and progressive synagogue is a wonderful place, and I invite anybody who's feeling alienated from their congregation, you know, you're very welcome to join. And hopefully, you know, there are going to be more congregations Kehilla, North London is also in that similar Edinburgh, parts of Leicester, you know, there are places where you can have these values, but we definitely have got to listen to what the young people have said today, and take the message to, to progressive Judaism, that our generation is going to be completely lost to the future. And these are future leaders. These are people who are movement workers, who are future leaders. And they are not going to be there. And that's, that's the that's the message.

G

Grahame Gross 1:21:05

Thank you, Rabbi, Rabbi le, it's for summing up what we've heard tonight, so well. And thank we're too short of time. So I want to expand on that. But I think you have been Frank and summed everything up and really hammered home. The message we wanted to get across tonight, it there's going to be more time afterwards, for anyone who's put their hand up to keep discussing after we close this meeting, I'd like to thank everyone who's come along this evening. But the last thing I really need to do is that I need to tell everyone, there have been questions this evening about how can we find create a safe place? How can we protect rabbis, and one thing please, that you can do is to join us. And please tell anyone you know, who is a liberal Jew or Reformed Jew, who is a progressive Jew. Now, to join us, the contact form is in the chat. And you can also Google LJJ I P or P JJ tip will find our webpage, and you can contact us read our statement of intent, agree with it, and you are a member, there are no fees. But if our movement grows, then we will be listened to more. And so every person here who can recruit and join us, this is the way that we can actually move our movement to speak out in the way we wanted to speak out in the way Judaism demands, the movement speaks out. So thank you to all of you, anyone who is not a member of progressive Judaism, and also join our mailing list, of course, and come to our events and know about what we're doing. Thank you all very much indeed. Those of you that need to leave now, obviously, you need to leave but we will be carrying on now with an informal discussion for anyone who actually wants to remain behind. And thank you all again.