

PROGRESS ON PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

IN THE LAST EDITION OF DAVAR, I MENTIONED THAT WE EXPECTED THE MERGER PROPOSAL BETWEEN LIBERAL JUDAISM (LJ) AND THE MOVEMENT FOR REFORM JUDAISM (MRJ) TO BE PRESENTED TO LJ MEMBERS BY SPRING 2025.



LAURENCE BLAKE

The two movements have now produced a pack with further information and I want to share some of those details with you. There are three areas I am going to concentrate on. The first is the actual legal process that needs to be followed for the merger to go ahead. The second is what the new organisation will look like and the third is the impact on our community.

The legal process is that both movements will have an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) in May at which their members will vote on whether to proceed with the creation of a new legal entity and the transfer of all the assets and liabilities of the existing legal entities into the new one and the dissolution of the existing entities after this. The EGMs will require a 75% majority of those voting for the resolution to pass. We will need to decide as a community which way we wish to vote and therefore we will be

holding a member's evening on Thursday 24 April at which you will be able to ask questions and help to determine whether or not we vote in favour of the merger.

Once the vote has taken place there are a number of possible outcomes. If either LJ or MRJ do not pass the resolution, then the merger will not take place and things will continue as they are. If both EGMs do pass the resolution then there are two possible outcomes for us:

- If we voted for the merger we will simply join the new legal entity and become a member of the new movement.
- If we voted no, then we will have to make a further decision as to whether we now wish to join the new movement (even though we voted no) or whether we wish to become an independent synagogue. That decision is something we could decide at our AGM later in the year.

If the merger goes ahead then similar to the current LJ organisation, there will be two main decision-making bodies: a Board and the Forum of Members. Every

member community will have the right to nominate candidates for election to the Board. The Forum of Members will meet quarterly and will have formal powers including the election of the Board and the Chair. As is the case now, voting will be weighted based on the size of community, but clergy will not have a vote, although they will be represented on the Board.

If the merger does go ahead, then the impact on us, at least in the short term, will be little. There is no intention for communities to have to change their liturgy, the way they worship or their identity. The two youth movements will continue to operate separately.

You can read more about the merger on page 8 where you will also find details of where to get the full pack and the Open House online events being jointly hosted by Rabbis Charley Baginsky and Josh Levy.

chair@arksynagogue.org