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UK

E-NEWS

Rescue-Return-Restore

December 25



SYDNEY IN HEADLINES

Hanukkah is the Jewish festival of lights, celebrating the rededication of the Jewish temple, after it had been desecrated by the Greek kings and culture. This happened around 160 BC, at the time of the Maccabees. The miracle of Hanukkah is that of the light in the temple that kept on burning, for 8 consecutive days, against all odds.

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CELEBRATING HANUKKAH

As their final meeting of the year, East Kilbride Ezra prayer group gathered to celebrate Hanukkah with latkes and beef brisket and of course, some doughnuts! Due to a lack of proper dreidl, the group played the game using ordinary dice.

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Hanukkah celebration at Ezra Prayer Group.



FRANCE IN TROUBLE



Our representative Maria (in pic) had an opportunity to share about Ezra in a zoom call after which she has been inundated with enquiries for help! Generally, in France, families prepare well for their Aliyah and have savings but there are many last-minute administrative costs that can cause an obstacle, especially for big families: costs for Certificate of Judaism, for Apostilles, for Police Clearance Certificates and sometimes also for passports, as well as additional documents, e.g. divorce papers. Ezra helps meet these costs, including at times costs of travel to the airport. The current rise of anti-semitism in France is what is causing Jews to leave for Israel. People are afraid for their children and afraid for themselves. Due to this families with children are no longer wanting to wait until the summer months if they are able to leave sooner and now, we see families making Aliyah even mid semester!

12 JEWISH CHRISTMAS SONGS!!

Did you know a lot of the American Christmas classics were written by Jewish musicians and lyricists? To highlight this astonishing interfaith co-operation, look out for our series '12 Jewish Christmas Songs' over the Christmas period, starting on Christmas Eve, on our Ezra UK Facebook page! You will be amazed to find out that these musicians who did not celebrate Christmas, but rather Hanukkah, wrote these songs which we so love and continue to associate with Christmas!! If you like the series, remember to respond with a like or a comment on each of the posts!



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Australia has a large population of Jews, around 120K, of which around 53K live in Melbourne and 44K in Sydney. For a long time, Australia has been considered safe for Jews.

Only 184 Jews made Aliyah from Australia in 2024 and that number was the highest in 5 years. Yet, we are expecting this to change in the coming year/s.



Ezra Downunder

Suddenly, Hanukkah and Sydney Bondi Beach was thrown into the focus of the world media, due to the terrorist attack there on the first day of Hanukkah. Such an attack is unprecedented downunder but sadly, it is symptomatic of the rising antisemitism on the continent. We do not consider it a co-incidence that during this year, we have been led to open a new branch of Ezra, Ezra New Zealand / Australia, and have sent our representative Leandro on the task, as reported in our August E-news letter. The plans for Ezra in NZ and Australia are to raise awareness of the prophetic importance of Aliyah and to gather support from local congregations and organisations at such times as these. We are asking in prayer for God to wake up the Australian and 'Kiwi' Jews to the reality of their true home, as well as Christians to support this move. Please remember this in your prayers as we are attempting to complete our registration in New Zealand in the coming months.



03/03

Dreidl, dreidl, dreidl!



The dreidl is a spinning top, often made out of wood, with four Hebrew letters carved on each of its four sides. They are נ (Nun), ג (Gimel), ה (Hei) and ש (Shin). Together, the letters form an acronym that means, "a great miracle happened there," *Nes gadol haya shama*, a reference to the 8 days of light in the rededicated temple. However, as Jews started playing the game in Israel, they changed the last letter to פ (peh), which changes the saying to *Nes gadol haya po*, 'A great miracle occurred here.' It turns out, with a little change of rules, the game can be played by an ordinary dice and some chocolate coins quite happily! Give it a go this Christmas! The Ezra East Kilbride Prayer Group will resume their monthly meeting in January 2026, God so willing. If you are interested in joining this jolly group of believers who pray for Israel and Aliyah, please contact us!