



Wembley synagogue

Press Release

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77 years of serving the community

Motzei Shabbat 16th September 2006

Choral Selichot Service

held at Wembley United Synagogue

Well over 200 people gathered from within and around the various local communities at Wembley Synagogue to participate in what is traditionally one of the most uplifting services in the Jewish calendar – the Midnight Choral Selichot Service.

Selichot and in particular its music, is designed to help us direct our hearts and minds towards the process of repentance in preparation for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The service is a veritable mixture of contemplative prayers and features some of the most beautiful melodies in the Liturgy.

For any Choir and Chazan, the Selichot service may be regarded as a dress rehearsal for the ensuing High Holydays. Some of the familiar tunes are chorally enhanced treating the congregation to a taster of what to expect from all their diligent preparations. This is their chance to “shine”, which they most certainly did – with Chazan David Shine commencing the service. He alternated with Chazan Henry Black and their contrasting vocal qualities created a delightful choral variety throughout the service. Wembley’s own Chazan, Anthony Wolfson, also participated with an emotional rendition of Shema Koleinu.

The London Cantorial Singers, under their very competent musical director, David Druce together with some members from the Wembley Synagogue Choir, gave a sterling performance. The young boy soprano, Elias Levy strode confidently on to the Bimah and delivered his various solos and duets with pure and measured tones which delighted all present.

Rabbi Martin van den Bergh used the opportunity to say one last goodbye as he and Mrs van den Bergh depart to take up their new posting in Hong Kong in time for

Rosh Hashanah. He expressed his mixed emotions saying that he felt happy that the community will be in such capable hands, but sad at his own departure. He wished us all strength to cope with the challenges which undoubtedly lay ahead. He also introduced Rev Alan Greenbat, who will be leading the Services in Wembley for the Yomim Noraim.

Rev Greenbat spoke most warmly of his working relationship over a number of years with Rabbi and Mrs van den Bergh. He also said that he was delighted to be asked to return to Wembley in this guest capacity and was looking forward to it.

If you require any further information please contact the people above.