

SUMMER 2022

The magazine of Jewish Blind & Disabled

**JEWISH
BLIND &
DISABLED**

The key to independence



THE KEY

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FROM OUR CEO

LISA WIMBORNE



I was recently talking to a tenant whose mobility is declining, an expected outcome with his condition. He told me he was struggling to get out and about to the cafes and shops he loves to go to. I suggested he contacts our Tenancy Support Team who can talk to him about

aids that he could consider, such as a mobility scooter. Despite a number of his friends and fellow tenants using these aids, his response surprised me. He told me he viewed using an aid as giving up and losing independence. I asked him what was more disabling: not being able to enjoy life or using a mobility aid? I am not sure he had considered this before. I am pleased to say we are now supporting him to explore options and encouraging him to think about what he wants to be doing and what aids can support him to achieve this.

“FOR TOO MANY PEOPLE THERE IS STILL A STIGMA ATTACHED TO AIDS THAT CAN AND DO ENABLE INDEPENDENCE.”

This conversation coincided with news that the Queen is now using a wheelchair, yet is determined not to be seen doing so during public appearances.

For too many people there is still a stigma attached to aids that can and do enable independence.

I couldn't help but feel that if the Queen were to appear in public in her own mobility scooter or wheelchair, this would go a long way in reducing the stigma.

Developments in technology enable people to retain their independence and are, unlike in the past, no longer reliant on someone else to push them.

I understand that for the Queen this is very much a personal decision and respect her right to make this personal choice. However, I am in no doubt that as an ageing society and with the advancement of technology, we must see these aids as the enablers they are.

Demand for our Independent Living Advisory Service which provides advice and support around aids and adaptations for people living in their own homes in the wider community has never been greater. The service led by a fantastic team of specialist Occupational Therapists is enabling people access to the tools they need to remain independent at home. We are able to offer the service thanks to a

generous legacy donation. The annual cost of the service is currently £50,000, but the impact for the clients it supports is often immeasurable. With our current funding pot declining we are now looking for further support from the wider community. We are committed to growing this service to ensure we can meet current and future needs.

When it comes to changing attitudes, where better to start than in our primary schools? In this issue of The Key, you will read more about our innovative and impactful schools programme led by our inspirational tenant ambassadors.

The magazine provides a snapshot of what we do and how our work, thanks to your support, transforms lives. However, it is difficult to convey on paper the true impact of our work. Our doors are open to you, our supporters. You are the backbone of this organisation and without you we wouldn't be here.

If you would like to arrange a visit please get in contact by emailing rachel@jbd.org or call Rachel on **020 4548 8692**.

Lisa Wimborne
Chief Executive



Introducing Ephraim Court

With planning permission granted earlier this year, work has now begun on our new development in the heart of the growing Jewish community in Mill Hill East. We are delighted to have secured a lead gift for the new development from the Ephraim 1998 Charitable Trust. The building will be named Ephraim Court in memory of the Trust's founders, brothers Menashi (Morris) and Heskel (Harry) Ephraim.

Ephraim Court will provide 23 one-bedroom mobility apartments and 7 two-bedroom mobility apartments, as well as an overnight studio apartment for the on-site house manager and a range of communal facilities.

The development, due for completion in Spring 2024, is being designed to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities or vision impairments. It will include accessible modern fitted kitchens and walk-in shower rooms – spacious

enough to accommodate wheelchairs, communal laundry facilities – with accessible machines for all to use, a lounge, small garden and roof terrace. There is parking for tenants which will enable those who drive to retain this aspect of their independence.

Alongside accessibility, sustainability has been a driving force in the design of this new development. An ambitious low-carbon energy strategy has been incorporated into the design which includes the inclusion of air source heat pumps, solar panels, and green and brown roofs.

As an independent organisation that receives no government funding, all our developments have, to date, been funded by the support and generosity of the community. The cost of the project is expected to be in the region of £10m and with several other generous gifts pledged,

we are now fundraising to meet the current £3.5m shortfall.

Gary Cullum, Trustee of the Ephraim 1998 Charitable Trust said: “Prior to his passing, Menashi appointed myself and his former financial advisor, Stuart Cutler, as Trustees of the Ephraim 1998 Charitable Trust and executors of his will. He left us clear instructions to seek legacy opportunities with particular interest in a number of fields including supporting the Jewish Community and people with visual impairments. We have been impressed with the work of Jewish Blind & Disabled and are delighted to be supporting this new development, a fitting lasting legacy for Menashi and Heskel Ephraim.”

Marc Gordon, Chair, Jewish Blind & Disabled commented: “This is our largest fundraising project to date. If we can fully fundraise for this development it will enable us to find a site in the Hertfordshire area where we know there is current and growing need. If meeting the current funding gap on Ephraim Court isn't possible, we will have to borrow from the bank and this will significantly slow down our ambitious plans for growth and development. We are an organisation that has grown and developed thanks to the generosity of individuals and families from across the community. We hope alongside our long-standing supporters to attract new individuals, families, Trusts and Foundations to support this wonderful cause. By working together, we can transform even more lives.”

“THIS IS OUR LARGEST FUNDRAISING PROJECT TO DATE. IF WE CAN FULLY FUNDRAISE FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT IT WILL ENABLE US TO FIND A SITE IN THE HERTFORDSHIRE AREA WHERE WE KNOW THERE IS CURRENT AND GROWING NEED.”



If you are interested in finding out more about our new development, or visiting one of our current developments, please contact Rachel Barres on rachel@jbd.org or 020 4548 8692.

To register your interest in Ephraim Court, please email info@jbd.org or call 020 8371 6611.

Yoel's story

For 38-year-old Jewish Blind & Disabled tenant, Yoel, swimming has been crucial in managing his health and wellbeing. Whilst some of us take to the local swimming pool for a few laps, Yoel is taking to the cold rough waters of Dover on a regular basis. After years of training, he is now set to take on the Catalina Channel challenge - a swim through the night from Catalina Island to Long Beach in the Los Angeles area. He expects the swim will take him between 10 and 20 hours.



Yoel said: "I fluctuate between leading a very active life and suddenly getting hit by a relapse or period of illness. Having neurological complications has really limited what I can do in a day. I was working in hi-tech before, but it was becoming more and more difficult with my cognitive issues. I couldn't do the detailed work, had trouble concentrating and was getting very fatigued. I lost this job three years ago and then started to swim more seriously.

Swimming has also really helped with my health; it has stabilised my illness and my symptoms. But, not only this, having goals and something to work towards has been great for my mental health. Otherwise, I think I would be really struggling with depression. Even when I've had periods of illness which affected my ability to swim, and I was having to swim much slower and less distances, I never gave up. I kept going and knew this period would be over and I would come back to it.

Along my swimming and training journey, I have been coached and taken inspiration from a range of coaches and swimming experts, but, the one swimming coach who didn't think I could do it will always stick with me. And now I have to prove her wrong. It's also important to me to raise awareness for disabled people doing sport. It really isn't something that is in the spotlight very much.

"AS A RELATIVELY YOUNG PERSON WITH HEALTH CHALLENGES, HAVING A FOCUS AND SETTING MYSELF BIG CHALLENGES HAS BEEN SO IMPORTANT. WHILST I AM TOTALLY FOCUSED N MY US SWIM CHALLENGE IN SEPTEMBER, I ALREADY HAVE MY SIGHTS SET ON THE ONE AFTER."

I am currently swimming about 20km which takes around 10 hours a week. Through the challenge, I am raising funds for the Challenged Athletes Foundation. I was suggested to get in contact with them about what support they could offer me with the swim but then thought that they would be great to raise money for. They help people all over the world with severe disabilities to achieve in sports and pay for training, help to enter competitions and get specialist equipment. Raising money for the foundation has been a key part in keeping me motivated - I know I can't not finish the swim.

I don't want my health to define me. I know I can live an independent and fulfilled life with the right support. Before my move here, I was living in Israel, having trouble with the stairs into my apartment and finding it difficult to use the bathroom. I knew I had to move to somewhere that better met my needs and was nearer to family and friends.

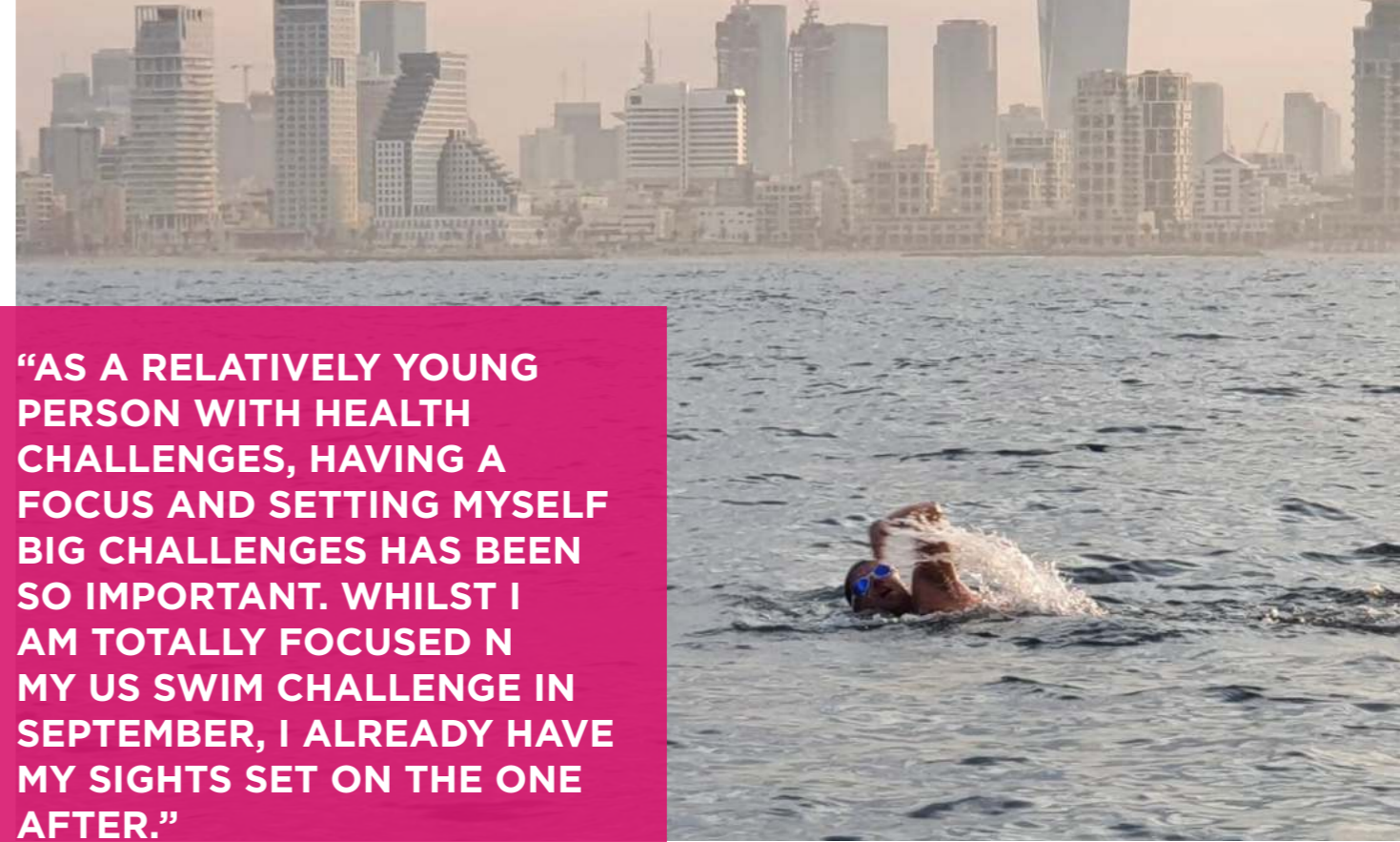
My move into my Jewish Blind & Disabled apartment was the right move, at the right time. I needed an adapted apartment like

the one I have; no stairs to manage and a wet room bathroom with level access. There is the peace of mind with the house managers being here and knowing that I am secure. With my illness, I don't know when the next episode will come. I have whole periods of time where I am reasonable, even sometimes very good, and then out of the blue, I can get hit with a period of being really unwell.

It isn't always easy, and I have benefited from having a telephone befriender who is a Jewish Blind & Disabled volunteer. She has been helpful for me on my return to England and gives me a different perspective and opinion on things and she has been good to talk to.

As a relatively young person with health challenges, having a focus and settling myself big challenges has been so important. Whilst I am totally focused on my US challenge in September, I already have my sights on the one after, North to South New Zealand. I won't let anyone tell me this isn't possible, as I believe if you focus and work hard you can achieve the impossible."

f To find out how Yoel gets on, follow JBD on Facebook.



Supporting Ukrainian Refugees

As the situation in Ukraine unfolded, Jewish Blind & Disabled's Trustees met in March and committed to doing all we could to support Ukrainian refugees. In particular, older or disabled people who would benefit from our unique offering of independent living with 24/7 on-site support.

Within days of the meeting, we provided a Holocaust survivor and her disabled daughter, who fled Ukraine, with keys to a temporary home in Frances & Dick James Court – our development in Mill Hill East.

Our Chief Executive, Lisa Wimborne, commented: "I saw a story in the Jewish News about Zac Newman who was in Poland trying to bring Kateryna, his grandmother-in-law and mother-in-law, Larysa, who is registered disabled to the UK. I immediately reached out to Zac and his wife, Katya, via their fundraising page and within 24 hours of first speaking to them we were handing them the keys to their temporary new home. The flat they are staying in is situated in Jewish Blind & Disabled's development just down the road from Zac, Katya, and their children. The tenants there couldn't have been more welcoming and supportive – it really has been so touching to see."

Since then, we have housed a husband and wife into a lovely one-bedroom flat in Milne Court which is conveniently located near their daughter and grandchildren.

"As an independent, agile charity we have been able to respond quickly and find funds to cover the costs to furnish these flats. We have provided ongoing support with benefits claims, access to health and social care and sourced basic everyday items such as mobiles phones. The bureaucracy isn't easy to work through. We are yet to receive any housing benefit for either family and are also currently covering the cost of their household bills such as energy and council tax. This is a necessary yet unexpected cost we will need to cover through our fundraising efforts. Without our generous supporters we wouldn't be able to respond in this way. Thank you."

If you know of any Ukrainian refugees who would benefit from accessible housing with 24/7 support, please tell them to contact us by emailing caroline@jbd.org or calling 0208 371 6611.

Partnering with synagogues

Like many communal organisations, we are an organisation that has a symbiotic relationship with the community. The partnerships that we have with synagogues are instrumental in so much of our work from promoting our services, to fundraising, to supporting our tenants to engage and connect to the community.

OUR WORK WITH SYNAGOGUES IS WIDE-REACHING AND VARIED: BELOW IS A JUST A SHORT SNAPSHOT OF RECENT ACTIVITY:

- We welcomed Bushey Synagogue Chair, Paul Belsman, and Trustee, Juliet Solomon, into Cecil Rosen Court to see the plaque that was erected to recognise their decision to support Jewish Blind & Disabled in their Kol Nidrei appeal
- We have regular kiddush events, including interesting Shiurs and talks thanks to partnerships with several synagogues including Mill Hill East Synagogue, Bushey United & Woodford Forest
- Tenants at Fairacres enjoyed a talk and cheesecake during Shavuot with Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg from the New North London Synagogue
- We hosted fantastic megillah readings across all developments with thanks to Rabbi Kett from Bushey United, Rabbi Wittenberg from New North London, Rabbi Austin from The Federation, Rabbi Cohen from Kingsbury United, Rabbi Wollenberg from Woodford Forest United, Rabbi Goodwin from Chigwell & Hainault United and Rabbi Schochet from Mill Hill United
- Our Chief Executive, Lisa Wimborne, has recently spent Shabbatot in Holland Park and South Hampstead Synagogues where she spoke to members of their communities about how accessible housing can transform the lives of disabled people and Jewish Blind & Disabled's services.

If you would like someone from Jewish Blind & Disabled to visit your synagogue or to partner with us, please contact rachel@jbd.org or call Rachel on 0204 548 8692.

Educating the next generation

Many of our tenants will tell you about the people they encounter who patronise them, make assumptions about their abilities and lack a basic understanding of disability. We know that if you don't know or haven't met a blind or disabled person, your understanding of how they live, their day-to-day challenges and how they overcome these could be limited.



Our school's activity pack designed to fit with the primary school curriculum and provided to all pupils who attend our talks

Here at Jewish Blind & Disabled we believe we have a role to play in educating the next generation to create a more inclusive and supportive society. Our school's education programme was launched over 10 years ago and has since reached more than 10,000 young people.

The programme is back, post-Covid, and stronger and better than ever thanks to our tenant ambassadors who we have recruited and trained to deliver impactful and age appropriate talks about their lived experience of disability. In the past six months, the programme has reached over 1,500 pupils across 13 primary schools.

Headteacher of Rimon Jewish Primary

School, Sarah Simmons, got in touch with us as a key area of their work is teaching children to have an awareness of different needs within our community.

We arranged a talk from Michael, a Jewish Blind & Disabled tenant and schools ambassador, who started experiencing sight loss in his 20's and is now blind.

Michael talked openly to the pupils about life with a disability and his experience of being blind. Michael also shared some of the aids that help him on a daily basis including a signature guide for when he needs to sign any documents, a coin holder, a talking clock and his smartphone. When asked how he feels about being blind, Michael said: "Sometimes I feel okay about it and sometimes I feel sad about it, but I have to try and make the best of the situation."



Jewish Blind & Disabled tenant, Michael



Jewish Blind & Disabled tenant, Diane, at a recent visit to Independent Jewish Day School

"THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE SO ENGAGED, THEY LOVED HEARING ABOUT THE DIFFERENT AIDS MICHAEL USES TO MANAGE TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY. HIS ZEST FOR LIFE AND POSITIVITY SHONE THROUGH."

Headteacher Sarah commented: "The young people were so engaged, they loved hearing about the different aids Michael uses to manage to live independently. His zest for life and positivity shone through. The pupils were so inspired by him that a week after the visit a group of year 6 pupils got together to hold an event in the playground to raise money for Jewish Blind & Disabled. There really is no better way to learn about protected characteristics - a curriculum requirement - than from people with lived experience. We look forward to inviting other Jewish Blind & Disabled tenants into the school next term."

We know from the feedback we are receiving from every school we visit that this programme is making a real difference, educating and inspiring our future generation.

Jewish Blind & Disabled Chief Executive, Lisa Wimborne, said: "We are well placed to help young people understand disability and to ensure they see people beyond their disability. Our school's programme does just that as well as providing us with an opportunity to raise greater awareness of Jewish Blind & Disabled. We are hugely grateful to the Desmond Foundation for their generous support enabling us to deliver this important programme."

To arrange for a tenant ambassador to visit your School, Cheder or Youth Group, please contact jo@jbd.org or call Jo on 0204 548 8678.

Aids, adaptations, and advice that can make all the difference

Jewish Blind & Disabled's Independent Living Advisory Service supports people who are living with physical disabilities and / or vision impairments to live independently in their own home. The service is led by Occupational Therapists who carry out an assessment and suggest a range of aids and adaptations or provide practical advice and support to enable the client to maintain independence in their own home.

Initially established in 2018 to support and advise on small aids and adaptations, the service has extended its offering and will support members of the community with advice, access, and funding applications for larger aids such as mobility scooters, chair lifts and ramps.



THE SERVICE CAN HELP WITH:

- Managing transfers around the house
- Making specific rooms more suitable/ meet needs for longer
- Advice and support with ramps, hand rails or stair lifts
- Mobility aids and advice on wheelchairs
- Referrals to Physiotherapists to promote better mobility
- Recommending environmental controls or assisted technology which allow the control of functions within the home via remote controls or Wi-Fi
- Advice, assistance, and adaptations to support with techniques to help get in and out of a car, bed or out of a chair independently.



“THANKS TO JEWISH BLIND & DISABLED, I WAS ABLE TO GET A NEW SCOOTER THAT FOLDS AND THEY HELPED ME FUND IT. IT HAS MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN MY ABILITY TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT.”

We recently supported a member of the community who contacted us following a fall in her flat. When we visited her, we could see why her old scooter wasn't meeting her needs and how a new more suitable model would transform her life. We were delighted to be able to help her. She commented: “I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 1980 and a few years ago I had a fall in my kitchen when transferring from my old scooter and broke my hip. I contacted Jewish Blind & Disabled as I desperately needed a new scooter that would be better for me in my flat but would also allow me to leave my flat on my own and go out in a taxi. Thanks to Jewish Blind & Disabled, I was able to get a new scooter that folds and they helped me fund it. It has made a huge difference in my ability to remain independent.”

Thanks to a generous donation the service is offered to anyone from the community who is living in their own home. If the client is reliant on benefits and does not have the finances to pay for aids and adaptations recommended by our team of Occupational Therapists, they will be supported to apply for funding and / or offered support from Jewish Blind & Disabled to purchase the aids on a loan basis.

If you or someone you know needs support, please get in touch and we will assess your needs. You can contact us by calling **020 8371 6611** or emailing **ila@jbd.org**, or you can complete our Independent Living Advisory Service application form on our website **www.jbd.org**.

A lasting gift

At least £1 in every £3 of the money we raise to continue our vital work is made possible thanks to the generosity of people who leave us a legacy.

Many of our tenants are not born with a disability; instead, at some point in their lives they face a diagnosis that has a significant impact on their life from that time forward. For many, this comes as a shocking and unexpected diagnosis that can feel like a total loss of independence and self-worth.

It doesn't have to be this way and there is help at hand. Our specially adapted apartments remove the barriers that people with disabilities or vision impairments face when living in inappropriate housing, while our Independent Living Advisory Service helps people retain their independence in their own home.

With the support from legacies, we can continue to offer accessible housing and support for those that need it and transform the lives of more people with physical disabilities and / or vision impairments.



Legacies can come in all different shapes and sizes.
A recent gift was this bookcase that is in the communal lounge at Fairacres.

FREE WILL WRITING SERVICE

As a supporter of Jewish Blind & Disabled, you can now access a free Will writing service through the National Free Wills Network.

We know that many people put off making a Will and it can be expensive. However, it is the only way to ensure that the people and causes you care about are looked after and that your wishes are known.

Our partnership with the **National Free Wills Network** gives you the opportunity to make or update your Will conveniently and easily. An experienced solicitor will write a Will at no cost to you. You just need to give your details and consent to pass them on to National Free Wills Network. They will then contact you with information on how to proceed, including a list of six local participating solicitors for you to choose from.

There is no obligation to leave a gift in your will to Jewish Blind & Disabled, however, a gift of any size will enable us to continue to deliver high quality housing and support to vulnerable members of our community and their families now and for years to come.

“WITH THANKS TO RECENT LEGACIES WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES AND VISION IMPAIRMENTS. LEGACIES ARE VITAL TO US AND CAN COME IN ALL DIFFERENT SHAPES AND SIZES.” Rachel Barres, Director of Fundraising



For more information about the difference that your legacy could make, or if you are interested in having a Will written, please contact Rachel on rachel@jbd.org or 020 4548 8692.

Fundraising update



Maccabi Fun Run

This year, we had more people than ever before, run, walk or scoot for us at the Maccabi GB Community Fun Run. Thank you to everyone who took part for Jewish Blind & Disabled, including some of our amazing tenants, and for raising just over £3,000.



Screening of Minions 2

We held an exclusive screening of the new Minions 2 film at the beginning of July at the Reel in Borehamwood. Families, kids and adults of all ages enjoyed the film with our very own Minion making an appearance at the beginning. With thanks to everyone who joined us, we raised over £1,500.



Annual Friends of JBD Golf Day

Over 80 people joined us for our annual Golf Day at Hartsbourne Golf Club. Huge thanks to Lloyd Botchin for his continued support in organising the event. This year marks the eighth year that Lloyd has organised the Golf Day and we are so grateful for his support and commitment. Guests also had the opportunity to hear from one of our tenants, Clive, who spoke about his story and what it is like to live in a JBD development. This year, the event raised a record high of £30,000.

To keep up to date with news and events, please follow us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram - **@JBDCharity**.

If you would prefer to receive The Key by email or to unsubscribe from our mailing list, please email **tami@jbd.org**.

We have updated our privacy policy – for more details please visit www.jbd.org/privacy-policy



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