



new london
synagogue



On the Passing of Chazan Stephen Cotsen of blessed memory

I feel a great sadness with the passing of my dear colleague and former Chazan of this community, Stephen Cotsen. I know so many of us do.

Stephen first came to New London in 1995 and became Head of Cheder before succeeding Chazan George Rothschild in 1999. He left in 2012 to take care of his family in Wales, but returned as Chazan in 2016 and served through Covid retiring in 2022. He has continued to be an invaluable support. His contributions to the community, from Bimah, kitchen, as a tutor, member of the team and – for me – mentor and guide are immeasurable.

We will ensure the community is informed of all arrangements and that we, as Stephen's family, take this time to remember the blessing of his memory appropriately. At this stage we are clear that the funeral will NOT be either today or Sunday.

In the meantime, plugging 'Stephen Cotsen' into the Youtube search engine will bring up a series of videos recorded during Covid by Stephen, made available for those who would want to hear the voice of our great Chazan.

Stephen's Hebrew name was Yonah – literally dove. Whenever I would use it, and particularly in the light of the conversations he and I had over many years about his stepping away from the position he loved at New London a line from Yehudah HaLevi's great poem and Shabbat Zemer would come to my mind.

Yonah Matza Vo Manuach – The dove found rest.

Our sweet singer in Israel has found rest.

Baruch Dayan HaEmet
Shabbat Shalom