

# The Hourglass

BULLETIN OF  
THE HEBREW CONGREGATION  
OF ST THOMAS

FEBRUARY 2021

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# February Services and Programs

## *Parashat Yitro*

**Exodus 18:1-20:23**

## **Purim**

5 Erev Shabbat Family Style Service,

Fri 7:00 PM AST (6:00 PM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

6 Shabbat Morning Worship and Study,

Sat 10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

## *Parashat Mishpatim*

**Exodus 21:1-24:18**

12 Erev Shabbat Service,

Fri 7:00 PM AST (6:00 PM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

13 Shabbat Morning Worship and Study,

Sat 10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

## *Parashat Terumah/ Shabbat Zachor*

**Exodus 25:1-27:19**

19 Erev Shabbat Service,

Fri 7:00 PM AST (6:00 PM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

20 Shabbat Morning Worship and Study,

Sat 10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

25 Erev Purim (The Eve of Purim)

Thu Possible Zoom Hamentashen Baking,  
Purim Songs; details TBD

## *Shushan Purim/Parashat Tetzaveh*

**Exodus 27:20-30:10**

26 Shushan Purim/Purim Observed

Fri Service, Mini-Schpiel and Megillah Rdg  
Exact details TBD; likely at 7:00 PM AST

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

27 Shabbat Morning Worship and Study,

Sat 10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>

Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

**Happy  
Valentine's  
Day**





# The Masks We Wear

Message from  
Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach



As we enter the month of February, and begin to look ahead, we see a relatively “early” date (on the common calednar) for the Jewish holiday of Purim. Purim begins this year on Thursday night, February 25, although in Jerusalem and other “walled” cities it is observed on Friday night, February 26 and Saturday, February 27. This delayed date is called “Shushan Purim,” as reported in the Book of Esther, where the celebration in the Persian capital city of Shushan also took place a day later than in other places.

Although our plans are still evolving, in St Thomas this year we are going to imagine the water around us as its own “wall,” and celebrate the holiday primarily on Friday night, February 26, although with possible additional observances around then. (And Shabbat morning services on February 27 will feature a deeper dive into the Book of Esther.)

One memory to share, and one theme I would like to develop here. The memory is that last year, in early March, our “Beatles” themed-Purim celebration was the last major event held in person in our Sanctuary. Who knew it would be a full year later, and we would still be wondering how and in what way to return?

The theme begins with a reminder, in the midst of this pandemic... that Purim is the holiday in Jewish life most associated with... the wearing of masks.

It flows from the question of what is seen, and what is not, what is hidden and what is revealed, identity and visibility and morality alike. The Book of Esther is one of only two works in the entire Hebrew Bible where God’s name does not appear explicitly (the other being The Song of Songs). But the name “Esther” means “hidden.” And just as Esther’s identity was hidden through much of the story, there is the vague reference, Star Wars-like, that if Esther did not act “help would come from another source.”



Masks. The hidden, and the revealed. It is a theme much on our minds, and all around us these days. It is a theme deeper, and even more pervasive, than the obvious and tedious arguments with anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers alike.

Briefly, three examples:

Continued on page 4

• **Vaccines and values.** As you read these words, now, our safety increasingly depends on something we cannot see – who has taken something inside themselves, and who has not. Who has offered their arm, and who has refused to do so. And related questions: which vaccine is available, and when, and where? What groups lag behind, and where, and why? Will the one-dose, less expensive, easier-to-store shot be seen as a “second class” choice because of initially reported numbers about its effectiveness? Will that lead to an economic disparity, as well as other factors which go in to who is able to be protected, and how? What of the displaced in our own midst, less popular populations, the undocumented, the incarcerated, those already ill? And this: what is the interaction between generosity and greed, selfishness and selflessness?

Purim speaks of the relationship of our community to those around us. Will we open our eyes, will we be wise enough to see that “inoculation nationalism” is self-defeating? For if our country, our communities reach high levels of protection, but other places do not... well, this virus is a foe which, like hatred, has to be treated in all its locations. Because if it remains anywhere, it will be back everywhere. And “me” and “we” and “here” and “there” are all part of the same web of life.

We are all connected. The right thing to do and the smart thing to do are the same. It is covering our eyes, it is wearing our mask in the wrong way....to not understand this.

• **GameStop and Wall Street:** I remember (from history, not personally!) arguments over the Gold Standard. What is the nature of money. What is currency? What is wealth? Is there a “there” there? While not offering any opinion on hedge funds or the stock market, I have often wondered about the wisps of rumors which send numbers in one direction or another, and the degree to which so much depends on so little. What is the relationship between valueables and values? And is every aspect of our economy truly dependent on a subjective collective agreement to evaluate “things” in a particular way? In which case, this current episode is an act of unmasking; it reveals the assumptions on which we depend – to which we will most likely return. But perhaps there will be a bit of wisdom, and sense of reality along the way.

• **Fact and Fantasy:** We have also seen, in recent days, a display in which attorneys and spokespeople of various sorts make strong assertions in public – and then do not come remotely close to backing up those assertions in court. Indeed, judges have issued rebukes, and legal teams have walked away from jobs, over the question of telling the truth when the stakes are high and the costs of lying are real. Perhaps the act of holding up your hand, of swearing in the name of God – or the consequences of being caught, are another form of unmasking happening around us, at this challenging time.

May we all experience Purim this year as a time of coming out of isolation, of renewed connections, of safety and security. May there be, for Jews and for all people, light and happiness, joy and gladness.





# What our Synagogue Board is Doing To our Congregants and Chai Members



## Message from Marilyn Blackhall, President

Life goes on as the pandemic becomes even more serious in many places. We all live wondering when it will end and look forward to the hope that will come from vaccinations and a life that will return to a (new) normality....which brings a variety of conjectures about what it will actually be like.

In the midst of all of this our Board continues to function in helping our Synagogue to survive. Without Rabbi Feshbach, our small dedicated staff, our loyal members and volunteers, and our wonderful Chai members, this could not be possible.

So, what are we involved in right now? Here are a few things amongst several others:

As a result of a significant donation from Sheila and Steve Redan a new fund has been created - "Community Personal Assistance"- which will serve to provide direct and immediate assistance to people in our congregation and community who are in need. This fund will be confidentially administered by our Board Executive Committee.

We have been working on several Grant possibilities to provide funding for items such as an expansion of synagogue security and the creation of a larger museum, in addition to expanding our ability to broadcast live services once we have moved back to the Synagogue. **Anyone with Grant writing experience? Please contact me. We could use your help!**

Thanks to PP Dorothy Isaacs and generous congregants who are working with her, progress is being made in restorations to the Altona Cemetery including landscaping.

In an older building such as our Synagogue, repairs and maintenance are constantly necessary. Our House Committee chair, Donald Pomeranz, is working on making sure that things are being taken care of as best as possible with available funding.

**Both Synagogue members and Chai members, if you have expertise in any of these matters and want to join one of our committees, please contact me directly or via [info@synagogue.vi](mailto:info@synagogue.vi).**

Take care, get vaccinated when possible and stay safe!!!!

**Purim 5781/2021**  
at The Hebrew Congregation of St Thomas

**SAVE THE DATES;**  
**Details to follow**

**Thursday, February 25, 2021**

**Possible Zoom Hamentashen Baking  
and Tot Purim: Songs and Sweets**

Watch for further details  
and list of ingredients to have at home.

Likely timing: 6:00 PM AST/5:00 PM EST



**Friday, February 26, 2021**

**Erev Shushan Purim (Purim Observed),  
likely at 7:00 PM AST/6:00 PM EST**

Our farcical, fun-filled, parody-based Purim.

A brief Friday night and Purim service,  
followed by a Megillah reading and online schpiel.

Details to follow.

**Saturday, February 27, 2021**

**Shabbat and Morning of Shushan Purim,  
10:30 AM AST/9:30 AM EST**

Brief service followed by  
study of the weekly portion,  
and the Book of Esther





**There are four *mitzvot* (commandments) associated with the holiday of Purim.**

**1. *Mikra Megilla*: The Reading of the Scroll**

We are commanded to read/hear the Book of Esther on Purim.

**2. *Shlach Manos* (or: *Mishloach Manot*): Giving of Gifts**

Purim is the original gift-giving holiday of Judaism, not Chanukah. Today such gifts are usually baskets of candy and pastry, or fun trinkets.

**3. *Se'udah*: A Festive Meal**

We are Jews. There is a commandment to eat during most holidays!

**4. *Matanot L'Evyonim*: Giving to the Poor**

*Tzedakah*, giving — supporting those in need in our midst



# Learning Opportunities through HUC Connect

Register at [huc.edu/HUCConnect](https://huc.edu/HUCConnect)



## GENDER AND LITURGY

Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 1:00 pm ET

Rabbi Dalia Marx, Ph.D., Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professor of Liturgy, HUC/Jerusalem Shani Ben-Or, Cantorial Student, HUC Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music

## IF FLAME FALLS ON CEDARS, WOMEN LEADERS WILL PUT OUT THE FIRE:

THE BIBLICAL DEBORAH REIMAGINED  
Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 1:00 pm ET

Wendy Zierler, Ph.D., Sigmund Falk Professor of Feminist Studies and Modern Jewish Literature, HUC/New York

## INFERTILITY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 6:00 pm ET

Kristine Henriksen Garroway, Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible, HUC/Los Angeles

Register at [huc.edu/HUCConnect](https://huc.edu/HUCConnect)



In partnership with HUC-JIR



Judaism & Civil Society

Register at [huc.edu/HUCConnect](http://huc.edu/HUCConnect)

**SCRIPTIIONS: JEWISH THOUGHTS AND RESPONSES TO COVID-19**

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 1:30 pm ET

**SPEAKING RELIGIOUS TRUTH TO POLITICAL POWER: VALUES & VOICES 2021**

Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 6:30 pm ET

**CONFRONTING HATE IN A BROKEN WORLD: LESSONS FROM THE CAREER OF MARC TANENBAUM**

Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 4:00 pm ET

**LANGUAGE AND RACISM IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY**

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 5:30 pm ET

**RACE AND IDENTITY TODAY**

Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 5:30 pm ET

**"LET MY PEOPLE GO:" PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON FREEDOM AND INJUSTICE**

Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 6:00 pm ET

**CHILDREN AND THE RIGHT TO VOTE**

Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 1:00 pm ET

**JEWES OF COLOR**

Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:00pm

**INTERSECTIONAL JEWISH IDENTITIES**

Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 3:00pm ET

**NOT THE SAME AS WHITE: LATINX STUDENTS TALK ABOUT JEWISH SCHOOLING**

Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 7:00pm

**JEWES, WHITENESS, POWER AND PRIVILEGE**

Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 1:30 pm ET



In partnership with HUC-JIR



**Language & Racism in the United States Today**

Sarah Bunin Benor, Ph.D., Professor of Contemporary Jewish Studies, HUC/Los Angeles

with Jared Jackson, Founder and Executive Director of Jews in ALL Hues

Andrew Rehfeld, Ph.D., HUC President, Moderator

**TUES., MARCH 2  
5:30 PM ET**

Register at [huc.edu/HUCConnect](http://huc.edu/HUCConnect)



# Birthdays and Anniversaries

## February Birthdays

Tyler Rice	Feb. 1
Michael Fuertes	Feb. 8
Thuy Rieder	Feb. 12
Patricia Gruber	Feb. 17
Stephen Moskowitz	Feb. 17
Samantha Pomeranz	Feb. 18
Becky Tunick	Feb. 22
Neil Prior	Feb. 26
Ariel Lynn Rosenthal	Feb. 26
Lyra Jean Rosenthal	Feb. 26
Frances Shapiro	Feb. 27

## February Anniversaries

Steve & Sheila Redan	Feb. 9
Mark & Patricia Borden	Feb. 16
Samuel & Sunny Steinberg	Feb. 25





# רפואה שלימה

A complete  
recovery to:



Robin Adler  
Laurie Allen  
Charles Arthur  
Pauline Balsam  
Amiel Cohen  
Quinn Copps  
Yigal Ehrlich  
Jared Falek  
Gina Talia Farahnick  
Marci Finkelstein  
Wycliffe Francis  
Julie Friedman  
Marilyn Grishman  
Violet Adelaide Johnson  
Jay Kranitz  
Helen Leneman  
Sheri Levson  
Linda Lewensohn  
Steven Markowitz  
Tom McCoy

Sheldon Minion  
Raymond Newton  
James Nicholson  
Maria Grace Nicholson  
Ella Ogden  
Neil Prior  
Rosa Pupko  
Dorothy Ring  
Monte Rosenthal  
Henia Rubins  
John Schenkel  
Ruth Schloss  
Maxine Shayna Stark  
Bill Stein  
Robert Tunick  
Rachel Wallace  
Andrea Weibel  
Rona Wolfson  
Rayna Sandra Zaner

Please be in touch with us to let us know of any updates.  
Hopefully we will hear from you with good news, of recovery  
and a return to health for you or your loved ones.  
You can write us at [info@synagogue.vi](mailto:info@synagogue.vi).

**We remember former members and those who are dear to our members.**

**Week of February 1-11**

Arnold Carlin, Albert E. Frankel, Frank Grbinich, Adam Jason Greenberg  
Claire E. Klein, Howard Kupperman, Anna Lustig, Ruzena Maxova  
James Michael Pontious, Phoebe Reckseit, Seymour Robinson, Harriet Siegel  
Tessie Soloway, David Tunick, Jennie Tunick, Walter Werbel

**Week of February 12-18**

Hannah Levin Christensen, Phyllis Friedman, Bernie Goldberg, Miriam Groisman  
Fred Kass, Julius H. Kessler, Marvin Lichtenstein, Alvin B. Maisler, Morris Migdal  
Riefka Levin Nielsen, Ricky Ressin, Meyer Rock, Samuel Rosenthal  
Tessie Soloway, Clara Walanka, Albert Wechter, Emanuel Weinberger

**Week of February 19-28**

Renee Sinai Avigdor, Alex Berlin, Arnold Brandstatter, Amanda Davis, Frances C. Davis  
James N. Davis, MD, Ron Dick, Max David Falek, Mollie Glassman, Arnold Hershkowitz  
Thomas Jamison, Louis Kessler, Albert Laffer, Ruth Levenbook, MD., Sylvia Luciano  
Charles Manck, Guido S. Moron, Diane Wyle Munk, Blanche Smollett Murphy  
Ethel Heller Paiewonsky, Alex Rabinowitz, Arthur Sandhaus, Suzanna Mann Schafer  
Martin Sternberg, Idalee Adel Stewart, Esther Wechter



# **We remember our Chai Members and those who are dear to our Chai Members**

## **Week of February 1-4**

David Callen, Ethel Cohen, Millie Eisenberg, Lila Fine, Ina Greenspan, David Groner  
Rose Gross, Ray Heller, Harry Lefkoff, Cherie Levien, Esther Levin, Sam Miller  
Morris Mirkin, Lorraine Morrow, Eric Nussbaum, Arnold Paddock, Florence Ragless  
Mark Robinson, Matel Snitman, Bella Teshler, Manuel Weinstein, Rosalyn Wolf

## **Week of February 5-11**

Rose Abramson, Norman Alterman, Gustavo Ascanio, Herbert Banks, Sutta Bartick, Norman Becker  
Leonard Berkman, Faye Bernstein, Hadassah Bogler, Pearl Brill, Lucille Brown, Henry Chakrin  
Louis Cohn, Jacqueline Cowl, Josephine Fagenson, Johnathen Fink, Sam Fisher, Frances Friedman  
Sol Furman, Sophie Gertz, Louis Goldberg, Hortense Goldenberg, Joseph Greene, Fred Henkin  
Rosalyn Jones, Jerry Jotkoff, Maria Karpousis, Bessie Kleid, Elias Korn, Henry Kosterlitz  
Rudolph Kronheim, Simon Kruger, Gerald Kuhr, Anthony Kurtz, Millie Lazare, Irving Lerner  
Nathan Lifshus, Morris London, Lillian Lorintz, Herman Mandell, Sonja Matos, Florence Mazer  
Hilda Mirkin, Louis Olchick, Tillie Pierce, Sydney Pols, Harriett Rosenberg, Morris Rosenzweig  
Albert Shipow, Elaine Singer, Emmanuel Solomon, Sidney Solomon, Sarah Spector, Bernard Turk  
Marjorie Weiss, Nathan Wicknin

## **Week of February 12-18**

Michael Arciola, Marvin Aszkenas, Sophie Barer, Gertrude Berwin, Sanford Black, Martha Blackman  
Sarah Bromberg, Alan Bronner, Isaac Brown, Max Butler, Dorothy Chudnofsky, Irene Cohan  
Kaylee Cutler, Ida Dashe, Sam Dlatt, Rose Dolby, Mary Dreyfus, Louis Fenyves, Pearl Gerstel  
Anna Goldstein, Paul Goldstein, William Goldstein, Muriel Greenberg, Seymour Greenberg  
Dr. Walter Gruber, Menashe Kestenbaum, Ofelia Klaiman, Marvin Kolkin, Louis Korenge, Herbert Kreiter  
Charles Kutner, Robert Lainof, Jacob Leff, Anna Lefkowitz, Edyth Lein, Irving Lerner, Anne Liberman  
Marvin Loewy, Riva Magid, Mina Miller, Rebecca Mittman, Phoebe Mooney, Sarah Orbuch, Milton Patz  
Anna Paverman, Clara Perlov, Benjamin Radbel, Joseph Rosenberg, Leonard Schur, Lenore Sherwin  
Olive Siegel, Millicent Stark, Edward Testa, Anna Toffel, Isaac Troy, Dorothy Vernick, Bernice Weinstein  
Eugene Weisberg, Bella White, Dennis Wood, Sylvia Zweiback

## **Week of February 19-28**

Ziska Anduze, Tillie Angert, Abe Applebaum, Esther Askenazi, Gerald Baker, Louis Barash, Ruth Beck  
Lina Benchimol, Jeannette Berger, Morris Berger, Muriel Berlin, Jack Bernstein, George Black  
David Brass, Herman Braverman, Joseph Bressler, Betty Chartor, Joseph Cohen, Dr. Reuben Cordova  
Lawrence Coyne, Leon Cutler, Harriet Danzinger, Harriet Davidson, Jeanne Dellapi, Arty Dorfman  
Abraham Faskow, David Fierberg, Carolyn Finkelstein, Sylvia Fleisher, Max Freedman  
Gertrude Friedman, Stephen Gardner, Reynold Goldstein, Leatrice Goodman, Abraham Gorevitz  
Dr. George Gottlieb, Eva Granek, Abraham Grossman, Irwin Grossman, Roslyn Haiman, Abe Hanopole  
Harry Harris, Miriam Henneh, Gwenthian Hewitt, Jack Hollander, Sol Iwrey, Alvin Kaplan, Harry Kranson  
David Kestenbaum, Burton Klein, Max Klein, Kate Lainof, Dorothy Langsam, Gerhard Leske, Art Levoff  
Philip Levy, Molly Lichtenberg, Uri Lichter, Judith Like, Irving Linner, Rose Locker, Toby Loewy  
Ruth Lupson, Michael Lustig, Esther Maletzky, Sam Marcus, Florence Mittleman, Arthur Namm  
Edith Namm, Julia Newman, Jacqueline Obstgarten, Janet Pace, Chester Parry, Esther Patz  
Dr. Sidney Pestka, Richard Peterson, Rose Redan, Martin Resnikoff, Morris Rittersky, Debra Rosen  
Frieda Rosenberg, Hazel Salzman, Jack Sandler, Hymie Schwartz, Leon Schwartz, Celia Siegle  
Martin Silver, Samuel Singer, Campbell Sogot, Jilda Strauss, Sam Strauss, Richard Taylor  
Naomi Vecker, Abraham Weingarten, Kerri Wood



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Janet McGee  
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Paula Nisan  
John Piolet

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Support our historical synagogue by purchasing unique keepsakes and one of a kind gifts you won't see anywhere else.

**Log onto [www.synagogue.vi/shop](http://www.synagogue.vi/shop)**



**We look forward to seeing you soon!**

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Your support enables all of our work

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# HOURGLASS

Shalom and welcome  
to a place where history and destiny meet,  
where looking up, and looking down, and looking around  
all tell a tale unlike almost any other.

We have come together here,  
as a community and as a congregation,  
in spirituality and study and service,  
one generation to the next, since 1796  
— and in our current building since 1833.

In coming together now, you step into that tradition,  
and help write the next chapter in our ongoing story.

<b>Rabbi:</b>	Michael L. Feshbach
<b>Administrator:</b>	Stella Minion
<b>Docent/Gift Shop Manager:</b>	Agnes Rampino
<b>Custodian:</b>	Michael Fuertes

## **The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas**

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