The Hourglass

BULLETIN OF THE HEBREW CONGREGATION OF ST THOMAS

APRIL 2021

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Happy Lag Ba'Omer!!		
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April Services and Programs

Parashat Tazria-Metzorah Seventh and (Reform) Last Day of Pesach Leviticus 12:1-15:33; Isaiah 66:1-24 2 Erev Shabbat and Eve of Seventh Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM 16 Fri Night of Pesach Service, 6:30 PM Yom HaAtzma'ut Observed and Fri https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312_ Honoring Stella and Lou Minion Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Pesach Concluding Festival Morning 3 Sat and Yizkor Memorial Svc, 10:00 AM No Shabbat Morning Worship and Study 17 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 Installation of Bishop Jerome Feudjio, Sat Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 at Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Cathedral Yom HaShoah/ Holocaust Remembrance Day Parashat Acharei Mot-Kedoshim **Jewish Community of the Virgin Islands** 7 Leviticus 16:1-20:27; Amos 9:7-15 **Special Joint Program of the Hebrew** Wed 23 Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM **Congregation of St Thomas and** https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 Fri Congregation B'nai Or of St. Croix Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Service of Remembrance, 7:30 PM. followed by special presentation on VI history. See page ___, below, for details. 24 Possible Early Torah Study, 9:00 AM https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 Sat Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Parashat Emor Parashat Sh'mini Leviticus 21:1-24:23; Ezekiel 44:15-31 Leviticus 9:1-11:46; II Samuel 6:1-7:17 Lag B'Omer Holiday Observed 9 Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM 30 In person Barbecue Dinner and Bonfire? https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 Fri Fri Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Location, timing and other details TBD 10 Shabbat Morning Worship 1 Shabbat Morning Worship and Study, 10:00 AM Sat and Study, 10:00 AM Sat https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Meeting ID: 340 774 4312 Yom HaAtzma'ut/ Israel Independence Day

Global Yom HaAtzma'ut Celebration,

Register at http://jfeds.org/Israel73

with Jewish Federations of North America

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Thu

Open For Us the Gates

Message from Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach

There is a powerful prayer, sung during the *Ne'ilah* Concluding Service almost at the end of Yom Kippur: "*P'tach Lanu Sha'ar*!" the prayer pleads... "Open for us the gates." (You can hear a version of the prayer here. This plaintiff setting was acutally written by a Cantor I once worked with.)



How we yearn to be together once again! While there have been silver linings of distance connection, while the ways we communicate may be forever changed, and while we will continue streaming in many areas of our lives... there is nothing better for relationships and nothing more important for community than in person human contact. Can we "go back?" What does it mean to move forward?

We face, now, a challenge which is human, probably expected, and common. It is also dangerous, and potentially destructive. It has been with us throughout the pandemic, but it grows more acute now that we see hints of hope on the horizon.

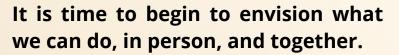
It is this: different people react to the same situation in different ways. Sometimes the differences may seem small: do you do curbside pickup, or get everything delivered? Do you set the groceries aside for a time, or unpack them right away? If you are eating outside with someone else, how long do you stay masked? And a thousand other such questions in our lives of late.

But there is a... I am not sure what to call it, so I will say, perhaps too harshly, a "high horse of small distinction," or "pointing fingers over a hand's breadth" of difference. You make your choices of how to be and how to behave in the age of COVID. Anyone less cautious is, of course, wildly reckless in your eyes. Anyone more cautious in engaged in a spineless overreaction.

But if this attitude festers, if it lingers without a healing elixir of love and compassion, this kind of judgement and bearing this sense of righteous certainty can degrade the bonds that hold a community together. We *have to be* patient, and kind, accepting and even trying to accommodate some range of the reactions in our midst, in the face of a crisis like this.

And yet, still, being together is also important. And we have to make communal decisions.

And vaccines are here. (Let me note the surface paradox that our islands offer among the easiest access to these vaccines under the US flag – and one of the lowest percentage rates of vaccination of the population. But, of course, it is not a paradox: the second fact is the reason for the first.)



Among the most important comments I heard at a recent conference was this one. "Last year, when COVID hit, we shut down like turning off a light switch. Now, in thinking about what to do, we should reopen like a dimmer," coming up slowly and cautiously.

A fourth wave could delay or alter any of these decisions. And good fortune and success also could lead to additional time together, sooner than some of this.



But as passed by our Board of Trustees, and presented in my report at our Annual Meeting in late March, I want to share with you what we are looking at, and hoping for, in terms of upcoming in person services and other gatherings.

All other things being equal, barring setbacks or reversals in progress, with masks when indoors, appropriate social distancing, and equipment ordered to continue streaming services, our plan for easing into a physical return follows on the next page.



Hebrew Congregation of St Thomas Plan for Phased Reopening I

• Friday, April 30: Observance of Lag B'Omer Outdoor Service? Barbeque? Bonfire? Location TBD.

Sunday, May 16: Erev Shavuot

5 PM: Ice Cream Tot Shavuot, Location TBD (possibly Lilienfeld House)

7 PM (or earlier?): In person Erev Shavuot in the Sanctuary featuring a standing, celebratory reading of The Ten Commandments, possibly also including blessing for graduating High School seniors.
8 PM: return home, Zoom Study Session/Tikkun Leil Shavuot.

Friday, June 4, 6:30 PM

Sanctuary Service in person!
Dinner or Oneg to follow? (Lilienfeld House).
Honoring Stu Wechter.

- Friday, June 11, 6:30 PM
 Regular Sanctuary Service
- Saturday, June 12, 10:30 AM
 Shabbat Morning Service
 in the Sanctuary: Life-Cycle Bar Mitzvah

This plan allows time for anyone on island to get the vaccine before our first "event." If you have not yet done so, please make plans to get the vaccine now! See Vaccination information flyer, below.

- Friday, June 18, 6:30 PM
 Regular Sanctuary Service
- Saturday, June 19, 10:30 AM
 Shabbat Morning Service
 in the Sanctuary: Life-Cycle Bar Mitzvah

Other May and June Services by Zoom (although, again, with luck and success this could change, to add more in-person gatherings.)

Hebrew Congregation of St Thomas Plan for Phased Reopening II

"Full" Reopening July 2021 if trends continue in the right direction. Shabbat morning services and Torah study may continue by Zoom other than when we have in-person services for other reasons, such as B'nai Mitzvah or visitors and life-cycle events.

· Friday, July 2, 6:30 PM

Family Style Sanctuary Service, followed by dinner or special Oneg Shabbat at Lilienfeld House. Honoring Agi Rampino.

- Saturday, July 3, 10:30 AM
 Shabbat Morning Service in the Sanctuary:
 Life-Cycle Bar Mitzvah
- Other Friday Night Services in July in the Sanctuary
- SAVE THE DATE NOW: Friday, July 23, 6:30 PM: Chanukah in July Regular Sanctuary Service, followed by Latke Dinner!
- HIGH HOLY DAYS in person, we hope, and with the in-person, physical presence of returning Student Cantor Laynie Zell, anticipated to be with us for three weeks.

Special Thanks and Words of Apprectiation -To our Staff, our Rabbi, our Members and our Board of Trustees

Message from Marilyn Blackhall, President

I take a deep breath beginning my second year as President of the Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas. This marks twice as President since I was elected the congregation's first woman President, in 1988.

I agreed to serve again because of what the Hebrew Congregation and its historic building means to me after over 40 years of membership... with children who were born here, named in our congregation, who became B'nai Mitzvah here, etc. etc. Believe it or not, without calling names, some of the long-time congregant families with whom my children grew up are still here with us, dedicated to the congregation as I am, loving our historic building and dedicated to its survival as well as to our friendships and longtime relationships. Despite our disagreements, which lately revolve around when we should reopen, how many people should we allow in at once, should we allow tourists to use our bathrooms now, etc. we are still dedicated to one another and, as I just mentioned, to our historic building and congregation as well. It keeps us alive, and we keep it alive.

This has been an incredibly challenging year. So many have left the island, our life cycle events which provided us with a great deal of financial support are practically nonexistent and our visitors have diminished to very few... although we do keep the synagogue open 3 days a week and offer tours, and a gift shop.

What I am really supposed to talk about now, marking the beginning of my second year as President, is what we have accomplished this year together, but believe it or not it's all a jumble and every day brings new challenges. Instead, this will be more of an expression of gratitude and emotional release from all the pressures of what leadership brings during a pandemic when things are so different. It will not be a list of the many things accomplished... like how to we keep fiscally sound, how to appreciate our hardworking staff, who have partially taken on new roles and adapted to finding other things to keep them productive, how to support our Rabbi, how to help congregants in need, how to just keep going....

I wish to thank and praise those who have been our support system, who deserve praise more than anything. First the staff, with Stella Minion, our administrator who never stops, is forever efficient, does everything that needs to be done and more.....who we couldn't do without and who is now leaving island, but thankfully will be working for us part time,

(Continued on the next page)

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remotely, with her newly hired assistant Michelle Barnes who will now be in the office....and of course Agi Rampino our gift shop manager and docent who has now taken on the role of grant writer so that we can capitalize on the grants that are being offered to help with the building and it's structural needs; and Michael Fuertes, our Maintenance person who has been with us for over 20 years and is always there when we need him. This is a team, second to none, without whom I cannot imagine functioning. A special welcome to Michelle who I know will be a great addition.

To our incredibly special Rabbi Michael Feshbach who works so diligently and effectively! He certainly deserves major praise for helping to keep us flourishing spiritually, through the live streamed services he creates weekly. He has dedicated himself to continuing our spirituality and our Judaism in ways that would have been hard to imagine before the pandemic and much of which we hope to continue after we move back into the Synagogue.

Loving mention of our devoted members who remain steadfastly with us in spirit on island, or from afar. And to our Chai members, we thank you for being with us on Friday nights and special events. Everyone's participation and contributions mean a lot and keeps us from feeling isolated

And finally, our Board of 11 people. I am purposely putting these names in no special order because they all are valuable. Thank you so much to our extremely qualified Treasurer, Lou Minion, who was just reelected to the Board and will continue to serve virtually; to our competent Secretary Penny Feuerzeig, one of our long term members who certainly didn't beg for the job having been past president, but who creates great minutes; to our very special House chair Donald Pomeranz, another long time member who served as past president and has assumed many other Board roles: to our immediate past president Dorothy Isaacs who grew up here and returned a few years ago after a legal career and is now doing restoring our hurricane damaged cemetery and who was an excellent president during and after two hurricanes; to Peter Rosen past house chair who is keeping us safe with solar panels; to Trudie Prior, another long term member, who was a superbly dedicated Treasurer for years and year and now is our Development Chair and a major contributor; to Mark Borden, one of our actual newcomers who is diligently chairing our Social Action Committee; to Liza Margolis who serves as our Social Chair and who we hope will have lots to plan once we reopen; and our illustrious Vice President, Alan Friedman, with a wonderful young family. He is always full of energy, and recently our Personnel Chair and Nominating Committee Chair, never saying no and a great listener; and finally, to Matthew Krefetz. Thank you again to all of you. I could not continue to do this job without you.

So please forgive me for not telling you more about what is going on at our Synagogue. I just had to take this time to thank everyone who is keeping our congregation functioning and alive and helping me to lead!!!

Erev Yom HaShoah

Holocaust Martyr's and Heroes' Remembrance Day

Wednesday, April 7, 2021, beginning at 7:30 PM



The Jewish Community of the Virgin Islands presents:

A Joint Gathering of Congregation B'nai Or/The St. Croix Jewish Community and The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas (The St. Thomas Synagogue)

A Service of Remembrance and Respect followed by
"A Forgotten Chapter in Island History: How the Virgin Islands
Nearly Saved Thousands of Jewish Refugees from the Nazis"
presented by Chris Finch, member of the St. Croix Jewish community,
former Executive Director of Lutheran Social Services of the VI and
former Commissioner of the VI Department of Human Services

Join us at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312 or use Zoom Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

Yom HaAtzma'ut Israel Independence Day

Thursday, April 15, 2021

Special Global *Erev Yom HaAtzma'ut* Program sponsored by the Jewish Federation of North America begins at 7:00 PM AST/EDT

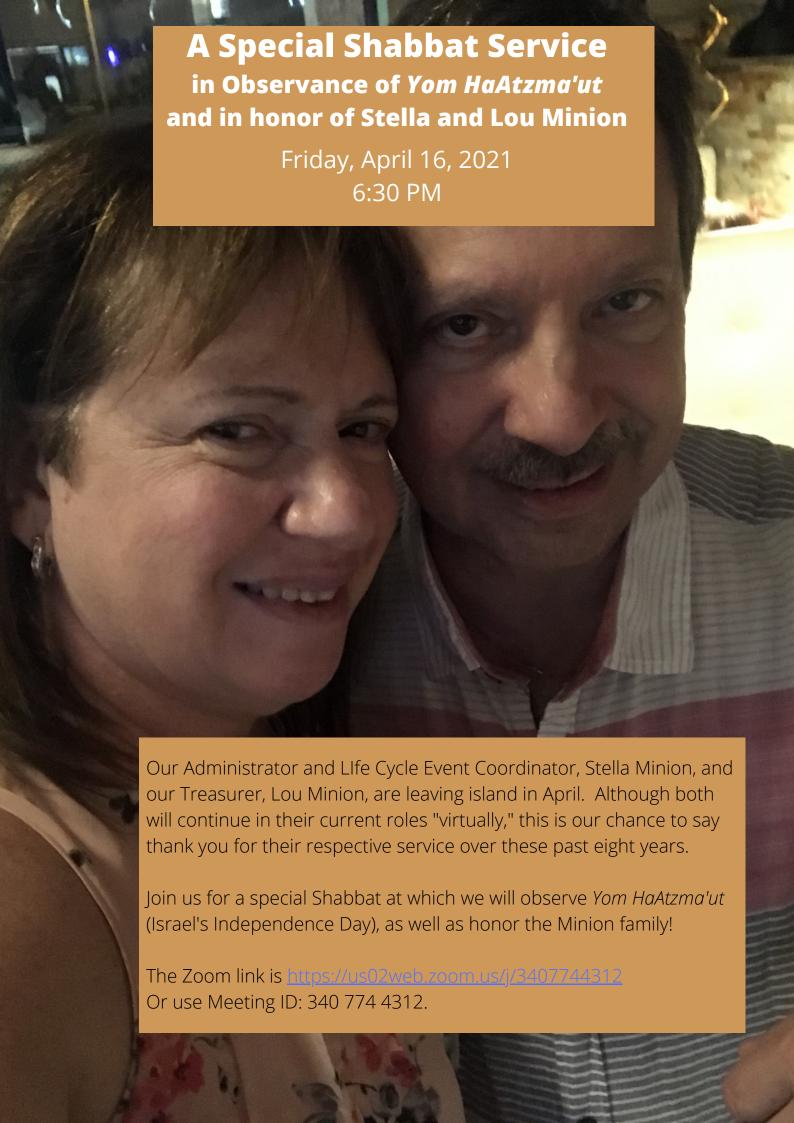
Israel's 73rd birthday will be one to remember, with special guests, Israeli

Sign up now! Register at http://jfeds.org/lsrael73

gold-medal-hopefuls and a celebration

in honor of Israel's President Reuven

Ruvi Rivlin - ראובן רובי ריבלין





THE GLOBAL NACAO











Sunday, April 18, 2021 10 AM EDT

Western Sephardi Synagogue Tours

Dominican Republic

Dr. Hakham Yehonatan Elazar-Demota

Indonesia

Yaakov Baruch

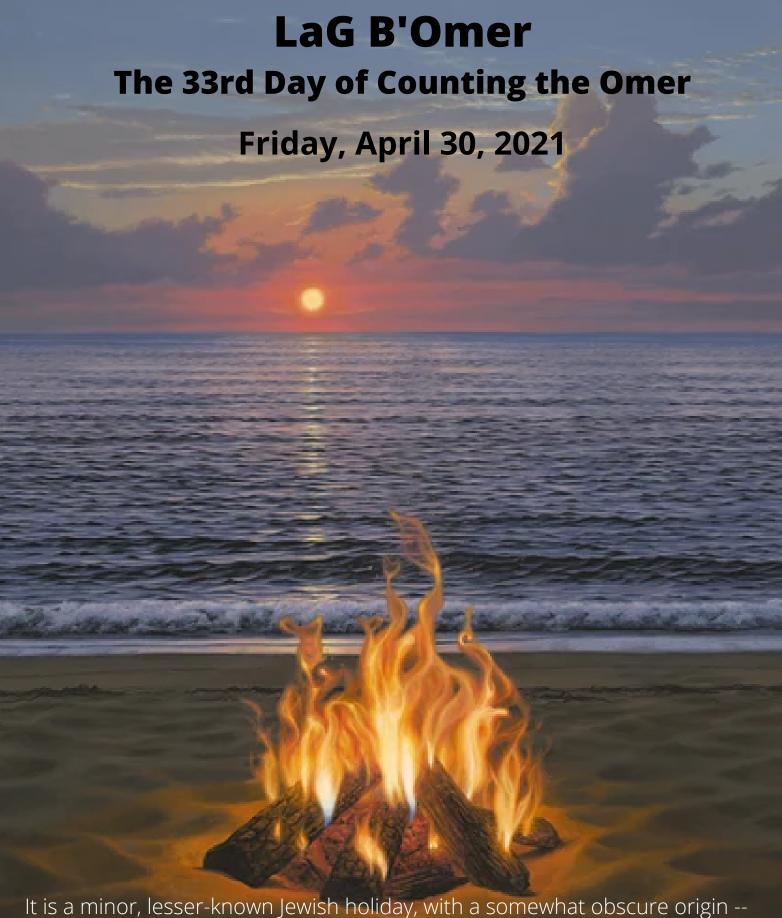
St. Thomas

Rabbi Michael Feshbach



Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas

Register at InstituteofJewishExperience.org



It is a minor, lesser-known Jewish holiday, with a somewhat obscure origin -revived in modern Israel through its celebration via Bonfires and Barbeques.
You can read more about it here. This year it is on Thursday night, April 29
through the day on Friday, April 30. And we are looking to observe Lag B'omer
here on St Thomas on Friday evening -- with our own barbeque, bonfire and
short service, in person! Watch for details on exact timing and location,
coming soon!!



The Qu'ran and the Jews

Dr. Reuven Firestone, Regenstein Professor in Medieval Judaism and Islam, HUC/Los Angeles

> APRIL 6 6:00 PM ET

Register at huc.edu/HUCConnect



The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas $\label{eq:congregation} \textbf{q}^* \textbf{q} = \textbf{crca} \cdot \textbf{normal}$

In partnership with HUC-JIR





Judaism & Culture

Opening the Ark: Bringing a Lost Polish Synagogue to Life

Abby Schwartz,
Director, Skirball Museum, HUC/Cincinnati

Shmuel Polin '21, Rabbinical Student, HUC/Cincinnati

> WED., APRIL 7 12:30 PM ET

Register at huc.edu/HUCConnect



The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas ק"ק ברכה ושלום ונמילות חסרים

In partnership with HUC-JIR





Reflections on the Significance of Holocaust Memory in the 21st Century

The Roger E. Joseph Prize Lecture

Sara J. Bloomfield,
Director,
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

THURS., APRIL 15 3:00 PM ET

Register at huc.edu/HUCConnect



The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas ק"ק ברכה ושלום וגמילות חסדים

In partnership with HUC-JIF



The World of the Cairo Genizah:

The Jews of Medieval Islam

Jennifer Grayson, Ph.D.
Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Assistant Professor
of Jewish History,
HUC/Cincinnati, and Xavier University

APRIL 27 6:00 PM ET

Register at huc.edu/HUCConnect



The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas ק"ק ברכה ושלום וגמילות חסרים







Birthdays and Anniversaries

April Birthdays

April Anniversaries

Jesse Kass	April 2
Nina Schafer	April 3
Sunny Steinberg	April 5
Avna Cassinelli	April 8
Michael Krienik	April 11
Arielle Rieder	April 14
Rabbi Stephen Moch	April 15
Elisabeth Goldberg	April 16
Eileen Berlin	April 17
Ashley Pomeranz	April 18
Christine Udycz	April 19
Morgan Rosenberg	April 30

Penny and Hank Feuerzeig April 8
Dorothy and Mark Isaacs April 8
Bethany and Jeff Silverman April 12



רפואה שלימה

A complete recovery to:



Robin Adler Laurie Allen Charles Arthur Pauline Balsam Eileen Berlin Marcia Bryant Amiel Cohen Kayla Copeland Quinn Copps Yigal Ehrlich Jared Falek Gina Talia Farahnick Marci Finkelstein Paula Finkelstein Wycliffe Francis Julie Friedman Marilyn Grishman Violet Adelaide Johnson Rabbi Bruce Kahn Toby Kahn Jay Kranitz Marilyn Kreke

Helen Leneman

Sheri Levin

Linda Lewensohn Steven Markowitz Tom McCoy Raymond Newton **James Nicholson** Maria Grace Nicholson Mary Pupko Rosa Pupko **Dorothy Ring** Monte Rosenthal Henia Rubins John Schenkel **Ruth Schloss** Maxine Shayna Stark Bill Stein Robert Steverson **Robert Tunick** Rachel Wallace Steve Wasserman Joyce Wasserman 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.

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

Week of April 1-8

Jayne Rein Abrams, Benjamin H. Becker, Melvin Benson, Herman Braunsberg, Bennie Deich Cornelle Dixon, Yetta Fixler, Shirley Gorin, Sarah Herling, Abraham Jaffee, Claire Kantor Yetta Rock, Edward Teperman, Arthur Zucker

Week of April 9-15

Muriel Mallin Berman, Nathan Buder, Zina Ida Gothelf, Morris Gurewitz, Lena Halperin, Anna Shapira Jollek, Marcus Jollek, Mordechai Jollek, Sali Jollek, Rose Kaminsky, Frances Kessler, Sida Jollek Lubianker Alexander da Costa Mendez Belisario, Dorothy Milburn, John D. Mooney, Jr., Sam Newman Bertha Cardoze Osorio, Benjamin Schuster, Chaim Leib Schuster, Gitel Weissman Schuster, Herschel Schuster, Rosa Schuster, Herman Simons, Harry Slosky, Louis Tobin, M.D.

Week of April 16-22

Rose Adel, Delmar Craft, Alexander Cohen D'Azevedo, Mariam Mendes DeCosta, Solomon deGeorge Leah dePinna, Judith Dorfman, Rachel Lopez Fonseca, Rabbi Bernard Heller Gabriel Prospero Henriques Moron, Albert Jacob Henriquez Moron, Nancy Jacobs, Belle Jaffee Irene Kornblath, Abraham Levin, Benjamin Matt, M. Leonard Matt, Amalia Paiewonsky Mylner Zina Paiewonsky, Abraham S. Sasso, Mordecai Sasso, Jack Starr, Benjamin Werbel

Week of April 23-30

Elvira Benjamin, Delia Delvalle, Cornelle Dixon, Genevieve Folk, Ralph Gruber, David Pretto Henriquez Harry Herstik, Hoheb, Larry Horwitz, Sarah Horwitz, Elijah David Houston, Rita Jacobs, Murray King Leah Adelaide Levi, Esther Levy, Ribca Hana Levy Maduro, Beatrice Lilienfeld, Robert John Maguire Abigail Halman Sasso, Vivienne Silver, Helen Starr, Anita Steinberg



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

Week of April 1-8

Dr. Robert Aaron, Fannie Axilbund, Harry Berkman, Doris Blumenkehl, William Cohen, Milton Danzinger, Ethel Davis Faith Diskin, Helene Epstein, Joan Fabe, William Feder, Sadie Firestone, Elaine Firstenbrg, Sarah Fisher Richard Freedman Bernard Gourwitz, Mary Greenberg, Ruth Groner, Mildred Halpern, David Herling Lillian Herman Anne Klein, Dorothy Klein David Kolkin, Lillian Lefkowitz, Florence Lipton, David Lutkoff Sam Mansky, Allan Mayro, Milton Miller, Herbert Mossett, Judith Peel, Ralph Pfingst, Stanley Reiss Sadelle Robinson, Ruth Rosen, Mildred Rosenberg, Marvin Ross, Lydia Rothschild Harry Sayetta, Lenny and Buffie Schafer, Annie Scheinin, Serena Sechy, Sandra Sickerman, Norma Silverman, Rose Skowron Clara Solomon, Pearl Stein, Esther Steinman, Thelma Strauss, Shirley Sussman, Betty Taflin Mary Tannenbaum, Edgar Taub Robert Thrasher, Gail Tobin, Donald Walgren June Wapner, Esther Wasserman, Marilyn Willer, Elmer Yavitz

Week of April 9-15

Ikana Aflalo, Harold Altus, Morris Beck, Leon Bercowitz, Harriet Bernstein, Rebecca Block, Walter Cooper Max Davis, Benjamin Elzweig, Gerald Faigeles, Phillip Feinberg, Ruth Feldschneider, Florence Friedman Ilse Friedrichs, Gertrude Gentry, Samuel Gordon, Marvin Green, Rose Herman, Billy Iler, Max Kleid Nathan Kleid, Charles Kodis, Allan Loren, Ida Mayro, Patricia Mayro, Alice Meyer, Stephanie Mizrachi Joe Orbuch, Benjamin Parnis, Joseph Poders, Arlene Rodkin, Bennett Rodkin, Rose Rosenzweig Rosa Rudnet, Lee Schoendorf, Robert Sherman, Samuel Slosman, Leah Sloven, Harry Steinhart Dr. Carl Strauss, Paul Tartak, Louis Vernick, Leah Walvisch, Rose Wander, Irene Weber Herman Weinstein, Clara Weiss, Eric Willenz, Jannette Zevin

Week of April 16-22

Isadore Azer, Irving Bauer, Ethel Berg, Morris Berman, Bess Chakrin, Esther Epstein, Lawrence Fried Irving Friedel, Bertha Geller, Lillian Goldman, Pearl Gordon, Elbert Greene, Anna Kaplan, Joe Kashinejad Marilyn Kaufman, Louis Kramer, Lillian Kurcias, Saul Lew, Phoebe Mooney, Abraham Novick Rabbi Raphael Ostrovsky, Lorayne Peretz, Tilley Rodman, Martha Rosenberg, Esther Rosenblum Mildred Rosenzweig, David Rothbart, Helga Sachs, Max Sandhaus Jerome Satin, Lillian Sherma Philip Sherman, Robert Shulman, Irving Silver, Marvin Stark, Earl Susaneck, Morton Vogel Charles Wine, Frances Winland, Tami Yavitz

Week of April 23-30

Arthur Abramson, John Adler Gloria Altman, Barbara Alterman, Dr.Sol Austrian, Edna Axilbond Jerome Balas, Frances Black, Patricia Bosecke, Solly Bromberg, David Casuto, Bertram Fagenson Jack Finkelstein, Shirly Gerstein, Aaron Greene, Chiam Guttenberg, Esther Kaell, Isidore Kaplan Leona Karp, Sidney Katz, Helen Laudon, Hymie Lemmer Joseph Letwat, Margot Levy, Tess Meyer Debra Millenson, Martin Nochimson, Betty Nussbaum, Helen Ostrovsky, Ephraim Ozsarfati, Arthur Pomper Doris Praga, Stuart Rich, Harry Rosenberg, Herman Roth, Sidney Rubinstein, Rose Shrenkel Jeffrey Strauss, Barachiah Thompson, Ida Thrope, Morris Varon, Lee Walper, David Wasserstrom Calvin Weinstein, Frances Weinstein, Charles Witlin, Ceda Wittenberg, Bernard Wolfe, Ellen Wolman

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Mark Borden, Matthew Krefetz, Liza Margolis Donald Pomeranz, Trudie Prior, Peter Rosen

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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.

Rabbi: Michael L. Feshbach

Administrator: Stella Minion

Administrative Assistant: Michelle Barnes

Docent/Gift Shop Manager: Agnes Rampino

Custodian: Michael Fuertes

The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas

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