

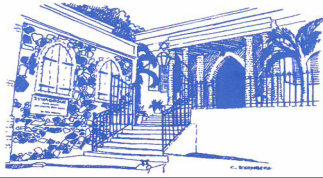
Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas

Membership Information and Application



Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas
2116 Crystal Gade (Synagogue Hill)
P.O. Box 266, St. Thomas, VI 00804
340-774-4312 Fax: 340-774-3249

Visit our Website: www.synagogue.vi
or follow us on Facebook at:
The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas
(<https://www.facebook.com/synagoguevi/>)



The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas

קהל קדוש ושלום וגמילות חסדים

P.O. Box 266, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00804-0266

(340) 774-4312

Fax (340) 774-3249

e-mail: info@synagogue.vi website: www.synagogue.vi

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 here now,
you step into that tradition,
and you help to write the next chapter
in our ongoing and still evolving story.

Our Congregation

The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas
is a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive community
composed of permanent residents, seasonal members, and overseas supporters.

We are proud of our past and conscious of our place in history.

Our Sanctuary is the oldest synagogue building
in continuous use under the American flag,
the second-oldest in the Western Hemisphere,
and one of five synagogues in the world
with sand on the floor.

As beautiful as the building may be, however,
we are about far more than a single space.

We are a living community, here for each other.

And we face the future with excitement,
ready to bring together the new energy you bring
with all that has gone before.

Our Worship Services

We come together to build our community
in service and song, spirituality and study,
social settings and common cause.
Our varied Jewish observances and
worship experiences include:

Kabbalat Shabbat

Every Friday evening.

The first Friday of the month the service often begin at 6:00 PM
Most other Friday evenings we begin at 6:30 pm.

Tot Shabbat

Watch for a schedule for services for the youngest among us,
held on occasional Friday nights and for many holidays.

Shabbat Morning Services and Study

We usually meet in our community space,
Lilienfeld House (across the street from the synagogue)
for a brief service on Saturday mornings,
followed by study of the Torah portion of the week.
Watch for details and dates; we sometimes meet
in homes or elsewhere on the island.

Havdallah

We also meet on occasional Saturday evenings
at locations across the island, for a musical, camp-style service
to end Shabbat and begin the new week.

Holidays

We offer a full-range of observance
of all Jewish holidays, in traditional and creative settings alike.

Please join us!

For further information, please contact us at:
340-774-4312 or info@synagogue.vi

Message from Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach

Dear Friends,

I am pleased and excited to welcome you, on behalf of everyone at the Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas, to this very special community. The Hebrew Congregation has had a rich history of inclusion since its founding in 1796. Spanish Jews escaping the Inquisition found a safe haven here in the Caribbean. The ways in which the island welcomed us, and we have been open to all people here, continued in subsequent years. We hope we convey that sense of openness and hospitality in all that we do, even now, over 200 years later.

Today, our membership reflects both the history and diversity of St. Thomas. Members come from all walks of life and many different religious backgrounds and ethnicities. We include in our midst descendants of the founding families and those on-island for the first time. As a congregation, we welcome Jewish families in all their diversity, including interfaith families, LGBTQ individuals and couples, those with or without children, Jewish singles and single parents, and Jews of color.

We are a part of the Union for Reform Judaism, the North American Reform movement. We also, however, remember our Sephardic legacy. We hold in our hands a heritage of diversity. Based on our history, the diverse backgrounds of our members, and our role in sharing our story with the entire Jewish world, we hope that those of all denominations will feel welcome worshipping with us.

Finally, as a Synagogue located in a tropical destination, we embrace an eclectic combination of permanent members, off-island members, and visitors, all of whom add to the culture of our historic synagogue and congregation.

In stepping into a community, something special happens. It is, in a way, a transformation of grammar, a shift from second- or third-person, to first person. “You” may join because of something that “they” offer. But as soon as you step in, you become part of who we are. Your voice, your vote, and your vision for our future mean as much as that of any long-time member. This, then, is our community – to shape, to dream, and to make real, together.

My own hope for our spiritual community, is that we are, always, a source of **warmth** (welcoming us as we are), and **depth** (challenging us to change, helping us to grow), and **breadth** (where our values walk with us into the world and the rest of our lives). May this place, and this community, be a source of inspiration, fulfillment, and meaning for you and your family.

L'Shalom (in peace),

Michael L. Feshbach
Rabbi

The most important part of what we do is community building. This is a sacred task which transcends even individual or single acts of observance; it calls upon us to be there for one another. A modern congregation is focused on relationships. In our coming together as a holy community, though, there is communal work to be done, and ways in which congregations are often organized which provide pathways to involvement. Here, then, are some opportunities and needs which help us both connect with each other and reach our goals. This is a sample list, subject to change. Not all groups listed below are currently active. And we welcome your input and suggestions, your ideas and energy as well.

Committees/Interest Groups:

Mitzvah Corps/Caring Committee

Offers support during periods of illness, isolation, and/or bereavement.
Includes assistance with transportation (to services and programs or appointments); help with shopping; visits to homes and hospitals; meals; making calls and sending notes and cards.

Tikkun Olam/Social Action

Organizes projects and activities which focus on *Tikkun Olam*—repairing the world.
Builds relationships both inside and outside our synagogue as we work together to make the world a better place.

Ritual/Worship/Religious Practices

Provides guidance to the rabbi with respect to services and religious practices of the congregation,
serves as a sounding board to explore ideas, and assists in carrying out the details associated
with worship services and religious observance.

Programming

Helps both plan and execute synagogue programming throughout the year,
including communal meals and off-site activities.

Young Families

Helps plan and provide programming for young families.
Created Facebook group called Yeladim Al Galgalim (www.facebook.com/yeladimalgalgalim)

Religious and Family Education/Youth

Planning and helping run programs through our Religious School,
Family Education programs, and on-line learning opportunities for our youth;
promote and support social programs, summer camp and Israel experiences for youth

Adult Education/Life Long-Learning

Helps envision, promote and support a varied program of life-long learning,
within the congregation and the community at large,
for those of all backgrounds and levels.

Welcoming and Hospitality/Hachnasat Or'chim

Helps acclimate newcomers (including clergy and staff) in their transition to life on the island.

Communications

Assists with publicity, our bulletin, electronic communications, and public relations.

Personnel

Employee issues, reviews and policies, and personnel changes with board approval.

House

Maintain and operate real estate and property of the synagogue building and community house.

Ways and Means

Coordinates and organizes ways of supporting the synagogue,
including our Annual Arts Auction.

Chesed Shel Emet/Cemetery

For the upkeep and preservation of our historic cemeteries.

Membership Application

Family Last Name _____

Adult #1 Full Name and Religion _____

(How you wish to be listed, "Nickname") _____ Birth date ____/____/____

Adult #1 Hebrew Name _____

Adult #2 Full Name and Religion _____

(How you wish to be listed, "Nickname") _____ Birth date ____/____/____

Adult #2 Hebrew Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ + _____ Home Phone _____

Cell Phone Adult #1 _____ Adult #2 _____

Email Adult #1 _____ Adult #2 _____

Marital Status _____ Wedding Date (if married) ____/____/____

Resident in St. Thomas _____ years Former Synagogue & City _____

Adult#1 Business Name _____ Occupation/Title _____

Address _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Adult#2 Business Name _____ Occupation/Title _____

Address _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Name(s) of Children	Birthdate	Age	Grade	School	Married/Single
_____/____/____ M F	____/____/____	____	____	Pu Pr	M S
_____/____/____ M F	____/____/____	____	____	Pu Pr	M S
_____/____/____ M F	____/____/____	____	____	Pu Pr	M S
_____/____/____ M F	____/____/____	____	____	Pu Pr	M S

Persons in your household other than children

Name	Age	Relationship
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Names of relatives who belong to Hebrew Congregation	Relationship
_____	_____
_____	_____

Yahrzeit Information-Name	Date of Death	Observe	Congregant	Relationship
_____	____/____/____	(Eng/Heb)	to notify	to Cong.
_____	____/____/____	(Eng/Heb)	to notify	to Cong.
_____	____/____/____	(Eng/Heb)	to notify	to Cong.

Hebrew Congregation Commitment

- Membership commitment amounts, fees and assessments are established annually.
- The membership (fiscal) year is May 1st through April 30th. Membership commitment amounts may be paid annually, semi-annually or quarterly. There is no pro-ration of commitment amounts until after the High Holy Days.

Pledge and Agreement:

- I agree to pay all annual membership commitments and fees, as well (if applicable) all fees for Religious School, Confirmation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, etc., per the following schedule:

Annual Payment _____ Semi-Annual Payments _____ Quarterly Payments _____

Signature

Date

Membership Commitment Amounts (May 1 – April 30)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| ● Family Membership | \$900 |
| ● Individual Membership | \$450 |
| ● Under 35 Membership | 1/2 Price |

*No prospective or current member is denied membership because of financial hardship.
A request may be made to Hebrew Congregation with completion of a confidential
"Request for Adjusted Membership Commitment" form.*