

The Hourglass

BULLETIN OF
THE HEBREW CONGREGATION
OF ST THOMAS

FEBRUARY 2022

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February Services and Programs

Parashat Terumah

Exodus 25:1-27:19

- 4 Erev Shabbat Family Style Service,
Fri 6:30 PM AST (5:30 PM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

- 5 **Shabbat Morning Service:**
Sat **Bat Mitzvah of Lillian Kass (LCE)**
10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

Parashat Tetzaveh

Exodus 27:20-30:10

- 11 Erev Shabbat Service,
Fri 6:30 PM AST (5:30 PM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

February Forum I: Jews of Africa

(for details, see page 6, below)

- 12 Shabbat Morning Study (online only)
Sat 10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

Parashat Ki Tisa

Exodus 30:11-34:35

- 18 Erev Shabbat Service,
Fri 6:30 PM AST (5:30 PM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

February Forum II: Jews of India

Parashat Ki Tisa (continued)

- 19 Shabbat Morning Study (online only)
Sat 10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

Parashat Vayakhel

Exodus 35:1-38:20

- 25 Erev Shabbat Service
Fri 6:30 PM AST (5:30 PM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

February Forum III: Jews of China

- 26 **Shabbat Morning Service:**
Sat **Bat Mitzvah of Maya Livni (LCE)**
10:30 AM AST (9:30 AM EST)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

**Happy
Valentine's
Day**



Funny, You Don't Look...

Message from Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach



In 1904, the Polish-born Ashkenazi “looking” explorer Jacques Faitlovitch travelled to Ethiopia. When there, he had an unexpected encounter with an ancient and, to him, isolated community. Upon revealing his religious affiliation to them, he was greeted with incredulity and disbelief. “What?” the members of that community said. “No, you’re not! There are no white Jews!

During my sophomore year, at Haverford College, as I was preparing to leave for a junior year in Jerusalem, a Bryn Mawr senior wondered why I would be going to a place where, she said knowingly, “everyone is the same!” But during that next year in Israel I encountered people of every race, creed and culture, from East Asia to Western Africa. It was a place far more diverse in appearance and opinion than the “mixed” environment of my undergraduate experience.

My first year of rabbinical school, also in Jerusalem, coincided with a major airlift, the “rescue” of tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews, brought out in secret overnight operation worthy of the Israeli “mystique” of yore. I worked closely with members of that newly arrived community as part of our outreach and social service efforts that year.

Years later, as a rabbi in the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC, we had so many interracial couples, so many adoptive families, that we were like a mini-United Nations. My former congregation was the most ethnically diverse Jewish setting outside of Israel that I had ever seen. At one point, we had 21 B’nai Mitzvah in a four-month period of time, seven of whom were non-Caucasian. A few years later, I arrived early for a Confirmation class, and I looked around the room. I was the only “white” person there; the students who had arrived early were, by chance, African American, Hispanic, and Chinese.

At one point we contemplated forming a group called FYDL, for “Funny, You Don’t Look Jewish,” but realized that we would be undermining our own message.

And here, of course, at any point, and at any service, we can have an amazing mix of ethnic backgrounds. A recent teen party in our pool (with COVID precautions) included 13 Jewish kids – seven of whom were mixed race or African American!



This moment, now, at the outset of Black History Month, I watch with interest as The View struggles what to do with Whoopi Goldberg. I have no opinion on whether she should have been suspended, but her description of the Holocaust as “white folk against white folk” was surely problematic.

We Jews are not a race. The Nazis were wrong about that. We can be of any race, any color. Years ago, I officiated at the Bar Mitzvah of a Sean O’Conner. (OK, his name was equally Irish, but I changed it slightly for the sake of anonymity). One cannot tell anymore – if you ever could – who is Jewish by name, or by appearance!

This is a wonderful thing! But it is often a challenge, a struggle, to be a Jew of Color.

There are many organizations which celebrate, support, and educate about Jews of Color. I recommend any of you who are not familiar with these groups to check them out. Just as a place to start exploring this topic, there is [B’chol Lashon](#) (In Every Language), which strengthens Jewish identity by raising awareness of the ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of the Jewish people. There is the [Jews of Color Initiative](#), which focuses on building a more inclusive community here in the United States.

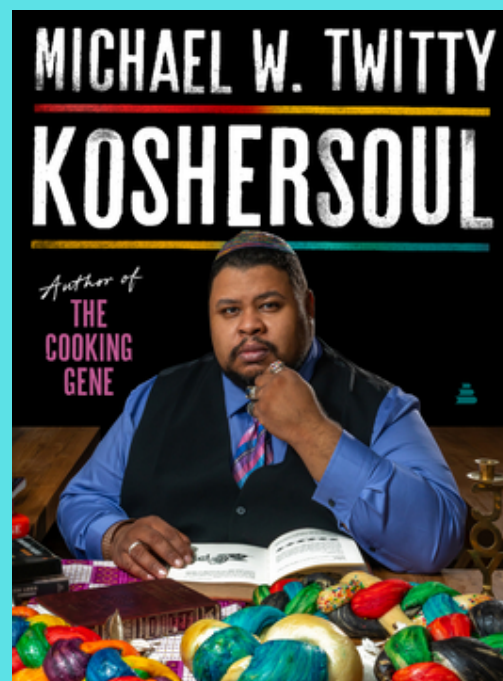
There are initiatives of our own Reform movement (see the Religious Action Center’s [Embracing Racial Diversity in Our Synagogues: Who Are Jews of Color?](#))

There is Kulanu, which supports isolated, emerging and returning Jewish communities around the globe (see <https://kulanu.org/>)

As a community with Sephardic roots, which became more Ashkenazi over time, on an island with a majority African-Caribbean culture, this is a topic we should be especially aware of.

Over the course of the coming weeks, I will be addressing, in sermons, aspects of the history and background of Jewish communities of color - from Ethiopia, to China, and beyond. See page 6, below, for details on our **February Forum on Jewish Diversity**.

And yes, it is possible, in some places, and based on some experiences, for someone to say to a white, Ashkenazi Jew: “funny, you don’t look Jewish!”



WHAT ARE WE DOING CURRENTLY? AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE ?



Message from Marilyn Blackhall, President

It suddenly dawned on me that my term as President of the Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas will be coming to an end in just a few months...and yet so much is happening that needs to be attended to in order to ensure our continuity. Here are a few things I am thinking about and welcome all of you to join the thinking process and offer suggestions and assistance.

A major question has arisen after the recent hostage situation at the Beth Israel Synagogue in Texas. For many, that attack recalled the 2018 attack on the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, when 11 worshippers were murdered. Many of us are pondering: What are the security measures that need to be in place for someone to worship safely? While we at the Hebrew Congregation have always felt safe in our community we have, nevertheless, been aware of the need for continued and increased security no matter how sheltered we may feel. We have recently embarked on safety courses with our staff and congregants and will continue to maintain awareness and knowledge in that regard. Any suggestions would be gratefully appreciated.


Our Annual Meeting will take place in April and at that time we will have the election of officers and Board members whose terms are expiring. If anyone is interested in serving on the Board, please contact me as soon as possible.

Currently, we are working on structuring a plan for the archiving of our Synagogue records so they can not only be displayed, but also preserved from the risks of hurricanes and other natural disasters, etc. We have recently made contact with the Director of Research & Collections at the American Jewish Archives to explore the possibilities available to us and will continue to work with that organization until we have completed our endeavor. We welcome your assistance in helping with this project.

There is so much more to say, to plan and to execute and several names to cite of people who are assisting with the ongoing issues. However, I will not run the risk of omitting anyone by mentioning names, but rather offer a broad and grateful THANK YOU to all of you who are working with us on the things that need to be done. We encourage everyone else to volunteer assistance as we definitely need more help.

I am proud of all that we are accomplishing together and challenged by all that we are facing in the future.

The February Forum: A Sermon Series on Jewish Diversity

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and a vibrant, multi-colored striped tallit (prayer shawl), stands with his hands clasped in front of him. To his right, a woman with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a white patterned shawl over a grey top, is speaking into a microphone. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage and pink blossoms. In the foreground, a wooden scroll with white parchment is partially visible.

February 11: Beta Israel, Igbo, Yibir, Abuyudaya, Lambda and More: Jews and Jewish Roots in Africa

February 18: Bene Israel, Bnei Menashe, Baghdadi, Paradesi (Cochin) and More: The Jewish Communities of India

February 25: Kaifeng: The Jews of China

All sermons are part of our Erev Shabbat services, 6:30 PM AST. Services are in person as well as streamed.

Purim and Pesach 5782/2022
at The Hebrew Congregation of St Thomas



SAVE THE DATES;
Details to follow

Sunday, March 13, 2022

Possible Hamentashen Baking
and Tot Purim: Songs and Sweets, 4 PM?

Watch for further details if this proves feasible!



Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Erev Purim, possibly at 6:00 PM

Our farcical, fun-filled, parody-based Purim.
A Purim service, followed by a Megillah reading
and possible schpiel (retelling of the story).



Friday, April 15, 2022

Erev Pesach/First Night Seder

We very much hope to be able to have an in-person, live
Community Seder for the First Night of Pesach,
for the first time in three years!

Watch for a decision based on health considerations
in the coming month.



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

Birthdays and Anniversaries

February Birthdays

Tyler Rice	Feb. 1
Johanna Calhoun	Feb. 6
Suzanna Calhoun	Feb. 6
Michael Fuertes	Feb. 8
Thuy Rieder	Feb. 12
Patricia Gruber	Feb. 17
Stephen Moskowitz	Feb. 17
Samantha Pomeranz	Feb. 18
Becky Tunick	Feb. 22
Estella Calhoun	Feb. 25
Neil Prior	Feb. 26
Ariel Lynn Rosenthal	Feb. 26
Lyra Jean Rosenthal	Feb. 26
Frances Shapiro	Feb. 27

February Anniversaries

Richard & Christine Newman	Feb. 6
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
Pauline Balsam
Marc Blazar
Mark Borden
Alex Botros
Amiel Cohen
Quinn Copps
Tom Craft
Allison Durst
Dave Edwards
Yigal Ehrlich
Gina Talia Farahnick
Paul Feuerzeig
Neamah Fils
Marci Finkelstein
Paula Finkelstein
Julie Friedman
Norman Fisher
Adela Gea
Marilyn Grishman
Kimberly Jackson
Amanda Baro Johnson
Violet Adelaide Johnson
Kim Kadingo
Elizabeth Kingery
Darrell Koren
Jay Kranitz
Michael Krienik
Helen Leneman

Sheri Levin
Linda Lewensohn
Ronnie Lockhart
Sara Lovinger
Steven Markowitz
Siobhan McCourt
Catherine Lockhart Mills
Rabbi Shimon Moch
Aparna Nagpal
James Nicholson
Maria Grace Nicholson
Emmanuelle Petillon
Grace Poon
Rosa Pupko
Dorothy Ring
Brook Robin
Steve Rockstein
Henia Rubins
Mary Sanchez
John Schenkel
Ruth Schloss
Jerry Silverman
Maxine Shayna Stark
Bill Stein
Steve Steinberg
Robert Tunick
Andrea Weibel
Rona Wolfson
David Alan Yoskowitz

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 February 1-10

Hannah Levin Christensen, Frank Grbinich, Miriam Groisman
Arnold Hershkowitz, Fred Kass, Max Klein, Howard Kupperman, Marvin Lichtenstein
Riefka Levin Nielsen, James Michael Pontious, Benjamin Radbel, Tessie Soloway
Millicent Stark, David Tunick, Jenni Tunick

Week of February 11-17

Renee Sinai Avigdor, Morris Berger, Arnold Brandstatter, Phyllis Friedman
Bernie Goldberg, Julius H. Kessler, Ofelia Klaiman, Burton Klein, Albert Laffer
Alvin B. Maisler, Morris Migdal, Guido S. Moron, Blanche Smollett Murphy, Ricky Ressin
Meyer Rock, Clara Walanka, Albert Wechter

Week of February 18-28

Samuel Aufseher, Alex Berlin, Martha Blackman, Max Breslow, Ron Dick, Zira Golde Dreis
Max David Falek, Gertrude Friedman, George Glassman, Ruth Horwitz, Thomas Jamison
Charlotte Kaufman, Rose Krasnick, Elizabeth Victoria Levin, Lucie J. Levin
Sylvia Luciano, Albert A. Lustig, Michael Lustig, Charles Manck, Abraham A. Matt
Sheldon Minion, William Charles Moch, Diane Wyle Munk, Frank Niedergang
Ether Heller Paiewonsky, Abraham Perlman, Peggy Polesky, Beatrice F. Rudnick
Arthur Sandhaus, Suzanna Mann Schafer, Martin Sternberg, Idalee Adel Stewart,
Betty Tenenbaum, Esther Wechter, Bessie Zahler



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

Week of February 1-10

Norman Alterman, Marvin Aszkenas, Sophie Barer, Ira Berger, George Black, Herman Braverman
Max Butler, Betty Chartor, Kaylee Cutler, Rose Dolby, Josephine Fagenson, Louis Fenyves, Lila Fine
June Freeman, Muriel Greenberg, Seymour Greenberg, Ina Greenspan, Rose Hanin, Fred Henkin
Jerry Jotkoff, Maria Karpousis, Menashe Kestenbaum, Marvin Kolkin, Louis Korenge, Elias Korn
Gerald Kuhr, Charles Kutner, Robert Lainof, Dorothy Langsam, Anna Lefkowitz, Irving Lerner
Cherie Levien, Philip Levy, Molly Lichtenberg, Nathan Lifshus, Marvin Loewy, Herman Mandell
Florence Mazer, Rebecca Mittman, Lorraine Morrow, Louis Oltchick, Sarah Orbuch, Arnold Paddock
Philip Paone, Enid Paradise, Esther Patz, Milton Patz, Sydney Pols, Florence Ragless, Dolores Ringold
Mark Robinson, Frieda Rosenberg, Harriett Rosenberg, Joseph Rosenberg, Lenore Sherwin
Emmanuel Solomon, Sarah Spector, Leon Wasserstrom, Eugen Weisberg
James Weiss, Marjorie Weiss, Sylvia Zweiback

Week of February 11-17

Tillie Angert, Abe Applebaum, Michael Arciola, Jack Bernstein, Gertrude Berwin, Joseph Bressler
Sarah Bromberg, Alan Bronner, Joseph Cohen, Leah Dorf, Abraham Faskow, Sylvia Fleisher
Toby Gabelman, Stephen Gardner, William Goldstein, Abraham Grossman, Dr. Walter Gruber
Roslyn Haiman, Miriam Henneh, Gwenthian Hewitt, Jack Hollander, Marvin Katz, Edyth Lein
Gerhard Leske, Judith Like, Irving Linner, Rose Locker, Toby Loewy, Riva Magid, Bea Moskoff
Julia Newman, Minerva Rosenberg, Hazel Salzman, Jack Sandler, Leonard Schur, Olive Siegel
Celia Siegle, Edward Testa, Dorothy Vernick, Dennis Wood

Week of February 18-28

Ziska Anduze, Ruth Beck, Jeannette Berger, Harry Black, Lillian Blacker, Elliot Brahms, Shirley Bressler
Dr. Reuben Cordova, Lawrence Coyne, Harriet Danzinger, Arty Dorfman, Reba Faigeles
Dorothy Feuerzeig, Diana Gardner, Dora Gerstein, Alex Glass, Janet Goodman, Leatrice Goodman
Dr. George Gottlieb, Morris Green, Julius Greenberg, Beatrice Greenstone, Murray Greenstone
Arthur Heagen, Elizabeth Hinchey, Jack Hindin, Walter Hoexter, Sol Iwrey, Robert Jaffe, Max Klein
Harry Kranson, Louisa Levin, Steven Levinear, Art Levoff, Uri Lichter, Benjamin Lichtman
Sarah Lichtman, Donald Lowtwait, Ruth Lupson, Steve Lutkoff, Bernard Maletzky, Sam Marcus
Sophie Markowitz, Renee Messing, Bernard Miller, John Mitchell, Florence Mittleman, Arthur Namm
Edith Namm, David Perkin, Clara Perlov, Richard Peterson, Morris Plevner, Edward Portnoy, Sam Post
Martin Resnikoff, Lynn Rosemore, Sandra Rotenberg, Mae Schneider, Leon Schwartz, Rae Shapira
Tikva Sheena, Helen Shulman, Martin Silver, Chaim Snitman, Libby Sonkin, William Strauss II
Michael Taveroff, Richard Taylor, Roberta Tighe, Sam Uris, Sara Weintraub, Alexander Weisberg
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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.

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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