

# The Hourglass

**BULLETIN OF  
THE HEBREW CONGREGATION  
OF ST THOMAS**

**MAY-JUNE 2022**

**Concert for  
Ukrainian Refugees,  
May 4, 6:30 PM**

**See page 9  
for details**

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# May-June Services and Programs

## **Yom Ha'Atzma'ut** **Israeli Independence Day**

4 Wed **Erev Yom HaAtzma'ut Concert/Program**  
**Fundraiser for Ukrainian Refugees,**  
**Rabbi Or and Feliza Zohar, 6:30 PM**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Light Reception to follow,  
Lilienfeld Community House

## **Parashat Kedoshim** **Leviticus 19:1-20:27**

6 Fri Erev Shabbat Family Service, 6:30 PM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

7 Sat Shabbat Morning Torah Study,  
Online Only (by Zoom), 10:30 AM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

## **Parashat Emor** **Leviticus 21:1-24:23**

13 Fri Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

14 Sat Shabbat Morning Torah Study,  
Online Only (by Zoom), 10:30 AM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312.

## **Parashat Behar** **Leviticus 25:1-26:2**

20 Fri Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM  
**Farewell Service for Rabbi Feshbach**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Special Reception to follow, LH

## **Parashat Behar (continued)**

21 Sat Shabbat Morning Torah Study,  
Online Only (by Zoom), 10:30 AM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

## **Parashat Bechukotai** **Leviticus 26:3-27:34**

27 Fri Congregant-led Erev Shabbat Svc, 6:30 PM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

28 Sat No Shabbat Morning Worship/Study

## **Parashat BaMidbar** **Numbers 1:1-4:20**

June 3 Fri Erev Shabbat Family Service, 6:30 PM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

4 Sat Shabbat Morning Service, including the  
B'nai Mitzvah of Alexander and  
Lucas Jaffee, 10:30 AM (LCE)  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

## **Shavuot**

4 Sat Erev Shavuot  
Details TBD

5 Sun Shavuot Festival Morning  
and Yizkor Memorial Service,  
by Zoom (online only), 10:30 AM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

**Parashat Naso**  
**Numbers 4:21-7:89**

10 Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM  
Fri <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

11 Shabbat Morning Service, including the  
Sat Bar Mitzvah of Joshua Lesser, 10:30 AM (LCE)  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

**Parashat Beha'alot'cha**  
**Numbers 8:1-12:16**

17 Erev Shabbat Service, 6:30 PM  
Fri Rabbi Feshbach's final service  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

18 Shabbat Morning Torah Study,  
Sat Online Only (by Zoom), 10:30 AM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312

**Parashat Shelach-Lecha:**  
**Numbers 13:1-15:41**

24 Congregant-led Erev Shabbat Svc, 6:30 PM  
Fri <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>  
Meeting ID: 340 774 4312  
Oneg Shabbat, LH

25 No Shabbat Morning Worship/Study  
Sat



**Farewell Service for  
Rabbi Michael Feshbach**

**Friday, May 20, 2022  
at our Erev Shabbat Service,  
beginning at 6:30 PM**

Details to follow.

# Roots and Wings: Finding Myself While Reaching Out to Others

## Message from Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach



One of the ideas I had for our congregation, which I was not able to complete during my time here, was to hold a special service celebrating anyone on island who had Jewish roots of any kind. I would have extended this to anyone who was curious about Judaism, anyone who could spell Judaism, or, actually, anyone who was interested in the Jewish story at all.

There are, truly, quite a few people on St Thomas and St John – many, in fact – who have Jewish connections in their family history. These people are attorneys and educators, pastors and preachers, sound engineers and kennel operators, restaurant owners and physicians. They are in every field, and every walk of life.

The nine families who founded our congregation can be found in every church, represented by every race, and at home in every place on these islands. To hear their stories, and that of many others, would be an amazing experience, a kind of “welcome home,” while at the same time not expecting anything more than the message that our history is rich, our reach is wide, and our door is open.

I would have called that service “Roots and Wings.” While I was not able to organize that event during my tenure, I have, nevertheless, had a powerful experience in recent days which I can only describe using the same title, the same words. I had wanted to help people be open in a new way to a part of their past. And something happened which led me to have the same experience I was hoping to facilitate for others.

As many of you know, in early April, just before Pesach, I travelled to Poland with a group of almost 30 Reform/Progressive rabbis and cantors, to bring supplies and donations to Ukrainian refugees, and to “bear witness,” as it were... to see first hand what was going on in the midst of this crisis. We were based in Krakow, and on our second day went from there to the Ukrainian border, to two refugee processing and relief centers, to the border crossing itself... and to the strategically located city which anchors that region.

That city is called **Przemysł**. In Yiddish (the population was up to a third Jewish in the pre-war years) it is known as פּשעמישל, romanized: Pshemishl; in Polish the “l” is almost silent and the pronunciation is close to “Shemesh,” or maybe, “Pshemeshle.”

On April 20 I did a report, on Zoom, about our trip. (You can find the You Tube link [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROa-uE2Xl1w), or go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROa-uE2Xl1w>.) There were over 80 people on that Zoom call. One of the participants was my aunt, my father’s sister, Charlotte Wasserman.

My father’s mother, Leah, had passed away on his 16th birthday. (My middle name, Lee, is in memory of her.) Charlotte was 10 or so at the time. Neither she nor my father spoke much about their biological mother. My grandfather remarried; the only grandmother on that side I knew was their stepmother.

But there, on that call, in front of 80 people, my aunt revealed the following biographical fact I had simply not known. It turns out that her mother, my actual biological grandmother... was from Przemysł! To find out that a place I had just been was part of my family history, and to find out in that way, was something of a shock to me. In some ways I wish I had known that while I was there! I will admit that I looked at the town itself mostly as a stopping point en route to the refugee centers and border area I had come to see.

But now I have this powerful sense of... I am not sure what. This was a moment when I went to lift up others, and I learned something about myself! Without knowing this would happen, **while working on wings, I found some of my roots.**

To see this refugee crisis up close, and with my own eyes, was powerful, and overwhelming. In my work, in my life, I have, in a small way, responded to Darfur. And I galvanized a community to host a Syrian family.

And I know that other needs remain: there are Afghani exiles, there remains racial injustice all around us, and antisemitism grows wherever democracy, decency and acceptance of difference is under attack.

For me, for now, the urgent call of this moment is Ukraine. This is the largest refugee crisis in Europe since the end of World War Two; it is an ongoing manifestation of brutality must be resisted. There are patriots who would return, but whose entire towns have been leveled. There is nowhere to go. There are displaced people who must be helped. Who I feel called to help.

I would not have chosen my last column for this congregation to be an appeal for funds – *much less would I have wanted to take away from the ongoing need our own congregation has for support.*

But who are we, if not who we respond to others? What are we here for, if not for this? After the hurricanes we got back on our feet by taking the hands which reached out to us from around the world. It is time to give a hand back as well.

One of the Israeli Reform rabbis who was on the trip to Poland with us, Or Zohar, is, along with his wife Feliza, a performer and musician. I heard them in Jerusalem in 2016. In Poland, when I invited him to visit me here, in the short time I have remaining on island, he indicated that he might be available... on *Yom HaAtzma'ut* – Israeli Independence Day.

And so, now, we have an amazing opportunity – a concert to celebrate Israel's independence, with two very talented Israeli musicians... and an evening dedicated as a fundraiser to help Ukrainian refugees.

You can read more about the upcoming concert on page nine, below. And you can see some of the projects and programs of the JCC of Krakow, on behalf of Ukrainian refugees, on page ten..

But please, whether in person or online, please **join us on May 4, for this incredible evening – and join us in this important endeavor.**

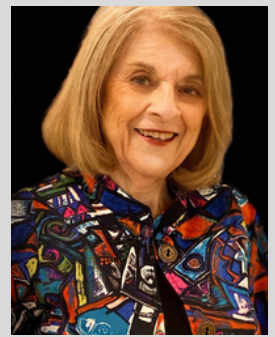


**We reach out to others. And in doing so, we reveal who we are. On these islands, around the world, may we all find our identity embedded in our stories, in our connections... and also in our deeds.**

**And may this historic congregation, and wonderful community, go from strength to strength in the months and years and decades to come.**

# **Happenings from this Past Fiscal Year Reported at the Congregation's Annual Meeting April 28, 2022**

## **Message from the President Marilyn Blackhall**



At end of 2020 and in the beginning of 2021, just a little over a year ago, we were in the throes of a severe pandemic and had only a prayer that effective vaccines would become widely available. Many houses of worship, including ours, were closed for live services and streaming via Zoom became a way of life even in St. Thomas, where we joined together with our members, Chais, and visitors.

Rabbi Feshbach became an expert in a completely new form of worship. This required computer skills as well as creative and beautiful ways of using pictures and visual prayers on the screen while we read and sang together. Services were different, but satisfying, though many missed being in our Synagogue in person. Nevertheless, there were positives because we were able to blend people from all over the country, and some even internationally, on Shabbat eve and Shabbat mornings, just as we did at our Annual Meeting this past April 28th.

At our March 2021 Board meeting, with the advent of more readily available vaccines and specially crafted protocols, Rabbi Feshbach, in conjunction with our Board, presented a cautious plan for reopening our Synagogue. For the first time in quite a while ...we gathered together, in person, on April 30, 2021 for the observance of Lag B'Omer. It was followed by a barbeque at Lilienfeld House. Such in person festivities had not been held for quite a while and they were missed. We had a variety of services, throughout May and June of 2021...some in person and some solely via zoom until we completely re-opened in July of 2021. We bought additional streaming equipment with donations and with the technical savvy of James Anderson, developed a cadre of young people, whom we continue to engage, for the routine tech work each Shabbat while the Rabbi conducts services. We are able to have the people attending on zoom call out their yarzeits and the names of those who are ill for a blessing and even say a few words.

In the meantime, a few months earlier even before opening the Synagogue for services, we had opened our office with staff working from the Synagogue 3 days a week and Michael, our Maintenance person, working in person 5 days a week. At some point Agi Rampino also began working from the Synagogue 5 days a week to offer tours and open the gift shop for more extended periods of time.

We set up a very strict procedure for visitors to the Synagogue with proof of vaccination, masks, and limitations of the numbers of people at any one time, required. Staff wore both masks and shields for their protection when visitors came. Vaccinations were also required for people to attend in-person services, but we have not required actual proof. Things have gotten a little less formal, but visitors and staff still wear masks on tours.

In the meantime, monthly Board Meetings were held, except for a month in the summer, and business was conducted by Board Members residing or traveling all over the country including St. Thomas Oregon, Virginia, Atlanta, etc. We had a quorum at every single meeting, for which I applaud the Board. So many things have transpired this year, despite the pandemic, and here are just a few more.

(continued from the previous page)

In working on our grant for a museum at Lilienfeld House, we were actually able to recently bring an archivist from the Reform Movement's Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) of Hebrew Union College, in Cincinnati to St. Thomas for almost a week. He went through all of old documents that were stored in boxes for many years, eliminating things not a part of our history and packing 41 boxes to be shipped to AJA so they can be permanently preserved. From those items we will choose what we feel will make a suitable museum display. This was, perhaps, one of the most valuable things we have ever accomplished for the preservation of our Synagogue's history for future generations and something I feel very proud of. Many thanks to past President, Jeannette Bastian, who was the Director of the Archives Management Program at Simmons University and who spearheaded the effort leading to our connection and relationship with AJA. Katina Coulianos and Ella Ogden were also helpful in this project which will continue to its conclusion.

We had two online security training programs with Wayne Brian, Director of the Virgin Islands Fusion Center for our Board and staff and have received a great deal of assistance from Mr. Bryan who will be a major help as we begin to work on the security of our Synagogue from a grant received recently. Very soon, we will plan another security training program for all who wish to attend. As a result of some of our training, we asked Mr. Bryan to help us come up with an escape plan for an emergency egress should we ever be faced with something such as an "active shooter". Donald Pomeranz has volunteered to spearhead this effort and will report back when a final plan is developed. Mr. Bryan, by the way, is responsible for having gotten the streetlights outside the Synagogue restored and having the police drive by the Synagogue during Friday night services. He is an amazing resource, for us.

We have affiliated with a service to help us achieve successful planned giving programs and are working on that right now. You will soon receive information on how you and the Synagogue might mutually benefit from setting up a planned gift from your estate or assets. A Board committee was established to handle that.

This year our annual Martin Luther King service, which we have been organizing for many years, was held entirely by Zoom and was a huge success with more than 100 people in attendance. High school students from 7 schools were involved in writing essays and the winners read their essays, online, to everyone in attendance and received their gifts and financial rewards. Stacy Plaskett, our Washington Representative, was a wonderful keynote speaker.

We celebrated our 49th annual joint Thanksgiving service with the Reformed Church. We had a very nice, but safe attendance at the Synagogue with many in attendance via Zoom.

We are happy to note that Life Cycle events are now picking up again after falling off majorly for the past two years.

I could go on and on with all that has happened this year, but my message must come to an end, or I will take up the entire Bulletin (LOL).

I thank and appreciate each and every one of our Board members: Mark Borden: Social Action Chair, Alan Friedman: VP and Personnel Chair, Penny Feuerzeig: Secretary, Dorothy Isaacs: Immediate Past President, Liza Margolis: Social Chair, Lou Minion: Treasurer, Donald Pomeranz: House Co-chair, Trudie Prior: Development Chair, Carol Ann Rich, our newest Board Member who replaced Mathew Kreffetz and will now be serving as Vice President, and last but not least, Peter Rosen: Co-House Chair, whose last 3 year term has now expired. We have been an awesome team!!!

And, of course, our wonderful staff, Stella Minion, office manager, working remotely 3 days a week, (but actually always available) whose talents and abilities to take care of “everything” that comes her way are endless; Agi Rampino running our gift shop and tours, who started doing many other things, such as grant writing, when the gift shop and tours diminished because of the pandemic. And Michael Feuertes, our Maintenance Manager. Words cannot express all that Michael does in a day and how much we have counted on him for over 20 years. Our newest part time Staff member, Michelle Barnes, started around this time last year and has fit in with the team in so many indescribable ways, becoming indispensable.

I have left this portion of my remarks for last as it is hard to describe all the ways that we will miss Rabbi Feshbach and his family as they prepare to leave us in the middle of June for a new congregation in New Jersey. We will have a farewell service and Oneg on May 20 followed by a reception. All the farewell messages we want to impart will be said from our hearts at that time. However, I just want to make it clear what a monumental change this will be for us, how much we have appreciated Rabbi Feshbach’s leading us through a post hurricane disaster, followed by a pandemic in which he continued to lead us creatively and marvelously. At this moment I don’t have the words that are required to express those thoughts as well as they should be said but I hope to be able to do that more fully and explicitly on May 20th. Please be sure to attend either in person, if possible, or via zoom.

It has been quite a year!!! Blessings to everyone for a continuing return to a life that enables us to find joy and satisfying coping mechanisms for all that we face.

**HEBREW CONGREGATION OF ST. THOMAS  
2022 ANNUAL MEETING ELECTION  
April 28, 2022**

An election was held at the Congregational Annual Meeting.  
The following Board positions were filled:

<b>ELECTED</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>TERM</b>
<b>Marilyn Blackhall</b>	President	Second two-year term: Expires 2024
<b>Carol Rich</b>	Vice President	First two-year term: Expires 2024
<b>Dorothy Isaacs</b>	Immediate Past President	Second two-year term: Expires 2024
<b>Penny Feuerzeig</b>	Board Member	Third three-year term: Expires 2025
<b>Trudie Prior</b>	Board Member	Third three-year term: Expires 2025
<b>Alan Friedman</b>	Board Member	First three-year term: Expires 2025
<b>Lindsey Eilon</b>	Board Member	First three-year term: Expires 2025



# ***Yom HaAtzma'ut* (Israel Independence Day) Concert and Fundraiser for Ukrainian Refugees**

**with visiting Israeli musicians  
Rabbi Or Zohar and Feliza Bascara-Zohar**

**Hebrew Congregation of St Thomas  
(St Thomas Synagogue)**

**Wednesday, May 4, 2022  
6:30 PM AST/EDT**

**In person, and also streamed at  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>**

**Light reception follows at  
Lilienfeld Community House**

**Donations to aid  
Ukrainian refugees  
can be made at  
[https://synagogue.vi  
/supportukraine/](https://synagogue.vi/supportukraine/)**

**Proceeds will  
help fund  
numerous refugee  
programs and projects  
of the Jewish Community  
Center of Krakow.**



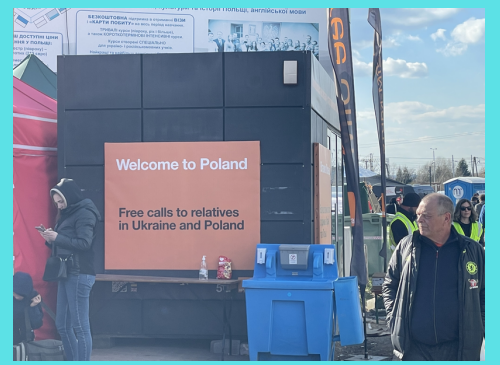
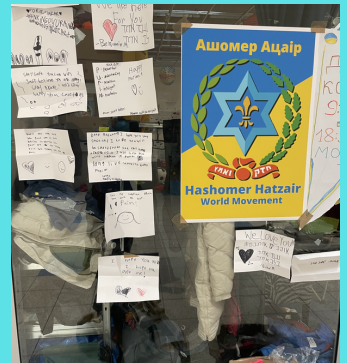
**More about Or and Feliza Zohar at  
<https://www.orandfelizamusic.com/>**




**JCC Krakow is a key provider of services, a strategic partner, and a convener, having already helped directly and via our partners over thirty thousand Ukrainians over the last seven weeks. We are operating in Krakow, on the Ukrainian side of the Ukraine-Poland border, and inside Ukraine and do not differentiate between Jews and non-Jews when providing support.**

- Our JCC continues to function 7 days a week as a distribution point for food, medicine, hygienic supplies, toys, and clothing that we have received and purchased. 600+ Ukrainians a day come in to take what they need and are met by our Ukrainian speakers who welcome them and offer assistance. So far ~20,000 Ukrainians have received over 40 tons of necessary supplies in our building. We have also begun offering on site meals and 250 free meals a day are served in our building.
- We are sending truckloads of supplies to other refugee centers in Krakow, to the border, and to numerous other points, including hospitals inside Ukraine. We have recently arranged the transport of 16 semi-trailer trucks full of food into Ukraine from Lille, France including food to Bucha after the Russian attack.
- We are currently directly housing and feeding 336 Ukrainians, Jews and non-Jews, in hotel rooms and apartments in Krakow we have secured for that purpose. We call and visit them regularly and help them with their daily needs including cash. Over 4,000 hotel room nights have been provided.
- We have outfitted and opened a mother and child safe space with a local partner that provides day care for 25 young children, and Polish and English classes, psychological counseling, and job training for their mothers in a warm, cozy environment.
- We are providing groceries daily to 80 Ukrainian Roma refugees being housed in a hostel in Krakow.
- We have begun supporting the "Closet of Good" distribution center, the largest center of its type in southern Poland, having distributed 170,000 items of clothing to 27,000 Ukrainian refugees.
- We are funding the transport of 1,000 women and children over 12 days from Mariupol and Kramatorsk to Poland via Lviv.
- We have partnered with a local Ukrainian organization and are funding 12 full time psychologists who are providing 1400 hours a month of therapy in 5 locations in Krakow.
- We support a LGBTQ+ friendly hostel that also serves non-white, non Ukrainian refugees from Ukraine.
- We have partnered with four local NGOs to run and equip one of Krakow's central refugee hubs. Staffed by two dozen Ukrainian speakers, it serves hundreds daily and has on site housing for 80 refugees and we provide food, laundry and a full array of social services.
- We are working with and financially supporting a local Evangelical Christian organization that brings supplies into Lviv for distribution across Ukraine, and brings people out to Poland. Over 4,000 people have escaped Ukraine this way since the war began. We have also partnered with them to create the only NGO help station on the Ukrainian side of the Korczowa border crossing, providing Ukrainians waiting to enter Poland with warm food, medical care and sanitary supplies.
- We provide transport for Ukrainians who are traveling onward via Poland to other countries in Europe and Israel by purchasing plane and train tickets. So far we have helped transport ~210 Ukrainians.
- We have hired 21 new full time staff members, including 16 Ukrainians, 12 of whom are refugees to work on our Ukrainian humanitarian response.
- We are part of the Jewish crisis response network set up and based in Warsaw and are coordinating with local Polish Jewish organizations to provide services and share information.
- We have partnered with a local university and an Israeli NGO to train 68 local psychologists to deal with refugee trauma and are creating a program and website to facilitate the training and certification of 2,000 Poles and Ukrainians in total.
- We have partnered with the Polish Scouts to establish a presence at the Krakow Central Train Station where we have purchased 130 beds and are providing supplies to refugees.
- We purchased vital medical supplies in Poland and delivered them into Ukraine to the hospital near the Yavoriv Military Base that was bombed by Russia on March 13.
- We have set up a hotline staffed by Ukrainian speakers to answer questions and direct people to available services 7 days a week.

# Pictures from a Rabbinic Mission to Poland





# ***Shavu'ot***

## **The Feast of Weeks**

### **Celebrating the Gift of Torah**

#### **Saturday, June 4, 2022**

*Erev Shavu'ot*

Watch for more details about the time,  
location and content of our  
observance this year,  
including possible online  
*Tikkun Leil Shavu'ot* Study Sessions.

#### **Sunday, June 5, 2022**

**Shavuot Festival Morning and Yizkor Service, 10:00 AM,**  
**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3407744312>, Meeting ID: 340 774 4312**

with *Hallel* (Psalms of Praise), The Ten Commandments,  
and *Yizkor* Memorial Prayers for loved ones we have lost.

**Where History and Destiny Meet**  
**(Final) Annual Report to the Congregation**  
**Rabbi Michael Feshbach**  
**April 28, 2022**

Today, on the Jewish calendar, at least until sunset, it is Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Day. The day is meant as a portal in time, using a memory of the past to shape the reality of the present, and to pave the way for a better future. We are at a moment, now, with a world at war, with echoes on the news of the atrocities of old. The past, then, has a hold on us, it calls to us, demanding that we respond to those around us.

In what I have written about our own congregation, I call this a place “where history and destiny meet.” We have a story to tell. I have been humbled, and honored, to serve as a curator of that story for these past few years.

Yet we also have a present reality to nurture, a community to nourish, and the path to pave for a future yet to arrive.

In the book of Genesis, Joseph comes to his role as the leader of a place he was not from not only by his knowledge that there were lean and challenging year coming, but also his guidance in showing that, with planning and preparation, there were years of abundance sure to follow.

This congregation, these islands know that story well. And this has been a particularly challenging five years that I have been with you. The hurricanes hit around a month after our arrival; COVID struck not only here but the whole world when we had not even fully gotten back on our feet from the storms. And now, as I said, the world stands on a precipice, and a war which you can close your eyes and pretend is far away nevertheless may yet change all of our lives.

But like Joseph long ago, I believe... I believe that the next five years may be ones of goodness and growth, of abundance and restoration for our islands, and our congregation.

I have walked this path with amazing partners – with the devoted and detail-oriented Marilyn Blackhall, with past presidents Dorothy Isaacs and Jeffrey Silverman... with lay leaders who have carried this congregation for, well, decades. Your staff team does so much more than many of you realize – Stella Minion, Agnes Rampino, Michael Feurtes and the newest team member, Michelle Barnes... expanding roles far beyond what they originally expected, giving time far beyond anything minimally required. And many of them do all of these ongoing tasks in the middle of welcoming groups who come without notice, without appointments, each of whom is having a “special” experience on their journey, and therefore expects to be treated in a “special” way by everyone they encounter. I am in awe of the juggling that goes on in order for anything at all to get done!

It is said that a rabbi is remembered for the way he or she says hello, and the way he or she says goodbye. For me, hello was a hurricane. And goodbye may yet be a world at war.

But there is a great deal that happened in between those points, not to mention all the adjustments we made due to the pandemic. I want to share some of those points in the middle, and some insights or pleas I would like to pass on.

- Julie and I have been honored to welcome the congregation into our home, for a Chanukat HaBayit, our house dedication as we put up the mezuzot, for a shiva minyan service for my father, for Sukkah Building and Sukkot, for Erev Shavuot study, Israeli film series, Purim, and many more occasions. Having a home with space for parking – and a flat driveway unusual on this island – no doubt helped facilitate our hospitality, and your willingness to come to us as well.
- Our congregation has been, in my time here, full partners in the life of this island community, organizing five distribution events after the storms, importing a half million dollars' worth of supplies – including a hundred portable generators, and, in the early days of the pandemic, helping My Brother's Workshop in a home distribution of meals. Our scholarships for high school students and our book drive for the Family Resource Center stand out for me as well.
- We have taken advantages of opportunities presented by the shift online, to reach for new levels of collaboration with other congregations and organizations, a joint service with Temple Solel of Bowie, MD; a Social Justice Shabbat with Cantor Dorothy Goldberg; a Chanukah Concert with Nefesh Mountain, and a joint Yom HaShoah observance with B'nai Or Congregation of St. Croix, to cite just a few examples.
- I hope that someone reads the Hourglass bulletin – sometimes I do wonder, and it is a lot of work to put together. But, friends, with over 3000 world-wide members, our communication, our official publication – it simply has to look good! It is not perfect, still, but I have learned a great deal about putting the bulletin together, and I am very proud of what we produce!
- I believe that leading a “full” “liberal” (that is, non-Orthodox) Jewish life should still be possible here, and to that end we have held holiday and festival observances on their actual dates, including Festival Morning services, Yom HaShoah, Yom HaAtzma'ut, and added such observances as Tisha B'Av and even Lag B'omer, even if attendance at some of these services has been small and some would just move anything to the most convenient adjacent weekend time.
- I am proud of the level of adult learning we have maintained, in person and then online – from our Irma-postponed Taste of Judaism class, finally presented in February of 2018, to the Hebrew Marathon, co-taught with our Student Cantor Ella Gladstone Martin, to the many courses and classes using material from the Shalom Hartman Institute, most recently what I thought was a very successful series called Foundations for a Thoughtful Judaism.
- I believe it was an important step that we returned to Israel in 2019, on a congregational trip – even though many of the participants were Chai members who live off island, and I believe it remains urgently important for personal Jewish growth and identity (once we get past the pandemic) for those who have never been to Israel to find a way to visit.
- I am proud to have offered things here I never had tried before, even if I had long wanted to do so: a post-Pesach Mimouna celebration, and, at long last, a personal goal – a Bob Dylan based Purim!
- I cherished long-established traditions here, such as the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, and the Martin Luther King service. If I may be a bit immodest here, I would add that I think I took outstanding existing customs... and increased the quality of the liturgical, musical and spiritual aspects of both of those services.
- While I famously cannot personally sing well, I also believed I have brought to you, here, some of the best of contemporary developments in the Jewish musical world, and I appreciate your support for student cantors, for musical accompaniment – and for the role you have helped my daughter, Talia, play in the community!

There is more to share from these five years, a wonderful b'not mitzvah, welcoming babies from some on island families... but I want to save room for some general insights, and a final sentiment.

- I am aware that, no matter how much work I put into a service, the most important part of a service is probably the Oneg afterwards!

- Be always gentle, always kind, and give on another the benefit of the doubt. A story, which could not be from here, since our founders were born, well, if any were actually still coming that would be quite impressive. But I remember when a founding member of my previous congregation came to a service after a long absence, and a newly active member asked the founder if she were there for the first time. The founder was... quite put out. Until I intervened and conveyed the unbelievably powerful importance of greeting and welcoming each other, even if we get details wrong!

- I believe that no matter who you are, no matter where in the world you live, there is one ticket to a richer, deeper, more meaningful and more culturally "thick" Jewish life. That ticket is... Hebrew. I don't mean everyone should learn to speak it fluently; that isn't feasible and it is not necessary for what I am saying. But I do think that anything you do to take your level of Hebrew from wherever it is, another few steps forward... you will see an unexpected and immediate improvement in the level of connection with Jewish life, Jewish identity, Jewish values and the Jewish world.

- An important reminder, to not be afraid of change! Not everything new is automatically right. Honoring the past is part of what we do, especially here. But – and this has not been a real problem here, but the point is so important it bears repeating – there has to be room for experimentation, change, new energy, new people, new ideas. Not all new initiatives will succeed. But imagine a community which takes no new steps! You can't – because such a community is no longer around.

- In the film made about this community when I first arrived, there was an interview with a woman I met a few times before the storms, who I greatly admired, and who was... not shy. In the film, Norma Levin, of blessed memory, did make a comment I was troubled by. With respect for her memory and my affection for her on my mind, I nevertheless think it is important to respond to it, even now. Norma said, with wit and wry amusement about the rabbis who come here to the Virgin Islands: "these rabbis, they think they are going to change us!" I have to say, even given the importance of learning about a community, and growing into an understanding of it... "These rabbis, they think they are going to change us." As if, how crazy is that! But folks: come on. That's our job! That's what we do. That's what we are here for, along with a sense of comfort and support and communal presence. To embrace, and to challenge... that is what a rabbi does. Don't ever settle for a rabbi who does not do the first! But don't sell yourselves short with a rabbi who does not do the second!

So that, then, is more than enough for now. My time tonight is almost done, as is my time full-time on island with all of you.

Friends: it is my hope, my prayer, my fervent wish that this congregation and these islands move to a place of success, fulfilment and renewed vitality. And I hope that you are open to me, to my family, remaining connected – in touch as our stories continue, of help in whatever ways we can be here, and welcomed back on those occasions when we are able to return. You are a permanent part of our journey, and our story; we hope we have a positive and ongoing place in yours as well.

May this community, and all of you, go from strength to strength, and, together, may you write the glorious next chapter in a shining story, whose conclusion is yet to unfold.

My blessing, my thanks, and my love...

# Birthdays and Anniversaries

## May Birthdays

Glenda Werbel	May 4
Bethany Silverman	May 9
Michael Adell	May 10
Joseph Rom	May 14
Erica Klopman	May 16
Chelsea Laing	May 19
Zachary Schafer	May 20
Marc Krasnick	May 21
Helen Goldman	May 26
Stephen Prosterman	May 28
Andrew Newman	May 30

## June Birthdays

Sasha Klein	June 2
Dania Ebenholtz	June 3
Benjamin Newman	June 3
Nancy Borowick	June 4
Justin Blackhall	June 6
Joy Stillman	June 9
Andrew Blazar	June 10
George Borden	June 11
Helen Abrams	June 12
Kali Calhoun	June 27
Liza Magolis	June 28
Katina Coulianos	June 29
Kyle Grimm	June 29
Julie Novick	June 29
Elissa Runyon	June 29

## May Anniversaries

Lane Sell and Madeleine Boucher	May 14
Donald and Carolyn Pomeranz	May 15
Michael and Nadia Adell	May 19

## June Anniversaries

Neil and Trudie Prior	June 6
Rabbi Feshbach and Julie Novick	June 11
Louis and Stella Minion	June 13
Daniel and Julia Rom	June 27
Jared and Lynn Kass	June 28





# רפואה שלימה

A complete  
recovery to:



Laurie Allen  
Pauline Balsam  
Marc Blazar  
Alex Botros  
Amiel Cohen  
Quinn Copps  
Tom Craft  
Moises Cukier  
Judith DiDomenico  
Allison Durst  
Dave Edwards  
Yigal Ehrlich  
Kathleen Erion  
Gina Talia Farahnick  
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Paul Feuerezeig  
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Julie Friedman  
Adela Gea  
Marian Goodman  
Rick Gratch  
Marilyn Grishman  
Kimberly Jackson  
Amanda Bari Johnson  
Violet Adelaide Johnson  
Kim Kadingo  
Darrell Koren  
Jay Kranitz  
Helen Leneman

Sherri Levin  
Linda Lewenshohn  
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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 May 1-12

Batia Abadi, Elvira Benjamin, James Clayton, Alexander Cohen D'Azevedo, Mariam Mendes DeCosta Solomon deGeorge, Delia Delvalle, Leah dePinna, Judith Dorfman, Stephen K Embly, Rachel Lopez Fonseca Rabbi David J. Forman, Gertrude Mandel Gentry, Samuel Gordon, Larry Hall, Rabbi Bernard Heller Gabriel Henriquez Moron, Albert Henriquez Moron, Rose Herstik, Nancy Jacobs, Frances Kessler Caroline Kimelman, Morris Klaiman, Irving Lentnek, Ribca Hana Maduro, Benjamin Matt, M. Leonard Matt Alexander da Costa Mendez, John D. Mooney, Jr., Amalia Paiewonsky Mylner, Sam Newman Zina Paiewonsky, Leonard Jay Reade, David D. Rothbart, Abraham S. Sasso, Mordecai Sasso Charles Solomon Schafer, Salomon Schuster, Reba Singer, Marvin Stark, Jack Starr Benjamin Werbel, Irene S. Zweigenhaft

## Week of May 13-19

Anna Heller, David Pretto Henriquez, (no first name) Hoheb, Larry Horwitz Sarah Horwitz, Leah Adelaide Levi, Esther Levy, Robert J. Light Beatrice Lilienfeld, Ronald Minion, Abigail Halman Sasso

## Week of May 20-31

Eitan Avigdor, Isaac Fonseca Brandao, Irving Cairo, Ramah Benlisa Cohen, Zipporah Cohen, Natalie Cohn Elaine Matt Davis, Moses Osorio deCastro, Abigail Campos Deleon, Morton Friedman, Richard Joel Friedman Mollie Greenberg, Dorothy Gruber, Morris Halperin, Rachel Henrique Moron, Herman "Jesse" Jesner Jonas Kaufman, Isaack Kriegel, Jacob Alfred Levi, Isaac Herman Levi, Morris Levin, Moses Levy Hattie Livinson, Walter John Maguire, Ribca Mansana, Aaron Mathias, Louis Meyer, Rebecca Mendez Monsanto, Samuel Mendes Monsanto, Sarah Henriques Moron, Ethel Rachel Paiewonsky, Jacob Paiewonsky, Isaac Petit, Grace de Pinna, Katherine D. Prior, Ronald Reckseit, Grace Athias Robles, Isaac A. Sasso, Abraham Haim Semach, Philip Singer, Karen Starr, Esther Valencia, John Douglas Watson, Israel Zerppert



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

## **Week of June 1-9**

Rebecca Deleon Abendanone, Ribca Abrams, George Ackerman, Isaac Athias, Eva Becker  
Rachel da Costa Gomez, Esther D'Azevedo, Jacob de Meza, Millie Deich, Esther Delvalle, Rachel Lopez Dubec  
Sydney Echenberg, Ida Edel, Jeffery Ted Feldman, Robert Galvin, Harry Gould, Elliott Louis Hyman, Eleanora  
Jacobs, William Kantor, Toni Leipsic, Joshua L. Levin, Zelda LeVine Levitan  
Samuel Louis Lopes, Rachel Levy Maduro, Samuel Levy Maduro, Sarah Meriam Naar  
Elkah Cohen Pereira, Ben Peirez, Jeosuah M. Piza, Jacob Pomeranz, Leonard Jay Reade  
Emma Rosenbaum, Louis Slomovitz, Bernard Smollett, Milton Slosky  
Adam Stark, Michael Weinman, Mollie Werbel

## **Week of June 10-16**

David Abrams, Ephraim Athias Robles Hannah Baiz, Arlen Brodsky, Isaac Ernest D.Sasso,  
David de Meza, Rosabel de Meza, Albert Gentry, Dee Doris Greene, Deborah Pretto Henriquez  
Rebecca Henriquez Moron, George Daniel Levi, Mordecai Levy Maduro, George Daniel Sasso  
Esther Elvire Sasso, Josephine Luna Wolff

## **Week of June 17-23**

Joseph Abner, Ira Joseph Barbash, Irene E. Bayne, Benjamin Bienvenisto, Rabbi David Cardoze  
Harry Costas Coulianos, Haim de Costa Gomez, Jacob Haim de Sola, Esther Deleao, Grace Cardoze Delvalle  
Solomon J. Delvalle, Solomon Lopez Dubec, Mordecai Garcias, Gertie Glazer, Louis Grosswirth  
Reginald Isaacs, Solomon G. Jacobs, Margaret Kerwin Kirkland, Samuel J. Lang, Vivian Leibowitz  
Esther Levy Maduro, Philip Nitkin, Morris Paiewonsky, Alfred A. Pomeranz, Rachel Rodrigues  
Jacob M. Sasso, Samuel Sasso, Jerry Silverberg, Jerome Stark, Miriam Van Vlierden  
Karl Ludwig Weibel, Mary Weiner, Rachel Wolff

## **Week of June 24-30**

Fidanque de Castro Aoa, Isaac Cardoze, Sara Semach de Valencia, Dina Deleon, Judith Delvalle  
Errol Echenberg, Audrey Edlis, Gidon Elad, Rachel Delvalle Fidanque, Solomon Fidanque  
David Gomez Fonseca, Jean Abel Galiber, Michael Allan Goodfriend, Esther Trieze Henriquez, Myriam Jacob  
Leah Jacobs, Harris Lee Keller, Belle Kessler, William Edward Milburn, Clara Moron, Bessie O'Kean  
Sarah Petit, Israel Reiffel, Esther Athias Robles, Rachel Solomon  
Jerome Stark, Anna K. Watson, Elias Wolff, Rachel Wolff



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

## **Week of May 1-5**

Elkana Aflalo, Lazar Arber, Leon Bercowitz, Ira Boyle, Abraham Cohen, Margaret Coupe, Esther Epstein  
Gerald Faigeles, Ruth Feldschneider, Sylvia Friedman, Jerome Gaines, Robert Gardner Sr, Herbert Gluckson  
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Abraham Weintraub, Clara Weiss, June Willenz, Jannette Zevin, Ernest Zimmermann

## **Week of May 6-12**

Isadore Azer, Jerome Balas, Elsie Baronfeld, Irving Bauer, Ethel Berg, Morris Berman, Frances Black  
Florence Braverman, Bess Chakrin, Rose Cohen Charles Epstein, Rose Finkelstein, Lawrence Fried, Irving Friedel  
Abraham Frumkin, Leo Gelber, Bertha Geller, Serena Gilbert, Arthur Goldstein, Elbert Greene, Charlotte Harley  
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Ludwig Schwarz, Leonard Selig, Robert Shulman, Eleanor Simon, Shirley Steinbock, Morton Vogel, Doris Wilens  
Charles Wine, Frances Winland, Albert Wolfson, Tami Yavitz

## **Week of May 13-19**

John Adler, Barbara Alterman, Allen Altman, Gloria Altman, Martin Bookspan, Lisbeth Brodie, Morris Browner  
David Casuto, Bennie Deich, Milton Finkel, Jack Finkelstein, Shirly Gerstein, Francine Gerstman, Doris Goldberg  
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Helene Spizz, Harry Sternberg, Jeffrey Strauss, Ida Thrope, Lee Walper, David Wasserstrom, Frances Weinstein  
Barbara Werner, Charles Witlin, Ceda Wittenberg, Betty Woldow, Ellen Zurbin

## **Week of May 20-31**

Hilda Apple, David Auron, Esther Beck, Etta Becker, Fred Bennett, Walter Birn, Minnie Block, Marcus Brand  
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Hannah Stern, Kenneth Sternberg, Abraham Tobol, Michael Varat, Philip Winick  
Sara Wolf, Lillian Zeleznik, Eugene Zinbarg



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

## Week of June 1-9

Jerome Aszkenas, Seymour Aszkenas, Eunice Balas, Gussie Barnett, Roslyn Beale, Ernie Bennett  
Frank Blumenthal, Etta Breitbart, Lucy Casuto, Morton Chertoff, Edward Cole, Albert Deixter, Philip Eisenberg  
Harry Farbman, Herman Feinberg, Sylvia Feldman, Sidney Fenton, Vivian Finkel, Ben Fiterman, Marvin Fracter  
Frances Friedman, Theodor Friedrichs, Albert Gentry, Lorraine Glick, Evelyn Goldberg, Joseph Goldfarb, Fay Goodman  
Lillian Gottlieb, Becky Greenberg, Irving Greenberg, Irving Haimovitz, Hermina Hirsch, Joseph Hochman, Victoria Inga  
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Shaun Lupson-Holden, Gina Lupson-Holden-Young, Joshua Lupson-Young, Benjamin Mayro, Francine Meyer  
Joel Novick, Gertrude Oltchick, Gloria Pollock, Joseph Reiss, Edward Ritter, Ruth Rosen, Elizabeth Rosenthal  
Anna Sandler, Mollie Sayetta, Lois Schild, Ruth Schneider, Marian Segal, Ida Shapiro, Helena Simonowits  
Norman Sloven, Jacob Sobel, Barney Steinberg, Amy Ann Tighe, Eleanore Tuch, Gregory Tutleman  
Gloria Vogelbaum, Raymond Wax, Marion Weiner, Ida Weiss, Pearl Zerolnick

## Week of June 10-16

Cynthia Altus, Ethel Auron, Maurice Baigelman, Ruth Bain, Sydelle Charlowe, Sylvia Clough, Mark Combs  
Jean Eckhaus, Sol Eisenberg, Howard Feldschneider, Edward Friedland, Gert Friedrichs, Norma Gerson Thomas  
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Louis Silverman, Harry Sloven, Lynn Spizz, Irving Steinman, Jack Tighe, Sander Tobias, Bruce Weber  
Bertram Weiss, Doris Weiss, Shirley Yermanok, Gerald Zeidman, Alice Zinn

## Week of June 17-23

William Abrams, Dora Barnett, Frances Bebbchick, Bernard Beck, Benjamin Bliss, Morris Bornstein, Isabella Braudo  
Irving Brickman, Lillian Cieply, Nathan Dembo, Irene Eisenberg, Gertrude Epstein, Hermann Figowy, HaRav Frieder  
Muriel Goldberg, Irving Green, Sam Greenberg, Bert Grossman, Sylvia Grossman, Lilli Harley, Henry Hayworth  
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Miriam Walerstein, Karl Ludwig, Sylvia Weiner, Ann Weitzman, William Wine  
Helen Wohl, Eleanor Wolf, Abraham Zweiback

## Week of June 24-30

Shirley Adler, Helen Barcan, Moritz Bauch, Ruth Black, Marvin Brooderson, Abraham Ben Dovid, Kate Eisemann  
Ernest Fishel, Benjamin Fisher, Samuel Friedman, Murray Goren, Milton Guberman, Lillian Heller, Evelyn Horowitz  
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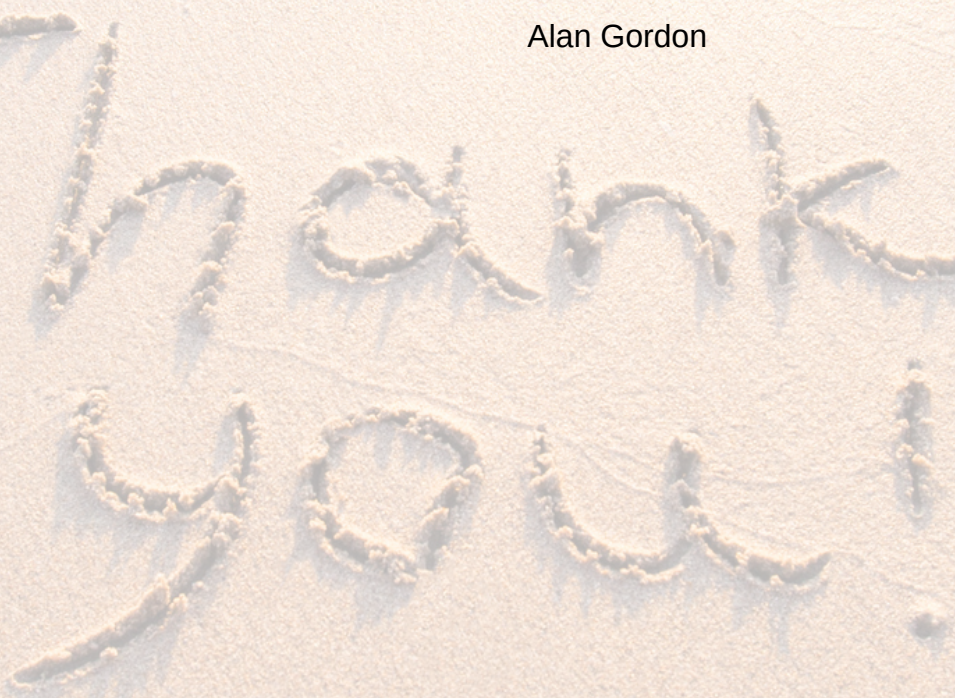
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# HOURGLASS

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.

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and help write the next chapter in our ongoing story.

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

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Mailing address: PO Box 266, St. Thomas, VI 00804

340-774-4312, [info@synagogue.vi](mailto:info@synagogue.vi)