

# The Agudagram

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March 2022 Volume 71, No. 7  
Adar II/ Nisan 5782

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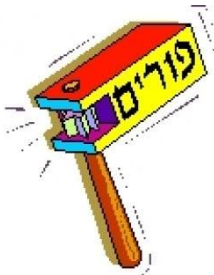
## Officers:

Debbie Walko, President  
Marlene Leonard, Vice President  
Richard Rockman, Secretary  
Helene Kline, Treasurer  
Al Rosen, Financial Advisor  
Richard Kline, Financial Officer



## **Shabbat Candlelighting**

3/4 Parshat Pekudei- candlelighting 5:40pm  
3/11 Parshat Vayikra- candlelighting 5:48pm  
3/13 DST Begins  
3/16 Fast of Esther 5:52am-7:52pm  
3/17- Purim!  
3/18 Parshat Tzav- candlelighting 6:56pm  
3/25 Parshat Shemini- candlelighting 7:03pm



PLEASE PLAN TO JOIN THE CONGREGATION  
SUNDAY, MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 6:30PM FOR OUR  
PURIM DELI DINNER. RSVP BY 3/9 TO  
CHRISTINA SO WE CAN ORDER FOOD.  
NOREEN GREGORY WILL BE PERFORMING  
FOR US. COME TO NOSH, SING, AND CELEBRATE!

**For many Jews, Volodymyr Zelensky is a ‘modern Maccabee’ as he fights Ukraine’s war**  
Leading his country in battle against Russian invasion, Jewish president is being compared to storied heroes, while also seen as dispelling notions of Jews as unpatriotic

By [PHILISSA CRAMER](#) 1 March 2022

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is drawing admiration from Jews who see him as a heroic figure. (Anadolu Agency/Getty Images via JTA)

JTA — One week ago, Jews outside of Ukraine knew Volodymyr Zelensky as the world leader on the other end of the “perfect phone call” that resulted in the impeachment of then-US president Donald Trump.



But now, after days of watching Zelensky balance humor and gravitas while rallying his fellow Ukrainians to rebuff the Russian army invasion, they know him as a contemporary Jewish hero. “Zelensky gives modern Maccabee energy,” Peter Fox, a writer, wrote on Twitter.

Fox was referring to the ancient Jews who, though outflanked in every way, fended off the efforts of foreign fighters, directed by a power-hungry ruler, to quash their independence and culture in ancient Israel.

That history can be seen as an apt comparison for what’s happening in Ukraine — and it’s one of several reasons that Zelensky’s leadership is resonating so much with Jews the world over.

“As a Jew, it is impossible not to feel proud of the courage, dignity, and defiance shown by Zelensky at this moment,” Molly Crabapple, a prominent leftist writer and artist, said in a tweet late Friday night, shortly after Zelensky posted a video showing him in the center of Kyiv, defiant in the face of encroaching Russian forces.

In Tel Aviv, people rallying for Ukraine chanted Zelensky’s name. A tweet by a former Israeli speechwriter encouraging people to pray for him by his Hebrew name was shared tens of thousands of times over the weekend. And multiple memes ricocheted around the internet highlighting Zelensky as a powerful embodiment of Jewish pride.



Demonstrators carry placards and flags during a protest march against the Russian invasion to the Ukraine, in Tel Aviv, on February 26, 2022. (Tomer Neuberg/Flash90)

“This is Volodymyr Zelensky. President of Ukraine. He is Jewish. His grandfather fought Nazis in WWII. Many of his relatives were killed in the Holocaust,” said one of

them, [shared by Good](#), a media company. “He is standing up to a dictator. Because he is brave. Because he knows what happens if you don’t.”

Another, shared by the organization Stop Antisemitism, emphasized Zelensky’s roots in a family decimated by the Holocaust. Over a photo of Zelensky, the meme says, “A Jewish Ukrainian family had 4 brothers. 3 were murdered by the Nazis. Only 1 survived,” referring to his grandfather.

Behind the feel-good sentiment of the memes lurks more complicated subtexts. Some saw the elevation of Zelensky as a Jewish hero as implying that others who came before him, potentially including Jewish victims of the Nazi genocide, lacked the bravery needed to survive, or that a Jewish president should be remarkable in a country where, not so long ago, more than 1.5 million Jews flourished.

Those embedded meanings are exactly why Zelensky’s leadership has been so inspiring to Jews, according to Ben M. Freeman, the author of the 2021 book “Jewish Pride: Rebuilding a People.” Freeman suggested the adulation of Zelensky was an antidote to the “Jews went like lambs to the slaughter” allegation that haunted survivors after the Holocaust.

“Jewish people are resilient. Jewish people fight back. Jewish people have always resisted. And I think many Jewish people feel that this is a continuation of that,” Freeman told JTA. He added, “There’s layers of Jewish resilience, but there’s also the rewriting of the Ukrainian Jewish relationship – not rewriting it to erase the past because we cannot – kind of helping us move forward.”

Before becoming Ukraine’s president in 2019, Zelensky was a comedian, and his meteoric rise from just another world leader to beacon of democracy has elicited its share of jokes this week. “As a Ukrainian-Jewish man, I’m getting a little concerned that Zelensky is setting some unachievable standards of behavior,” tweeted Sam Biederman, a public relations professional



in New York City. Fox tweeted about Zelensky's height, 5' 7", and called him "an inspiration to short Jews everywhere."

But many others say they see in his leadership serious, and gratifying, implications for Jews in Ukraine and beyond.

For one thing, many see Zelensky's success as a turning point in the history of Jews in Ukraine. "If Zelensky has now become synonymous with the blue-and-yellow flag of his country, it might signal an unexpected outcome of this conflict that has found Jews feeling finally, improbably, one with a land that has perpetually tried to spit them out," wrote Gal Beckerman, the author of a book about efforts to liberate Jews from oppression in the Soviet Union, in *The Atlantic* on Sunday. (Beckerman is married to Deborah Kolben, the editorial director of 70 Faces Media, JTA's parent company.)

This history is part of what Fox said was so inspiring about seeing Zelensky in charge.

"In 1941 over 33,000 Ukrainian Jews were murdered in a 2-day span in the Babyn Yar ravine marking one of the deadliest massacres of the Holocaust," Fox wrote, referring to the mass shooting — first reported by JTA — that was organized by Nazis but supported by local collaborators. "For Ukraine to have a Jewish President descended from a Holocaust survivor standing up to a dictator is really empowering."

At the same time, Zelensky's steadfastness in the face of acute danger — and offers of evacuation — would appear to undercut a dangerous, age-old stereotype about Jews, that they are not fully committed to the countries in which they live.

"Now is a good time to dispense with the idea that Jews aren't really loyal to the country of their birth," tweeted Elizabeth Picciotto, a writer on Long Island.

Unusually in a moment of extreme polarization, Zelensky is drawing praise from Jews across the political spectrum.

"Fawning over politicians, especially around militarism, makes me uneasy. That said, we should probably get Zelensky this @truahrbabis shirt," wrote Sophie Ellan-Golan, the director of strategic communication at Jews for Racial & Economic Justice, a liberal Jewish activist group. She pointed to the rabbinic human rights group's swag, which reads: "Resisting tyrants since Pharaoh."

(The mention of Pharaoh conjures a second comparison to a legendary Jewish leader, Moses, who delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt; others have likened Zelensky to Mordecai, the Jew who defeats a wicked, murderous leader in the story retold on Purim.)

Meanwhile, David Suissa, the editor of Los Angeles' Jewish Journal, which frequently decries progressive ideology on its editorial page, wrote that he saw a different element of Jewish tradition reflected in Zelensky's resolve not to leave his native country.

"Thousands of years after our biblical patriarch Abraham's poignant cry to God of 'Hineni' ('Here I am'), the ultimate expression of responsibility, a Jewish president in the midst of war uttered a similar message: "Listen. I am here," Suissa wrote. "In the face of such courage, it's hard to think of more essential words to embody the miracle of Jewish survival."

Suissa connected Zelensky's leadership to Israel, which he called "the ultimate example of Jews telling the world, 'Listen, we are here. We're not running. We're not hiding.'"

Politics are emerging in some of the Zelensky valorization. In a third and more charged meme, JewBelong, a group that has recently posted provocative billboards in multiple cities drawing attention to antisemitism and what it says is Jews' need to fight against hatred of them, juxtaposed an image of Zelensky in army fatigues next to the famous image of US Sen. Bernie Sanders sitting with his arms and legs crossed and wearing large mittens at Joe Biden's presidential inauguration.

"What type of Jew are you?" the meme asked — a message that confused some who saw it but left others with the clear impression that the group, which is ardently pro-Israel, was suggesting that Sanders compared unfavorably to Zelensky.

But for the most part, as Zelensky seemingly single-handedly alters the way the world responds to his beleaguered Ukraine, Jews are expressing one sentiment over and over again.

"The only good thing to come out of this humanitarian crisis is to see such an admirable and heroic Jewish president," wrote Marion Haberman, who goes by My Jewish Mommy Life online, on Instagram this weekend.

Using the congratulatory Hebrew term meaning "all the honor," she added, "Kol haKavod to President Zelensky."

**SHEILA IS RESIDING AT ST. LUKE'S PAVILION. VISITATION AT ST. LUKE'S IS NOW OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. PLEASE WEAR A MASK SHOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT AND REFRESH HER MEMORY OF HER LIFE WITH US! LAURIE TEVLIN KLEMOV VISITS SHEILA WEEKLY. PLEASE EMAIL HER AT [LTEVLIN@PTD.NET](mailto:LTEVLIN@PTD.NET) WITH ANY MESSAGES YOU'D LIKE TO PASS ON TO SHEILA OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEND HER A CARD, YOU MAY SEND IT TO:**

**SHEILA MOYER  
C/O ST. LUKE'S PAVILION  
1000 STACIE DR. ROOM 227A  
HAZLETON, PA 18201**



GET WELL WISHES ARE EXPRESSED TO: BOBBIE KLEMOW, LEANNE TRATTNER, SHIRLEY BRENNER, SHERRI KLEMOW SHELVIN, & EILEEN BRENNER.

SHOULD ANYONE HAVE ANY NEWS TO SHARE WITH THE AIC FAMILY, PLEASE EMAIL IT TO [AGUDASISRAELHAZLETON@GMAIL.COM](mailto:AGUDASISRAELHAZLETON@GMAIL.COM) TO RUN IN THE NEXT AGUDAGRAM!

C. Jeffrey Mason Obituary  
Feb. 24, 2022

C. Jeffrey Mason, 77, of Aventura, Fla., formerly of Drums, passed away peacefully Thursday surrounded by his loving family.

Born in Dayton, Ohio, Jeff moved to Hazleton during World War II. He was the son of the late Florence (Friedman) Mason and Donald Mason. Jeff was a graduate of Arizona State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in marketing from the College of Business Administration. After graduation, he worked for the Leader Department Store, downtown Hazleton, as a merchandise manager/credit manager.

In addition, he served six years in the Pennsylvania National Guard, 165th Military Police Unit, in Hazleton Heights.

In 1968, he was one of the original shareholders of LDP Inc., d/b/a Leader Data Processing, and was elected to the board of directors as treasurer. In 1972, he assumed full responsibility for the financial area of LDP. In 1972, he also assumed the position of human resource manager.

He designed and implemented the LDP Inc. Employees Handbook and the Employees Defined Benefit Pension Plan. When the union was established at LDP Inc., he led all union negotiations. In 1976, his responsibilities expanded to include the areas of account management.

In June of 1994, Jeff was elected chairman of the board and CFO. In January 1995, he was also elected president of LDP Inc. and assumed the role of CEO.

Jeff's present/past corporate affiliations included president of COM, Inc., managing partner of COM Leasing Associates, a full-service leasing company, chairman of the board/secretary of LDP, Inc., director of Advanced-Tec Materials LLC, director of Evergreen Raceway Inc., board member of Concrete Alternatives & More Inc., director of IMR Limited, secretary/treasurer of Insta-Print Inc., president of Interface Inc., secretary/ treasurer of International Microfilmmers Inc., board member of Jo Jo's Beverage Store Inc., merchandise manager for The Leader Department Store, president of LizRick Tours Inc., secretary/ treasurer of Metro Talent Inc., secretary - treasurer of Micro-Comfax Inc., secretary/treasurer of Micrographics Internationals Inc., president of Quest Systems & Technology LLC, treasurer of Stanton Lanes Inc., president of Hunter Highway Inc. and secretary/treasurer of Leader 1320 Realty Inc.

Jeff's present/past civic affiliations included treasurer for Beth Israel Temple, president for Beth Israel Cemetery Association, member of Hazleton Education Council (Penn State Hazleton Campus Advisory Board), member of Penn State Mount Nittany Society, president of Pennsylvania State Police Camp Cadet Troop N, president of Valmont Park Association, board member of The Greater Hazleton Area Historical Society, serving on the Advisory Board for Mid Penn Bank of Hazleton, vice president of the Castle Board of Directors (Alice C. Wiltsie Performing Arts Center), director and income development chairman for the Greater Hazleton American Cancer Society, past president of the Hazleton Educational Council (Penn State Hazleton Advisory Board), member of the board of directors of Hazleton General Hospital, treasurer of Hazleton Government Study Commission in 1984, treasurer/coach for Hazleton Little League, member of the Hazleton Planning Commission, director for Hazleton YMCA, member of the Lehigh Valley Hazleton Campus Professional Affairs Committee, committee member of the Minsi Trails Boy Scouts and a member of Greater Hazleton Healthcare Alliance Professional Affairs Committee. Jeff's club affiliations included the Hazleton Elks Lodge 200; American Legion Post 781 and he was an NRA life member.

Jeff was an avid Yankees baseball fan. He loved to travel and enjoyed spending time with his family, especially his adoring grandchildren. Preceding him in death was his granddaughter, Julia Mason.

Surviving are his wife of 35 years, Judith A. Mason, Aventura, Fla.; his sons, C. Jeffrey Mason Jr. (wife, Lynn), Sugarloaf Twp.; David J. Mason (wife, Jill), Drums; daughter, Stacey L. Baker (husband, Cory), Hagerstown, Md.; grandchildren, Aaron J. Mason; Calli Mason; Riley Mason; Zoe Mason; Preston and Peyton Coffman; Haley Filbert; and Emerson and Sullivan

Baker. He is also survived by his sister, Susan Mason Horn (husband, David), Beverly Hills, Calif.; and a nephew, Matthew Horn, Seattle, Wash.

Donations may be made in memory of Jeff to Beth Israel Temple (Mason Family Endowment Fund), P.O. Box 2147, Hazleton, PA 18201; or Camp Cadet Troop N, P.O. Box 2279, Hazleton, PA 18201.

Funeral arrangements will be conducted by Fierro Funeral Home, 26 W. Second St., Hazleton. The viewing will be held from 2 to 6 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home. Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Monday from Beth Israel Temple, 98 N. Church St., Hazleton. Interment will follow in Beth Israel Cemetery.

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### *March (Adar II/ Nisan) Yahrzeits*

*May the memory of the righteous endure as a blessing.*

The yahrzeit plaque lights are on in the sanctuary in memory of our departed loved ones.

\*Numbers before each name correspond to the Hebrew date of their passing. The date after each name is the secular day of the yahrzeit. Yahrzeit candles should be lit the evening before this date burning through the day of their passing. Kaddish should be said the evening before and the day of the date of passing.

#### **Adar II**

- 1 Abraham Starker 3/4
- 2 Shayna Sukenik 3/5
- 2 Benjamin Rabinowitz 3/5
- 9 John Miller 3/12
- 10 Charles Schlesinger 3/13
- 11 Lillian Kline 3/14
- 13 Louis Druian 3/16
- 15 Isaac Singer 3/18
- 17 Robert Gildenberg 3/20
- 20 Minnie Small 3/23
- 21 Gertrude Wagner 3/24
- 21 Jeanette Mason 3/24

### *Prayers To Recite When Lighting the Yahrzeit Candle*

“I light this candle to bring peace to the soul of \_\_\_\_\_ (insert Jewish name) ben/bat (son of/daughter of) \_\_\_\_\_ (insert father’s Jewish name).”

The human soul is a light from God. May it be your will that the soul of (*insert name*) enjoy eternal life, along with the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, and the rest of the righteous that are in Gan Eden. Amen.

*Neir Adonai Nishmat Adam. Yehi Ratzon Milfanecha, Adonai Eloheinu Veilohei Avoteinu, Shetehei Nishmat (insert name) Tzerurah betzeror hachayim, im nishmot Avraham Yitzhak ve'Ya'akov, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel VeLeah. Tehi Menutchatah kavod, Selah*



# FEBRUARY DONATIONS RECEIVED

## Endowment Fund

### Donation Received from

Richard Rockman  
David Stern & Barbara Wagner  
Faye & Richard Bishop  
Beulah Bishop & Richard Bishop  
Sharon Levine

### In Honor/Memory of

Martin Cury, Cousin  
Dorothy Taub  
Daniel Freedman  
Daniel Freedman  
Daniel Freedman

We greatly appreciate donations for yahrzeits, life events, and other celebrations! They truly keep the shul running and show how strong our congregation is.

## Yahrzeit Fund

### Donation Received from

Terry Chercass  
Barbara Wagner & David Stern  
Ted & Jackie Matlow  
Ted & Jackie Matlow  
Bruce S. Miller  
Tama Lee Barsky  
Marvin & Thelma Chercass  
Marvin & Thelma Chercass  
Yanusiewicz & Kaplan Families  
Yanusiewicz & Kaplan Families  
Faye & Richard Bishop  
Faye & Richard Bishop  
Faye & Richard Bishop  
Faye & Richard Bishop  
Barry & Karen Chaskin  
Eric Sugarman  
Marilyn Bergstein  
Ken & Penny Frumkin  
Carlos & Sharon Buchbinder  
Lois Sugarman  
Elliot & Toby Eisenberg

### In Memory of

Sophie Richter, Aunt  
David Wagner, Father  
Lillian Cohn, Mother  
Jeffrey D. Bloch, Nephew  
Beatrice Miller, Mother  
Ethel Koplin, Mother  
William Chercass, Father  
May Chercass, Mother  
Goldie Kaplan, Grandmother  
Goldie Lande  
Marilyn Harris, Neighbor & friend  
Reuben Zimet, Father of friend  
Grace Klemow, Aunt  
Milton Ziff, Father of friend  
Rebecca Chaskin, Aunt  
David Sugarman, Father  
Bernard J. Bergstein, Husband  
Lillian Frumkin  
Grandmother, Martha Buchbinder  
David Sugarman, Husband  
Dora Yust

If you'd like information about donating, please email us at [agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com](mailto:agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com) or call the shul.

Elliot & Toby Eisenberg  
Elliot & Toby Eisenberg  
Elliot & Toby Eisenberg  
Howard Rockman

Harold Eisenberg  
Milton Yust  
Ruth Eisenberg  
Florence Kashinitz, Aunt

We leave you this edition with a special prayer shared by Art Kaplan.

## A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

Holy One, Source of Strength,  
War has begun, and innocent people are dying.  
We ask Your protection for Ukraine and its citizens.  
We pray for their safety and the security of the country,  
and for the neighboring countries—Hungary, Poland, and Rumania, among others—  
that have opened their borders to provide humanitarian corridors  
and safe passage for all those who wish to evacuate.  
We seek the comfort of believing that everything will be all right,  
even in the face of insurmountable odds.  
Quiet the fears that threaten to deafen us; grant us Shleimut—  
the inner peace we so desperately seek. Help us remain calm and reach out to those in need.  
May this horrific situation be diffused swiftly with minimal casualties.  
Bless our world leaders with the ability to work together for the greater good,  
and the wisdom to make wise decisions during this turbulent time.  
Bless the people of all nations with the desire, strength and courage  
to create a world based on justice and filled with peace.  
May the words of [Isaiah 2:4](#):  
“Nation shall not lift up sword against nation;  
neither shall they learn war anymore”  
become true in our day—in this very hour.  
Source of Goodness, shine Your healing light on us  
and all those in the Ukraine we hold in our hearts.  
Shelter us, shield us, show us the path to peace.  
May we each be inspired to use our unique gifts to usher in an era of enduring peace.  
And let us say: Amen.

## MARCH PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Shalom,

We share in the Hazleton Jewish community's mourning on the loss of Jeff Mason from Beth Israel. May his memory be a blessing.

After the hostage situation in Colleyville to the now Russian invasion of Ukraine, my heart hurts for our world. May we continue to pray for peace as a congregation, as Jews, and for the world.

I am looking forward to celebrating at our Purim deli dinner while listening to Noreen Gregory entertain us with enjoyable music. Noreen was a dear friend of Alan Berg and would often sing at Leisure Lounge and other shul events. You will surely enjoy her performance! It will be nice to gather with our beautiful Purim decor in our social hall, thanks to Marlene & Jimmy Leonard. Please place your reservations with Christina.

We would like to have your input for when to return to in-house Shabbat Services. We will also keep Zoom services available for those unable to attend in person. Please call or email the Shul with your thoughts.

Some of you may remember Rabbi Samuel Burnstein from the 1960's. His daughter, Ilana, is doing research and wants to visit our Shul. I will be providing her with a copy of our book, Voices of Hazleton. If you have any information, please email her.

We have additional 2022 calendars available if anyone would like to order them for family members.

We have completed filling out our second Pennsylvania Non-profit Security Grant, requesting additional safety and security items. We will keep you posted on the outcome.

All the best,

*Debbie Walker*