

Preservation & Remembrance

Holocaust Torah Scroll #325, which proudly stands in a case in the foyer of Beth Emeth Congregation, is one of 1564 Czech Memorial Torahs on loan from and distributed by the Memorial Scrolls Trust of the Westminster Synagogue in London, England. This Torah comes from Uhrineves, a village in Pitkovice, which is a suburb of Prague.

This Torah stands as a sacred memorial to the Jewish souls of Uhrineves whose lives were cut short during the Holocaust. It was written in the 1800s. Correspondence indicates that Torah #325 was acquired for Beth Emeth through a generous donation from Arthur Leist, the congregational president in 1986. It was Mr. Leist who claimed the Torah at the Phoenix airport when it arrived in 1987. After our current building was completed, the Torah was formally dedicated in a ceremony on April 15th, 1988.

After learning about the preservation requirements from Lee Shedroff, a local volunteer of the Memorial Scrolls Trust, and researching the cleaning process from Jerry Weiser, an “official” Torah cleaner in Seattle, Washington, a work party was organized and took place after morning minyan. Tom Behrendt, Beth Emeth’s president, and congregants Morrie Hesch and Jim Toney participated. Rabbi Robert Sternberg was present and assisted with locating the center section of Vayikra/Leviticus where the Torah is open for display. This section contains the verse “Thou shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Lev 19:18)

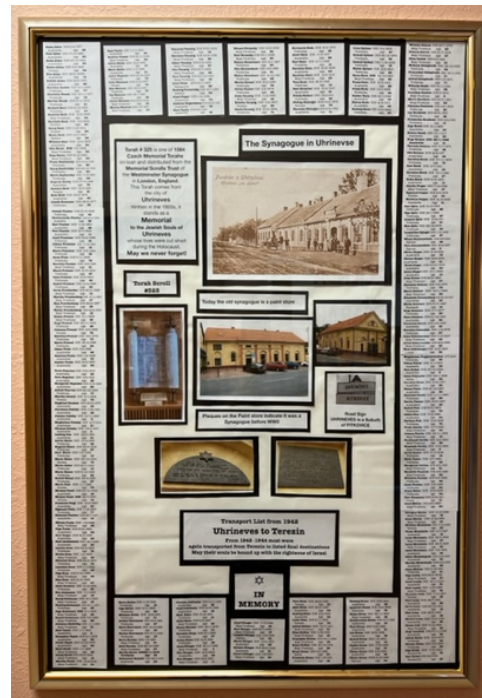
The process was a labor of love and very time consuming taking several hours to complete. It required disassembling the case and saying the ritual blessings, one for the washing of the hands, and one thanking HaShem for sustaining us and allowing us to reach this season. Morrie worked diligently brushing the dust from the parchment with a special brush. The Torah was rolled from end to end as each section was cleaned. Then it was rolled back to the center and placed back in the case.

The **Simchat Torah** service on **October 18th will begin at 9:30 am** and will include a memorial presentation featuring a tribute to all the individuals who were transported from Uhrineves to Terezin. The tribute lists each individual’s name, birth date, final destination and age at death.

May their souls be bound up with the righteous and may we never forget!

All are welcome!

Preservation and Remembrance Cleaning the Holocaust Torah



A labor of Love!

Thank you to Ketzi Toney for organizing the work team and for making the tribute for the memorial ceremony included in the Simchat Torah service on October 18th which begins at 9:30 am.

