

High Holiday Resources



2025/5786

Welcoming the Stranger in 5786

As your congregations and communities prepare for the High Holidays during a year that has fundamentally challenged an American commitment to welcome, HIAS has curated the following resources to aid your efforts to support refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants for the holidays and beyond. Below, you will find the following:

- Curated text studies for communal torah study
- Resources for sermon writing including Jewish texts and proclamations grounded in Jewish text
- Liturgical resources for use in services

As Rabbi in Residence at HIAS, I am available to consult on how to use and leverage these resources within a larger congregational strategy. Consider joining our [HIAS Clergy Council](#) to add your voice in support of welcome with the Jewish community and don't hesitate to reach out. *Shana tovah* and *b'hatzlecha* as you prepare for the holidays.

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Curated Text Studies

These resources are prefabricated text studies best used in focused Torah study sessions ranging from 15 to 60 minutes depending on how detailed the discussion.

[Reading Ezra in an Age of Mass Deportation](#)

Explores xenophobic strains of thought within our own tradition, how to understand, contextualize, and overcome them.

[You Shall Not Pass: Responding to Fear-based Immigration Policy](#)

Explores the toolkit of responses to xenophobic policy as reflected through interpretations of the Israelite encounter with Edomites when wandering in the wilderness

[Sarah and Abraham: A Theology of Border Crossing](#)

Explores how the origins of Jewish tradition are grounded in experiences of migration and how that permeates the Jewish outlook on the world

[Joseph and the Trauma of Human Trafficking](#)

The story of Joseph being sold into slavery reflects the experience, conditions and psychology of contemporary victims of human trafficking – particularly across international borders

Textual Resources

These resources provide content to bolster sermon-writing focused on immigration and refugee issues. Support from Jewish sacred texts and current rabbinic and organizational voices provide useful fodder for quotation.

[Refugee Torah](#)

This resource is a compilation of the most common texts cited in support of refugees and immigrants with citations from biblical, rabbinic and contemporary sources.

[Jewish Responses to Contemporary Policy](#)

These proclamations from HIAS and others use the voice of tradition to express our values and positions.

- [Clergy Letter on the Immoral Use of Law](#)
- [The Spiritual Response of Resilience to Devastation](#)
- [Clergy Letter Against Scapegoating and Targeting Immigrants](#)
- [Lessons from Rejecting the St. Louis](#)
- External Sources:
 - Rabbi Ammos Chorny “[A Fence Around Compassion](#)”
 - Jay Michaelson “[Have We Become the ‘Ordinary Germans’ Now](#)”

Liturgical Readings

The readings below connect themes in the liturgy with contemporary issues facing refugees and immigrants.

[Psalm 150 \(New for 2025\)](#)

A creative responsive reading of the conclusion of p’sukei d’zimra with original text included

[Prayer for Our Country](#)

HIAS’ Platform Pledge reframed as a prayer for our country by Rabbi Lauren Grabelle Hermann

[Nisim B’Chol Yom – Daily Miracles](#)

A creative interpretation of the morning blessings over daily miracles centering our ability to help those need

[Hear the Call, Heed the Call](#)

A meditation on the sounding of shofar

[Unetaneh Tokef: Who Shall Rest and Who Shall Be Forced to Move](#)

A reflection on the cosmic accidents that call us to compassion

[P’tach Lanu Sha’ar- Open the Gates](#)

A reflection on access to safety, dignity and welcome

[Is This the Fast I Desire](#)

A prophetic call to bring the refugee home