



# Shabbat for Ukrainian Jews

## How to Talk about Jewish Federations and JDC's Response

*This document outlines Jewish Federations and JDC's Ukraine crisis response, and should be used to guide your conversations during the Feb. 24 "Shabbat for Ukrainian Jews" event, marking the 1-year anniversary of the conflict.*

Exactly one year ago today, the Ukraine crisis began. Immediately, Jewish Federations, JDC, and their partners mobilized to deliver humanitarian aid to Jews in Ukraine, and those fleeing to neighboring countries. This was a collective effort and that life-saving work continues today. As we welcome Shabbat and light our candles tonight, we, too, are engaged in a collective effort, a timeless Jewish tradition. As we do so, let us reflect on the current crisis and help bring light to those Ukrainian Jews still caught in darkness.

## Jewish Federations and JDC's Impact to Date

1. A year into the crisis, the Jewish Federations and JDC continue our life-saving care for tens of thousands of Jews in Ukraine, thousands of Jewish refugees remaining in Europe, and also to thousands of non-Jewish Ukrainians.



necessities such as food, medicine, shelter, and guidance, in partnership with European Jewish communities.

Fielded over **67,600 calls and requests for help** via our emergency hotlines



Provided nonsectarian medical aid and psychosocial support to **20,000 Ukrainian refugees** and support to medical facilities in Ukraine, including the distribution of telemedicine devices, training in their use, and critically needed wheelchairs and crutches.

2. Over the last year, JDC, with the support of Jewish Federations, has:



Continued life-saving services (food, medicine, and homecare) for more than **43,000 Jews** in Ukraine, including poor, elderly, and newly impoverished Jews.



Distributed over **800 tons** of humanitarian assistance.



Evacuated over **13,000 Jews** from Ukraine, including **170 medical evacuations** of frail and sick elderly.



Provided winter survival aid to **tens of thousands of Jews**, which included subsidies for heat, as well as wood and coal.



Aided over **40,000 Ukrainian refugees** fleeing to neighboring countries at border crossings, supplying vital

3. Our ability to achieve this is based on our vast, preexisting social service and Jewish community infrastructure in Ukraine, professionals and local volunteer corps, and partnerships with local European Jewish communities.



## Current & Future Needs

A year into the crisis, Jews from Ukraine need us more than ever. The country is in the midst of a bitter winter, and temperatures frequently drop below freezing. Recent escalations have damaged much of Ukraine's electricity and heating infrastructure, leaving many without light and warmth. Because of this, Ukraine's Jewish community is contending with a host of frightening and new winter-related challenges as well as ongoing economic decline.

To meet this dire need, the Jewish Federations, JDC, and their partners are working around the clock to provide winter survival and material support, and other aid to poor and vulnerable Jews. This includes:



Providing 22,000+ people with **winter survival needs**, including: wood, coal, canned and dehydrated foods, support for covering utilities costs, heaters, warm clothes, blankets, sub-zero sleeping bags, and electric bedding.



With Federation support, JDC Hesed social service centers and JDC-supported community service centers are being converted into **warming centers with generators** for those who do not have access to heat or electricity. Should power fail, the shelters will offer refuge and community to poor and vulnerable Jews.



**Expansion of JOINTECH** – JDC's remote care and online community programs – that has provided life-saving assistance and trauma support during the conflict and pandemic. By putting technology in the hands of JDC clients and caregivers, we have been able to locate and assist Jews in danger, ensure connection to Jewish life and decrease loneliness among the homebound and those in isolated locations.



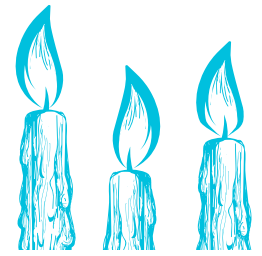
**Resettlement and integration assistance for refugees** in Jewish communities in Europe, including: food, medicine, accommodation, trauma support, educational scholarships, camping, and workforce training and integration.



Strengthening Ukrainian hospitals and supporting access to healthcare for non-Jewish populations in Ukraine and refugees remaining in Europe.

**The Jewish Federations and JDC's life-saving winter survival operations are only possible thanks to the generosity and compassion of donors like you. On behalf of the tens of thousands of Ukrainian Jews whom you are helping keep warm this winter and sustaining throughout the crisis, we thank you.**

# Shabbat for Ukrainian Jews



## BLESSING OVER THE SHABBAT CANDLES

### A Candle for Ukrainian Jews

On Shabbat, we light two candles. We pass our hands in front of our eyes, taking in the light and warmth of the flames.

A year into the Ukraine crisis, many Jews live without light and heat, and must endure rolling blackouts and bitter cold. In even the best of times, JDC delivers winter relief to poor and elderly Jews in Ukraine and the former Soviet Union. But without electricity and heat, winter relief has turned into winter survival: That's why JDC and Jewish Federations have increased their efforts, opening warming centers where people can gather and escape the cold, while also delivering radiators, food, medicine, and fuel for warmth.

As we say the blessing over the candles, let us remember those Jews trapped in darkness, in need of light, warmth, and hope.

ברוך אתה יי *Baruch Atah Adonai*  
אלוקינו מלך העולם *Eloheinu Melech haolam*  
אשר קדשנו במצוותיו *Asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav*  
וצונו להדליק נר *v'zivanu l'hadlik ner*  
של שבת *shel Shabbat*

Blessed are You Adonai our God Ruler of the Universe You hallow us with Your mitzvot and command us to kindle the lights of Shabbat.



## VOICE FROM UKRAINE

**Stella B.,**  
JDC Volunteer in Odesa

If I wasn't volunteering, I'd go crazy.

When the crisis began, everything changed. We had to do everything all at once, do whatever was needed: We packed boxes of food. We answered calls from people asking for help, for evacuation assistance, for supplies — even diapers and baby formula. There were hundreds or thousands of those calls during the first part of the war. But as difficult as it was, it taught us to work quickly, to communicate fast and efficiently. And we did — we worked fast and non-stop.

Our elderly people have faced this situation before, and us volunteers were important to them; they needed us to distract them from the crisis, if only online, over Zoom. That's why I held virtual Shabbats, as well as an online Rosh Hashanah and Passover seder: Each Friday, the elderly could enjoy Jewish life and ignore the world outside their window.

Jewish Federations and JDC are my support, especially now. They are vital at this time, and I feel so much gratitude for what they've done. They're part of our big Jewish community. And when I light Shabbat candles, I thank God, that we are alive, and that everything feels all right. I noticed recently that every Shabbat, the air-raid sirens never go off. Never.

## ACTION ITEM

### The Third Candle

Tonight, we light three candles instead of two. We reserve this extra candle for Jews in Ukraine — those without light and fuel, for whom rolling blackouts have darkened their cities and towns. As we light this candle, we commit to taking action for these Jews — delivering them the life-saving help and support they need to endure these difficult times.

**Be a Light for Jews Caught in the Ukraine Crisis: Give Today**  
[jfeds.org/CrisisInUkraine](http://jfeds.org/CrisisInUkraine)

# Shabbat for Ukrainian Jews



## A SONG FOR PEACE

### Shalom Aleichem

The title of the near-universal Shabbat song, *Shalom Aleichem*, translates from Hebrew to English as “Peace be upon you.” The poem’s four stanzas welcome angels into the home — greeting them in peace, wishing them peace, and singing them a peaceful departure. As we sing *Shalom Aleichem*, we wish for peace — for our loved ones, for all Jews, and for all people.

For Jews in Ukraine, the call for peace is now more urgent than ever. Amidst shellings, air-raid sirens, and constant uncertainty, these Jews struggle to stay safe and maintain Jewish life. And for many

elderly Jews, many of whom endured the horrors of World War II, this crisis resonates with a particular bitterness. For many of them, their “angel” is their JDC homemaker worker — a person who cares for them, and brings them food, medicine, and other crucial aid, all with the support of Jewish Federations.

As we sing *Shalom Aleichem*, let’s sing for the peaceful end to the conflict in Ukraine, and for the angels working to secure a better world for Jews caught in the crisis.

שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת  
מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן מִמְּלֶךְ מַלְכֵי  
הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

*Shalom aleichem mal'achei hasharet  
mal'achei elyon. Mimelech mal'achei  
ham'lachim Hakadosh baruch Hu.*

בּוֹאֲכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם  
מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן מִמְּלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים  
הַקְּדוֹשׁ  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא

*Bo'achem leshalom mal'achei  
hashalom mal'achei elyon. Mimelech  
mal'achei ham'lachim Hakadosh  
baruch Hu.*

בְּרַחוּמֵי לְשָׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי  
עֲלִיּוֹן מִמְּלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא

*Bar'chuni leshalom mal'achei  
hashalom mal'achei elyon. Mimelech  
mal'achei ham'lachim Hakadosh  
baruch Hu.*

צֵאתְכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם  
מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן מִמְּלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים  
הַקְּדוֹשׁ  
בְּרוּךְ הוּא

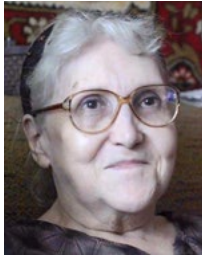
*Tzetchem leshalom mal'achei  
hashalom mal'achei elyon. Mimelech  
mal'achei ham'lachim Hakadosh  
baruch Hu.*

Peace be with you ministering angels messengers of the Most High.  
Messengers of the King of Kings the Holy One, Blessed be He.

Come in peace messengers of peace messengers of the Most High.  
Messengers of the King of Kings the Holy One, Blessed be He.

Bless me with peace messengers of peace messengers of the Most High.  
Messengers of the King of Kings the Holy One, Blessed be He.

Go in peace messengers of peace messengers of the Most High.  
Messengers of the King of Kings the Holy One, Blessed be He.



**VOICE FROM UKRAINE**

**Galina S.,  
JDC Client, Kharkiv, Ukraine**

When the rocket fell next to us, it was already dark. Our building shook and everything turned a glowing red: All I could see

were fragments flying everywhere. And I was screaming, screaming for my son, Dima.

Earlier in the year, when the crisis began, I simply couldn't believe it. And later on, when the bombings started, it was horrible. It's horror, that's all. We're living in horror.

But for as long as I can remember, JDC, with the support of Jewish Federations, has helped us — they have always helped with everything. I got sick about 20 years ago, and they provided me with food, medicine, and moral support.

It's impossible to list everything that JDC does. They're always next to me. Always. And for

everything I need, I call them. Where else can I turn for help?

Now everything is especially difficult. And it's so horrifying. But when you know that someone cares for you, that's everything. And when my JDC homecare worker arrives, and the day somehow begins, all I feel is relief.

That's how it is with the Jewish Federations and JDC: We go hand in hand together.

Without them, I don't know what would have happened to my family. My son Dima is ill and has disabilities — he needs extra support.

So, if you asked me about angels, I would say it at once — it's the Jewish Federations and JDC. They're all heroes. And there are lots of them.

They help us even when there's shelling, they run to us and bring us aid.

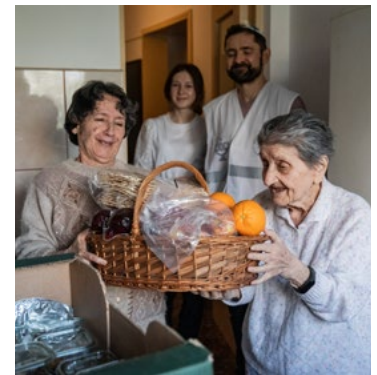
**ACTION ITEM**

**Everyday Angels**

Angels come in many forms: Who is an angel in your own life? This could be anyone — a teacher, family member, colleague, someone famous, a fictional character, or whoever comes to mind. What has this person given you? How have they changed your life?

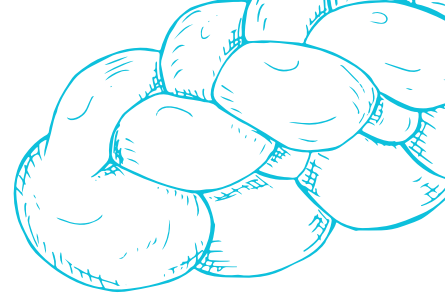
***Be an Angel for Jews in Ukraine: Support Our Efforts Today***  
[jfed.org/CrisisInUkraine](http://jfed.org/CrisisInUkraine)

**Scenes from the Crisis**



Images from left to right: An elderly Ukrainian Jew with complex medical needs is evacuated from Odesa. JDC, with the support of Jewish Federations, evacuated more than 12,900 refugees from Ukraine in the first six months of the crisis alone. A family of Ukrainian refugees receives a Passover food package at their temporary housing in Bucharest, Romania.

# Shabbat for Ukrainian Jews



## BLESSING OVER THE BREAD

### Hamotzi

The bread we eat is a timeless source of sustenance — that which gives us life and nourishes our spirit. On Shabbat, many Jews around the world eat challah, the braided bread made with two or more plaits.

All of us need food. And since the Ukraine crisis began, many Jews across the region have lived in fear and struggled with, not knowing where their next meal will come from. That's why JDC, with the support of Jewish Federations, has partnered with local Jewish communities throughout the country to deliver food and other essentials to poor and elderly Jews. Many have even received challah on Shabbat.

As we say the *hamotzi*, let us remember those Jews without bread, in need of sustenance.

ברוך אתה יי  
אלהינו מלך העולם  
המוציא לחם מן הארץ *Baruch atah Adonai  
Eloheinu melech haolam  
hamotzi lechem min haaretz*

Blessed are You Adonai our God Ruler of the Universe who brings forth bread from the earth



## VOICE FROM UKRAINE

**Galina Z.,**  
Coordinator of JDC Food Security Initiative in Sumy, Ukraine

We started our project on Feb. 1, 2022, and a few weeks later, the crisis began. We work to meet the needs of people who live in poverty — some have disabilities and live on tiny pensions, and they can't even cook for themselves. We work to deliver food sets and hot meals to vulnerable Jews in Sumy, and now to internally displaced people, too.

But there's another component to our work, too — baking challahs for Shabbat. I knead the dough with my daughter, and I think about community and about how the different generations must support each other. We teach our children to do good, and we carry forward our traditions. It's amazing.

I think Jews help each other because we understand that a human life is the most valuable possible thing. What unites us is kindness, trust, love, and some power from above that empowers us to act, even in these difficult times. During the crisis, I've realized that my main talent is to love — to love people, to love my country, and to love my Jewish community. That's my source of energy, and it's what ensures that I don't give up.

And when I see elderly people receiving one of our challahs with tears in their eyes, I understand that our work is critically important.

## ACTION ITEM

### What Sustains You?

Food isn't the only thing that sustains us. Go around and talk about what gets you through life's highs and lows. This could be an activity, a place, a memory, a person, a book, or anything else. Why does this activity/person/thing make you feel alive? After going around, did you learn about something you'd like to start doing in your own life?

***Help Sustain Those Jews Still Caught in the Crisis: Support Our Work Today***  
[jfed.org/CrisisInUkraine](https://jfed.org/CrisisInUkraine)