



Holocaust Statue

This statue was created for and donated to our congregation by Larry, Joan, Margie and Julie Schwartz and dedicated with love to their parents Leon & Anne Schwartz and Julius & Minna Simon. It was displayed in our Memorial Alcove when we moved into this building. The statue is a representation of the infamous photograph which was taken at the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (1943) and which is displayed on the other side of this statue.

The statue was moved into the Haines Memorial Chapel on September 1, 2018 as both a reminder of the horror of the Shoah, but also to inspire all those who worship here that arms extended to heaven can also represent reaching for that which is holy.

Dedication of the Holocaust Statue Written by Rabbi Jason Bonder

This statue, dedicated here, emerges from one of Jewish people's most harrowing experiences of all time – the *Shoah* – the Holocaust. The artists' work conveys the angst and horror that we find in the infamous photograph beside it. A Jewish boy no more than 10 years old his hands raised. Our artist, through the absence of arms on the two larger people, conveys the equally horrifying experience of parents who must watch this happen but are powerless to help.

We, Congregation Beth Or, place this heart wrenching work in this sacred worship space as an eternal testament to the horrors that we as a People have endured. Yet we can also find in this gesture a yearning which is central to the Jewish experience. In the face of circumstances which are out of our control, from illnesses to threats against humanity, we the Jewish People have not lost our hope. We continue reaching upward towards the heavens, petitioning God, affirming our covenant with the divine – reaching for that which is holy.

It is this aspiration that we hope to stir within ourselves each time we enter this chapel. We passionately petition our Creator for the strength, both physical and spiritual, to make a difference in this world for good.

Each time we enter this chapel, let us never forget the raised hands of this child of Israel. May we raise our hands not in surrender but with a deep desire for a better future.

Let us pray with fervor in this space. Let us find support in times of mourning. And even in the face of life's greatest adversities, let us celebrate the blessings of our lives together. Am Yisrael chai – The Jewish people live.