

My dear community!

It's hard to believe it's been a year since I came to Minnesota. Throughout this year, we have gone through a lot of experiences and challenges together. I learned to drive in the snow, teach through zoom, appreciate the sun and get to know what Jewish life looks like in St. Paul.

When I got here, I didn't know what I got myself into. Whether it's the cold Minnesotan winter or Shabbat dinners, the community here has surprised me. I love getting to know you, every family, every child, and every person with a story. You move me with your deep and true connection to Israel.

During this year, thanks to the support of the Federation, I taught in synagogues, the JCC, the Talmud Torah and organized various community events. There are two moments from this year that I will cherish forever. The first program is the "Heart to Heart" series that took place in January on Martin Luther King Day. My dear friend Eden Farda came from Portland Oregon to teach us about the Ethiopian Jewish community and share with us her Israeli story as a black woman in the State of Israel. I think we now understand how significant this conversation was, given the developments that happened over this past summer. These conversations are immeasurably important, especially within our Jewish community here.



When I returned to Minnesota in August for my second year of Shlichot, my grandfather passed away suddenly. This loss hit me hard, and his loss still hits in waves over time. I contacted you, through Facebook, to ask for support and you were there for me in the most moving way, beyond any expectation I could have ever had. I received over 90 comments on that post. You really cannot imagine how important this support was to me in the darkest moment of all. These two moments taught me about our strength as a community and the power of the personal connection between us.

The near future brings challenges that we will not be able to meet easily. It is easy for us to converge within ourselves, especially as winter comes. I want you to read this letter as a personal invitation to contact me! I would love to meet you, even on zoom, and strengthen the bond between us and Israel.

Thank you so much for being a part of my community.

Happy New Year and Shana Tova,

Keshet