



## THE UNITED JEWISH CONGREGATION OF HONG KONG

*Celebrating 20 Years of Progressive Judaism in Hong Kong*

# SHABBAT SHALOM

6 - 7 November, 2009

20 Cheshvan 5770

Parashat Vayera  
(Genesis 18:1-22:24)

Rabbi Stanton M. Zamek  
Cantorial Soloist Shani Ben Or

## From the Rabbi's desk

After months of planning, preparation, and anticipation, Jamie Shear, our sofer, has arrived in Hong Kong. He is here to officially inaugurate the UJC Year of Torah by beginning the writing of the Book of Genesis with the congregation. For the next seven days the UJC Sanctuary will become Jamie's studio where letter by letter he will bring the new UJC Torah into being. We will have the rare privilege of observing the birth of a new Sefer Torah.

The next week is packed with opportunities to meet our scribe, watch him at work, and learn from him. I wouldn't miss any of this if I were you. Our programming for this week is too rich for me to summarize here. I do want to highlight one particular event, however. I am hoping that the entire UJC family will be present for the Opening Convocation on Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm. That afternoon we will stand together and formally invest Jamie Shear with the authority to write a Sefer Torah on our behalf. He will then write the first few letters of the Book of *Bereishit*. I know you will want to be present to witness this important event in the history of the UJC.

This is your Torah we are writing. This is the Torah your children will read from at their B'nai Mitzvah. This Torah will be read, studied, and cherished for generations. This Torah will still be bringing the word of HaShem to life long after we have left this world. And this Torah will be different in one critical respect from the other Sifrei Torah that we have revered and cared for these past twenty years. Our new Sefer Torah is the natural-born child of the UJC. Without us, it would not exist. The world will be richer in Torah because of us. It is an expression of our community's maturity that we have undertaken this great mitzvah. Only a confident and serious congregation is capable of accepting the responsibility laid upon us by the words of the Torah: *Now write for yourself this song and teach it to the children of Israel.*

As this new Sefer Torah will be ours in a way no Torah has been before, I know that you will not be content to merely witness its birth. You will want to be midwives to this Sefer Torah, assisting and supporting its creation. I am confident that you will actively participate in this great undertaking and be generous in your sponsorship.

זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יי נִגְלָה וְנִשְׁמַחָה בּוֹ!

This is the day the LORD has made, let us rejoice and be glad on it!

All Blessings,  
Rabbi Z ([rabbizamek@ujc.org.hk](mailto:rabbizamek@ujc.org.hk))



Sofer Jamie Shear at work on our Torah in the UJC Sanctuary.

5<sup>th</sup> November, 2009