

I never thought I'd write these words, but I am currently praying for three of my Ukrainian rabbinic colleagues who are trying to stay alive. Two of them have managed to make it across the Ukraine border, including walking through freezing temperatures for hours at night. One of them is sheltering in a bomb shelter in Kyiv. All three are gifted, kind-hearted, liberal-minded Reform rabbis who I got to know through my time at Leo Baeck College (my rabbinical school in London). I have and continue to follow their ordeal on social media where they post text, photos and videos of all they are contending with.

War in Europe. As a European immigrant to the United States, I never thought that I would be here and there would be war on the continent of my birth; the very scourge my post-war generation has been raised up to prevent for decades. I saw the steady march of European integration. I was a child when the European Economic Community formed;

think that now, in the streets of Kyiv and other cities, there is war. It is unfathomable.

The universalist humanitarian angle intersects with a unique Jewish angle. In our American Jewish community, many Jews (though, significantly, not all—and that is important to remember too) can draw on Eastern European heritage. I, too, watched 'Everything is Illuminated' years ago. The lines binding the generations of many American Jews to Ukraine are surprisingly, shockingly short. This unprovoked war against a nation with a brave and resilient Jewish president, has affected many in our community deeply.

I refer you to our own President Janice Weiner's column for more context on Ukraine; she is far more knowledgeable in the geopolitical and historical context of that region than I am. She also offers concrete steps we can take as Jews and as a congregation to offer support to the people of Ukraine. I will also amplify her call to build our own