

PESACH 5781—How Different Are These Nights!

Dear PSJC,

Believe it or not, Passover is almost upon us once again. The first seder begins Saturday night, March 27th. Despite movement towards healing, we reach our second Pesach of the pandemic still limited in the ways in which we are able to connect with one another. But as we have learned throughout this year, with a little determination and some creativity and patience, we can create real and meaningful moments together. And Passover is no exception. Here are some things that might help you make this Passover a good, meaningful and safe celebration for you and all you love.

1. SAVE THE DATES

To begin with, here are a number of important dates to put in your Pesach Calendar:

PSJC PESACH PACKAGE PICKUP

Sunday, March 21 | 12:00-2:00PM

Bring home a bag of Passover goodies from your PSJC community. In keeping with what has become a PSJC holiday tradition this year, we will provide a bag of items to enhance your sederim and connect with PSJC wherever you are. To sign up for your Pesach Package, please sign up [here](#). You can pick up your Pesach Package in the PSJC Yard on Sunday, March 21st from 12:00-2:00PM

FEED YOUR BODY AS WELL AS YOUR SOUL THIS PESACH

Sunday, March 14th 1:00-3:00PM

Come to PSJC's first-ever progressive Passover cooking lesson! Learn from our community's creative cooks how to make halek (Indian charoset), special matzo balls, Pesach rolls and more. Join us on zoom and get inspiration for your own sederim and the seven days that follow.

SEDER PLATE CRAFT PROJECT

Thursday, May 18th | 5:30-6:30PM

Seder crafts are not just for kids anymore. Join Angela Weisl for a fun craft project to make your seder plate, or matza plate something special this year.

STORYWALK AND PASSOVER ACTIVITY KITS

Sunday, March 21st | 11:15AM - 12:15PM

Experience a passover story while walking along the fence at PSJC and pick up an activity kit, Passover reusable sticker activity, and DIY crafts, plus PJ Library Matzah boxes! Complete the crafts on your own or zoom into a stories and songs with PSJC Faculty, Rachel and Stephen on Tuesday, March 23rd at 3:00PM. \$15 for kit and class (\$10/PSJC members). *Ages 3 - 8.*

SEDER SECRETS: RUNNING A ZESTFUL, ZIPPY, ZAZZY, ZAFTIG (?) ZOOM PASSOVER SEDER

Monday, March 22 | 6:00PM

Join us to learn creative and practical ways to enhance your Zoom or small group Seder. We will be sharing successful ideas culled from the Internet and from PSJC community members. If you would like to share some of your own experiences that were particularly effective – either as a Seder leader or a guest – please email Elizabeth Schnur at davening@PSJC.org by 3/15/21.

SELL HAMETZ with Rabbi Carter

Now until Wednesday, March 24th

One important way to rid your home of Hametz, is to sell whatever may still remain in your possession for the period of Pesach. Just fill out [this form](#), and Rabbi Carter will take care of this for you.

SIYYUM B'CHORIM: [Thursday, March 25th | 8:00AM](#)

SHABBAT HAGADOL services: [Saturday, March 27th | 10:00AM on zoom](#)

PESACH SEDARIM

First Seder, Saturday night, March 27th (candlelighting:7:53PM)

Second Seder, Sunday night, March 28th (candlelighting: 6:58PM)

PESACH SERVICES DAY 1 and 2

[Sunday, March 28th | 10:00AM \(on zoom\)](#)

[Monday, March 29th | 10:00AM \(on zoom\)](#)

HOL HAMOED PESACH SERVICES

[Wednesday, March 31st | 8:00AM](#)

PESACH DAY 7 and 8

[Saturday, April 3 | 10:00AM](#)

[Sunday, April 4 | 10:00AM](#)

Additional In-Person Yizkor in PSJC Yard (Sunday, April 4 | 1:30PM)

Please **let me know** if you would like to attend this in person Yizkor Service.

PSJC PESACH PICNICS

Saturday afternoon, April 3rd in Prospect Park

Celebrate the last days of Pesach with a picnic in the park with PSJC friends and neighbors. More details coming soon.

2. WHAT TO EAT? --COOKING AND SHOPPING FOR PESACH

Here is the [Rabbinical Assembly's yearly Passover guide](#). It is a good overall guide for Passover in ideal times, and has proven to be particularly helpful as we adjust as needed as we continue to celebrate Pesach in the shadow of COVID-19.

Don't forget that the Conservative movement has formally permitted Ashkenazim, who choose to do so, to consume kitniyot (legumes) during Passover. This may be a good year to consider putting aside the Ashkenazic custom of eschewing legumes (beans and lentils) corn and rice, if only until the pressures of the pandemic ease. Do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have questions - rabbicarie@psjc.org.

3. SEDER: PERSONAL SEDARIM AND ZOOM SEDER

This year, once again, it is not safe to gather in large communal seders or even with large gatherings of family and friends. This is clearly quite emotionally challenging for us all, and we will miss gathering around a large physical table on Seder night. Instead, we will create private small sedarim of immediate family and individual sedarim again this year. But that is what we must do in order to ensure that we and those we love will be able to celebrate together in the future. Many of us will once again create zoom seders, connecting with friends and family even across distance.

PSJC is offering an opportunity to share [Seder Secrets: Running a Zestful, Zippy, Zazzy, Zaftig \(?\) Zoom Passover Seder](#). Here, we will be able to share our favorite ideas/activities to enhance this year's seder.

4. Sharing your Seder with others

If you would like to open your seder up to others via Zoom, please drop me a note with the following information:

- Date/Time of the Seder
- One Sentence description of the Seder— (abbreviated, child-friendly, extensive deep discussion, etc.)
- Haggadah that you are using

If you are looking for a zoom seder to attend, please let me know as well.

5. RESOURCES FOR CREATING MEANINGFUL SEDARIM

[Check out the PSJC website](#) this week to see good resources for creating meaningful Sedarim.

6. PESACH PACKAGES

It has become a tradition this year, since the start of the pandemic, to share bags each holiday with resources for celebrating the holiday from home and to connect you with your PSJC community. Sign up [here](#) for your Pesach Package, filled with ideas and items to enhance your sederim and connect with PSJC wherever you are. You can pick up your Pesach Package in the PSJC Yard on Sunday, March 21st from 12:00-2:00pm.

7. TIPS FOR YOUR SEDER PLATE

Karpas – Parsely or celery are regular favorites for Karpas. But remember, this can be any vegetable—including a boiled potato.

Maror – In addition to horseradish, you can use other fruits or vegetables that can bring a tear to the eye if consumed raw: hot peppers,

mustard greens, raw lemon are good options. Don't forget Romaine lettuce with its bitter aftertaste which can also work as maror.

Roasted Shankbone on Seder Plate -- A roasted beet works in place of the shankbone (*Pesachim 114b*)

8. EXPANDED SEDER PLATE

Over the last many years, it has become the practice in many homes to add additional symbolic foods to acknowledge injustice and issues of deep concern in our world today. Some favorites:

- Orange—to symbolize inclusion
- Tomatoes—to support workers (especially immigrant workers)
- Olives—symbolizing efforts towards peace in the Middle East

To this, we at PSJC added Ginger—an important spice used in Chinese cuisine, and a way to show our support of Chinese Americans who have been targeted as a result of COVID-19. [Click here](#) for the letter our members Sojourn Wei and Kenan Jaffe shared last year when bringing this to our community.

9. KASHERING/CLEANING

Check out the Rabbinical Assembly's Pesach Guide for details on cleaning and kashering things for Passover. Remember, things do not need to be perfectly cleaned of dust, but they must be well-searched and cleaned of hametz. I understand that this year, because of different living/working set ups in our homes, it might not be as easy as normal to prepare everything for Pesach as we might like. But please do your best to rid your home of hametz. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions about how to do this – rabbicarie@psjc.org

The good news is that at the end of the day, we state: “All Hametz in my position, whether I am aware of it or not” is as the dust of the earth. While normally we would burn this Hametz before Pesach, this year, because we should not get together to burn hametz, we should throw our extra hametz in the garbage, sprinkling household cleaner on top to assure that it is inedible. Please do not flush hametz down the toilet—for the sake of your pipes and those of the city.

10. SALE OF HAMETZ

This year, it is all-the-more important to sell your Hametz. This can be done with [this online form](#). It gives me permission to sell your hametz to a non-Jewish person for the duration of Passover. Just put your leftover hametz in a sealed cabinet/separate location in your home and allow me to sell it for you. **Please fill it out by Wednesday, March 24, 2021.**

11. SHABBAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

This year, Pesach begins on Saturday night, and that means that a lot of the Pre-Pesach preparation has to be adjusted just a bit:

The Siyum for the Fast of the Firstborn will be Thursday morning at 8:00AM instead of on Saturday, since we don't fast on Shabbat.

Thursday evening is the time for Bedikat Hametz (for searching your home for hametz). Because this is done a day earlier than we might have thought, we are permitted to keep enough hametz for Shabbat meals if we would like. (If you do this, don't recite the passage Kol Hamira when you burn/dispose of your hametz—you wouldn't want to negate the food that you are still planning to consume).

Friday morning is the time for Biyur Hametz (Burning/or destroying the hametz you collected the night before as mentioned above). Even if you have food set aside for Shabbat, your stove should now be ready for

Pesach. And all cooking done from this point forward should be done in your Pesach pots and only Pesach utensils used.

How do I eat meals on Shabbat leading into Passover night?

There are two traditional practices that make this question complicated: 1) It is customary to abstain from Matzah the day before Pesach; 2) We are told to eat three meals on Pesach, two of them with Hamotzi.

Two options have developed to address this dilemma:

Option 1) We save two small hallot, and keep them on a special Hametz dish that will serve as a hallah crumb catcher. These hallot are eaten at Friday night dinner and Shabbat lunch. Then, anything left over is thrown out and the Kol Hamira formula—including the line “hametz that I know about”—is recited following this second meal.

Option 2) Remove all hametz earlier in the week, and serve Pesach-friendly meals over Shabbat, using Egg Matzah (Matzah Ashirah) for HaMotzi. Matzah Ashirah is kosher for Passover but it is not matzah that can be eaten to fulfill the mitzvah of eating matzah at the Seder.

Seudah Shlishit (the third meal towards the end of Shabbat) should include neither hametz nor matzah ashirah so that you have a taste for matzah at the Seder.

12. We are in this together

Please don't hesitate to be in touch – rabbicarie@psjc.org - with any questions/concerns that may arise this year.

May we move through the Narrow Places of these days (from places of constraint) to a place of openness and renewed possibility as we make our way through this holiday of Freedom.

May this be a zissen pesach (a sweet and healthy Pesach) for us all,

Rabbi Carie Carter