



# MA CHADASH!

What's New! The newsletter of Temple Shalom Synagogue Center, Auburn, Maine

## מה חדש!

ק"ק היכל שלום

April 2024, Adar II/Nisan 5784

## Temple Shalom Passover Seder 2024



Tuesday, April 23rd, 5:00 P.M.  
At Temple Shalom  
(also available on Zoom)

*"I love Passover because for me it is a cry against indifference, a cry for compassion." —Elie Wiesel*

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Save the Date

*Cafe Shalom*

Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 P.M.

# FROM THE RABBI



There is an old saying that “opinions are like a\*\*holes; everybody has one and they all stink!”

There has been a lot of “noise” connected to Oprah’s recent television special about weight loss and weight loss drugs like Ozempic—at least on my news feeds. In reading a couple of articles about this hyped television event (along with too many of the bazillion comments they inspired), I was introduced to a concept that I was unfamiliar with until now: the concept of “food noise.”

For those who are unfamiliar, food noise refers to the near constant inner voice related to food—what food is

tempting, when will I permit myself to eat, what will I permit myself to eat, what food should I buy, cook, etc.—noise that makes people who are struggling with weight control miserable. Noise that weight control drugs like Ozempic promise to eliminate or at least quiet to a manageable level.

While I am certainly no stranger to food noise, what struck me is that what is truly making me miserable nowadays is also a kind of noise—but this noise is external. A near constant barrage of political opinions—opinions assertively—often angrily—delivered in an “agree with me or you are morally deficient” manner, from so many people in my life—friends, acquaintances, myriad anonymous online commenters. Opinions that are, as you would expect, almost always diametrically opposed to each other. No matter what I say, write or even think, they stand ready to accuse me of either supporting genocide or being a bad Zionist and/or Jew. Feh!

Perhaps some of you can relate.

I should first say that things could certainly be much worse: I could be living in Gaza—as an Israeli hostage or a Palestinian civilian. I could have a close relative living in Gaza—as an Israeli hostage or a Palestinian civilian...

But living as a Jew in America has become almost intolerably difficult. Whereas in the past it was considered polite to keep your politics to yourself, we are now asked, over and over again, to declare where we stand in this awful, horrible conflict—and whatever our response, we can be assured of being “canceled” by one side or the other.

This noise is particularly affecting our young people who are even more exposed to aggressive opinions through social media. My now 30-year-old daughter, Ilana, desperately texted me much too late the other night excited to inform me that on Facebook a prominent Klezmer violinist called out many of her Jewish friends in the Yiddish music world for seeming to forget the hostages or the October 7th atrocities—providing Ilana a much-needed validation for her own feelings and letting her know that she still has a place in that world. When our family led a Kabbalat Shabbat service in Bath several weeks ago, my now 15-year-old daughter, Charlie, was desperate to connect with another Jewish high school freshman to share the disheartening experience of being one of the only proudly Jewish students in their respective high schools, post October 7th.

So, here is my attempt to quiet the noise—for myself, and for anyone reading this who might find this helpful: Those with the most aggressive, extreme opinions fail, in my opinion, to see the Israel/Palestine conflict in all its complexity and seek to lionize or villainize one side or the other. But the truth is the situation is enormously complex and nobody’s hands are clean. Israel, again in my opinion, has an absolute right to defend itself and live within secure borders, but should the dangerous (and, in my opinion, loathsome) settler extremists who, shockingly, now hold prominent positions in the government gain more power and control over their government’s agenda, Israel will rightly become a pariah nation and take down American Jews (and potentially America itself) along with them. Conversely, the Palestinians absolutely deserve to live in a peaceful Palestinian state alongside Israel but, as it stands now, far too many Palestinians are unwilling to permit Israel to exist in any form.

As far as I am concerned, the rest is just noise.

Rabbi Sruli

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



Even though the holiday is late this year because we had an Adar I and an Adar II, we celebrate Passover this month. We are commanded to retell the story every year. The seder is designed to not only remind us of what it was like to be a slave, but also to celebrate how it feels to be free. I was thinking of this while vacationing in Florida in January while eating a kosher beef knish at the flea market. Living in Maine, where the only kosher meat for sale in the whole state may be some frozen chicken at Trader Joe's in Portland, I was truly feeling like I was in the land of the free. I was reflecting on all the Jewish foods I had eaten at restaurants during my short vacation. I had matzo ball soup, stuffed cabbage, half sour pickles, noodle kugel and kasha varnishkas at the Pastrami Club. I had a potato knish and blintzes at TooJay's Gourmet

Deli. I had whitefish, lox, cold salmon and sable with rye bread, bagels, cream cheese, red onion and capers at 3G's Gourmet Deli. Not to mention the chopped liver and rugelach we brought home from the local supermarket.

Is it a deprivation to live without these Jewish staples readily available? Or does it make them feel more special and taste even sweeter when we are able to get them? Do I want to be the Jew who takes all this for granted, or the one who tries extra hard to bring some Jewish spice to my family's life? Lucky for us, we are free to be either kind of Jew, and to live in either type of place. Passover is a time when we should remember the struggle, as symbolized by the foods we will make and eat at the seder. And also, to never forget where that journey has taken us.

Happy Passover!

Lesli Weiner  
President



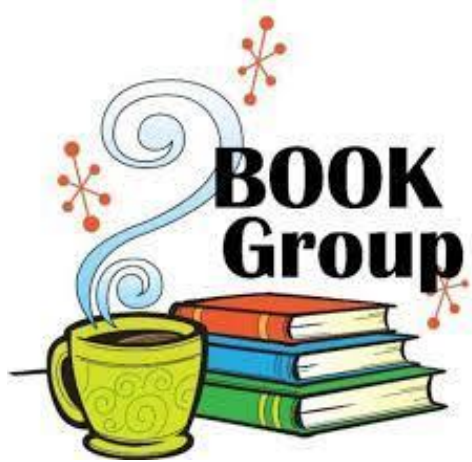
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## SPEEDY RECOVERY

We pray for refuah sh'leimah – the full and speedy recovery of **Valci Braga, Rachel Corvi, Lee Jay Feldman, Andrea Finn, Sara Graf, Robert Galumbeck, Isaak Gekhtin, Detlef Gerlach, Ariella Green, Sharon Hemond, Alison Jaeger, Cylus Johnson, Suzan Katzir, Michael Kendall, Linda Koskela, Henry Lefkowitz, Lee Leveille, Carolyn Marshal, Bruce Meyer, Alice Richman, Sandy Traister, William White**, and all others who are not well at this time. *We like to hear good news! Whenever you request that a name be put on this list, please let Temple Shalom know when it can be removed.*



# !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!BOOK GROUP NEWS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



We just read Mitch Albom's new book, a novel called *The Little Liar*. Present were Babs Shapiro, Jodi Tucker, Bertha Bodenheimer, Marsha Auster, Karen Calloway, Mitch Ross and me, Lesli Weiner. As always, Albom's writing style was wonderful to read and easy to follow. His character development was thorough. And the whole premise of the book, narrated by Truth itself, was a fascinating look at honesty versus lying or even silence. We saw kindness and cruelty, resistance to oppression and complicity in evil. Yet the main characters were not black and white. After all, what would you do to survive?? So yes, read it!

Our next book will be *The Wolf Hunt* by Ayelet Gunder-Goshen. (We've postponed Lisa's novel until May.) Following is the synopsis found on Amazon:

**"Award-winning author Ayelet Gundar-Goshen returns with a timely and suspenseful exploration of the fault lines in a community, a school, and a family, as a mother begins to suspect her teenage son of committing a terrible crime."**

Lilach has it all: a beautiful home in the heart of Silicon Valley, a successful husband and stable marriage, and a teenage son, Adam, with whom she has always felt a particular closeness. Israeli immigrants, the family has now lived in the U.S. long enough that they consider it home. But after a brutal attack on a local synagogue shakes their sense of safety, Adam enrolls in a self-defense class taught by a former Israeli Special Forces officer. There, for the first time, he finds a sense of confidence and belonging.

Then, tragedy strikes again when an African American boy dies at a house party, apparently from a drug overdose. Though he was a high school classmate, Adam claims not to know him. Yet rumors begin to circulate that the death was not accidental, and that Adam and his new friends had a history with Jamal. As more details surface and racial tensions in the community are ignited, Lilach begins to question everything she thought she knew about her son. Could her worst fears be possible? Could her quiet, reclusive child have had something to do with Jamal's death?

Praised for "instilling emotional depth into a thriller plot" (*New York Times Book Review* on *Waking Lions*), Ayelet Gundar-Goshen once again brings together taut, page-turning suspense, superb writing, and razor-sharp insight into the fault lines of race, identity, and privilege and the dark secrets we hide from those we love most."

Join us on MONDAY, APRIL 8 at 4PM on zoom. If you're not on my regular email list, let the Temple know you'd like to be included.....lesli



## **Eroticism and the Divine: a comparative look at the *Song of Songs* and the *Gita Govinda***

Please join us at 11 a.m. on Sunday, April 7, for two special events: a catered brunch prepared by Temple Shalom men, and a feminist talk about eroticism and religion titled “Gardens of Oppression: In Search of Her Delight,” to be delivered by Khushi Choudhary, Bates Class of 2023, who is a candidate for a Master of Theological Studies degree at the Harvard Divinity School.

The brunch begins at 11 a.m. The talk, followed by a Q&A session with Choudhary, begins at noon.

Donations for the brunch are \$10. Those planning to attend should RSVP by emailing the synagogue at Temple6359@aol.com no later than Tuesday, April 2.

Written under the direction of Professor of Religious Studies Cynthia Baker, Choudhary’s 2023 honors thesis explores the place of eroticism in religion.

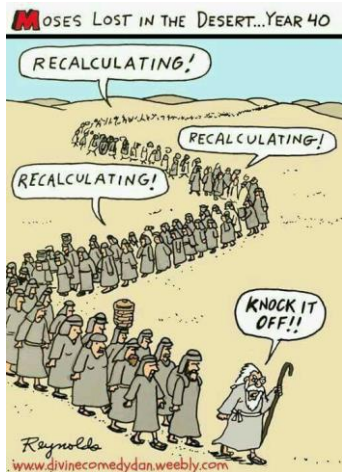
“Eroticism has no place in religion. Or so I’ve heard,” Choudhary wrote in her thesis abstract. Yet, the *Song of Songs* and the *Gita Govinda*, among other texts, complicate the separation of eros/kama and God and “invite speculation about the place of desire and passion in human-divine relationships.”

“These texts have lured me on with scandalous glimpses of mutuality, equality, even sexuality as defining elements of sacred eros,” she says. “More than that, each features an unapologetically assertive female protagonist in active pursuit of the divine object of her desire. Can God really be sought and enjoyed by women like me? Not without some challenges.”

Using her “native Hinduism and newfound dalliance with Judaism,” Choudhary will consider “how the larger patriarchal structures of Judaism, Christianity and Hinduism tend to corrupt the erotic impulse.” She maintains, however, that “where culture dooms, let counterculture bloom!”

Join us to learn more in what is sure to be a compelling presentation by a young scholar.





After 39½ years of wandering in the desert, Mrs. Moses secretly asks for directions.

## Dry Bones

I put on a few pounds each year because Yom Kippur is one day of no food, and Passover is...

...one week of overeating!!

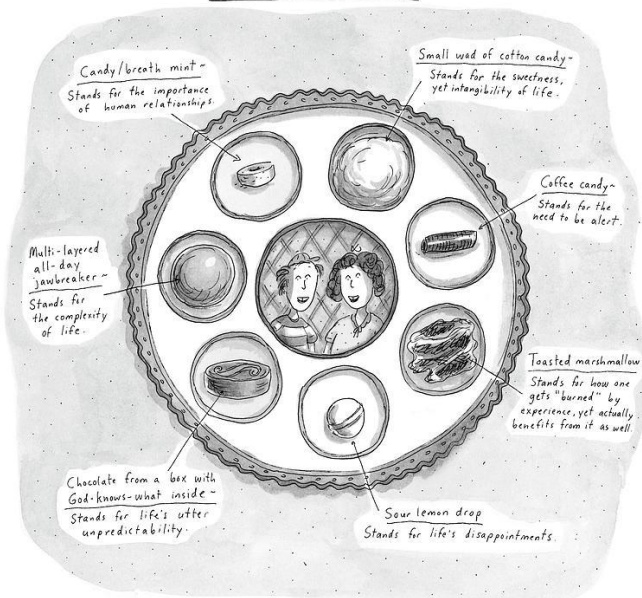


Please help me understand how boils and locusts are plagues but bread that tastes like cardboard isn't.

someecards



## ALL-CANDY SEDER



R. Ch. 7

Ma Chadash/What's New is published monthly by Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center. Temple Shalom is an independent congregation and a member of the Lewiston-Auburn Jewish Federation.

The mission of Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center is to foster a strong Jewish identity and an active Jewish Community.

Rabbi Sruli Dresdner

Office Manager Julie Waite

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Board of Director's Meeting  
Monday, April 8, 2024  
7:00 PM

**Rabbi Sruli is always happy to speak with and meet with members or our Temple. Please call or text his cell phone at 914-980-9509 if you would like to speak with him or to arrange a time for a meeting. You can also call or leave a message at the Temple office and Rabbi Sruli will get back to you.**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Finley Barter-Levine	April 1
Robert Laskoff	2
Elliot Katz	5
Stanley Tetenman	6
Sharon Day	7
Zachary Olstein	8
Judith Ross	12
Julie Cohen	13
Teagan Barter-Levine	15
Daniel Penan	15
Allyson Casares	16
Janet Zidle	16
Joan Levenson	17
Lesli Weiner	17
Andrea Levinsky	19
Riley Barter-Levine	22
Steven Cohen	24
Susan Brown	25
Michael Meyer	29



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO

Paul & Marion Rausch	April 14
Daniel & Dina Blackerby	30

## Yahrzeiten

Pearl Steinman	April 10
Lillian Zidle	10
Sheldon Nussinow	12
Gertrude Berent	15
Ida Perry	15
Edward Reeves	17
Irving Isaacson	20
Robert Meyer	21
Edward Laine	22
Lydia Izenstatt	24
Abraham Perry	25
Joseph Margolin	26
Sally Faiman	27
Murray Rubinstein	27
June Margolin	28
Murray Nussinow	28
David Woods	29
Pearl Salberg	30



## CONTRIBUTIONS

### GENERAL FUND

Bertha Bodenheimer

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

In memory of Bert Bodenheimer

To Paula Marcus-Platz in honor of  
receiving the Priscilla Gendron

Legacy Award

Cathy & Stan Tetenman

In memory of Bert Bodenheimer

Marianne Wise

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

Joy & Lewis Zidle

In memory of Joseph Zidle

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

Margaret & Hank Meyer

In memory of Sadye Cohen

In memory of Robert Meyer

Gertrude Nemeth

In memory of Leonard Nemeth

Gladys Garcia

In appreciation

Bonnie & Larry Faiman

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

Speedy recovery to Melissa Johnson

Matthew Snider

In memory of Neal Weiner

Steve Passerman

In memory of Maxwell Passerman

Cindy Tayman

In memory of Irvin Tayman

Julie White

In appreciation

### BODENHEIMER PASSOVER FUND

Nancy & Ken Levinsky

To Bertha Bodenheimer in honor of  
her birthday

### NUSSINOW EDUCATION ENRICHMENT FUND

Amy & Scott Nussinow

In memory of Rose Nussinow

### PULPIT/PRAYER BOOK FUND

Roz & Barry Kutzen

In memory of Jules Asher

In memory of Lillian Kutzen

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Elcha Buckman

With gratitude to HaShem for Lisa's  
safety & recovery

Joel Olstein

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

The Day Family

In memory of Nathan (Nick) Day

Bob Laskoff

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

Jeri & Benny Brem

Speedy recovery to Lisa Mayer

### ABROMSON FUND

### BELL MEMORIAL CHAPEL FUND

### CEMETERY FUND

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Permit #4

# Community Passover Seder

Open only to Temple members and their families

**Tuesday, April 23 at 5:00 p.m.**

\*Adults: Members - \$25

\*Children 12 & under: \$15

\*Children under 5: No Charge

We MUST receive your paid reservation by Monday, April 1st!

Mail to: Temple Shalom, PO Box 3315, Auburn, ME 04212-3315

