

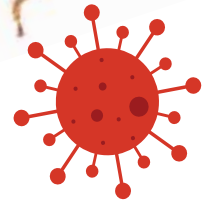
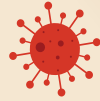
Sim Shalom

THE NEWSLETTER OF TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL, HARLINGEN

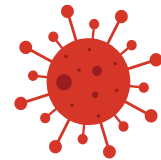
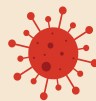
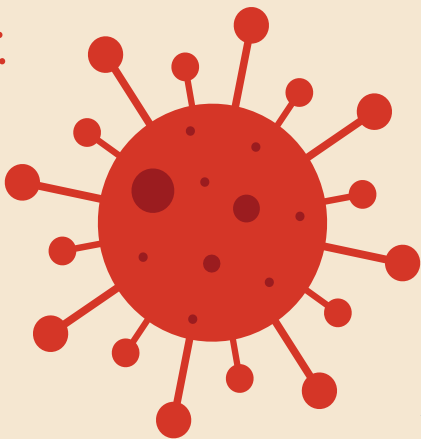
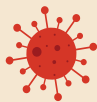
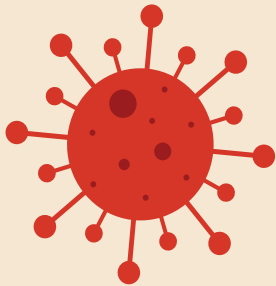
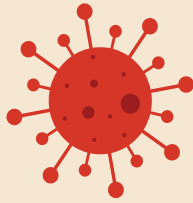
SPRING 2020



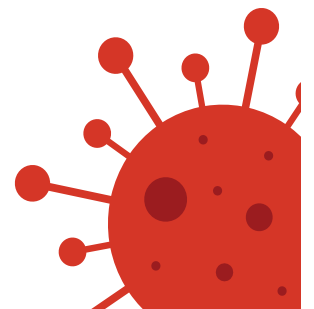
WELCOMING
TEMPLE BETH-EL, BROWNSVILLE
TEMPLE BETH EL, CORSICANA
AND IRVING HAVURAH



This night
will be **VERY**
different



JOIN US FOR
ONLINE PASSOVER
SEDERS at 7 P.M.
APRIL 8 & 9
(SEE PAGE 3[])



FROM DR. STANLEY FISCH

Harlingen



This is not a hurricane.

The way people stocked up on toilet paper and canned goods, you would think a hurricane is heading our way. Big storm, lots of wind and rain, gone in 2 or 3 days. Then clean up. But this is not a hurricane. None of us has experienced anything like this in our lifetimes.

In the next 2 weeks we will likely see reports of increasing numbers of cases in Valley counties. That's because test kits are coming in, more people are being tested, and some will be positive. Some of those will not be ill — no symptoms. Some had been ill and may have lingering symptoms. Some will be starting to show symptoms. So the rising numbers may alarm at first. What they will show is that the virus is here.

That is why the measures imposed are so important. Social distancing, no large gatherings, isolation of infected or exposed persons, meticulous hand washing — all these measures aim to slow the spread of the virus through the community. If we can prevent a huge surge, then we will all be safer, our clinics and hospitals will not be overwhelmed, and our doctors and nurses will face less risk as they attend to their patients.

How long will this last? No one knows for certain. There is much speculation, wishful thinking, doomsday thinking, and misinformation. It's important to stick with reliable sources. Here are two (access is free):

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

The New York Times <https://nyti.ms/31jGhk2>.

Above all, stay connected — despite the need to maintain distance, we need to connect, now perhaps more than ever. Rabbi, thank you for keeping your presence in our lives via Facebook and YouTube.

FROM RICHARD FOURZAN

Temple President, Harlingen



Shalom and Chag Sameach, congregants, friends, and new friends from the Dallas-Fort Worth area! I am happy that the Sim Shalom is having another issue out during this special time of Pesach, beginning of spring, and social distancing.

I want to extend a warm welcome to our friends in Brownsville, to the members of Temple Beth El in Corsicana, and Irving Havurah in Irving. Welcome to the Sim Shalom and Temple Beth Israel. We are here to offer friendship and a good laugh, and we are happy to have you on-board on the newsletter.

I do not want my report to have much if any negativity, but aside from the usual, I think we need to get our minds together and think of the good things this self-imposed (now mandated) lockdown has brought upon us; not only the good things, but the funny things as well. We all know the negatives, the incredibles, and the unspeakables, so let's talk about the positives, the incredibly good stuff, and the stories that warm our hearts. Here are some of mine:

1. The pollution around the world (air, noise, and otherwise) has got to be at a lower rate than ever before with all the mandatory stay-at-home laws the governments have so wisely instituted.

2. There is more time for personal

Continued on Page 8

Chag Sameach,

There's a new plague in town that brings into stark relief the holiday of Passover and the distant human memories of fear and confusion in times of microscopic peril. We have been so lucky, most of our lives, to see medical advances that conquered tropical fevers and scourges like polio and smallpox. We look now again to medicine, to the brave nurses and doctors treating a growing hospital population with COVID-19 and to researchers furiously seeking treatments, tests and vaccines.

They will prevail. This, too, shall pass. And the great majority of us will see the day return when we can freely embrace our loved ones, work and play together without fear, and walk out of our houses without a second thought.

Until then, what should we make of our new world? We know we are strongest when we are well connected, and Passover is a holiday that unites Jews of all stripes. Let's celebrate our history and make some new memories safe in our own homes, together!

Join us for online seders, 7 p.m. April 8 & 9

The Rabbi will lead these participatory seders and offer commentary. Send him a text message if there is a part you'd like to read at 214-293-6515.

PLATFORM

Bluejeans video-conferencing app — download at www.bluejeans.com

HAGADDAH

A Family Haggadah II by Shoshana Silberman.

You can purchase an ebook or print version for about \$5 at <https://books.google.com/books?id=vgrwDwAAQBAJ>

We will attempt to use the screen-sharing function on the Bluejeans app so you can view the pages as we go along for free.

IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE

Send an email to laurie.b.joseph@gmail.com. We will include you in a group message on April 3 with directions to sign in for a connection test at noon on Sunday, April 5.

FROM THE RABBI



Shalom,

In Chapter 10:21-23 of Exodus, we read about the ninth plague of darkness visited upon the Egyptians: “Then the L-RD said to Moses, ‘Hold out your arm toward the sky that there may be darkness upon the land of Egypt, a darkness that can be touched.’ Moses held out his arm toward the sky and thick darkness descended upon all the land of Egypt for three days. People could not see one another, and for three days no one could get up from where he was; but all the Israelites enjoyed light in their dwellings.”

Our sages tell us in the Midrash of Exodus, that the darkness, in addition to a physical absence of light, was symbolic of the fact that the Egyptians had chosen a life of spiritual darkness, while the children of Israel had accepted upon themselves G-D'S Torah and Mitzvot, which are compared with light. Therefore, they merited actual light.

There is another way our sages have interpreted this. We know that the Egyptians and the Israelites were both living in the same area, under the same atmospheric circumstances. However, the Egyptians during the physical absence of light were not considerate to one another. The darkness made them self-centered and completely insensitive to one another's needs. They were not interested in the

Continued on Page 4

A NOTE ABOUT ONLINE SERVICES

From the responses we have received, the rabbi's online Shabbat and Sunday services have been successful in bringing a sense of comfort and continuity to many congregants whose lives have been upended by current events. We plan to continue broadcasting live on Facebook and offering a recorded version afterwards on YouTube. In the coming weeks, the rabbi plans to conduct services using different prayerbooks. See the Calendar on Page 7 for details.

FROM THE RABBI, *continued from Page 3*

overall welfare and wellness of the Egyptian community. However, the Israelites enjoyed light in their dwellings during the plague of darkness because they were all kind and thoughtful of one another and their needs. They were especially concerned about the welfare of the Israelite community. They must have been especially concerned about the well-being of their elderly. For the Israelites, even at the height of the darkness, the light shone through.

Fast forward from 2000 B.C.E. to March of 2020 C.E., to the current plague we are experiencing. We can all learn from the behavior of our forebears.

During this time, let us as Jews set an example to all whom we encounter. Let us cease from all hoarding and continue practicing social distancing. Let us follow the directives of the CDC, and our medical community. Let us increase our acts of lovingkindness and function with an abundance of compassion and patience. Let the needs of our community reflect our every action and concern. And let us continue to be the most optimistic and positive people we all have the ability to be. This current plague of darkness will pass, and we will all see a brighter tomorrow.

Laurie and I wish everyone a wonderful Passover! While we may not be with you physically, we are with you in spirit. We love you all!

Stay well. Stay safe.

Shalom U'V'Rahcha!! Peace and Blessings!

Rabbi Frank Joseph

Passover Facts and Traditions Every Jew Should Know

Excerpted from Chabad.org, by Shalom Goodman

1. Passover Is the Most Widely Celebrated Jewish

Holiday: According to the 2014 Pew Portrait of American Jews, the Passover Seder is celebrated by even more Jewish people than Yom Kippur and Chanukah.

2. Passover for All: Giving is the hallmark of Judaism and the Jewish people. The Jerusalem Talmud records that Jewish communities would make collections of *maot chitim*, literally "wheat money," before Passover.

3. Live Leaven Free: As Passover approaches, Jewish people can be found cleaning their houses, cars and offices to get rid of chametz, anything produced from grain that has risen.

4. The Main Thing Is the Matzah: If you can do only one (or two) things to celebrate Passover, it's this: eat a kezayit (a measure formally described as the size of an olive) of matzah (2) after dusk on the first night of Passover.

5. The Most Popular Hebrew Book: The Haggadah, the text around which the Passover Seder is based, is the most popular book in the history of Jewish printing, having gone through thousands of editions. Amazingly, there is very little variance between versions.

6. The Coffee-Maker's Haggadah: In 1932, Maxwell House, a leading coffee manufacturer, decided to print and distribute the now iconic Maxwell House Haggadah. There are more than 50 million of these Haggadahs in print.

7. Fine Wine Is Divine: Throughout the Seder evening, everyone drinks four cups of (ideally red) wine. For some reason, there's a persistent idea that Seder wine needs to be gloopy sweet stuff that tastes like cough syrup. Thankfully, there are hundreds of high-quality kosher wines out there.

8. Go Nuts: Kids are a major part of the Passover celebration. How to keep them engaged? The rabbis of old had a solution: give them nuts. Not sure if nuts will do it for your progeny? Make sure that the Seder itself is so engaging that they stick around to see what happens next.

9. Four Squared: Did you ever notice how many elements of the Passover Seder come in groups of four? Four sons, four questions, four cups of wine. What's the significance? The most common answer is that all these fours correspond to the four terms G-d used when promising to take the people out of Egypt.

10. Lamb, Anyone? In ancient times, the center of the celebration was the Passover lamb, which was sacrificed in the Holy Temple and then eaten with matzah and bitter herbs as a dessert at the end of the Passover meal. Roman invaders destroyed the Temple nearly 2,000 years ago, and we no longer bring the sacrifice. Today, we still eat the matzah and bitter herbs without the lamb, and then eat an extra piece of matzah, known as the afikoman, to remind us of the missing meat. © Copyright, all rights reserved.

Sell Your Chametz for Passover

What's this all about?

By Eliyahu Kitov (Chabad, abridged)

A person who owns a large quantity of chametz which he is reluctant to dispose of, because doing so may cause him considerable financial loss, may sell his chametz to a non-Jew.

After writing a bill of sale, one may leave the chametz in his home without transgressing the prohibitions of not seeing or having chametz, since the chametz no longer belongs to him. However, it must be set aside in a special place which is rented to the non-Jew who has purchased it, so that the chametz becomes the property of the non-Jew until after Passover.

The place where this sold chametz is stored should be inaccessible, so that neither he nor the members of his family take anything from there through force of habit. The bill of sale for the chametz states that he is selling his chametz to the non Jew for a specific price. The non-Jewish purchaser then gives him a down payment to acquire ownership of the chametz. A stipulation is added to the bill of sale, stating that if the purchaser does not pay the balance due by the end of Passover, the chametz will revert to the original owner at that time that is, at the end of Passover. The non-Jew's failure to pay will not be seen as having retroactively invalidated the sale.

Transfer of ownership, according to Halachah, requires intent to sell; that is, the seller must intend to relinquish his rights to his property in order for title to be transferred to someone else and an act of acquisition must be made. Hence, when the seller consciously transfers ownership of the chametz, and when payment is made, the chametz can remain in the home of the Jewish seller since it is no longer his.

DELEGATION OF POWER FOR SALE OF CHAMETZ

I, the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi Frank Joseph to act in my place and stead, and on my behalf to sell all Chametz possessed by me, knowingly or unknowingly as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law (e.g. Chametz, possible Chametz, and all kinds of Chametz mixtures). Also Chametz that tends to harden and adhere to inside surfaces of pans, pots, or cooking utensils, the utensils themselves, and all kinds of live animals and pets that have been eating Chametz and mixtures thereof. Rabbi Joseph is also empowered to lease all places wherein the Chametz owned by me may be found, particularly at the address/es listed below, and elsewhere. Rabbi Joseph has full right to appoint any agent or substitute in his stead and said substitute shall have full right to sell and lease as provided herein. Rabbi Joseph also has the full power and right to act as he deems fit and proper in accordance with all the details of the Bill of Sale used in the transaction to sell all my Chametz, Chametz mixtures, etc., as provided herein. This power is in conformity with all Torah, Rabbinic and Civil laws.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name _____

Address/es _____

City/State/Zip _____

PLEASE SIGN AND EMAIL TO
FRANK@RABBIFRANKJOSEPH.ORG



Debmillerfineart.com

Meet the buyers

Our great friends Deb and Chuck Miller of Corsicana, fine Methodists both, have graciously agreed to purchase for \$10,000 all the chametz owned by any of the rabbi's congregants and lease the space in which it is stored for the duration of Passover. Per our contract, we have received a \$1 down payment an advance.

Deb and Chuck are fine artists, historians and pillars of the greater Corsicana community, and we thank them for helping us with this important mitzvah!



Chuckmillerfineart.com

RECIPES

Vegan Matzo Ball Soup

Ingredients

For the Matzo Balls

- 3/4 cup matzo meal
- 2 tablespoons chickpea flour
- 3 tablespoons tapioca starch
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup unflavored soy or almond milk
- 1/4 cup canola oil (or another neutral flavored cooking oil)

For the Soup

- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- 1 medium leek, white and pale green parts only, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh dill
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

To make the matzo balls, stir the matzo meal, chickpea flour, tapioca starch, and salt together in a medium bowl. Stir in the milk and oil until thoroughly mixed.

Cover the bowl and chill the mixture for at least 30 minutes, while you begin the soup.

To make the soup, coat the bottom of a large pot with olive oil and place it over medium heat. Add the leek and carrot, and sauté for 5 minutes, until the carrot just begins to soften.

Add the garlic and continue to sauté for another minute, until very fragrant.

Stir in the broth. Raise the heat and bring the broth to a boil. Lower the heat to a simmer.

Shape the matzo mix into 1-inch balls, pressing the mixture firmly together. Carefully drop each ball into the soup right after forming it.

Allow the soup to cook, uncovered, at a low simmer, for 45 minutes. Do not stir.

Carefully stir in the peas and cook for about 2 minutes more.

When the soup is finished cooking, remove it from the heat and season with salt and pepper to taste. Carefully stir in the dill.

Ladle into bowls and serve.

<https://www.connoisseurveg.com/vegan-matzo-ball-soup/#wprm-recipe-container-15419>

FROM LAUREL STEINBERG

Harlingen

Passover Rolls

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup oil
 - 1 cup boiling water
 - 1 cup matzoh meal
 - 1 tablespoon sugar
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 4 eggs
1. Add oil to boiling water.
 2. Add sugar, salt, and matzoh meal.
 3. Remove from heat and add eggs, one at a time.
 4. Spoon into greased muffin tin.
 5. Bake at 400F for 30 minutes and 350F for 15 minutes .
 6. Yield: 9 rolls.

Fruity Passover Muffins

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup sugar
 - 3 tablespoons matzoh meal
 - 1 cup chopped dates
 - 1/2 cup raisins
 - 2/3 cup chocolate chips or chopped pecans
 - 3 eggs lightly beaten
1. Combine sugar and matzoh meal in bowl.
 2. Fold in dates , raisins, and chips or nuts
 3. Add eggs to mixture.
 4. Spoon into greased muffin tin.
 5. Bake at 275F for 40 minutes.
- Yield: 24 small muffins or 12 regular size.

Israeli Salad with Avocado and Mint

- 1 1/2 lbs Persian cucumbers diced small
- 1 red bell pepper diced small
- 1 yellow bell pepper diced small
- 1 oz fresh mint chopped
- 1 avocado diced
- 2 tomatoes diced small
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice or more to taste
- 3/4 tsp salt or more to taste

Combine all vegetable ingredients in a bowl. Add olive oil, lemon juice and salt. Stir gently to combine. Taste; add more lemon juice or salt, if desired. Serve chilled or at room temperature. As the salad sits, a delicious liquid will collect in the bottom of the bowl. Stir the salad to meld the flavors, or dip bread in this juice for a treat.

<https://toriavey.com/toris-kitchen/israeli-salad-avocado-mint/>

Calendar

ONLINE SERVICES

Live at [facebook.com/frank.joseph.9041](https://www.facebook.com/frank.joseph.9041)
Recorded and available afterward, search for Rabbi Frank Joseph

APRIL

- 3 Kabbalat Shabbat service, 6 p.m., using Siddur Sim Shalom (Conservative)
- 4 Shabbat service, 10 a.m., using Siddur Sim Shalom (Conservative)
- 5 Shacharit service 10 a.m. Children's Service using Gates of Prayer for Young People
- 5 Shacharit service 10:30 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 5 TEST for online seders, noon
- 8-16 Passover**
- 8 Virtual Passover Seder, 7 p.m.
- 9 Passover Festival Service, 10 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 9 Virtual Passover Seder, 7 p.m.
- 10 Passover Festival Service, 10 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 10 Kabbalat Shabbat service, 6 p.m., using Rabbi Jonathan Sacks Authorised Daily Prayer Book (Orthodox)
- 11 Shabbat service, 10 a.m., using Rabbi Jonathan Sacks Authorised Daily Prayer Book (Orthodox)
- 12 Shacharit service 10 a.m. Children's Service using Gates of Prayer for Young People
- 12 Shacharit service 10:30 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 15 Passover Festival Service, 10 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 16 Passover Festival Service, 10 a.m. using Gates of Prayer including Yizchor service
- 17 Kabbalat Shabbat service, 6 p.m., using Artscroll Sephardic prayerbook (Orthodox)
- 18 Shabbat service, 10 a.m., using Artscroll Sephardic prayerbook (Orthodox)
- 19 Shacharit service 10 a.m. Children's Service using Gates of Prayer for Young People
- 19 Shacharit service 10:30 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 20 Erev Yom HaShoah service 6 p.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 21 Yom HaShoah
- 24 Rosh Chodesh Iyyar Shacharit service 10 a.m. using Gates of Prayer
- 24 Kabbalat Shabbat service, 6 p.m., using Ha-Siddur Hashalem Daily Prayer Book by Philip Birnbaum (Orthodox)

NEWS AND NOTES

■ MAZEL TOV to the Temple Board of Trustees in Harlingen, who were all elected to a new annual term. They are:

- ◆ Richard Fourzan, President, (210) 897-6011, fourzan@gmail.com
- ◆ Bruce Landsman, Vice President, (956) 244-1034, adjc1c2@hotmail.com
- ◆ Angela Silguero, Secretary, 956-970-8303, silguero33@yahoo.com
- ◆ Alma Russek, Treasurer, 956-970-7722
TempleBethIsraelHarlingenTexas@gmail.com
- ◆ Samuel Barrios, +512 557 222 4383, shmuel81@yahoo.com
- ◆ Bill Berg, 956-371-8205, wberg@fastmail.fm
- ◆ Abby Warshowsky, 956-536-0705, Gonsky@sbcglobal.net

■ MAZEL TOV to the Holzman family of Brownsville on acquiring Gigi, the new addition to their family! Writes Elizabeth: "We have been given a beautiful blessing during these hard times."



Gigi Holzman

■ POSTPONED: The Confirmation Class in Harlingen will reschedule its trip to the Holocaust Museum in Houston during a safer time.

Harlingen Oneg Shabbat (tentative)

Each member household is asked to host one Shabbat oneg during the year. Remember hosting now involves setting up, cleaning up, and providing challah, Kosher wine, grape juice, paper/plastic goods, coffee and drinks. You can bring other treats you like, but the congregation will share the responsibility of bringing snacks and desserts. If you cannot be a host on the date assigned, please call Laurel Steinberg at 550-9530.

ONEG HOST FAMILIES

- May 22: Bergs & TBA
- June 12: Newman Family & TBA
- July 10: Richard F
- August: Silguero Family & TBA
- September: TBA (or, will be Erev RH)
- Erev Rosh HaShanah (Sept): Temple Board Members
- October: Dyan B & TBA

FROM RICHARD FOURZAN, *continued from Page 2*

prayer and for learning the three daily prayer times for us. Best of all, we have the time to put on Tefillin and Tallit and pray for this upside-down world we are living in now; now, meaning temporarily because it will get back to normal, right?

3. We have plenty of time to clean for Pesach now that we have more free time.

4. How many of us really know how to conduct a Seder? Now is the time to be thrown into it cold if you have never done it (it's Halacha!). Good luck to all!!! And to those experienced, Mazel Tov, you got off easy.

5. My house now smells of the aromas of vegan pastries and baked goods (yes, there is such a thing as vegan pastries).

6. We now know how to really, really, really wash our hands.

7. My brother who lives in Cancun, a doctor, reports to me that he looks like an astronaut when he sees patients in his clinic; a little awkward, but he says it works.

8. Families are now getting closer to each other even if they can only use video conferencing to talk. I have heard from some of you who now talk more often to parents and/or children and relatives.

9. Try new recipes. Try recipes from other cultures; you'll be surprised at their cuisine. Get away from the norm for a change.

10. I am positively sure that our synagogue, and others as well, have had more attendees online than in person in a long time.

11. And an extra one (el pilón), I saw on the news how a Pennsylvania community came outside to their front doors to sing, "Won't you be my neighbor?"; how about organizing the same on your block? It would be great!

If you have extra time, write down all the positive things you have encountered in your life during this stay-at-home ordinance. My list covers more than the 11 points I wrote, but space is limited. How long can you make your list?

This is a time when people are panicking, having uncontrollable emotions, and believe the end of the world is near. It is our duty as Jews and members of our synagogues to take care of ourselves, and those near us. Even in the worst of times and when we feel utterly affected by what goes on, we have a duty to care for others as well. I am not saying for you to go out and physically care for others in these times, right now, but to emotionally support those who are on the verge of panic attacks or alone. One thing I keep telling myself to gather strength to do that is "Tikkun Olam... Tikkun Olam..." We must make this a better world no matter what.

Chag Pesach Sameach!!!

And in the words of Laurie Joseph: "Stay safe and stay connected."

Richard Fourzan, Temple Beth Israel President

Harlingen Celebrations

ANNIVERSARIES

5/29	Bill & Monica Stewart
5/30	Bill Berg & Laurel Steinberg
6/29	Harry & Elizabeth Holzman
8/14	Gilbert & Susy Weisberg
8/19	Luis Gonzalez & Abby Warshowsky
8/25	Rabbi Frank & Laurie Joseph

BIRTHDAYS

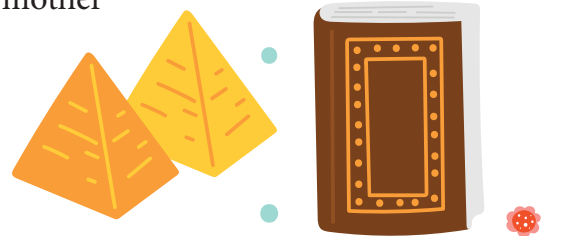
3/14	Gerald Sondock
3/31	Gilbert Weisberg
4/5	Alma Russek
4/6	Dagan Wise-Herring
4/11	Andre Suissa
4/15	Jonathan Berg
4/16	Brittini Elise Greenfeld
4/20	Harry Holzman
5/2	Susan Ander
5/4	Patty Gaytan
5/14	Marisa L. Kahn
5/15	Benjamin Gonzalez
5/30	Andrew Newman
6/3	Benjamin Newman
7/13	Laurel Steinberg
7/14	Rebekah Shulamit Russek
7/16	Adriana Gonzalez
7/22	Melanie Goldstein
7/22	Rabbi Frank Joseph
7/25	David Suissa

Thank You

Donations to the Harlingen Temple

TO THE GENERAL FUND

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr, in loving memory of Nivia Fisch
 Andreas Holzenburg
 Johnnie and Shay Butterfras
 Sheila Greenfeld, in loving memory of Harry and Gertrude Greenfeld
 Jesus and Angela Silguero
 Geoffrey and Rossana Bogorad, in honor Alma and Fernando Russek
 Joe Garza
 Rene and Eliza Gonzalez in honor of Harim Zabdiel and Haziel
 Jacinto Reyes
 Craig Haines
 Samuel and Ada Barrios
 Matthew Scherer
 Alma and Fernando Russek Jr, for memorial plaque of Abel Figueroa Valdez
 Abby Warshowsky
 Richard Fourzan, for alliyot and honors
 Barrie and Suggie Guterman, in loving memory of Lewis Milton Levine
 Sam Greenfeld, in loving memory of Gertrude Greenfeld
 Victor and Judy DeLeon, in loving memory of Ezra De Leon
 Sharon Fulton, on the occasion of her conversion
 Julian Reyes
 Pamela and Tom Griggs, in gratitude for time spent at the Temple
 Sheila Greenfeld, in loving memory of Gertrude Greenfeld
 Gisela Ramos



RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Bryan and Shirley Hewitt, for a refuah shlema for the Rabbi's mother

EDUCATIONAL FUND

Robert and Rebecca Dicus
 Angela and Jesus Silguero
 Gisela Ramos

TORAH FUND

Barrie and Suggie Guterman, in loving memory of Dena Fai Mayers Levine



Thanks to Howard Sheinberg of Corsicana for sending this our way:

Shamelessly stolen from

McSWEENEY'S

Daily humor almost every day since 1998.

March 27, 2020

An Open Letter to Dr. Anthony Fauci Asking for Passover Seder Advice

by Jackie Pick

Dear Dr. Fauci,

I'm really sorry to bother you, it's just that I'm hosting a virtual Seder this year and I want to make sure everything is kosher. I mean, this night will be different from all other nights, mostly because I'm not even sure what night it is anymore. You too, probably, but for different reasons. You're busy saving the world on four hours of sleep (Dayenu, am I right?), and I'm busy watching C-SPAN, eating Lucky Charms by the fistful, and not bothering to change from my daytime athleisure wear to my nighttime athleisure wear.

This is all just to say that not only are you our country's best hope and conveyor of concise medical information, but you're also America's zayde, trustworthy and sage.

I've checked the CDC website and none of this is on there, so if you have a few minutes to answer these questions, I'd be grateful:

How do I disinfect a Seder plate?

How many extra handwashing steps should I add to the Seder? I mean, there are two already built-in. Should I add more, possibly ratcheting the evening up to seven hours, or should we just hold the whole thing over the sink?

Because this debate will come up (it's the nature of the beast): Would wandering in the desert be advisable at this time? That is assuming there is manna from heaven and/or Amazon Prime, enough water and shelter, and we keep six feet away from other wanderers.

We're forbidden from eating things like leavened wheat, barley, rye, oats, or spelt. Unfortunately, the only thing left at Costco yesterday was a 50-pound sack of spelt. I'll obviously hold off on eating it until after the holiday but need to know what is the LD50 on spelt?

I'd love to be sure I'm coronavirus-free before asking my husband and kids to the table, but the only tests I can get my hands on are an expired ClearBlue Easy and a gently used Cologuard. Which do you think would reassure my family more?

My Uncle Murray insists on tweeting that Manischewitz cures coronavirus. In case the president sees this, please tell him it's not true. Also that he shouldn't retweet it, no matter how tempted he is by Uncle Murray's use of all-caps.

When the Treasury sends everyone some "Corona cash," would you mind bundling that with a Xanax prescription for parents? You see, we've been e-learning these last few eternal days, and if we have to hear one more question — never mind four questions — a great cry will go out over all the land, such as never has been heard before, and never will be heard again.

Can the president use the Defense Production Act to have gefilte fish factories converted to make... literally anything else?

Does opening the door for Elijah violate the "no more than ten people" gathering rule?

Instead of sending the kids on a search for the hidden afikomen, can I send them on a search around town for a megapack of Charmin Ultra, even if it means they miss some of the Seder? Not your area of expertise, but I trust your judgment on these matters.

I've been carb-loading ever since we started sheltering in place. Will the charoset act like my own personal digestive mortar? Or will it put me on the express chariot to the hoop?

Our local dispensary is an essential business. Can I go there for the requisite "bitter herb"?

I know you're unable to state for sure, but based on your experience, do you think "Next Year in Jerusalem" — politics aside — is feasible? Or should it be changed to "Next Year via FaceTime"?

Thank you, Dr. Fauci, for leading us through this. When this is all over, please come for dinner. Hope you like spelt.

— Jackie

Tu B'Shevat at Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge



We miss all of you.
See you soon.

Rabbi Frank and Laurie Joseph