

TEMPLE HILLEL B'NAI TORAH

If you have no place to go for a seder, or if you have extra space at your seder table, please contact the office.

You may also invite others you know in the community to join you at your seder. Our community is committed to opening our homes to members and friends.

Services and programs scheduled for Pesach 5784/2024 at Hillel B'nai Torah

Sunday, April 21	9:45-12:15 pm	Pesach Kulanu Yachad and Matzah Workshop with Rabbi Emerita Barbara
Tuesday, April 23	10:00-12:30 pm	First day of Pesach services with Hallel
Saturday, April 27	10:00-12:30 pm	Fifth day of Pesach and Shabbat services with Hallel, featuring the HBT Band
Sunday, April 28	9:45-12:15 pm	Chaverim School
Monday, April 29	10:00-12:30 pm	Seventh day of Pesach services with Hallel and Yizkor

Note: There will not be services on the second day or eighth day of Pesach at HBT, and there will not be Chaverim School on Wednesday, April 24.

Pesach Observances—A Week of Mindful Eating

Pesach is a time for renewal. As the snow melts and spring brings new blooms, we clean out our homes and our souls. Whether you are hosting a seder or sharing with friends and families, there are many ways to prepare for the holiday. For those who find the Passover preparations complicated and confusing, here are some guidelines for making this holiday different from all other nights.

Each individual family observes the eight (some follow only seven) days of Passover in unique and compelling ways. For example, some families find the week of Passover a time for paying closer attention to the food we eat. Some enjoy the variety of prepared kosher-for-Passover foods available in many supermarkets today. Others avoid all the pre-packaged mixes and heavy egg dishes and aim for a simpler menu of fresh vegetables and fruit, dairy, fish, and fowl. For all of us, each year can be an opportunity to learn more, to try a new ritual, to be more *hametz*-free. Look at the suggestions that follow. What do you do now? What would you like to do differently?

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the rabbi at RabbiNoyo@templeHBT.org.

I. Option 1: Refrain from eating grain products that are not matzah.

Hametz includes any product made of the following five grains: wheat, barley, oats, rye, or spelt, as well as any derivatives of them. These grains become *hametz* when they come into contact with moisture for more than eighteen minutes. Thus, not only flour and bread products, but cereals, pasta, beer, and all alcohol fermented from grain are *hametz*.

Matzah is not *hametz* because it is mixed, kneaded, and baked in a very hot oven within the eighteen-minute time limit. Matzah meal is simply finely ground matzah.

Beans, legumes, and rice, known as *kitniyot*, have long been considered *hametz* by the Ashkenazi community because of a variety of concerns. For example, in some parts of the world where there were Ashkenazi communities, farmers would cycle *hametz* crops and *kitniyot* crops on the same land, which could lead to mixing of crops. Corn and peanuts, while not *kitniyot*, fell into the category of prohibited food as well because when ground, they may be confused for wheat flour. However, recent rabbinic rulings in the Reform and Conservative movements have permitted Ashkenazim to consume *kitniyot*, corn, peanuts, and their derivatives on Pesach. Some Ashkenazim still avoid these foods because they have kept this tradition for so long. Sefardi communities and others who have adopted their Pesach rules, particularly vegetarians, do not follow this strict observance.

There are enough Pesach products on the market to keep you satisfied for a whole eight days, though it is also possible to eat healthy and nearly normal meals without buying the mixes and special kosher-for-Pesach products. Fresh fish, meat, fruits, and vegetables do not require kosher-for-Pesach certification.

An important note: If you live with disordered eating, the food restrictions of Pesach may be triggering. Please do what you need to do to stay healthy during the holiday, and know that while you do not need special rabbinic leniencies for this, you are also welcome to speak to the rabbi in confidence. The organization A Mitzvah to Eat is a good resource for this as well, and has information about eating across all our holidays.

II. Option 2: Clean *hametz* products out of your house.

Consider donating all sealed packages to your local food bank prior to the holiday. Any open packages of non-perishable food can be placed in a box or cabinet, out of use. You may also want to place a sign or a taped boundary to visually remind you not to use the food there. Frozen food may be stored in the freezer, as long as you keep it separate from food you will use during the holiday, with or without signage. This food that you set aside can be symbolically sold for the duration of the holiday. More information can be found in Option 4. Pre-Pesach “spring cleaning” is intended to read your home of all crumbs, so this is a great time to do some sweeping and wiping. Think of all the places in your home where people eat, and start there.

After you have cleaned as much as you are able, there is a beautiful declaration that you may recite:

כָּל-חֲמִירָא וְחֲמִיעָא דְאִכָּא בְרִשּׁוּתֵי,
דְחִזְתִּיה וּדְלָא חִזְתִּיה, דְחֲמַתִּיה וּדְלָא חֲמַתִּיה,
לְבָטֵל וְלִהְיוּ הֶפְקֵר כְּעַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא.

*Kol hamira vahami'a d'ika virshuti,
dahaziteih ud'la haziteih, dahamiteih ud'la hamiteih,
libateil v'lehevei hefkeir k'afra d'ar'ah.*

All *hametz* in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have removed it or not, is hereby nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

III. Option 3: Make your kitchen kosher for Passover.

Once you have removed or stored away any *hametz*, try setting up your kitchen differently from the rest of the year. If you don't have separate Pesach dishes and pots (dishes which have never touched *hametz*), you can kasher flatware and metal pots by boiling water and filling or submerging the entire item completely. Pots can be kashered in the sink so you can pour water over the bottoms as well. Instead of using your everyday dishes, you could also buy inexpensive glass or plasticware for yearly use, or you could use disposable plates for the week. Speak to the rabbi for additional help and ideas.

IV. Option 4: Symbolically release yourself of ownership of all *hametz*.

Selling the *hametz* that remains in your home (*mehirat hametz*) is done symbolically, through the rabbi as your power of attorney. HBT provides a form for the sale of the *hametz* in your home. Whatever products you keep that are not kosher-for-Passover should be stored away for the holiday; they do not belong to you until ownership reverts at the end of the eight days. All *hametz* will be sold on Sunday, April 21 at 12:15 pm, so please be sure to return the form to the temple **before noon**. All *hametz* will remain sold until Tuesday, April 30 at 8:30 pm, after which point it becomes yours again and you will be free to eat it.