



LEARNING IN ADVANCE

- **Siyyum:** Traditionally, firstborn children fast on erev Pesah, but morning Torah study exempts them from that fast. Whether or not you are a firstborn, please join us for Torah study the morning before Passover begins! In this siyyum (celebration of the completion of study), we will join Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti as she completes her study of tractate Sofrim, the minor tractate of the Talmud about Torah scrolls, which GJC's Clergy Study Group studied together. We will share some insights and questions raised in this text. How do the rules about writing Torah scrolls and treating them with *kavod* (honor) affect how we interact with the physical Torah scroll, our interpretation of the text, and our roles as teachers and vessels of Torah? All materials will be provided in Hebrew and English. Breakfast with hametz will be served after we study.
 - The siyyum will be held as part of Morning Minyan on **Monday, April 22, from 7-8:30 AM in-person and accessible via Zoom**. If you need to study on your own schedule, please reach out to Student Rabbi Maria Pulzetti for the source sheet.

ORGANIZING A SEDER

- **How to Lead a Seder:** In 2020, Rabbi Zeff taught an online class to help prepare those of us who may be leading our own seder to do so. We covered topics such as "How can we get meaning out of the haggadah this year?", "What are the really essential parts of a seder?," and "Is it really possible to lead a seder on Zoom?" The link to access the video is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4r0iPddQgAI>.
- **Haggadot everywhere:** There are wonderful haggadot that you can order online in amazing variety. In addition, there are websites like www.haggadot.com where you can create your own personalized haggadah to download or print.

GJC PASSOVER SUPPLEMENT

- In 2021, GJC created a booklet with artwork, supplementary readings for each step of the seder, and suggestions for engaging children, all created by wonderful artists and teachers who are members of GJC! If you do not have a copy, please stop by the GJC office to pick one up. There is an audio version, narrated by GJC member Judy Sussholtz, available at <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/pesah/>.

CLEANING OUR HOUSES

- **Don't discard hametz:** The Torah states that we should remove all leaven from our houses before Pesah, but the ancient rabbis came up with an alternative: setting our leavened goods aside and "selling" them for the duration of the holiday. I urge everyone to take advantage of this process of this year at <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/sale-of-hametz-5784/>.
- **Don't go overboard:** The ancients taught that when we are searching for hametz in our houses we should use a candle because its light is poor (Tosefta Pesachim 1:1). They are encouraging us both to go easy on ourselves in our cleaning and to concentrate on the [spiritual meaning of the holiday](#). Although many of us have the custom of deeply cleaning before Pesah, we need to remember that dirt is not hametz. We need to distinguish between what is law and what is custom at a time when we're overwhelmed.

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PESAH FOODS

- We need fewer certified kosher for Pesah foods than we think: We should remember that generations of Jews celebrated the holiday with only a few special foods. The 2024 Rabbinical Assembly Guide to Passover (found at <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/RA-Guide-to-Passover-5784.pdf>) has very good guidance about the many foods that can be bought without special certification, particularly prior to Pesah.

SEDER NIGHT

- GJC Seder Pairing: Do you have space at your Seder table for an additional guest? Are you looking for a Seder to attend? Germantown Jewish Centre's VP of Community Building, Amy Schragar, is pairing member guests with hosts for First Seder and Second Seder. Hosts are needed! Please fill out the Seder Pairing form online at <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/passover-seder-pairing/>.

SERVICES

- Holiday services for the first 2 days of Pesah, Hol ha-Mo'ed, and 7th and 8th-day service with Yizkor will be in-person and online according to schedule.

PIRKEI AVOT STUDY

- A highlight of our yearly calendar is studying each of the chapters of Pirkei Avot, the Teachings of the Sages, each Shabbat afternoon between Pesah and Shavuot. This year, Pirkei Avot sessions will be at Germantown Jewish Centre. The schedule can be found at <https://germantownjewishcentre.org/pirkei-avot-2024/>.

A zissen Pesah! May we find our way through from slavery to freedom again this year, supported by everyone around us and by our wonderful community.

