

## Getting Ready for Pesah: Passover Schedule

**Mekhirat hametz (Selling hametz):** One of the essential *mitzvot* of Passover is that “No leaven shall be found in your houses” (Exodus 12:19). In order to fulfill this mitzvah, we do two things: (1) strive to rid our homes of as much hametz as possible in preparation for Passover; and (2) sell any hametz that we are unable to dispose of. Selling of hametz is accomplished by signing the sale release found in this Bulletin on page 18, and by including with it a check made out to Rabbi Lerner’s Discretionary Fund. As we prepare our own homes for Passover, the funds we collect will go to help others who are in need of food. As in past years, these funds have been designated for MAZON to help feed those in need. The deadline for returning your forms, or for e-mailing Maria Espinoza ([mespinoza@emunahlex.org](mailto:mespinoza@emunahlex.org)) that you wish to sell your hametz, is **Friday, March 26 by 12 noon.**

**Bedikat hametz (Searching for hametz):** Once our homes have been cleaned of hametz, we perform a search for any remaining bits. As our homes have already been cleaned, we “plant” our own hametz to find during our search. Carefully place a piece of bread or other hametz item in each of the rooms of your home (remember where you put them!). After dark, search through the rooms of your house and gather the pieces with a feather and a wooden spoon, lighting your way with a candle. They can then be placed in a paper bag for disposal later (see below). **We perform the search for hametz on the night before Passover begins: Sunday, March 28, after dark.**

On **Erev Pesah, Monday, March 29**, we will join together for *Shaharit* services at 6:45 am as we commemorate the Fast of the First Born. Rabbis Lerner and Jacobs will lead a *siyyum*, a traditional celebration of completing a cycle of study. Following any *siyyum*, we hold a *se’udat mitzvah*, a meal accompanying the performance of a mitzvah. This *siyyum* and its attendant meal allow firstborns to eat—otherwise, all firstborns would fast on this day. In preparation for Passover, we stop eating hametz well before the holiday begins. **This year, we must finish consuming hametz by 10:44 am.** We also destroy any remaining hametz (that we “found” the night before!) on **Erev Pesah** by burning it. This is called ***B’iur hametz***—we must burn our hametz on Monday morning by **11:47 am**. Instructions for *Bi’ur hametz* can be found in most *Haggadot*.

**This year, the *sedarim* take place on Monday & Tuesday nights.** There will be no *Ma’ariv* services on March 29 or 30. Our Sisterhood Judaica Shop is an excellent source for finding a number of good *Haggadot*, including the one published by the Rabbinical Assembly.

The first days of Passover are **Tuesday and Wednesday, March 30 & 31**, when we will gather for services at 9:30 am. On Wednesday evening, we will gather for *Ma’ariv* services and *Havdalah* to conclude *Yom Tov* at 7:45 pm. Please join us.

Passover is an eight-day holiday. The first two and last two days are *Yom Tov*: holidays when, like Shabbat, we refrain from work and have special services. An additional festive atmosphere is achieved in these services through special Torah readings, *Hallel*, and *Musaf*. This atmosphere reaches the home as well with festive home meals. The intermediate days are called *Hol Ha-moed*; although work is permitted, they still retain their holiday flavor through the addition of special Torah readings, *Hallel*, and *Musaf* to the morning service.

For *Shabbat Hol Ha-moed*, please join us for services at our regular time on Friday night at 6:15 pm. **Saturday morning, April 3 will be a Synaplex Shabbat** featuring Dr. Anne Lapidus Lerner as guest scholar, teaching on “Visions of Jerusalem.” **On Saturday evening, we will gather together for *Minhah*, *Ma’ariv*, and *Havdalah* beginning at 7 pm.**

On the **7<sup>th</sup> day of Pesah, Monday, April 5**, we will read a chapter from *Shir Ha-Shirim*, the beautiful Song of Songs. In the afternoon, ***Minhah* will begin at 7 pm.** We are delighted to welcome back Rabbi Stephen Lerner to teach us following *Minhah* on the topic: “*H*ametz, almost *H*ametz, and not *H*ametz.”

On the **8<sup>th</sup> day, April 6**, *Yizkor* will be included in the morning service. We will join together for the final hours of the holiday, with *Minhah* beginning at 7 pm. **The festival concludes at 7:59 pm; we may resume eating hametz at 9 pm.**