



## Portland's UnShul Monthly Newsletter



### **Holding Each of You at This Painful Time**

by Rivka Gevurtz, Board President on October 27

When I first prepared my comments for this, our inaugural newsletter, we were still basking in our season of joy. But today, as we prepare to send this out, we are all reeling in the pain and shock of abhorrent violence.

It is precisely for moments like these that we crave community. We mirror the moments of joy in our lives and we hold each other up when tragedy would drop us to our knees. In an age of instant communication, we have never been so far from civic and civil discourse. We plug in because we fear missing out, but many are detached from simple compassion. If you need support, as we come to terms with this, reach out to us. In addition to our Rabbah's wise counsel, as a chaplain, I am also available to lend an ear.

In a world which is so divided, I feel so blessed to be part of visioning what an UnShul community can look and feel like, now more than ever. A community which is qualitatively different from older models of faith communities. If you are not yet a member, *and if you have already joined our young community*, I want to hear from you; what are your visions for a community which is committed to social justice, relevant and inspiring, which would source you for the world we live in today? Feel free to reach out to me at

[UnShulRivka@asthespiritmovesus.com](mailto:UnShulRivka@asthespiritmovesus.com)!

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## A Bissel Torah from our Rabbah

What a scary time this is.

Children are separated from their parents at the border. Bombs are sent to leaders of the Democratic party and to one of the greatest Jewish philanthropists of all time. The identities of our Trans and non-binary beloveds are threatened with erasure. And today, on Shabbat, the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh was attacked by a gunman. Eleven are dead. A community is shattered. Yet again the Jewish people are thrown into mourning.

In *The Smell of Rain on Dust*, Martin Prechtel writes: “We have to be able to turn the event of having lost into something whose cure is not only for us but for the rest of the people.”

How can we do this when our hearts are shattered? How do we find a cure for loss that is not just for ourselves but for everyone? When our epigenetic trauma is activated and the memories of a Black church in Charleston, a Sikh temple near Milwaukee, a Muslim mosque in Minnesota, an LGBTQ nightclub in Orlando\* are vibrating in our souls, how do we find a cure for loss for all of us?

I first heard about the attack in Pittsburgh from my friend, Pastor Matt Hennessee. Throughout the day I received an outpouring of love and connection from Christian and Unitarian pastors and Muslim leaders, secular activist friends, including those committed to turning out entire communities, like the Trans community. A veritable non-stop flow of love from allies asking what to do, how to help, where to show up. Asking if I was ok. Asking if I wanted to talk. Asking if I was remembering to take care of myself.

After 40 years of intersectional activism what I understood today was that this administration with its hateful rhetoric inciting violence has done what activists had not been able to do for decades: galvanize us to show up for one another, over and over and over again.

Grieve, Prechtel instructs us. Grieve our Sages teach us. Grieve and know as Psalm 23 teaches us: “Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we will fear no evil, for Yah is with us.” Grieve wholly and fully with full throated sobbing. Grieve our loss and offer praise for those who have left us. And together, within our community and throughout our communities of resilience WE WILL RISE and the cure for loss will be finding together a world where hate is known no more.

Nachamu ami, says the prophet Isaiah. Comfort my people. Let us gather and love, gather and restore, gather and grieve, gather and find the cure.

So much love to you all. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

\*Thanks to Jenny Pressman for her eloquence in naming all these connected tragedies

## Tikkun Olam

Vigils, marches and gatherings are popping up every week! Stay tuned via this newsletter and our [Facebook page](#) and catch weekly action alerts [on our website](#). Or sign up for the

Portland Spirit Led Justice Alliance Weekly Action Alert right here: [Portland Spirit Led Justice Alliance](#)

## Fundraising and Friendraising

The UnShul is an inspiring, truly grassroots community that works on a small budget to pay for only the essentials needed: a few bills and the small salary of our Rabbi, someone we can be proud to call our leader in faith and social justice. But, we are much larger than the support we give to our leaders, we are a growing community of individuals who are each pouring our love and energy into something larger that in turn feeds us all. The donations we give bolster our community, but they also have the power to bolster our individual spirits. There are a lot of things we **have to** pay for in our lives. The UnShul is one important way we can exercise empowering **choice** in where we spend our money. Paying into the UnShul which then in turn pays us back tenfold in spiritual growth and mutual support is exponentially beneficial to you, our community and the intersecting communities to which we belong. If you haven't joined as a congregational member yet, reach out and make it official! Visit our website to join and learn more: <https://www.asthespiritmovesus.com/unshul/> and/or make a donation today! <http://bit.ly/2uFu9N1>

## Community News: Cedar Sinai announces re-launch of The New Robison Health & Rehabilitation Center

Our friends at Cedar Sinai have shared the opening of the new 44 suite rehab center, after two years of construction. The new center, which expands the original "Robison Home", is outfitted with state-of-the-art equipment and offers innovations in care, accommodations and technology to help patients recover, rebuild and return safely home.

## What is upcoming?

### **Tree of Life Memorial Service**

**Sunday, November 4, 4:00 pm**

**Rabbah D'vorah's home, 3651 SW Custer Street, 97219**

On Shabbat Vayeira (October 27) 11 Jews were murdered at a Pittsburgh synagogue as they worshipped and celebrated a baby naming. Our grieving continues. Let us gather and learn about those killed, sing Psalms and prayers of mourning, perform ritual to ground ourselves, locate ourselves in the brutality and the beautify of this intersectional/interconnected web of the universe (learn about other hate murders this week and about acts of exquisite solidarity and support), and G-d willing find a bit of healing and strength in the container of our love.

All are welcome, but **do RSVP to [our FB event](#) or via email** so we know how many to expect.

**Saturday 11/10, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm**

### **Shabbat Morning Service**

**Central Lutheran Church 1820 NE 21st Avenue Portland, OR 97212 - *This space is 100% accessible in all ways--front entrance, gathering room, bathroom.***

Lyrical, musical, joyful, meaningful, heart opening, transcendent—all words used to describe Shabbat morning davenning with Rabbah D. On Second Saturdays we lift our voices in prayer

together from 10-12 and then dive deeply into meditation and mystical Torah study from 12-1. Together we will open Judaism's deep well of wisdom through the lens of the Zohar, Sfat Emet, and other mystical commentators. If you yearn for a beautiful Shabbat morning service in an intimate environment, this service is for you. Can't wait to see you!

**Saturday 11/17, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm**

**Shabbat Morning Service**

**At the home of Rabbah D'vorah 3651 SW Custer, St. PDX 97219**

Lyrical, musical, joyful, meaningful, heart opening, transcendent—all words used to describe Shabbat morning davenning with Rabbah D. On Third Saturdays we lift our voices in prayer together from 10-12 and then explore the Torah portion from 12-12:30 using the lush foliage outside the windows. This service integrates one of the best qualities of our previous Torah hikes and elevates our intracconnectedness with nature and all of Creation. And once again, if you yearn for a beautiful Shabbat morning service in an intimate environment, this service is for you. Can't wait to see you!

**Friday 11/23, 7:00 pm**

**Friday Night with the Rabbah**

**At the home of Alison Loercher 5427 SE 121st; Portland Or 97266**

After a virtual candle lighting, we will gather in beloved community to learn a little, sing a little, talk a lot and eat a beautiful meal.

*Please bring the following according to last name:*

A-E: Entrée (fish or vegetarian)

F-G: Gluten free dessert

H-M: Entrée (fish or vegetarian)

N-O: Vegetable side dish no dairy

P-S: Salad

T-Z: Wine or Juice

**Want to support Portland's UnShul? Donate using our PayPal link:**

<http://bit.ly/2uFu9N1>



As The Spirit Moves Us & Portland's UnShul

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