

Spring Cleaning by Board Member Sara Carr:

Trees and plants are coming to life after the long, cold winter. The season of rebirth has emerged! For me, and many Americans, Spring is the time to let things go, clear things out and open up space. It is time to remove physical clutter such as broken furniture, old t-shirts, free clicky-top pens from the Postal Annex that write surprisingly smoothly.

Spring also brings with it Pesach - an intentional and spiritual clearing out to make way for freedom. Like many Jewish holidays, Pesach isn't just Pesach. We begin counting the Omer during Passover, one harvest festival ushering in another, right up to Shavuot. We have so much work to do to become a liberated people before receiving Torah! Okay, back to Pesach . . .

Every year we prepare our homes, meals and spiritual selves for this week-long ritual of abstaining from *chametz*. Not just the literal *chametz*, such as bread or pasta; throw in all of the emotional and spiritual *chametz* that is cleansed from our internal systems. The Lubavitcher Rebbe wrote that the basic theme of Pesach is that it, “enables us to undergo a personal exodus from Egypt by transcending our individual limits”. May you find strength and wholeness in the retelling of our liberation. *Chag Sameach Pesach!!!*

Come to our Second Night Seder, Saturday, April 20th at the Q Center!
details below in the April Happenings section of this newsletter.

Bissel Torah from Rabbah D’vorah:

I write in the week following our reading of parshat Tzav. This is a part of our Torah focused on direction for the priests on how to enact ritual to heal transgression, to make whole that which is broken and to rejoice in our gratitude.

We learn so many details about how Aharon and the priests are commanded. We might lose ourselves in the descriptions of the different kinds of sacrifices and get overwhelmed with how many times we are to required to engage in these magical, alchemical, transformational acts. We might bristle at the idea of being commanded to do something that we don’t fully understand. We might wonder what relevance this ancient and no longer used practice has for us. We may vibrate with frustration about having obligations imposed on us that take time and are costly and of course, harm rams and bulls and goats and doves.

Yet as our conversion students explored together, the obligations from parshat Tzav are actually a gift. They provide a communal context that supports our tshuva (repentance)

process. They actually limit our intake of meat—many scholars say that the sacrificial animals were the only meat that most consumed. They create daily opportunities for communal gratitude and celebrations. When/where does that happen in the USA today for entire peoples?

I would add that parshat Tzav commands us to enact ritual so that we can be truly free. Free of guilt, shame, regret, brokenness and emptiness. Free to become who we are destined to become.

And of course we are on our journey now to Pesach, when we remember and celebrate our freedom from oppression and slavery. Isn't it interesting that we immerse ourselves in the story of physical liberation AFTER we have been given the ritual recipe for freeing ourselves from emotional or spiritual slavery?

How beautiful! How integrated! How holistic!

Freedom through ritual obligation. Freedom through story. Freedom through community.

May Pesach invite all of us into an ever more profound relationship with liberation, and may our path together, dancing on the shores of next incarnation, continue to nourish, delight and support all of us.

See you at our seder!

Rabbah D

This Month's Happenings:

Shabbat Morning Service

Saturday, April 13th 10:00 am

3651 SW Custer St, Portland 97219

**This space has two steps at its entrance after a walkway with an incline to the door, but we have a portable ramp that converts it into a wheelchair accessible entryway. The bathroom does not have grab bars.*

Lyrical, musical, joyful, meaningful, heart opening, transcendent—all words used to describe Shabbat morning davenning with Rabbah D. This Saturday we lift our voices in prayer together from 10-12 and then dive deeply into meditation and mystical Torah

study from 12-12:30. 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!

Interfaith Service for the Portland Spirit Led Justice Alliance

Tuesday April 16, 7:00 pm

2728 NE 34th Ave, Portland, OR 97212

Though Rabbah D doesn't always co-lead, she frequently does and soon Rivka Gevurtz will also be in the rotation.

There is ample parking in the lot across the street and a ramp to the front door. There are two front doors, please use the one on the right, go down a short hallway, make a right and the first door you see will be us.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/255151825374637>

Second Night Seder

Saturday, April 20 6:00 pm

Q Center 4115 N Mississippi Ave, Portland, OR 97217

We have so much liberation to discuss!

REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR ALL UnShul Members and Community:

\$20 per person in advance, \$36 two days prior/at the door. We have a few ways for you to register for our seder:

- Send a \$20 check made out to "As the Spirit Moves Us" and mail to 3651 SW Custer Street 97219
- Or - PayPal: <http://bit.ly/2uFu9N1>

BYO plate, cup & silverware, for this potluck of non-dairy vegetarian and meat dishes. Dishes can contain eggs, but NO dairy/milk/butter.

Kitniyot is allowed: *Beans, Lentils, Rice, Corn, Rice, Flaxseed, Green Beans, Buckwheat, Caraway, Cardamom, Edamame, Fennel Seeds, Fenugreek, Hemp Seeds, Millet, Mustard, Peas, Poppy Seeds, Rapeseed, Sesame Seeds, Soybeans, Sunflower Seeds, Teff*

Please bring the following if your last name begins with (please label the ingredients of your dish)

A-B: 2 bottles kosher juice

C-D-E: 1 bottle kosher wine

F-G-H: Charoset

I-J: Parsley and jar of horseradish

K-L: 12 hard boiled eggs

M-N: Gefilte fish

O-P: Matzah-1 box regular, 1 gluten free

Q-R-S: Carb side dish like potatoes

T-U-V: Veggie side dish

W-X-Y-Z: Main dish-fish or chicken

Friday Night With the Rabbah

Friday, April 26th 7:00 pm

710 SE Franklin, Portland

At the home of Linda Rifkin - after candle lighting, we will gather in beloved community to learn a little, sing a little, celebrate the end of Pesach, talk a lot and eat a beautiful Pessadic veggie/dairy 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

Vigils, marches and gatherings are popping up every week!

Stay tuned via this newsletter and/or:

- Our [Facebook page](#) has the latest news and updates
- [Keep up with the latest Spirit Led Justice Alliance Action Alert HERE!](#)

Or sign up to receive the Portland Spirit Led Justice Alliance Weekly Action Alert right to your email [HERE!](#)

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

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

COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Portland United Against Hate

Tuesday, April 30th 9:30 AM - 12:00

3536 SE 26th AVE

Portland United Against Hate is excited to be hosting the second quarterly gathering on April 30th. Featuring youth from Cleveland CARES and their work on mapping racial profiling at Cleveland High School. We will also be hearing from Laura John, Tribal Liaison at the City of Portland, providing updates on the hate reporting tool and building camaraderie - all while enjoying some delicious snacks!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/346282419322003/>

Portland United Against Hate Reporting Website

In case this hasn't made it onto your screen, I wanted to make sure that those who attended the Portland United Against Hate "Interrupting Hate in Public Spaces" workshops last year got information on how to report a hate incident via the new www.ReportHatePDX.com website.

Please distribute this information through your social media and organizational networks.

It is critical that anyone who experiences hate (*including you*) can report it through a vehicle that is community based, anonymous and as safe as can be. Also included on this website are organizations that can serve as resources to you and others when targeted by hate.

Thanks for your commitment to making Portland safe, welcoming, equitable and kind.

You can find out more about the data reporting tool through this video on Facebook as well as the FAQ's attached in English and Spanish:

<https://www.facebook.com/PortlandUnitedAgainstHate/videos/535896440252285/>