



# Portland's UnShul

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Once again, a HUGE thank you to all who joined us for our Passover Seder. We literally could not have done it without you! Stay tuned for all of our Spring, Summer & Autumn programming updates via this weekly email and our [Facebook page](#).

The joy we shared together as a Jewish community here in Portland at the beginning of Passover was met with tragedy at the close: the shooting at Chabad of Poway in California last weekend. Several congregants sustained injuries and

On Monday, a small gathering met at Rabbah D's home to process this tragedy before joining the larger community gathering at the JCC. We spent time mourning for the other faith communities that have survived the recent rise in white national terrorism - the three historically black churches in Louisiana, the survivors and congregants at the Mosque in New Zealand, the Pittsburg Jewish community and so many others. It does not seem fair that it is tragedy that is uniting us, yet that is why we gathered together.

At the close of our time together on Monday, Rabbah D'vorah invited us all - those in attendance and those out in the world - to resist the hate and division these groups attempt to plant by showing up for our Jewish communities. Of course, she had much more eloquent wording than I do, but I would like to come out in support of her idea and ask all of you - near and far - to join us at an UnShul happening in person or virtually, consider joining our board of directors; or you can reach out to any Jewish organization or group you feel connected with. As I said earlier, we cannot do this without you - be it host a meaningful Passover seder, mourn our loved ones or work to sustain our wider community during trials and triumphs.

I often find if I have a good thought, someone has a better way of expressing it. So I leave you with one of my favorite passages from Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Ulysses" that I hope makes you smile, makes you think and inspires you to take action in whatever way is meaningful to you:

*Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.*

Shavua tov,  
Sara Carr

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## ***A Bissel Torah From Our Rabbah***

### **Counting the Omer: Counting Down to Heaven on Earth**

This year, for the first time in my life, I have awakened every morning to instantly count the Omer. No app, no email, no other external prompt.

What is that about, I wondered, and also, how fantastic!

On Thursday, April 25, on Day 5 (Hod sh'b'chesed, or the glory of loving kindness) it hit me.

I've ALREADY been doing a daily counting this year. That's why it was coming so easily. That's why I was so eager. Because this year, for the first time, I actually, deeply, uncontrovertibly experienced mitzrayim (Egypt or the narrow place) in my body. Just like the haggadah wants us too. And I couldn't wait to get to the shores of my liberation and from there to the moment of Revelation when I will be immersed in Spirit and community and hope and truth.

This year, before the Omer counting began, I started counting down the days to my second hip replacement surgery. Except I was counting backwards. Instead 1,2,3, it started at 10 weeks and then went to 9 weeks and 6 days, 9 weeks and 5 days, etc. Today as I write this it is 7 weeks and 5 days.

I feel so blessed that for me there IS another side of the Sea of Reeds where I get to keep journeying. Not everyone gets that in their body. Oh, my dear friends living in pain and immobility for whom there is no remedy, my empathy for you is endless.

But for me, in several months from now, after a couple of months of healing from my second hip replacement, I have a 95% chance of living a life without intense pain, constriction, immobility and daily unknowing of what torture will

I am remembering the chorus to that Rainbow Gathering inspired song: We can feel it, in our body, in our spirit and in our soul.

First we feel it in our body, and then our spirit catches on and then our soul.

That has always been true for me.

And what is it that is going on in my body and in the counting of the Omer? In counting up to 49 days we are refining our characters quality by quality till we are clear and healed of that trauma, of that fear, of that hate and of that yearning for revenge. Until we are clear of the lack of self-awareness born out of 400 years of being used as a tool, brutalized and oppressed, our people whipped out of having an independent consciousness.

We are counting and we are clearing. We are clearing and we are healing.

So on Shavuot, after clearing the 49 levels of degradation we are REALLY FREE and we can receive Torah, receive TEACHING, receive THE WAY, receive the abundant ever-flowing ever-loving ever-healing Presence and not turn away, not run away, not imagine that we are not worthy, not start screaming in rage at whoever orchestrated this overwhelming, incomprehensible experience.

Instead we are kabbalists, and we receive.

What about you?

What makes the Omer come alive for you?

What trauma lies in your body yearning to be set free?

Where do you feel broken where you are yearning to heal?

What can your body teach your spirit and your soul?

Looking forward to seeing you at Shavuot services on Saturday evening, June 8, and that the universe aligns so we can connect on many Shabbatot before then.

B'ahava uvracha (with love and blessing)

Rabbah D

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## UnShul Happenings in May

**Shabbat Morning Service at Central Lutheran Church**  
**Saturday, May 11th 10:00 am - 12:30 pm**

*\*This space is 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 12-12:30. 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!

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**Shabbat Morning Service at Rabbah D'vorah's  
Saturday, May 18th 10:00 am - 12:30 pm  
3561 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. 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 intraconnectedness 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!

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**Friday Night With the Rabbah  
Friday, May 24th 7:00 pm  
Camp Angelos: 32149 SE Stevens Rd, Corbett, Oregon 97019**

Please join us for a special Friday Night with Rabbah, at beautiful Camp Angelos, in Corbett (between Troutdale and Multnomah Falls, along the Sandy River.) Board president, Rivka Gevurtz and Tom Gevurtz are hosting us at the

The meal will be catered, so please rsvp at your earliest convenience. AND, then please plan to return, on Sunday evening, as we celebrate Rivka's ordination and graduation from seminary.

For full details on that part of the weekend, and to rsvp for that event, please go to: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2314787788737077/?ti=icl>

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***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>

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## Digital Membership Option

Through the wonders of modern technology we are inviting out of town folks and others who can't be physically present to drink from the well of our joyous prayer and learn from Rabbah D'vorah and our whole community through our deep Torah discussions.

We will be Zooming our twice monthly (2nd and 3rd) Shabbat morning services live! You can be with us, even if you can't be in the room. We start at 10 am and end at 12:30 pm, and we will also be saving the services on a link so you can access it at any time.

We would so love to have you join us! If this sounds like something you'd be interested in, we are offering it for just \$240 a year donation, which comes out to only \$10 per service. You can pay via paypal with a monthly recurring donation of \$20, or a one time payment (<http://bit.ly/2uFu9N1>) or by sending a check made out to **As the Spirit Moves Us** sent to Rabbah D'vorah at 3651 SW Custer Street,

In addition to sending your payment, email us to confirm your intent, so we will be sure to send you the Zoom information: [unshuladmin@asthespiritmovesus.com](mailto:unshuladmin@asthespiritmovesus.com)

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## COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

### **Interfaith Service for the Portland Spirit Led Justice Alliance**

**Tuesday, May 21st 7:00 pm**

**2728 NE 34th Ave., Portland 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 will see us.

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## 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/>

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**NOTE: Replies to this email do not go to Rabbah D'vorah. If you want to connect with Rabbah D personally, please write to them at [RabbiDebra@asthespiritmovesus.com](mailto:RabbiDebra@asthespiritmovesus.com)**

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