The Messenger

2nd Night of Passover
Community Seder

Saturday, April 23, 2016

Mincha will begin at 7:20 pm followed by the Seder

Dinner created by our wonderful kitchen staff
$30.00 per person
$37.00 without a reservation

Your payment is your reservations, and must be made by Monday, April 18
You can pay for this event online or by calling our office at 833-2222
**PASOVER SERVICES and candle lighting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, April 22</td>
<td>Fast of the First Born</td>
<td>6:45 am</td>
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<td>Chametz sale deadline</td>
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<td>Mincha &amp; 1st evening Passover</td>
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<td>Candle lighting</td>
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<td>Saturday, April 23</td>
<td>Shachrit 1st day Passover</td>
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<td>Mincha &amp; 2nd evening Passover</td>
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<td>followed by Community Seder</td>
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<td>Candle lighting</td>
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<td>Sunday, April 24</td>
<td>Shachrit 2nd day Passover</td>
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<td>Mincha/Conclusion of 2nd day</td>
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<td>Thursday, April 28</td>
<td>Mincha &amp; 7th evening Passover</td>
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<td>Candle lighting</td>
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<td>Friday, April 29</td>
<td>Shachrit 7th day Passover</td>
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<td>Mincha &amp; 8th evening Passover</td>
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<td>Candle lighting</td>
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<td>Saturday, April 30</td>
<td>Shabbat/Shachrit 8th day Passover</td>
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<td>Yizkor (time approximate)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mincha &amp; conclusion of Passover</td>
<td>7:35 pm</td>
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<td>Holiday ends</td>
<td>8:27 pm</td>
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*and much more...*

**The Messenger** is published monthly, except July and August

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE MESSENGER IS April 15**

Articles and pictures should be emailed to the synagogue office at bnaizion.congregation1@gmail.com

Congregation B’nai Zion ♦ 805 Cherry Hill ♦ El Paso, Texas 79912 ♦ 915-833-2222

www.congregationbnaizion.org
When I was interviewed for the position of Rabbi of Congregation B’nai Zion in the Spring of 1986 by the board of directors, the first question that was asked of me was, “Rabbi, how will you increase attendance at Shabbat services?” I remember my answer as if it happened yesterday. I looked at the people in the room, of which there were about 25, and I said, “I will answer your question with another question.” I continued, “The fact that you are raising that subject indicates to me that there is a problem in this synagogue attracting members to attend Sabbath services. Therefore my first question to you is, “How many of you attend services on a regular basis?” Only 5 or 6 hands went up. I continued with follow up question, “Those of you who do not attend, what is the reason behind that decision?” Practically everyone joined in the conversation. Some said that the services were too long. Some complained that there was too much Hebrew. Others confessed that the services were boring. A few argued that it was just not their thing. One or two admitted that they weren’t sure that they believed in God, so to come to pray would be hypocritical.

After about 15 minutes of listening to the excuses of those who were judging my ability to bring the disenfranchised to shul for Shabbat worship, I told the committee my solution. I said as follows, tongue in cheek, “On the first Shabbat that I serve as your Rabbi, I would bring in Barry Manilow (he was one of the hottest entertainers in those days) to put on a concert. Mr. Manilow will fill up the seats and then after the concert we’ll do the Shma, Borchu, Amidah, Aleinu and Kaddish in about 10 minutes. The second Shabbat, I’ll invite the Rockettes from Radio City Musical Hall to perform several dance routines and then we’ll daven for a short while. The third week we’ll show a newly released film which will be preset so as not to violate Shabbat, and conclude with prayers.”

Then I stopped with my solutions and addressed the members once again. “The problem of motivating Jewish people to come to services is an old problem. It began over 2500 years ago when the first Temple was destroyed and the synagogue became a house of prayer, a house of study and house of social activities instead of the Beit HaMikdash, where our ancestors offered sacrifices to God. We moved from an ancient practice where every member of the community was obligated to offer that sacrifice or suffer severe consequences, perhaps even death for violating that commandment. But when prayer replaced sacrifice, communicating with God became the “service of the heart” and unless the heart and the soul of a Jew motivates him or her to pray to God, it won’t happen. History has proven that.

The Hasidic movement was started to inspire Jews to come to synagogue. The Reform movement came into being for the same reason. This was followed by the Conservative movement. After that Reconstructionist Judaism was invented, then Jewish Humanism, Jewish Renewal, and today even cyber-Judaism. Nothing has really worked, because most people feel that attending services is not a priority in their list of Jewish responsibilities. Today some Jews want a shorter service, more English, musical instruments. Some synagogues have a program once a month called “Friday Night Live” where the Cantor brings in an orchestra and puts on a combination service and concert. By the way, for that one service usually the attendance is much greater (shades of my Barry Manilow idea?). Shabbat dinners, special Sabbaths honoring individuals, organizations, having the children and teenagers lead services, theme services -- all of those will bring new people to that particular service, but what happens the rest of the time when the service does not include any of these “extras?”

I told the committee three decades ago and I reiterate it today, “I cannot be the motivation for a member of the synagogue to attend services, the inspiration must come from his or her heart and soul. But I do promise you this -- when I daven it will be sincere and come from my heart. When I give a sermon or teach a lesson it will be well-prepared and everyone will understand clearly what message or lesson is. God has blessed me in my life, and so I pray to God with devotion and soul. I love the teachings of the Torah and so I teach its lessons with conviction and sincerity. That is all I can do. I promise you, this I will do, and now I humbly ask you to make your commitment to give me the opportunity to be your Rabbi and your teacher.” Thirty years have gone by since that meeting and I continue to follow those same principles and ideals which led me to becoming a Rabbi 45 years ago.

As you honor me this month for my thirty years of service to this blessed congregation, I thank each of you for the “kavod” that you have bestowed upon me, for your friendship, your kindness and loyalty. At the celebration I will say a lot more and thank some specifically who have been especially supportive and encouraging. But let me conclude for now by especially thanking my beautiful wife Sharon who, as a Rabbi’s wife, has supported me, sacrificed for me and loved me from my years as a Rabbinical student to this very day. I am also grateful to my children Shoshana, Rachel, Rebekah and David for all they have endured by being put in the difficult position at times of being a rabbi’s child. You have all shared with me in the miracle of creation of my three incredible grandchildren, Daniel, Jordyn and Emmie, who are my most sacred and precious gifts from God.

Thank you so much and may we all be blessed with a joyous, meaningful, and peaceful Pesach.

Stephen A. Leon
Rabbi
As we begin this month, it is easy to notice that Spring is near. As I conclude my first winter here in El Paso, I look forward to my first spring. Springtime is a special time for everyone. Every animal, every tree, and every bush, every flower bursts with color, everything gets new life.

At our office here at B’nai Zion spring came early. New activity and life have erupted since last December. Many of you have noticed numerous changes. With the help of Joyce, our Messenger is getting a whole new look. Our weekly emails are more colorful, and every event has a flyer dedicated to it. These flyers are the first thing you see when you walk in the door.

Our events have a new look, a new feel. There is excitement around every corner. We have events planned till next July. Our planned events do not just cover the Jewish Holidays, but when they do, we do it with a different flair and energy.

Everything in Jewish life is commemorated with a celebration. As Jews we do not do countdowns - we count up. It is in our blood to elevate and inflate, not to lower and deflate. With this thinking in mind, we plan our events. Each event we try to elevate and make it better. Year after year so many are used to the same thing; in doing so we lessen our celebrations and we decrease the impact they have on our lives. As we move further into Spring and through the next year our events will be exciting and they will elevate. They will bring new life to our community - just as the flowers bring the bees in spring.

In order for B’nai Zion to provide these events, like many other shuls we depend on its members to help offset the costs associated with each event. We have several ways in which our members can contribute. You can be an Underwriter for an event or can sponsor a portion of the event, such as decorations or food. Sponsorships are not always huge sums of money. Many times they are made of small amounts given by several members. We encourage a donation for $10 just like we would of $100 or more. If you join us for an event and you wish to donate to upcoming events we will have a big box labeled “Event Donations,” in which you can contribute. We need volunteers to help us plan and run our events; this is another way of giving. If you have an idea for an event, please come in and see us. Participation is key to a successful event.

We have several committees that are in need of help. Joining a committee will greatly help us in our effort. Lending us your valuable time, donating to become a sponsor and joining us at an event all will help us elevate and strengthen our community. We hope to see you soon, and look forward to seeing you participate in any way that you can.

Ken Kahn
Executive Director

Visit our website
www.congregationbnaizion.org

with
Rabbi Leon

INTRODUCTION TO THE TALMUD
Wednesday mornings: 10:30 – 11:30 am
Dates: April 6, 13

ADULT B’NAI MITZVAH CLASSES
Classes for anyone interested in having an adult Bar or Bat Mitzvah
Wednesday evenings: 6:45 - 7:45 pm
Dates: April 6, 13

In addition Rabbi Leon will offer private lessons for those wishing to learn synagogue skills, such as leading services, reading Torah and Haftorah.

Contact Rabbi Leon to arrange those meetings.
April is here and B’nai Zion has sprung forward with many activities. One of the most important is Rabbi Leon’s 30 Years Celebration. Reserve your seats now if you have not already done so, for this once in a lifetime event. We will be honoring Rabbi Leon for his 30 years of dedicated service to B’nai Zion on April 18th at the Camino Real Hotel. It is rare for any Rabbi to have the opportunity to serve their community so long. We have been fortunate to enjoy so many years with our Rabbi. Come one, come all to celebrate this glorious milestone!

Other events in April are also community oriented. On April 10th, Mitzvah Day will allow us to demonstrate our commitment to the community and Jewish Federation. Let’s all turn out to show El Paso that B’nai Zion positively impacts the city with Tikun Olam.

Then, on April 12th, at 7:00 PM, B’nai Zion will be hosting an Israel Bond presentation conducted by Izzy Ezagui followed with a dessert reception. Mr. Ezagui is an American-born squad commander for the Israel Defense Force (IDF). He lost his arm in a skirmish in Gaza, but refused to leave the service. As such, Izzy petitioned to remain and serve after his physical loss, but had to prove himself worthy to stay. After he overcame this challenge, Izzy rose to become an officer in the IDF. Currently, Mr. Ezagui resides in Brooklyn, NY and travels the country telling his story for Israel Bonds. However, this story is really Israel’s story personified.

Israel Bonds help to feed, clothe and equip IDF soldiers, among many other purposes. Even if you do not buy a bond now, please plan on attending to obtain the information. What better gift can you give than to help strengthen Israel in the name of your loved one? When we say our prayer for Israel during Shabbat, we ask that Hashem “Strengthen the hands of those who defend our Holy Land.” Come to be inspired and support our brothers as well as sisters in arms!

Last but not least, at this time of year, two things become predictable -- Passover and Taxes. With regards to Passover, B’nai Zion will be providing a Community Seder and everyone is invited (more information is provided in the Messenger). When filing your taxes, if you discover a need to lower your taxable income, B’nai Zion can assist. Remember that donations are tax deductible and make a difference.

Let’s “spring into action” and enjoy the many community oriented B’nai Zion activities coming our way in April. Whether it is with celebrations, charitable acts or sharing time and meals, we need you to complete our “Jewish Home.” You are always welcome at B’nai Zion.

Alan Cohen
President, Congregation B’nai Zion

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Return this RSVP by April 8, 2016 to Congregation B’nai Zion
805 Cherry Hill Lane, El Paso, TX 79912
or RSVP online at www.congregationbnaizion.com.

Name(s): ______________________________________

___ Individual ($25)
___ Reserved seating ($118)
___ Reserved Table for 10 ($1,000)
___ Event Sponsorship ($5,000)

Include a personal special congratulatory message to Rabbi Leon and/or photograph in the souvenir program from your family.
Please submit items and payment by April 6.

___ Full page, 4½x7½ ($100)
___ Half page, 4½x3½ ($50)
___ Quarter page, 4½x1¼ ($25)

Message (please print or email as indicated below):
______________________________________________
______________________________________________
______________________________________________
______________________________________________
______________________________________________
______________________________________________

Did you study with Rabbi Leon as a bar or bat mitzvah?
Submit a message of thanks and/or picture for a special “30-Yearbook” for Rabbi Leon to cbzdevelopment@gmail.com or to the B’nai Zion office (915-833-2222) by April 6.

Checks payable to Congregation B’nai Zion.
Credit card payment available online or by phone.
Misplace your Messenger?

You can always find a color copy on our website:

www.congregationbnaizion.org

FORM FOR SALE OF HAMETZ

I/We ________________________________

hereby authorize Rabbi Stephen Leon to dispose of all hametz which may be in my/our possession, wherever it may be, at home, place of business, or elsewhere in accordance with the requirements and provisions of Jewish Law.

NAME

_____________________________________

ADDRESS

_________________________________

CITY

______________________________________

Please return this form by Friday morning, April 22 at 9:00 am.

Mother's Day Brunch

Save the Date - May 8th

Save the Date

Lag Ba’Omer

Thursday, May 26, 2016

6:30pm - Mincha Services

6:45pm - Jewish Music Concert with Local Musicians

Friedman Social Hall, Congregation B’nai Zion

Suggested Minimum Donation $18 indiv., $36 family

Contact the shul office at 915-833-2222 or cbzdevelopment@gmail.com by April 26th if you would like to perform.

Proceeds help fund Yom HaShir, the first outdoor Jewish music festival in El Paso. Jewish blues musician Saul Kaye will headline this community-wide event on Sunday, September 25, 2016. Keep an eye out for details.
Things are really happening at the synagogue! In March we celebrated a Scout Shabbat, had great fun at the Purim celebration with its Star Wars – The Grogger Awakens theme, assembled and delivered over 400 Shalach Manot bags, celebrated Havdalah in Pajamas with Temple Mount Sinai, and began preparations for the celebration of Rabbi Leon’s thirty years at B’nai Zion. Additionally, the Sisterhood joined Hadassah and women of Reform Judaism for a book discussion and the programming committee began preparations for our Sisterhood annual meeting in May. A very busy month! Kudos to all who helped make this all possible.

All of this activity makes our synagogue a vibrant, fun, and joyous place to gather and share our lives. As Sisterhood members, we play a key role in the life of the synagogue and all of the activities that occur there. After all, it wouldn’t be complete without the addition of food at all of these events, and the Sisterhood is responsible for maintaining the kitchens that make this possible.

But that is not all Jewish women do for the synagogue – their contributions to the life of the synagogue, the community, and their families include so much more. Analyzing the nature of women’s contributions to religious life in America, historian Ann D. Braude noted that “women have made religious institutions possible by providing audiences for preaching, participants for ritual, the material and financial support for religious buildings, and perhaps most important, by inculcating faith in their children to provide the next generation of participants.”

With that last contribution in mind, it has been a goal of Sisterhood to help sponsor activities of the Talmud Torah and USY. Sisterhood has provided monies to Talmud Torah to purchase supplies, sponsored the December Hanukkah celebration as well as the Tu B’Shevat seder and tree planting. We also have provided monies to USY to help make possible their attendance at conferences. With all of that, we could do so much more! Please let us know your ideas about what Sisterhood could do to make life at the synagogue more meaningful and fulfilling.

In Sisterhood,
Patty Hutman
Sisterhood President
pahutman@gmail.com

Shalah Manot Project a Huge Success!

Thank you to everyone who purchased Shalach Manot bags. We sold over 400 bags this year!

Thank you to the following people who worked so hard to make this project a success:

Patty Hutman and Kristin Kimmelman - Co-Chairs
Rachel Leon - Sisterhood Treasurer
Annalie Rollins - Letter Preparation
Judy Grodin and Karen Kaplowitz - Food Procurement

Those who sent bags to all:
Mike Batkin
Alan and Debra Cohen
Cliff and Martha Eisenberg
Tony and Robin Furman
Evelyn Goodman
Rabbi Stephen and Sharon Leon

Bag assemblers:
Alan and Julian Cohen, Margie Dean, Scott and Renaye Feldt, Jonathan Gopin, Judy Grodin, Dan Heuer, Michelle and Hannah Holland, Mark and Patty Hutman, Joel and Karen Kaplowitz, Asher Keim, Joan Korn, Monica Kupetz, Simone Levy, Leticia Neiman, Galyn Palmore, Dora Roe, Thomas Warrior, Cathy, Jeff and Isaac Weislow, Jackie Zehden

Sunday Drivers and Helpers:
Mario and Shoshana Aranda, Eileen Armour, Lety, Marco, and Lizzy Briones, Blanca and Cesar Carrasco, Jennifer and Elise Ehrlich, Loretta and Jennie Fertel, Neorah and John Garcia, Michelle and Hannah Holland, Patty and Mark Hutman, Kristin and David Kimmelman, Sarah and Jaeden Kimmelman, Monica and Sam Kupetz, Rachel Leon, Joyce Lieb, Jeanne, Ross, and Marshall Lipson, Consuelo Madero, David Sabal, Marcia and Jerry Schwartz, Alia and Gilbert Ureste, Isaac and Jeff Weislow
to Hannah Holland on her upcoming Bat Mitzvah. 
Hannah is the daughter of James and Michelle Holland, 
and sister of Moises. The Kiddush Luncheon is being 
sponsored by her grandmother, Shaya Holland. The 
family invites you to join them on April 16 at 9:30 am.

The Simcha page this month is sponsored by the Mt. Franklin Insurance Agency. If you would like 
information on how they can meet your needs, please call Shane Lipson or Bill Carvajal at 915-599-2900.

Women's League Torah Fund

Sisterhood is selling cards to help you 
commemorate many events:

Get Well cards                  Condolence cards
Mazel tov cards                  Milestone cards

Cards are $5.00 each if you mail it 
$5.50 if Sisterhood mails it.

Contact Bernadine Belkin, Torah Fund Chair, 
at 833-3307 to purchase cards.

Sisterhood Gift Shop

The Sisterhood Gift Shop will be open special 
hours in April to help those who are preparing for 
Passover get those items they need to celebrate a 
truly wonderful holiday.

Gift Shop Dates and Hours for April

Fridays, April 1, 8, and 15 
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Sundays, April 3, 10, and 17 
9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

You can also contact the synagogue office to 
schedule an appointment. Come in see what 
you can’t live without! We will be so happy 
to help you.
Come to our
Chocola te Seder
Saturday, April 30
7:30 PM

Join us for Mincha/Ma’ariv and Havdalah followed by our Chocolate Seder

Elections for 2016-17 will be held on May 1, 11:30 a.m. at Ardovino’s. If you will be in 9th-12th grade for the 2016-17 school year and are interested in running for a board position, please let your advisor know.
IN HONOR OF
Rabbi Leon and the Congregation
Abraham Yosef
Susan Eisen being an extraordinary
Jewelry Designer
Louis & Miriam Rosenbaum
Gary and Judy Weiser’s birthdays
siddurs were purchased by
Bertie Siegelman
In gratitude
John & Neorah Garcia

SPEEDY RECOVERY TO
Harold Peitzer
Tibor & Ann Schaechner

IN MEMORY OF
(includes yahrzeit donations)
Lynn Landis
Irwin, Beth, Debra, Maurice and
Shayna Kurland
Ysrael Schutz
Rose Holland
Donald Abernethy
Harold Eisenman
Henry Zucker
Robert & Carol Teplitz
Rose Zlotnick
Allen & Marlene Levine
Irving Weinberg (father of Wendy
Rothschild)
Allen & Marlene Levine
David & Rose Schecter
Milton D. Feinberg
Stephen Feinberg
sister of Harry Page
Louis & Miriam Rosenbaum

Our synagogue thanks you so much for your
donations and support.

The New Republic
of CBZ thanks
Mike Batkin for his generous
donation by underwriting the
prizes for the children of the
Galactic Empire.
Ernest and Cheryl Eisenberg
their generous donation by
underwriting the special
entertainment for the children
of the Galactic Empire.
Laura Tolentino for turning
Darth Vader into a Pinata for
the children of the Galactic
Empire.
Sherry Grinsteiner for donat-
ing the Megillot in memory of
her mother, Shoshana Giat
A Siddur was purchased for Gary
and Judy Weiser
in honor of their birthdays.
Purchased by Bertie Siegelman

To Our Family & Friends,
Thank you so much for
thinking of us during the
Purim holiday. We have
enjoyed all the goodies in
the Shalach Manot bags.
We appreciate your
thoughtfulness....
Cliff & Martha Eisenberg

INTRODUCING A NEW CONCEPT
IN PRIVATE JEWELRY BUYING

NOW A PRIVATE JEWELER WHO
CATERS TO YOUR NEEDS FOR
MAJOR PURCHASES OF DIAMONDS
AND JEWELRY OVER $5000

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friend or relative in the business?

Have you been dealing with a
"wholesale" jeweler in or out of town?

Are you buying at a "discount" of
50-75% off but not sure if it really is?

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price before you buy. Her membership
in a private wholesale worldwide
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any pricing.....Guaranteed. You will be
perfectly amazed!

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orders@susaneisen.com

We would like to thank the CBZ Boy Scouts Troop 613
for sponsoring the Kiddush Lunch in honor of all scouts.

If you are interested in sponsoring a Friday evening
Oneg Shabbat, Saturday morning Kiddush Lunch,
Saturday afternoon Seudah Shlesheet, or Sunday
morning Bagel Breakfast in honor or in memory of a
loved one, please call the Synagogue office for more
information or to make arrangements.

We appreciate your support!
**Around the Community**

Sunday, April 3  
6:00 pm  
Temple Mount Sinai

The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso is having a celebration!

An evening of good food, good friends and fun with **comedian Elon Gold**. The Foundation will be honoring all of the individuals who have established funds with the Foundation.

RSVP by calling Sue Bendalin at 915-842-9554 or send an email to sbendalin@jfedelpaso.org

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**Save the Date**

**Yom HaShir**  
Day of Song

Sunday, Sept. 25th

Featuring Jewish blues musician Saul Kaye  
The performance will also include local Jewish musicians

Contact Alison Westermann at alisonwestermann@gmail.com if you are interested in performing at Yom HaShir or at the Lag Ba’Omer fundraising concert
ISRAEL BONDS EL PASO
INVITES YOU TO A
Community-Wide Reception

FEATURING GUEST SPEAKER
Izzy Ezagui

GUEST SPEAKER
Izzy Ezagui
IDF 1st Sergeant (Res.)
An American-born squad commander in the Israel Defense Forces, Izzy was severely wounded in combat, losing his dominant arm, yet he returned to his unit to continue defending his country.

Tuesday, April 12, 2016 · 7:00pm

CONGREGATION B’NAI ZION
805 Cherry Hill Lane · El Paso, TX 79912
Complimentary Admission - Registration Is Required

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
Steve Landis, Registered Representative
steve.landis@israelbonds.com
713.360.3530

Thru April 30, 2016
Letters to Sala:
A Young Woman’s Life in Nazi Labor Camps

Special traveling exhibit on women’s experiences during the Holocaust, featuring the story of Sala Garncarz, as told through her letters, postcards and photos.

For more information:
El Paso Holocaust Museum & Study Center
715 N. Oregon • El Paso, TX 79902
915.351.0048
www.elpasoholocaustmuseum.org

Yom HaShoah
Community Program

Sunday, May 1
2:00 pm
Congregation B’nai Zion
INTRODUCTION

Passover is the supreme Jewish holiday, the most universally celebrated. There is no holiday in the Jewish calendar over which the Jews make more of a tumult—in some households weeks before the event. The reason is clear. From the very first Passover—celebrated in Egypt—the holiday has been celebrated in the bosom of the family. Family is a supreme Jewish value.

THE NAMES

Passover occurs on the 15th day of Nisan and is called the time of our freedom in our liturgy. The name Pesach refers to two events:
1. The placing of blood on the doorposts of the Hebrews’ homes at the time of the first Passover; the blood came from the Karbon Pesach, or the Paschal Lamb, which was sacrificed to G-d on the eve of the Exodus.
2. In Hebrew the verb ‘pesach’ means ‘pass over’ and it refers to the Angel of Death who passed over the homes of the Hebrews and killed only the first born of the Egyptians.

The holiday has several names. The word Passover comes from the Hebrew word Pesach, which itself is the noun form of the verb pasah. During the last of the Ten Plagues—the slaying of the first born sons—the Angel of Death is said to have “passed over” the houses of the Israelites. For this reason, the holiday is also known as Leil Shimirim, a night of observing, in which Israel has no fear. A third name is Hag haMatzot, after the unleavened flat bread, eaten because the hastily departing Israelites could not allow bread the time to rise. The fourth name of the holiday is Hag ha’Aviv, the Feast of Springtime. Just as springtime connotes the rebirth of nature after a long winter, Passover celebrates the rebirth of a people after years of slavery.

THE DATE

Passover is therefore one of the Jewish New Years. Indeed Nisan, the month during which it is celebrated, is called in the Torah, the first month of the year. (Tishrei, the month of Rosh Hashanah, is the seventh.) Like Sukkot, Pesach begins at the full moon, on the 15th of the month, and ends in Israel after seven days and in the Diaspora after eight. For the record, the date of the Exodus is sometime during the 13th century BCE.

THE SEDER

The word Seder literally means order. In the Diaspora there is a Seder on each of the first two nights of Pesach; in Israel, on the first night. This order was given to us probably to assure that, in our flights of story-telling fancy, we do not forget to observe the other basic requirements.

PASSOVER CUSTOMS

BEDIKAT HAMETZ — Search for leaven

On the evening before Pesach the entire house is searched for leaven. This is done by using a candle for light, a feather to sweep the crumbs and a spoon to hold the crumbs.

BIOR HAMETZ — Burning hametz

All of the leaven is then burned in the backyard (only a few symbolic crumbs). This must be done before 9:00 a.m. on the morning of the first Seder—Friday, April 22.

MEHIRAT HAMETZ — The selling of hametz

Any manner of hametz (leavened food or utensils) owned by a Jew during the Passover holiday is forbidden for use forever. Since one cannot dispose of all hametz before the holiday, he must arrange for a formal Mehirat Hametz or sale of the leaven to a non-Jew, which is then re-purchased after Passover. All such hametz and utensils should, therefore, be locked in a special place by April 3rd. As not everybody is familiar with the legal technicalities of the law regulating such sale, it is the custom to sell it to a non-Jew. For your convenience in observing this law, an authorization form is in this bulletin and should be completed and returned to the Synagogue office by Friday, April 22.

MOTZI FRIDAY NIGHT AND SHABBAT MORNING

Since our homes should be cleared of all hametz by Friday morning, we should use egg matzah for the Motzi on Shabbat.

MAOT CHITTIM — Helping Charities

At this time of Pesach, when one sells his hametz or when one prepares for the Seder, he is obligated to give to a worthwhile charity. May I suggest a contribution to the Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund to help the poor. These contributions may be sent to our office c/o Rabbi Leon. Contributions to one’s favorite charity or Jewish Family and Children’s Services also is appropriate.

TA’ANIT AND SIYUM B’HORIM — Fast and service for first born males

All first born Jewish males are required to fast the day before Passover in order to remember the first born Egyptian males who were killed by G-d’s hand at the time of the Exodus. In order to change this obligation to a Mitzvah, a tractate of the Talmud is completed at a service early in the morning. If they attend a siyum—a party celebrating the completion of a cycle of study—they may break the fast. Such a siyum will take place on Friday, April 22, following the morning service that begins at 6:45 a.m.
THE SEDER
Passover begins with the lighting of the candles. On the first evening of Passover the following prayers are said when lighting the candles:

1. “Baruch ata adonai eloheinu melech ha’olam asher kidshanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu lihaddilik n’ear shel Yom Tov.”
2. “Baruch ata adonai eloheinu melech ha’olam shehecheyanu v’kiyeme shamayim she’vai typography gazeh.”

On the second night of Passover the prayers are the same.

On the 7th and 8th evenings of Pesach, only the first prayer is said when lighting the candles.

Prior to the Seder, every family should attend Passover services at the Synagogue. Then they return home for the Seder.

The word Seder means ‘order’ and the Seder book called Haggadah means ‘story.’ The Seder service consists of 14 parts. One should consult his own Haggadah for the appropriate prayers.

These are the parts of the Seder:
1. Kiddush: Prayer over the wine
2. Uritch: Wash hands using a pitcher or cup poured over the hands. No blessing is said because we are not yet ready to eat the meal, only to eat the karpas.
3. Karpas: A green vegetable (celery or parsley) is dipped into salt water and the prayer is said.
4. Yechatz: The middle matzah is divided in half; one half is returned, the other is hidden for the afikomen.
5. Mageed: The story of Pesach is told. This lengthy part of the seder includes the four questions, “we were slaves,” the four sons, G-d’s promise, Dayeinu, the three symbols.
6. Rachatz: We wash our hands once more, this time with the appropriate blessing for we are about to eat the meal.
7. Motzi Matzah: The prayer “Hamotzi” is said and then a special prayer concerning G-d’s command to eat matzah is offered. Then a piece of matzah is eaten.
8. Maror: We remember the bitter times of slavery by dipping the herb into charoset and saying the prayer.
9. Koreych: A sandwich is made and eaten consisting of two pieces of matzah, maror and charoset.
10. Shulchan oreych: “The Set Table.” The meal is eaten.
11. Tzafun: Dessert, everyone receives a piece of the afikomen which has been recovered from the child who found it, for a gift.
12. Bareich: The grace after meals is said by all.
13. Hallel: Songs of praise to G-d are sung. This occurs after the cup of Elijah is discussed.
14. Nirtzah: Conclusion. Final prayers and then many songs of Pesach are sung.

SERVICES
On the first two and the last two days of Passover, it is customary to attend synagogue services. Special Passover prayers and appropriate Torah readings are said. Please check the schedule of services. During Chol Hamoed Pesach, the intermediate days between the first and last two days, additional prayers are offered at services. Most regular customs of the weekday are observed – one may ride, go to work, etc. However, for all 8 days only Passover products may be eaten.

On the first day of Passover the prayer for dew is offered. On the eighth day of Passover the Yizkor Memorial services are offered.

SEFIRAT HAOMER
Beginning with the second night of Passover, and continuing for forty-nine nights, we count the Omer, in accordance with the Biblical injunction: “From the morrow of Pesach, from the day of your bringing the Omer, you can count seven full weeks.” The Omer was a special offering of barley gathered from the newly ripened grain, which then permitted the use of the spring harvest. In Temple times, the harvesting of the Omer on the second night of Pesach was an occasion of great celebration in the streets of Jerusalem. The counting of the Omer must take place after sunset. Immediately before stating the daily and weekly number of the Omer, we recite the benediction “Al Sefirat Ha’omer.”

The forty-nine days link the festival of Passover, the celebration of our physical redemption, with the festival of Shavuot, which occurs on the fiftieth day, when we celebrate our spiritual redemption, the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai.

“Baruch ata adonai eloheinu melech ha’olam asher kidshanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu lihaddilik n’ear shel Yom Tov.”

The following foods may be used for Passover in unopened packages or containers and require no Kosher L’Pesach label: coffee, sugar, tea, salt, pepper. Frozen vegetables normally permitted for Passover use are permitted. Fresh fruits and vegetables (except those mentioned above) are permitted. Other products require Kosher L’Pesach labels and should be verified by Rabbinic signature.

4. Dishes and utensils
   a) Silverware, knives, forks and spoons made wholly of metal require thorough scouring, and immersion in boiling water.
   b) Glassware may be koshered by soaking in water for 72 hours. The water must be changed at least once a day.
   c) Metal pots and pans must be totally immersed in boiling water. The container used for this purpose must be heated with a red hot stone.
   d) Earthenware, enamelware, and porcelain utensils used during the year may not be used on Passover.
   e) Utensils used for baking during the year should not be used.
   f) Refrigerators and freezers should be thoroughly cleaned and the shelves should be covered.
   g) Ovens and ranges must be thoroughly scoured and all the gas jets or the electricity should be turned on for 5-7 minutes to burn out all the hametz.
   h) Dishwashers may be used after thoroughly scouring with boiling water and the use of a new tray.
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Mother's Day Brunch

Save the Date - May 8th