

TEMPLE ISAIAH  
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# The Prophet

Magazine

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During a Pandemic

In Search of the  
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The Yam of Affliction

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The Impossibly Multicultural Cookbook

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# From the Rabbi



*Shalom!*

At the end of the Passover seder, we recite the traditional words "L'Shanah HaBa'ah BiY'rushalayim — Next Year in Jerusalem!" Last year, like so many of you, I was inclined to add the phrase "Next Year in Person!" And... as the old Yiddish saying goes, "We plan and God laughs." For some, it will be possible this year to gather in person with just a few more of the individuals we love around the seder table, to recite the prayers and share a meal, to give thanks simultaneously for freedom through the prism of our Jewish experience of the Exodus, and for freedom through our past year's experience of lockdown, quarantine, illness, loss, and ultimately the development and ongoing distribution of life-saving vaccines. That said, the vast majority of us (my family included) will have another year of Zoom seders. I hope you will consider joining your Temple Isaiah family for our community Second Night Zoom Seder on March 28.

Passover is the ultimate symbol of Springtime as well — and the Jewish calendar is structured so that no matter how "early or late" it occurs, it arrives in early spring. As I write this column on the first day to cross the 70-degree mark in many months, and as the first crocuses begin to poke their heads out of the winter-softened earth, we can open the windows and sense the changing of the seasons. Here at Temple Isaiah, there is an optimistic breeze in the air. Just days ago, our Temple Isaiah Preschool re-opened its in-person program for the first time in nearly a year. The sound of the voices of little ones drifting through the windows of my office from their outdoor play in the courtyard brought a surge of emotion that was hard to anticipate. The popular Israeli song "BaShanah HaBa'ah" includes the line: "The sounds of little children playing freely, running between house and field." An evocative enough line in any year, all the more so today.

At both the beginning and the end of the Passover seder, we pause to open the door of our homes. The first time, we say: "*Ha Lachma Anya* — This is the bread of poverty and persecution that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need come and share in the Pesach meal." These words are an invitation, a genuine one, to anyone who has hunger — but also to all who are "in need." And that includes all of us. Yes, hunger is real and local — if anything, this past year's pandemic has brought to the fore the dramatic needs of the poor in our community. I am so proud of the ways in which our synagogue and so many other organizations and individuals have stepped up to address that pervasive need, which is hunger in our local community and beyond. The Torah assures us that it will never be fully defeated, "there will always be hungry in the land" — and that it is always our responsibility to try to end hunger. Additionally, this past year has demonstrated the things that we are all — each and every one of us — in constant need of: companionship, community, and connection. I am similarly proud of the ways that Temple Isaiah has addressed these needs, and hopeful that we will be able to do this in increasingly meaningful ways, as our physical doors re-open.

At the end of the seder, we open the door once again — this time to welcome the annual visit of *Eliyahu HaNavi* — Elijah the Prophet. This opening of the door is tied to the optimistic future-facing nature of the end of the seder. Elijah's visit is meant to herald possibility, the advent of the time of the *Mashiach* — the ultimate messianic redemption which will bring about the world as it ought to be, rather than the world as we experience it. In the custom of one Hassidic rebbe (Naftali Tzvi Horowitz), each person present at the seder table pours from their own wine cup into the empty Cup of Elijah until it overflows, in advance of this door-opening and singing to welcome him. The symbolism of this cannot be missed — it is the individual contributions and actions of each and every person that will bring about the ultimate redemption we pray for. In our own moment of beginning to re-open our doors, windows, and lives, we each have an integral role to play in bringing about the world we wish to see, and I pray the combined impact of our efforts and responsibility will bring this redemption.

I wish for all of you and your loved ones a good, sweet, healthy, and joy-filled entry to spring and celebration of Passover. ■

*Rabbi Craig Axler*

# Jews Commanded to Feed the Hungry...

by Alisha Rovner Blam

## During a Global Pandemic?

Feeding the hungry is an explicit commandment in Judaism, *Ha'achalat Re'evim*. A Midrash (to Psalm 118:17) teaches: "When you are asked in the world to come, 'What was your work?' and you answer, 'I fed the hungry,' you will be told, 'This is the gate of Adonai, enter into it, you who have fed the hungry.'"

Temple Isaiah (TI) is proud of its long-standing initiatives to feed the hungry in our community. For example, every year on Rosh Hashanah, Temple Isaiah members collectively take home hundreds of empty shopping bags and return them ten days later on Yom Kippur, filled with food items slated for donation to Elizabeth House's food pantry. Each month, TI volunteers prepare and serve a meal for approximately 120 people at the Grassroots Day Resource Center and 50 people at Elizabeth House. Also, for the past eight winters, Temple Isaiah has hosted homeless guests through Grassroots Cold Weather Shelter (CWS), providing CWS guests with a warm place to sleep for a week, as well as home-cooked, nutritious meals.

Yet in the past year, efforts to feed the hungry have taken on a complicated and deeper dimension, as food insecurity in our community and across the country has risen during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Consequently, Temple Isaiah members have been faced with the challenge of wanting to continue to provide food to those in need, while at the same time needing to socially distance to reduce the risk of coronavirus spread. Undeterred, Temple Isaiah clergy, staff, and volunteers have accomplished both goals with careful planning.

Since last Fall, TI has hosted two successful food drives. The first one, led by Ben & Amy Levitt and the TI Men's Club, and supported by dozens of volunteers, was held during the High Holy Days. Although religious services were held virtually, the annual Centennial Park outdoor service was adapted into a novel "Rosh Hashanah in the Park(ing) Lot" event that encouraged congregants to make their way to the synagogue in person. Congregants were able to donate bags of non-perishable foods from their cars, visiting a station in a cavalcade, after driving past a symphony of shofar-blowing clergy and volunteers. Indeed, this year the shofar's call to prayer was quite imminently tied to fulfilling two *mitzvot* (both hearing the shofar and *tzedakah*), all while donors could remain separated from collectors within the safety of their vehicles. This year during the High Holy Days food drive, 406 bags of groceries were collected to help 140 families.

This past January, TI congregant Paul Warshowsky organized a second socially-distanced food drive in response to the increasing food insecurity in our community, as furloughs and layoffs during the pandemic threatened families' financial well-being. With no other reason to be at the synagogue (Sunday religious school was conducted completely virtually that week), TI congregants formed a continuous flow of vehicles coming to the Temple specifically to drop off food donations. Volunteers, including Larry Finkelstein and Maury Lerner, helped Paul collect and load 1400 pounds of food into a van and deliver it to the Howard County Food Bank. In addition, during the food drive \$1,750 in cash, checks, and gift cards were collected and donated to families in need.

This winter, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Grassroots CWS still needed to provide assistance to our local homeless population. TI congregants Diane Freedman, Susan Gordon, and Cheryl Kaufman spearheaded this year's initiative at Temple Isaiah, but altered it in accordance with social-distancing guidelines. CWS guests were not housed at the synagogue, but rather were put up by Howard County at an Extended Stay America hotel while some TI volunteers cooked meals, and others delivered the meals to 25 CWS guests at the hotel.



Throughout this year, Susan & Matt Soifer continued organizing monthly meals for people at Elizabeth House, just like they did over the last ten years. Although some changes needed to be implemented to ensure everyone's safety, including making the meals to-go, they were still able to provide guests with nutritious food. Elizabeth House has been extremely grateful for Temple Isaiah's continued support, as their demand for food assistance has dramatically

increased because of the pandemic. They are now providing meals for 80–100 people, compared to approximately 50 people pre-COVID.

The TI community quickly adapted to the pandemic in order to continue to serve those in need. *Mitzvot* may be more difficult to fulfill during crises, but these times may be exactly when the importance of fulfilling *mitzvot* become most clear. ■





# Cooking with *Young Children*

by Meredith Zuckerman

A vision of raw batter splattered across the table, flour spritzed across the floor, and sugar spilled out of the bag is what comes into my mind when I envision cooking with young children. Cooking can be very messy and can come with its challenges — knives, hot surfaces, and it's time consuming. Cooking with children may seem overwhelming at first, but the memories will last a lifetime. I still think back to the times when I used to go over to my Bubbie and Zayde's house after school to bake mandel bread using the famous family recipe. There are so many benefits to introducing cooking to young children, as well as tips and tricks for overcoming the challenges involved. Cooking also promotes literacy, fine motor development, math and science skills, and social emotional development.

## Use the Right Tools

To assist children in the kitchen, it's important to use the right tools and to set up your workspace before you start. Put away or move aside items that could be dangerous for your child.

*Learning Tower or Stepstool* — Children should be at the right height to be able to safely participate while cooking. A learning tower is a semi-enclosed structure that will put your child closer to counter level while limiting falls and promoting independence to climb up and down.

*Child-safe stainless steel or nylon knife* —

Children as young as three can learn to use a knife to cut fruits or vegetables with parent supervision. There are child-safe knives that will allow children to cut fruit or vegetables, but not skin.

*Non-slip bowls* — Children can get very excited when they want to assist with mixing and stirring in the kitchen. Non-slip bowls have a silicone base that helps the bowl stick to the table so it doesn't go flying onto the floor. Been there!

## Literacy and Language

Learning how to read a recipe provides a wonderful introduction to instructional texts. There are some recipe books that provide picture directions to help young children follow along. Even children who are not able to read yet, are able to help with following the directions. To start out, young children can help you to gather the necessary ingredients from the cabinets or pantry. As children get older, they can start to read the ingredient list without pictures, and read the instructions step by step. Read each direction out loud and use simple words to explain what you would like your child to help you do. As you are cooking along with your child, talk about what you are doing and what you are seeing. For example: What do you notice when the sugar and the butter are mixed together? What does the flour feel like? What does the sugar feel like? Do the flour and sugar feel the same or different?

Recipes also introduce a variety of words to improve your child's vocabulary including ingredient names, processes, measurements, and temperatures. For young children, exposure and hands-on experience with hearing these words in context will help them to find meaning.

## Fine-Motor Development

Fine-motor skills are the ability to create movements using the small muscles in our hands and wrists. We rely on these fundamental skills to do important tasks in everyday life. In the kitchen, baking and cooking provides multiple opportunities to develop and build fine motor skills. The age of the child will help determine which task they should do to assist in the kitchen. Two- and three-year-old children will not have as proficient fine-motor skills as a child in Pre-K, Kindergarten, or 1st Grade. A few activities to try with your child in the kitchen: stir and mix the batter, squeeze a piping bag, knead dough, use a rolling pin to roll out dough, use palms of your hands to roll items into balls. Any of these activities can be differentiated based on your child's age and abilities.

## Social Emotional Development

Cooking is a learning process, even for adults! Finding new recipes and testing them out, seeing if they turn out the way that you want to is all a part of process. Even professional chefs have times where the recipe goes wrong and the end product looks more like a playdough creation than the matzah balls they were trying to create. It is important for children to know that it is OK to make mistakes and to keep trying. With more opportunities, children will become more confident and independent. When you are cooking with your child, don't worry about the measurements being perfect. It is more important for your child to try to measure the sugar on their own, than making sure that the 1 cup measure is completely leveled off at the top. Taste as you go and problem solve if the measurements are a little bit off. There is nothing better than seeing the accomplishment that one created.

## Mathematics and Science Skills

From looking at a recipe to measuring out the ingredients, simple math concepts are interspersed. Recipes use fractions and measurements to determine how much of an ingredient that you will need. For a child who is preschool-aged, ask your child to help you find

the measuring cup that has the 2 on it (1/2 cup) or hand you "the medium-sized cup." Your child can help to fill the cups and add the ingredients to the bowl. Your child can also help to count and sort the ingredients that you will need to use or identify shapes and sizes of the ingredients.

Science concepts are also introduced and taught through cooking; chemical changes, physical changes, predictions, and observations. Let's take baking brownies for instance: the batter is liquid when you mix all of the ingredients together, but once it is baked it becomes a solid. Your child can observe the changes in the state of matter.

My favorite scientific concept to explore with young children through baking is making bread. Yeast, when combined with warm water and sugar reacts, creating a chemical reaction of bubbles and expansion. Children love to watch the bubbles appear and the mixture grow in size!

## TIPS' Top Tips for Cooking with Children

1. Use picture directions, especially with preschool-age and young-elementary age children.
2. Use the right tools and set guidelines before you start. Setting up your workspace before you start will set your child up for success.
3. Don't rush! It can take a lot of patience and time. Set aside enough time to complete the recipe and time for extra clean up. Also, cut yourself some slack! It's a learning process for you and for your child. Don't feel pressured to get everything right the first time. It might take a few times with both of you in the kitchen to get into a groove.
4. Start small. Begin with a short recipe that does not have many ingredients. As your child gets more comfortable in the kitchen, you can expand to more difficult recipes.
5. Give children specific tasks that you would like them to do that are developmentally appropriate for their age and abilities.
6. Don't worry about the measurements being perfect!
7. Taste and touch ingredients (parent-guided) as you go. This is a great sensory experience for children to compare and experiment with different textures.
8. Cooking with young children, especially picky eaters is great! If a child helps to make the recipe, they are more likely to want to try it. ■



In Search of the

# Perfect Sandwich

by Rabbi Daniel Plotkin

One of my favorite memories as a child was getting in the car with my grandparents and heading east to the Milwaukee suburb of Shorewood. The destination was Benji's Delicatessen. With the choice of lunch counter or booth seating, Benji's was the real deal with that classic deli smell, look, and feel.

My love of great deli has stayed with me all my life. Family trips to visit my cousins in South Bend always included a stop outside of Chicago at Barnum and Bagel on Dempster Avenue in Skokie, where my great aunt served as hostess for 30+ years. In my years in Madison, Cincinnati, and St. Louis, along with summers in Indianapolis, a truly great deli was nowhere to be found (yes, I am aware of Shapiro's — it never measured up). Even my year in Jerusalem offered no respite.

Over the years, I still found my way to great deli with trips to NYC for 2nd Avenue Deli and the now closed Roxy Deli on Times Square. In the most unlikely of places, Houston, Texas where I lived for two years, Katz's Deli had the best hard salami I've ever eaten. During those years in Houston, through Katz's, and the more well-known Kenny & Ziggy's, my tastes started to veer more toward pastrami than corned beef.

Moving to Baltimore in 2011, I expected great things, but was initially disappointed. Of course. Attman's is a classic, but it's hard to get to and there's not a lot of dine-in space. Additionally, during this COVID period, the structure of the restaurant is not well suited for good service. The new location in Potomac (replacing the one in Cabin John), may be better suited for our current times. The Parkway Deli in Chevy Chase is also an old classic, largely due to its (COVID-closed) pickle bar. The challenge of getting there and the machine-cut of the corned beef that reduces the "melt in the mouth" feel, makes the trip difficult to justify too often (although the onion rings make a strong case for a return trip once the pickle bar is open again).

I was also saddened that strictly kosher delis of Pikesville don't have that classic taste, nor do they serve freshly-made corned beef. The unfortunately brief run of Pita & Rye in Maple Lawn, back in 2011–12, never allowed Jay Fridkis to take the concept to that next level, and the clientele for strict kosher in Howard County is too limited for longevity.

Now in 2021, however, we are experiencing a deli renaissance in both Pikesville and Maple Lawn. The openings of The Essen Room and Mikey & Mel's in recent years have made great delis far more accessible to lovers of outstanding corned beef throughout Howard County and beyond.

I have had great pastrami at both places,



and Mikey & Mel's breakfast is delicious and humongous. That said, I had not yet had the core deli classic of corned beef at either restaurant, besides a taste off my wife's or sons' sandwiches. I decided to take a trip to each one to try the corned beef, not a difficult task given the proximity of one to my home and the other to TI.

Mikey & Mel's is owned by Temple Isaiah's own Aaron and Harley Madgen. They opened it as a tribute to their father and grandfather, with whom they used to go to Corky & Lenny's Deli in Cleveland. They also found that with the closure of BJ Pumpnickel's in Olney back in 2010, the greater HoCo area was lacking a true kosher-style deli. A trip to The Essen Room in Pikesville shortly after it opened was the final push the Magdens needed to make it happen. Despite the COVID pandemic, they opened in the late summer of 2020, and have truly achieved their goal of bringing first-rate deli to Howard County. Once they are able, they will have a pickle bar of their own.

My first corned beef from Mikey & Mel's came as a part of a Temple Isaiah socially-distanced staff lunch during our calendar-planning session. Despite having sat for a little bit before we were ready to eat, the corned beef was everything I was hoping for. Hand-cut and still nice and warm, it melted the way it should as I tasted it. The rye bread held up nicely to the significant amount of meat, 8 oz. in the smaller "Mikey" size. It never got soggy in the last few bites as can sometimes happen. The homemade chips had me eating every last crumb. As an extra bonus, the mustard is "imported" from Corky & Lenny's in Cleveland and is perhaps the best deli mustard I've had. Everyone else on the TI staff enjoyed their meals as well, including, of course, "The Axler" vegetarian sandwich.

The Essen Room opened in early 2018 and is located on Hooks Lane in Pikesville. As it took over the location of the former Brooklyn Water Bagel Co., the New York feel was already there, along with a dispenser for self-mixing Cherry Coke. Inspired by the Kibbutz Room inside Attman's, The Essen Room has a more-generous dining area, and lives by the slogan "size does matter." The monstrous matzah ball soup and huge sandwiches are a testament to that. You can order a half sandwich, but it's generally a better value to share a whole or save the second half for the next day.

Despite my own advice, I ordered a half sandwich as it contains the same 8 oz. of meat as the whole sandwich in most other delis (or the smaller, "Mikey" size at Mikey & Mel's). The corned beef was quite fatty, which I love, but you can order lean if you don't, and it melted in the mouth as it should. The one downside was the half slice of rye simply can't hold up to 8 oz. of meat, so I ended up using a fork for most of the sandwich. While there are multiple options for sides, I had a bag of chips, which was sufficient given the quantity of meat. They will give a selection of pickles upon request until the Pickle Bar can re-open.

Great deli is back in full force both in Howard County and in Pikesville, thanks to enterprising individuals who saw a void and had the expertise, desire, and ability to fill it. While recreating the feel of the classic delis isn't possible or even practical in 2021, both The Essen Room and Mikey & Mel's capture the tastes that I remember so fondly from my childhood. No longer is there a need to schlep to downtown Baltimore or all the way up to New York City to get that Old Country feel. It is available right in Howard County and up in Pikesville (with ample parking and seating in both places). ■



# The *Gam of Affliction*

by Rabbi Craig Axler

When Pam and I were just married, we had our very first opportunity to host our family's Passover seder at our apartment in Fort Lee, NJ. This was a BIG deal — hosting the family for perhaps the most important meal of the Jewish year. We were still unwrapping wedding gifts at the time (it will be our 25th anniversary this May, by the way). Perhaps this lovely platter will be set aside for our Passover dishes? What else do we need? How many extra tables will we need and in what way can we snake them through the living room to accommodate the whole family? All these questions were on our minds. But there was one question above them all: what are we serving?

It was a particularly interesting question due to the restrictions of Passover foods, which pose their own challenge. But the additional layer is the fact that I have been a "pescatarian" since about age 14, and while Pam and I have always shared the cooking responsibilities in our house, at the time I was definitely more comfortable in the large-scale family meal cooking arena. However, not only did I have no interest in cooking meat or chicken for our family seder, I simply wouldn't even know what to do with those ingredients. Sure, I'd watched lots of cooking shows, but that's not the same as making a perfect brisket!

We decided that we were going to host a pescatarian Passover seder, with a main dish of baked salmon, but everything else fully vegetarian. This was a bit of a shock to some in the family. No chicken soup? No brisket? No chopped liver? How could it be Passover?!? To their great credit, they all still came to our seder (perhaps because they knew there would be two seders and the other one would have lots of meat!). One factor that might have persuaded my in-laws the most was the promise that if we did not have a meat meal, we could have dairy desserts. It just so happened that this was the first year that Philadelphia cream cheese featured on their "kosher for Passover" packaging a recipe for Passover Cheesecake with a macaroon crust and fresh strawberries. It is a delicious finish to the seder (tastier than the found pieces of the *afikomen*) that I have made pretty much every year we have hosted a non-meat seder.



One of the most interesting decisions at the time concerned the symbols on the seder plate. Ours was brand-new, a wedding present, and had never hosted a roasted shank bone on it — and thus was still in its pure vegetarian state. We debated whether or not we would feature the symbolic roasted bone, but were pleasantly surprised when my brother-in-law (who is NO vegetarian) took a sweet potato and carved for us his contribution, “The Yam of Affliction.” The bone-shaped tuber was good enough for us that year. In subsequent years, I would learn that the Talmud has a legitimate substitute for the roasted bone, which is a roasted beet. While it is the vegetarian replacement, if you roast it whole and then just pierce it a bit, the bright red beet-blood will ooze out on the seder plate, calling to mind the ancient animal sacrifices that it is there to represent!

It also turns out that, when simmered for many hours, the vegetable soup with all kinds of root veggies, dill, parsley, and your favorite matzah balls is a pretty good substitute for the chicken soup. Vegetarian Passover recipes abound, as do resources on holding an ethical vegan seder (look at [jewishveg.org](http://jewishveg.org)). There might be any number of reasons to have a vegetarian or vegan seder, or simply to increase the number of plant-based choices at the Passover table. Health, kashrut, diet, and ethical concerns are only just a few.

If you have unique and creative seder traditions in your home, I'll be interested to hear about them as well. Passover, perhaps more than any of the other Jewish holidays, is an opportunity for creative re-framing of the traditions, and the symbolic foods of the seder are at the heart of this. *Chag Sameach* — A Happy Passover! ■



# The *Impossibly Multicultural* Cookbook

by Joanne Brazinski

When my husband and I moved to Maryland as newlyweds, all our family was in New York — the Albany area and the Catskills. Work friends of his became my friends, too (and then family). They were also an interfaith couple and we started having seders with them and another interfaith couple they knew. We started with six people and clearance-bin Haggadahs. (We joke that version must have been from the Southern Baptist Jews — lots of fire and brimstone!) Since we all were new to cooking Passover for ourselves and finding something to please the non-Jewish spouses, I compiled the recipes I found online and in the newspaper into my own collection, to share with my friends.

In addition to lack of familiarity with traditional foods (and horror of gefilte fish), my husband had been raised Catholic and found it hard to break the tradition of no meat on Fridays during Lent. (He also doesn't like fish, so that's extra-challenging.) And when his parents visited during Passover and it overlapped with Good Friday (as it usually does) — sometimes on Seder nights! — I had to find things we could all eat. So, the cookbook has categories for "Kosher for Passover Lent" and "KLP\* Easter foods" — which is why the cookbook's title is "The Impossibly Multicultural Cookbook." Our go-to for Passover non-meat meal is a potato/tomato/cheese layered dish with olives — mozzarella and canned olives for kids, feta and kalamatas for the more adventurous.

Our Friends' Seder got bigger over time. We all added children, my mother moved to Maryland, and why not invite our good friend's parents in Annapolis, too? Ah, but her dad kept kosher-style, so another classification to add to the cookbook — parve items. And there are markers for untried recipes, favorites, and quick recipes.

One year, Manischewitz cut back their Passover baked goods line. I couldn't find mandel brot or mandel cuts anywhere. Off to the internet and I found substitutes I liked even better! Matzah Crunch (a.k.a. Matzah Crack) had to be added. Passover "bagels" and popovers became staples. I lightened a few of Joan Nathan's recipes, too. There are some recipes I still haven't tried in the book, but I can't bring myself to delete. (You can now imagine what a mess our basement is.)

The cookbook was originally created in a desktop publishing program, but current versions of Word are up to the task. The pages are printed and put in plastic page protectors, which can be wiped clean. Individual binder rings keep it together and allow it to open flat.

Many of the recipes are from the old Manischewitz and Empire Chicken websites. Manischewitz and Empire still have websites, but they're sleek and modern. The sites I found in the early 90s had tales of their extended families (real or fictional, I couldn't tell) and their extensive Passover prep. I grew up far from Jewish culture and relatives, so it was fascinating to read how Aunt Rivkah always had to finish making her house *Pesadich* first and then taunt the other relatives about it. Or how a sick child begged for chicken

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# ShulCloud: /SHōōl/ /klood/

*noun*

definition: a cloud-based synagogue management software

by Shelley Engel  
with Beth Luntz

By now you have all heard the exciting news; ShulCloud, a web-based, interactive congregational management system, is now at Temple Isaiah.

Here are just a few of its many advantages for you and your communications with us:

1. Secure and private access to your family profile and transaction history.
2. Ability to view current information on your account.
3. Connect more easily with other members through the real-time online directory and picture postings.
4. Manage important life cycle information.
5. Register and pay for Temple programs and events.
6. Make secure payments and set up recurring payments using credit cards or e-checks directly from your checking account. Credit card information is not stored on our servers and all financial transactions are SSL encrypted.

There is so much you can do with your Temple Isaiah online account!

If you haven't received a welcome email, please contact me at [Shelley@templeisaiah.org](mailto:Shelley@templeisaiah.org) so we can get you started.

Once you have set up your account, you can access your personalized Member Dashboard, from our website by clicking on the "Members Login" link in the upper right corner. You will use the labeled icons on the dashboard ("buttons") including personal and family information, financial information, congregational mailing information, and event information to interact with your account.

We know you may have questions, and we encourage you to explore the new system. If you're having difficulty logging on, please give us a call in the office at 301.317.1101 during business hours and we'll be happy to help. In addition, I am always available by email or in the office during business hours to help with any issues or questions in person. ■

# Book Review *Miriam's Kitchen: A Memoir*

by Marilyn Handwerger

After a first glance at the title, a reader may easily assume that *Miriam's Kitchen* is just another Jewish cookbook. Undeniably that is true, but it is so much more. First published in 1997, this book has become a beloved classic.

Using the family kitchen as her base, Elizabeth Ehrlich takes us on her historical and spiritual journey, following a path from her immediate family's left-wing, anti-middle class leanings where they lit Friday night candles but retained few ties to traditional Jewish rituals to a gradual embracing of *kashrut*, *mikvah*, and Hebrew prayer.

The journey was very gradual. The author claims that she always knew who she was, although at times she tried hard to forget. Her grandmothers bequeathed mystical teachings and family stories spiraling back through time as they dished out their soup. They nourished her not only with their wonderful food, but also with "the connection to something larger than everyday life." But Ehrlich devalued all of it for many years.

"What made me value my inheritance as treasure, not burden? The luck that placed me, as an adult, in range of Miriam's kitchen." Ehrlich married a man whose mother (Miriam) survived the Holocaust. A "keeper of rituals and recipes, and of stories, she cooked to recreate a lost world."

The arrival of Ehrlich's children also became a big motivator, as she could not stomach cutting the ties connecting her children to their ancestors. She wanted to create a consistent framework for their identity (including, for example, no dichotomy between eating shrimp "out" but not in the house). Because her in-laws kept kosher, she wanted to be able to accommodate them in her own home.

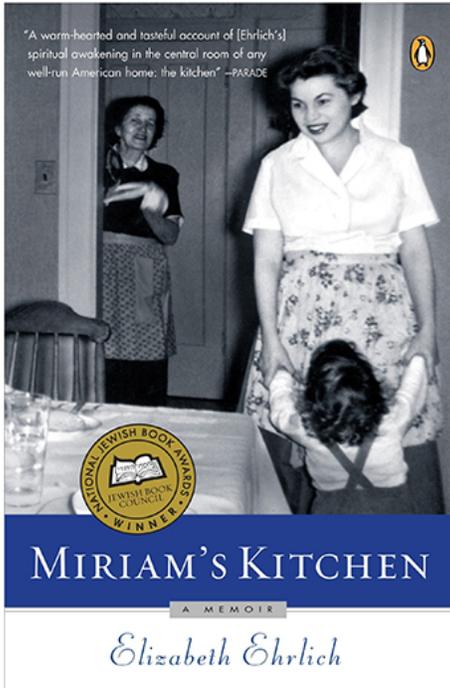
The transition toward a more traditional Jewish life took time. Ehrlich is refreshingly honest in her retelling. First she moved to an intermediate balancing point between Jewish tradition and "citizenship in the regular world." The family built a sukkah booth in the fall; cooked latkes on

Hanukkah; created seders for Passover. First she did it for her children, then she did it for herself.

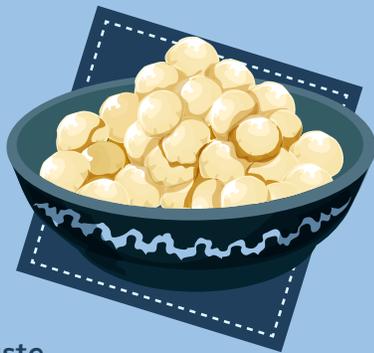
The family tried Sabbath dinners not so much as a new experience, but as an intensifying one. On Friday nights they lit candles more often, finding that "Sabbath dinners were a time to gather, a quietness in the week's clutter and noise. Sabbath is becoming a gift to us, one we are choosing and wrapping ourselves in and then opening with an astonished surprise. I can't say precisely when it happened. For the moment I will try Sabbath. I will light the candles and watch them burn and think about it. So far with no sense of obligation, no sense of commandment. I will recite prayers, but to What and to Whom?" Step-by-step, as Ehrlich moves into a more traditional life, she still questions how to observe Sabbath as she ponders the conflict between observance and her children's opportunity to participate in Saturday morning sports.

Throughout the book, Elizabeth learns to cook from Miriam, watching her throw ingredients together (without measuring or using a Mixmaster), writing down the ingredients and guessing quantities while Miriam tells family stories. Ehrlich concludes that the stories were remembered because they (as well as religion) contained essential truths about how to live. At the end of the cooking sessions, we get treated to Ashkenazi recipes for apple cake, noodle kugel, matzoh balls (*kneydlek*), sweet and sour cabbage, cheese Danish, breaded flounder, and many more mouthwatering recipes. Genealogy, history, descriptions of Jewish life cycle events and strengthening of family bonds all wrapped up into one package.

Try it, you'll like it! ■



## Kneydlekh Matzah Balls



8 eggs, separated  
1 cup matzah meal  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Dash of ginger  
About 1 tsp. vegetable or peanut oil

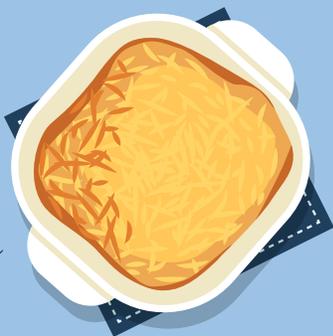
Crack open eggs and separate white from yolks. Beat whites until fluffy. Beat yolks; add oil and matzah meal. Add salt and pepper. Add ginger. Fold in egg whites. Add a little cold water — quarter of a cup. Mix it all around. Has to be a batter you can work with — can't be cement or mud.

Taste it. Must be good raw! Add more seasoning if necessary. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap. Put in freezer 10–20 minutes.

Boil either soup or salted water. Have a small bowl ready with cold water and ice cubes. Dip hands in cold water before each *kneydlekh*. Form *kneydlekh* and throw into boiling liquid. If you want small small, hard *kneydelekh*, add more matzah meal and seasonings. For small ones, form marble-sized; for big ones — size of golf ball. (They grow).

Cook for 15 minutes. Cut one big one in half and see if ready. (Look and taste.) Throw into a colander. If you want to keep warm, cover.

## Miriam's Dairy Noodle Pudding



1 lb. medium-width egg noodles, cooked  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
6 eggs  
1 can (20 oz.) crushed pineapple  
1 tsp. vanilla  
½ cup margarine or oil  
1 large container (16oz.) sour cream  
1 lb. 4% cottage cheese  
½ cup crushed cornflakes or cookie crumbs

Mix these ingredients together; spread into a greased 9" x 14" pan. Cover with crushed cornflakes, sprinkle with sugar. Bake 1 hour at 350° F.



## Mandelbrot

3 ½ cups all-purpose flour  
2 tbsp. baking powder  
Pinch of salt  
½ tsp. cinnamon  
¼ tsp. cloves  
1 cup finely chopped walnuts  
½ cup chopped almonds  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
4 eggs  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
1 tsp. almond extract  
6 oz. vegetable oil  
10 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips (optional)

Preheat oven to 350° F. Sift flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and cloves into a mixing bowl. Add the walnuts, almonds, and sugar. Mix. Make a well in the flour mixture. To the well, add the eggs. Capture all the egg whites from the shell with your thumb. Add vanilla extract, almond extract, and oil. Mix first with a fork, then with your hands. Add chocolate chips, if desired.

Chill the dough for at least six hours, preferably overnight. Remove from the fridge and divide into four parts. On a floured board, roll each section into a snake-shaped loaf 18 inches long. Place "snakes" onto pans greased with margarine. Flatten dough loaves until ½-inch thick. Bake for 20–25 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool. Lift loaves off pans carefully. (Miriam uses two spatulas.) Set on a clean surface (the rolling board is fine).

Wipe the baking pans. Remove any particles or crumbs, but don't grease again. Slice the loaves ¾-inch thick, at an angle. Arrange slices flat on the pans. Bake again at 375° F., for 15–20 minutes until light brown.

# Temple Isaiah Preschool

by Meredith Zuckerman

## REOPENING UPDATE

Temple Isaiah Preschool is proud to announce that we have officially reopened in person for a small group of children in our threes and our fours classes. Seeing the children running around, smiling, and engaging with their peers has been a wonderful sight to see! We are so lucky that these children have gotten to know each other and their teachers over Zoom during their virtual classes, before returning to the classroom. The children have spent their first few days getting acquainted to the classroom and their classroom routines. The threes spent time creating crayon rubbings of birds to represent their class name (Blue Jays and Red Robins). The fours spent time outside preparing for Passover by planting parsley for their seder plates. Thank you to all of our teachers, TI staff, and families for helping to make our reopening warm and welcoming! ■



# Bits & Pieces

## Who's Who @ Temple Isaiah



Name: Tina Connolly

Family: My husband and our three daughters, Shannon, Erin, and Colleen. Next year, we will welcome John to our family, as he marries Shannon.

Hometown: Fairport, NY and Silver Spring, MD

Something You Might Not Know About Me: I spend nine months of the year volunteering with Special Olympics. Erin plays SOMD bocce, soccer, and basketball. I love to spend my downtime reading. I spent my junior summer of high school as an exchange student in Switzerland.

Position at Temple Isaiah: Accountant

Worked Here Since: 2019.

People Can Come to Me If They Need: Answers to questions on your billing or your tax statements, or if you need reimbursement for Temple expenses.

Why I love being at TI: I am enjoying learning about the Jewish faith and understanding its history. I love the family atmosphere within the congregation and staff.

# Welcome

## New Members!

Lou & Judi Gershenson

Howard & Rachel Greif

## In the Next Issue...



## Return & Renewal

...continued from page 12

nuggets, so they invented a cashew nut-coated chicken nugget, which the child misheard and it became "Achoo Chicken." (That one's a winner, by the way! Replace crumbs in any nugget recipe with ground cashews, salt, pepper, garlic, and onion powders.)

Along the way, we realized that the kids we were supposed to be teaching had left the table ten minutes into the seder; I stopped updating the cookbook and made a kid-friendly Haggadah. Plagiarized heavily from a Passover coloring book and the standard Reform Haggadah my mom used, I updated it over the years for less coloring and more content as they grew. We throw plastic bugs and frogs, hit each other with scallions, turn a pitcher of water red, and cross the Red Sea. All the kids are grown now, but we're still doing our "Rocky Horror Passover Seder," now on Zoom! ■

\*Kosher L Pesach



Temple Isaiah  
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Fulton, MD 20759



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## Keeping the Promise of "Never Again" What it means in 2021

**THURSDAY APRIL 8, 2021**  
Virtual Presentation

Hashoah  
Commemoration

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**6:00 PM On-Line Gallery Pre-Event:**

- Holocaust Artifacts Exhibit From Local Community Members
- Survivor Video Testimonials with "Early Warning" Themes
- Local Authors' Book Gallery

**State of Deception:**  
The Power of Nazi Propaganda  
Traveling Exhibit from the USHMM

"Never Again" Student Essay Winners

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**7:00 - 8:15 PM** Memorial Service, Candle Lighting, and Keynote Speaker

[JewishHowardCounty.org/YomHaShoah](https://JewishHowardCounty.org/YomHaShoah)



