

April 2019

# Mt. Sinai Congregation

910 W. Randolph Street, Wausau, WI 54401

Website: [www.mtsinaiwisconsin.org](http://www.mtsinaiwisconsin.org) T: 715-675-2560

## *The Bread of Affliction: Passover, Matzah, and Poverty*

One of the themes of Passover is poverty and its relationship to freedom. For an interesting read on just how hard it is for people to raise themselves up from its devastating effects, I recommend the book "*Nickel and Dime: On Not getting by in America*" by Barbara Ehrenreich. Ms. Ehrenreich was an undercover reporter who attempted to live under the guidelines of the Welfare Reform Act that forced many to accept employment at even the most menial level. It is a day-to-day account of the struggle to live at the poverty level.

Poverty is a complex phenomenon. Most of us can recite a litany of factors that cause an individual to become poor and downtrodden. Life circumstances, such as being raised in poverty, lack of quality education in childhood, illness, all can render a person or family impoverished. One can conclude that poverty is one form of slavery. What is the responsibility of those who have to those who remain enslaved? This theme is explored at the seder.

Passover is designed for us to reflect on the devastating effects of poverty on the human condition. This is symbolized through our commandment to eat matzah. Matzah also is called lechem oni - the bread of the affliction. But the Hebrew word oni also means poor. Poverty is an affliction, indeed a form of slavery. When we eat matzah, it is to remember that we were once slaves in Egypt, doing back-breaking, crushing labor which, as important, nearly crushed the human spirit of a people whose ancestors were Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, Leah, and Rachel and then Joseph. It is to literally taste one of the most minimal forms of human existence. We must see it in ourselves before we can see it in others.

There is a beautiful teaching, I believe Hasidic in origin that focuses on the absence of leaven. It is this missing ingredient that accounts for its lack of taste and flat appearance. When added, it causes the bread to rise - becoming full and rich in texture. You would think that for such a wonderful event, the release from bondage, divine intervention, and leaving Egypt with great wealth, that we would have been commanded to have the fullest, richest, foods available, so as to fully celebrate such a wonderful event.

Instead, we are commanded to approach Passover with a greater awareness of the fragile condition of humanity. Just as this observance of freedom is characterized by humility and sensitivity to the terrible difficulties of slavery, so too should those of us who have the means to fully celebrate, remove the leaven from our hearts and acknowledge that there are many who remain enslaved. This is why one of the most important parts of the Haggadah provides, "Let those who are in need of celebrating the Passover join us. Let those who are in need of food, come and eat."

Passover observance is to fully realize, with our minds and hearts, that there exists slavery in many forms, one of which is to be poor. We must work on our character, to approach freedom as a Divine gift with humility so as to create conditions that will enable everyone, each and every day of their lives, to come and partake of the abundance to which so many of us have been blessed. The matzah is a reminder that many remain enslaved. But the mitzvah of matzah, when properly performed, creates an inner framework that inspires each of us to do the work of achieving freedom for those who are still in need.

May this Passover serve as an inspiration for us all to continue to do the work of tikun olam and to recognize that it begins in the deepest parts of our humanity.



## Upcoming Events

### April 10

Lunch Bunch at 12pm

Book Club at 1pm

Board Meeting at 7pm

### April 20

Congregational Passover Seder at 6pm

### April 21

Mt. Sinai Community Dinner

### April 28

Annual Meeting at 10am

## Contact Information

Rabbi Edward Boraz  
[rabbiboraz@gmail.com](mailto:rabbiboraz@gmail.com)

Secretary - Kellie Messman  
[kelliem@mtsinaiwisconsin.org](mailto:kelliem@mtsinaiwisconsin.org)

Office Hours:  
Mon, Wed, Fri  
9am to 2pm

Friday, April 5	6pm	Stevens Point Friday Family Service Shabbat at Janet Fagan's home
Saturday, April 6	10am	Shabbat Service and Torah Portion Discussion
Friday, April 12	6pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Service
Friday, April 26	6pm	Shabbat Service (Wausau)
Sunday, April 28	4pm	Yom Hashoah Service
Friday, May 3	7:30p	Stevens Point Historical Society Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 4	10am	Shabbat Service and Torah Portion Discussion

## April Service Schedule

### **Stevens Point Friday Family Shabbat Service**

On Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, please join us for a Stevens Point Friday Family Shabbat Service at the home of Janet Fagan, 654 Ben's Lane, Stevens Point. Please bring a dish to pass.

### **Shabbat Service & Torah Portion Discussion**

A Shabbat Service and Torah Portion Discussion will be held on Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, at 10am.

### **Kabbalat Shabbat Service**

Mt. Sinai will be having a Kabbalat Shabbat get together on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. This is a wonderful opportunity for members to get to know one another in a fun and informal setting. There will be a short Shabbat service beginning at 6:00pm followed by dinner at TBA (watch the Blast for more details). The only cost is for the dinner. Please let Kellie know if you will be attending so we can give a number to the restaurant.

### **Shabbat Service**

Please join us on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm for a Shabbat Service

### **Yom Hashoah Service**

Join us for a special Yom Hashoah Service on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. We are still in need of Oneg hosts for this service. Please contact Kellie if you are willing and able to host.

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## **Todah Rabbah**

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- To: Marsha and Max Stella and Jessie and Mitch Musicant, for hosting the Kiddish on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- To: Mike Kolasinski, Len and Arleen Wurman for hosting the Oneg on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

*Volunteers are needed to help out at the 26<sup>th</sup> Portage County Cultural Festival which will be held on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 4pm at SPASH. Please contact Kellie if you would like to volunteer to help.*

### **Religious School News:**

10am – 12pm

4/7 21<sup>st</sup> Session  
4/14 22<sup>nd</sup> Session  
4/21 23<sup>rd</sup> Session  
4/28 24<sup>th</sup> Session

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 10am. All congregants are encouraged to attend.

## **DONATIONS:**

### **Miscellaneous Donations:**

- Peter and Karen Rotter, in memory of Oscar Loveless.
- Kent and Nancy Ugoretz, in memory of George Ugoretz.
- Jenny and Larry Gordon, sponsor UWSP Student Dinner.
- Evie Martin, in memory of her mother, Mollie Deutch.
- Mt. Sinai Gift Shop, for the website maintenance.
- Toni Starr, help for flooding damage

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:**

- Rabbi Boraz, in honor of Bill Silverman and in memory of Edna Silverman.

### **Tzekakah Project:**

- Peter and Karen Rotter

### **Endowment Fund:**

- Art and Jeannie Waldman, in honor of the upcoming June Wedding of their daughter, Kim Waldman to Dan Kutschera.

### **Cantorial Fund:**

- Bob and Jean Beck

### **Lucille and Alfred Shovers Family Youth Group Fund:**

- Matthew and Gretchen Otto
- GCI
- Eve-Lynn Siegel
- Laurie Segal
- Janice Gratch
- Harvey Shovers
- Gloria Cramer
- Bettine Lipman
- Lawrence and Bonita Sanders
- John and Kimberlyn Otto
- Margaret Carspecken
- Rita Crooks
- Jay, Barb, Andrew and Ben Arndt

### **Passover Security Donation:**

- Donna Stapleton
- Syd and Lois Cohen
- Ed and Faye Miller
- Jenny and Larry Gordon
- Karen and Shane Teter
- Mitch and Jessie Musicant
- Marlene and Steve Resnick
- Steve and Susan Blonsky
- Bill and Gail Skelton
- Rabbi Boraz
- Marsha and Max Stella
- Shanny and Kimberly Luft
- Len and Arleen Wurman
- Amy Gervasio
- Toni Starr

### **Adult Purim Party Donation:**

- Phil and Margo Albert



## **Community Supper Volunteers Needed Sunday – April 21<sup>st</sup>**

Mt. Sinai will be hosting the Community Dinner on Easter Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup> and we are looking for volunteers. Please contact Linda Glazner at [Indglazner@aol.com](mailto:Indglazner@aol.com) or 715-370-4897 to volunteer.

### **TORAH PORTIONS**

4/6	Tazria	Lev. 12:1 – 13:59; Exod. 12:1 - 20
4/13	Metzora	Lev. 14:1 – 15:33
4/20	1 <sup>st</sup> day of Pesach	Exod. 12:21 – 51 & Num. 28:16 - 25
4/27	8 <sup>th</sup> day of Pesach	Deut. 14:22 – 16:17 & Num. 28:19 - 25

### **Directory Updates:**

If you have any address, email or phone number changes, please start getting them into the office so that Kellie can make the changes to the new directory.

Thank you!

### **A FRIENDLY REMINDER TO COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

Our Annual Meeting is right around the corner. Please remember to submit your committee's report by April 12<sup>th</sup> to Kellie at

[kelliem@mtsinaiwisconsin.org](mailto:kelliem@mtsinaiwisconsin.org).

Mt Sinai Congregational

# PASSOVER SEDER

Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at 6:00 pm

**Please RSVP by April 10<sup>th</sup>!**

- ✧ Come celebrate the Seder with family and friends
- ✧ Join in the retelling of our story of liberation
- ✧ Share in songs, symbols, and stories
- ✧ Babysitting provided (starting at 5:45 pm)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select:

\_\_\_ # of Vegetarian meals      \_\_\_ #Adults @ \$25      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ # of Chicken meals      \_\_\_ #Children (3-10) @ \$15      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ # of Fish meals      \_\_\_ #Children (2 & under / Free)

I cannot afford the full amount. Enclosed is my check for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*No one will be turned away for inability to pay.*

My contribution to help sponsor a fellow congregant: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Unused contributions will go to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund.*

**Total Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Babysitter Needed? Y N / # of children \_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

I/ We can help with: \_\_\_ Set Up    \_\_\_ Clean Up    \_\_\_ Serving    \_\_\_ Bringing a dessert

Questions? Contact Erica Esser at 608-886-7489 or [erica.esser@gmail.com](mailto:erica.esser@gmail.com) or call the synagogue office at 715-675-2560

**Please make check payable to Mt Sinai Congregation and mail this form, with payment, to:  
Mt Sinai Congregation · 910 W Randolph St · Wausau, WI 54401**

**If you need a babysitter, please rsvp by April 12<sup>th</sup>.**

# Passover Appeal

We live in an ever changing world. As the world changes, we must adjust. The recent shootings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburg, as well as other mass shootings and acts of domestic terrorism, compel us to re-evaluate our beautiful synagogue home and take action to protect our congregants, families and guests. The Board of Trustees, especially the Building and Grounds committee, has been studying the issue for some time now and wrestling with various options, both high and low tech. The committee has consulted with experts, law enforcement and systems providers.

There are many things that we can do and the list of the highest priority items includes 1) classroom door stops, 2) motion detector outdoor lighting, 3) panic buttons within the building, 4) bullet resistant glass windows, 5) a secure entry system (a key fob system seem most cost effective for a congregation such as ours), and 6) a security camera and recording system. The above list is not arranged in order of priority but rather by approximate cost.

To raise funds for these systems we are planning a Passover fundraising drive. We know that a smear of lamb's blood on our lintel will not be enough in this day and age.

You will soon be receiving a postcard reflective of the Seder plate with each of the items listed together with a corresponding security need. Please treat these as levels of giving. Each represents a multiple of chai (18) for life. It is a way of visualizing our needs and how our gifts may provide for them. But if three people are moved to donate \$990 for the key fob system we will not install three key fob systems, we will install one and direct the rest of the funds to other security needs. None of the systems are standalone, they all work together. Hopefully we will never know which of the systems is most important, all we know now is that each of them, even the smallest, has its own merit.

Please consider giving to our Passover security drive, either in one of the amounts listed on the card or in any other amount that you are moved and able to give.