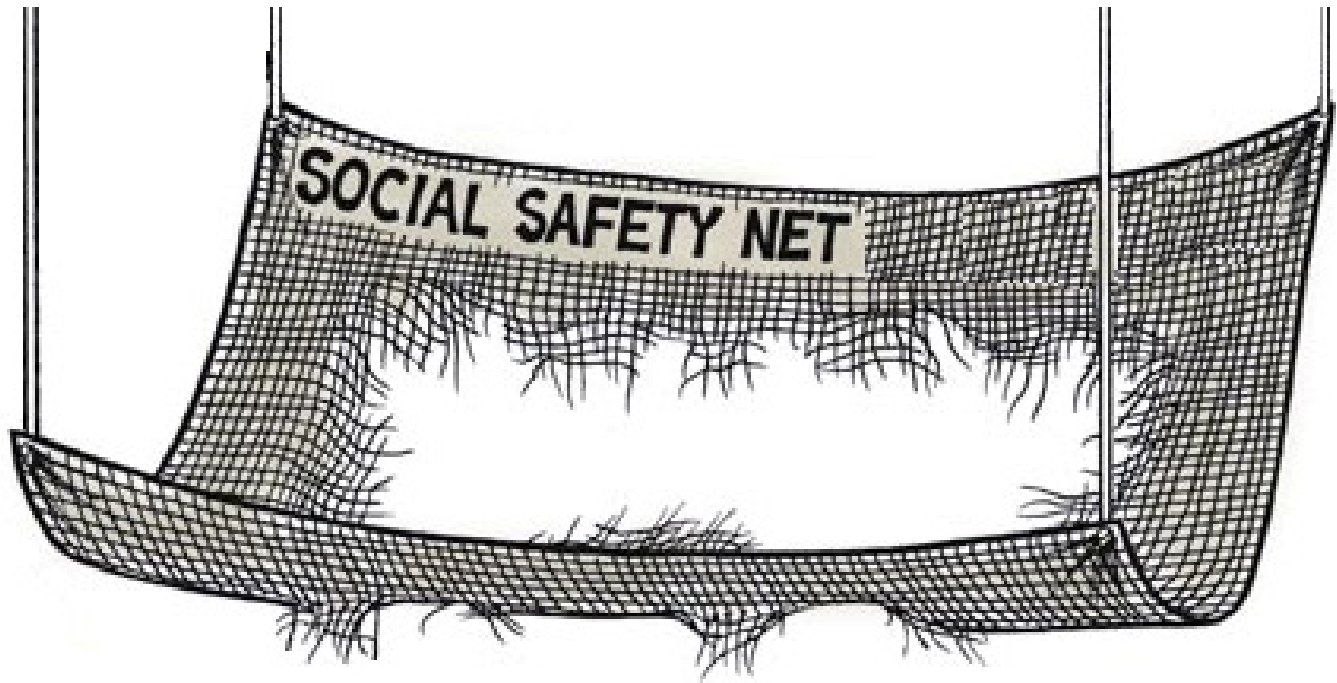


JEWS UNITED FOR JUSTICE PRESENTS
THE 9TH ANNUAL
LABOR SEDER



**OUR SOCIAL SAFETY
NET IS BREAKING.**

YOU CAN HELP FIX IT.

APRIL 11, 2010
27-28 *NISAN* 5770
ADAS ISRAEL CONGREGATION
WASHINGTON, DC

2010 Labor Seder Cosponsoring Organizations and Individuals

With Signs & Wonders / Otot u-mofetim

UFCW Local 400 is a respected and influential labor organization representing more than 40,000 workers in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Tennessee. Members of Local 400 are an important part of a democratic organization, one with a very important goal: to help workers obtain and hold onto better paychecks, job security, decent fringe benefits, and justice on the job. www.ufcw400.org

With a an Outstretched Arm / U-vizroa netuyah

The Community Foundation of the National Capital Region is a “community of givers” dedicated to giving back and making our communities better places to live. www.thecommunityfoundation.org

The JUFJ Board of Directors

With a Mighty Hand / B'yad chazakah

AFGE Local 476 (HUD) represents more than 1,100 members at the Department of Housing and Urban Development headquarters and provides legal representation, legislative advocacy, technical expertise, and informational services. www.afge476.org

AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps engages young people in direct work on the causes and effects of poverty in the United States. Participants in our service Corps program live out and deepen their commitments to social change and Jewish life through a year of full-time work at anti-poverty organizations in Chicago, New Orleans, New York, and Washington, DC. www.avodah.net

AVODAH-AJWS Alumni Partnership engages young people at the intersection where their Jewish values meet their passion for social justice, building a community that takes action to create social change. We offer a new opportunity for young Jews to work together toward a just world within and beyond the Jewish community. www.avodah.net and www.ajws.org

Bet Mishpachah is a congregation for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Jews and all who wish to participate in an inclusive, egalitarian, and mutually supportive community. Our membership is comprised of singles, couples, and families, and is open to everyone, regardless of religious affiliation, sexual orientation, or gender identity. We join together for weekly Shabbat services, educational and social events, social action/social justice community service, and holidays – affirming our religious and cultural heritage. www.betmish.org

CASA de Maryland improves the quality of life and fights for equal treatment and full access to resources and opportunities for low-income Latinos and other immigrant communities. www.casademaryland.org

DC Employment Justice Center seeks to secure, protect, and promote workplace justice in the DC metropolitan area by providing direct legal services and engaging in broader advocacy, organizing, and community education. www.dcejc.org

DC Jobs with Justice (DC JwJ) is a coalition of labor, faith, community, and student groups working together for economic justice in Washington, DC. By building broad-based coalitions and using direct action organizing, DC JwJ leads and supports campaigns to protect the rights of working people, create living wage jobs, and demand corporate accountability in our communities. www.dcjwj.org

DC Vote is an educational and advocacy organization dedicated to securing full voting representation in Congress for the residents of the District of Columbia. www.dcvote.org

Fair Budget Coalition and its more than 40 members fight for a just and inclusive District of Columbia by advancing budget and public policy to address the systemic roots of poverty and the disparity in social spending in Washington. www.fairbudget.org

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society Young Leaders Founded by Jewish immigrants, refugees and their descendents, HIAS Young Leaders is a unique national community of young professionals and graduate students. Through a combination of advocacy, education, community service and fundraising initiatives, HIAS Young Leaders generates new and creative ways to continue HIAS' longstanding mission of rescue, resettlement and reunification of Jewish and other immigrants. www.hias.org/get-involved/young-leaders

Interfaith Worker Justice of Greater Washington is a network of people of faith that calls upon our religious values in order to educate, organize, and mobilize the religious community in the United States on issues and campaigns that will improve wages, benefits, and conditions for workers, and give voice to workers, especially workers in low-wage jobs. www.iwj.org

Jewish Foundation for Group Homes provides individuals with developmental disabilities and/or chronic mental disorders with the opportunity to live independently within the community with dignity, personal choice, and respect. www.jfgh.org

Jewish Labor Committee The Jewish Labor Committee provides a vital bridge between the Jewish community and the American labor movement on issues of social justice and a just peace in the Middle East. It has a long history of active programs and educational projects around the country to carry out these objectives. www.jewishlaborcommittee.org

Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, based at Georgetown University, develops creative strategies and innovative public policy to improve workers' lives in a changing economy. lwp.georgetown.edu

Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO is the local affiliate of the national AFL-CIO, working with nearly 200 affiliated union locals and our community, religious, student, and political allies to improve the lives of workers and their families throughout greater Washington. www.dclabor.org

Moishe House DC is a community house run by and for post-college Jews. There are over 25 Moishe Houses across the world. Each house is shaped by the character of the local community, and all are working to create vibrant community life for young people. The residents of MHDC invite you to their programs spanning social, religious, cultural, and activist facets of Jewish life in DC.

Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism For nearly 50 years, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism has been the hub of Jewish social justice and legislative activity in Washington, D.C., mobilizing the Reform Jewish community on legislative and social concerns and advocating on issues including economic justice, civil rights, and Israel. The RAC's work is mandated by the Union for Reform Judaism, whose 900+ congregations include 1.5 million Reform Jews, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, comprising 1,800 rabbis. www.rac.org

SEIU Local 32BJ With more than 120,000 members in eight states, including 15,000 in the D.C. Metropolitan Area, 32BJ SEIU is the largest property service workers union in the country. 32BJ helps building service workers to lift themselves out of poverty and win livable wages, health care benefits, and full time work. In DC, the union is now looking to help improve wages and benefits for government contracted security officers and to improve industry standards through procurement reform. www.seiu32bj.org

SEIU Maryland and DC State Council mobilizes SEIU members to engage in an action-based, issue driven agenda that improves the workplace and lives of not only SEIU members, but working families across the region. www.seiumddc.org

Tifereth Israel Congregation Social Action Committee Tifereth Israel is an egalitarian Conservative congregation that has been a longtime, active participant in many social justice causes. www.tifereth-israel.org

UNITE HERE Local 25 uses organizing to transform traditionally low-wage jobs in the Washington area, like hotel housekeeping, into good, family-sustaining, middle class jobs. www.unitehere.org

Washington DC Jewish Community Center preserves and strengthens Jewish identity, heritage, tradition, and values through a wide variety of social, cultural, recreational, and educational programs and services. www.washingtondcjcc.org

Steve Metalitz and Kit Gage

Susan and Sanford Fain

Individual Sponsors:

Dan Blumenthal

Dena Briscoe

Linda Greenberg and Tac Tacelosky

Karen Hoerst and David Rosenblatt

Ann Hoffman

Ed Rehfeld

Bella Rosner and Saul Schapiro

Margaret Siegel

Many thanks for your support of the Labor Seder and of Jews United for Justice!

A Green and Just Seder

JUFJ's *Green & Just Celebrations* guide helps Jewish families in our region infuse the Jewish values of equality, justice, and environmental stewardship into the purchasing choices they make for their celebrations. This year's Labor Seder is an example of such a celebration. As always, we have tried to minimize the Labor Seder's ecological impact and maximize its support of responsible labor practices in the following ways:

- ✧ The Labor Seder is located within walking distance of the Metro and several bus routes to encourage participants to seek alternatives to driving here.
- ✧ All of our ritual foods are locally procured and organic wherever possible. We sourced our apples, eggs, beets, and *karpas* from local farmers, while our matzah, oranges, walnuts, and grape juice are organic but not local. Purchasing foods, particularly produce, from local sources eliminates the need to transport food long distances and supports farmers and open space in our communities. Purchasing organic foods is one way to reduce our ecological footprint by supporting sustainable farming practices.
- ✧ Our tablecloths, napkins, water pitchers, and vases are reusable, generously loaned to us by Adas Israel and Tikkun Leil Shabbat.
- ✧ The plates, cups, and silverware we are using tonight are biodegradable, compostable, and made from sugarcane, a renewable plant resource.
- ✧ We thank Honest Tea for their gracious donation of the fair trade iced tea that is on our tables tonight. Honest Tea is a DC-area company that strives to support sustainable agriculture and community building with healthy, all-natural teas. Find out more at www.honesttea.com.
- ✧ JUFJ aims to support local and unionized businesses whenever possible. The postcards advertising the Labor Seder were printed by a collective, worker-owned, unionized print shop. As a small organization with a small budget, though, we also accepted the gracious offer of "labor donated" printing of this haggadah by our cosponsor, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. We did not undermine prevailing wages or union standards by soliciting a non-union print shop in the production of this haggadah.
- ✧ All seder materials printed by JUFJ, the Religious Action Center, and our print shop have been printed on recycled paper.

For more information on making your celebrations green and just, visit http://jufj.org/green_just_celebrations

Why a Labor Seder?

We have come together at this time for many reasons. A traditional Passover seder* is a festive, ritual-laden meal in which we remember the ancient Jewish story of liberation from slavery in Egypt—a great struggle for freedom and dignity. Tonight, we are also here to recognize that the struggle for human freedom did not end with that Exodus. We have come together to remember that there are those in our midst who struggle every day for dignity and freedom in their work and in their lives as a whole.

Over the centuries, thousands of different versions of the Passover haggadah*, or “narrative,” have been written. This haggadah has been prepared to bring leaders and members of the Jewish, labor, and activist communities together to retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. As we recount it, we will examine its relationship to the struggles of working people to improve their lives, and the lives of their families, their co-workers, and their communities. The story of Passover is rich in imagery that resonates for those who care about workers’ rights: persecution, oppressive taskmasters, impossible work demands, work quotas, and finally, a struggle for freedom.

Adapted from the Jewish Labor Committee Passover Haggadah, Third Edition: Spring 2002

Why a Seder About the Safety Net?

Like clockwork, Passover arrives each spring, reminding us of the yearly cycle of renewal and hope. In the Washington region, the yearly budget cycle also begins early each spring. This year, instead of renewal and hope, many face the budget season with fear. Like almost every state across the country, DC, Maryland, and Virginia are experiencing a budget crisis as a result of the Great Recession, and face budget shortfalls of hundreds of millions of dollars for the coming fiscal year. Proposed 2010 budgets fail to provide adequate funding for a broad array of social services—even in a time of ever-increasing need.

These tears in the fabric of our social safety net* affect all of us who live in the region. For much of tonight’s seder we will focus on the situation here in the District, but local governments in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs are facing the same challenges. We gather tonight to educate ourselves about the issues, learn to take action, and stand with the workers, families, service recipients, service providers, activists, clergy, and organizations who are working so hard to protect the vulnerable, or just to stay afloat.

Song: Hinei Mah Tov

Led by Cantor Charlie Bernhardt and Ben Dreyfus

*Hinei mah tov umah na'im
Shevet achim/achayot gam yachad.*

How good and pleasant it is for brothers and sisters to sit together!

Welcome: Rabbi Esther Lederman (Temple Micah) and Rabbi Elizabeth Richman (Jews United for Justice)

Opening Blessing: Shehecheyanu

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.
Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam shehecheyanu vekiyanu vehigianu lazeman hazeh.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, who has given us life, and kept us strong, and brought us to this time.

* All words and phrases marked with an asterisk are defined in a glossary on page 20 of the haggadah.

Hand Washing

At the beginning of the Passover seder there is a tradition of washing our hands in preparation for the rituals to come. We wash away our spiritual dirt and ready ourselves to retell our journey to freedom. Each new budget cycle also offers us a chance for a fresh start, and an opportunity to think and act differently as we wash our hands of past policies.

We are all now invited to symbolically wash our hands, shed the past year's frustrations, and recommit ourselves to seeking justice in this new fiscal year.

Table discussion: Introduce yourself. What are you “washing your hands of” from the past year? What positive changes do you hope to see this year?

Blessing Over the First Cup of Wine

Fill the first cup of wine or juice.

In a traditional seder, we drink four cups of wine. Tonight, the four cups will provide the structure for our seder. As we bless each cup, we will move forward in our journey from learning to action. We raise this first cup and recite the blessing in honor of the learning we are about to undertake about how our communities have supported us with social safety net services throughout history.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Drink the first cup of wine.

Yachatz: Breaking the middle matzah

Take the middle piece of the three pieces of matzah on the table, break it in half, and set aside one half.

Matzah is a symbol of the bread of poverty. As the Talmud teaches us, just as the poor person usually has to eat bread that is broken, tonight we break this special bread to remind us of our neighbors who are poor and hungry today.

The resulting half piece of matzah that we normally set aside to become the *afikoman*— the hidden piece that is the last thing we eat at a classical seder— is set aside on our tables tonight as a visual reminder of our community's suffering.

We now prepare to acknowledge some of what is broken in our world.

Adapted from the Jewish Labor Committee Passover Haggadah, Third Edition: Spring 2002

The Four Questions

The questions we ask at the beginning of the seder are meant to set in motion the whole telling of the Passover story. Although we are most familiar with the formal four questions that begin with “*Mah nishtanah....! Why is this night different from all other nights?*” Rabbinic commentary tells us that any genuine question about the seder ritual or the Passover story can serve the same purpose. (The Talmud even tells the story of Rabbah, a rabbi who would remove the seder table from the room before dinner just to provoke questions from the surprised and hungry children gathered around it!) In that spirit, tonight’s “four questions” are meant to catalyze our storytelling about the social safety net crisis in DC, and to provide a foundation for our discussion of “why this budget is different from all other budgets.”

All ask: What is a social safety net, and why do we need one?

A social safety net is a combination of programs and services designed to prevent those experiencing economic hardship from falling deeper into poverty and to provide resources to help lift people out of poverty. Social safety net programs include food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)*, disability assistance, subsidized childcare, rent supplements, job training services, and government-subsidized health care such as Medicaid and the DC Health Care Alliance*.

Poverty impact all of us. When people are impoverished, they are not healthy and productive. This has cascading effects throughout our community: fewer customers for our businesses, fewer dollars available to fund schools and streets, and for the youngest, a greater chance that they will experience poverty throughout their lives.

All ask: What is happening with the DC budget?

The Great Recession has pushed the District, like Maryland, Virginia, and almost every other state across the country, into a budget crisis. Job losses and falling housing prices have translated into a sharp drop in income, sales, and property tax collections, which means the city has less money to fund programs and services. Currently there is a \$525 million deficit for next year's budget. Now the city must find new sources of money, cut programs it currently provides, or enact some combination of both approaches. A balanced approach is crucial to addressing the budget shortfall and preserving programs that help our most vulnerable residents. City leaders must consider ways to add money to the budget instead of simply cutting, including possibilities like tapping into the city's financial reserves and creating a higher tax bracket for high-income residents.

After DC's new budget was released on April 1, the DC Council has eight weeks to review it and hold hearings, which citizens like us should attend and offer our comments at. Once the eight-week period ends, the council will make its changes and then vote on the entire budget.

All ask: What does all of this mean for DC's safety net?

DC's safety net is at risk, right at a time when people need its help the most. Last July, when city officials cut \$150 million from the city's budget, almost two-thirds of the cuts were in human services and education. Now, as the mayor and council face a \$525 million shortfall for the upcoming fiscal year, many of those same programs will be targeted for cuts once again.

All ask: What are the dangers associated with an extreme decrease in safety net services in DC?

Tearing DC's safety net means that many of our neighbors and fellow residents will fall deeper into poverty, becoming increasingly vulnerable to hunger, homelessness, illness, and illiteracy. Access to benefits and services will become even more constricted as residents face wait lists and longer lines. Jobless adults will find it harder to access employment services and job training programs. Even after the recession ends, poverty and unemployment rates will take much longer to recover.

Table Discussion: Ha Lachma Anya— The promise of a safety net

In the classical haggadah text, we read about God's promise of redemption and liberation: our time of oppression will end as we make our way to the promised land. In an act of imitating the Divine, we also make a promise of our own. At the beginning of the seder we recite one of the most famous lines of the whole ritual. "*Ha lachma anya... kol dichfin yeitei v'yeichul*"— "**This is the bread of poverty that our ancestors ate in Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat!**" Every year at the Passover seder, we make that same promise to help sustain and care for other members of the community by including them in the celebration of freedom.

Judaism teaches that this obligation to care for members of our community also is in force year-round—and that our communities cannot sustain themselves unless they meet the basic needs of all members. Similarly, the United States has a rich history of programs and services intended to support vulnerable individuals and communities.

Below are three texts about historical Jewish and American attitudes toward safety net-like programs. Later in the seder we will hear more modern stories about the safety net.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

If there is a needy person among you, one of your kinspeople in any of your settlements in the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsperson. Rather, you must open your hand and lend them sufficient for whatever they need.

Babylonian Talmud (Bava Batra 8a)

It has been taught: “[After a person lives in a town for] thirty days he or she is obligated to contribute to the *tamchui* [the daily collection and distribution of food to the poor], after three months to the *kuppah* [money collected and distributed to the poor every Friday], after six months to the clothing fund, after nine months to the burial fund, and after twelve months to the repair of the town walls.”

The 1944 GI Bill

The GI Bill, signed into law in 1944 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, provided college or vocational education for returning World War II Veterans (commonly referred to as G.I.’s, an abbreviation for “government issue”) as well as one year of unemployment compensation. It also provided many different types of loans for returning veterans to buy homes and start businesses....

In the democratic euphoria that followed the war, many Americans reassessed their prewar prejudices. [Through the GI Bill] Jewish veterans gained entry into many fine schools previously known to reject or apply strict quotas for Jewish applicants, and they, as well as Catholics, benefited from the growth of public institutions in urban areas. The GI Bill helped move these children of European immigrants into academe, business, and the professions, and thus essentially eliminated religious bigotry in American higher education....

[The GI Bill] turned the American people as never before into stakeholders, self-reliant property owners, owners of homes and businesses prepared to take responsibility for their communities because they now owned a piece of it. The dramatic impact of the GI Bill on the physical, geographic, and economic landscape of the nation is as important a legacy as the educational benefits.

Adapted from Milton Greenberg, Historians on America (US Department of State)

Discussion Questions:

1. What kinds of assistance do the Biblical and Talmudic texts obligate us to provide? What are the similarities and differences between these texts? What would these obligations translate into today?
2. How have we and/or our own communities benefited from safety net programs like the GI Bill?
3. According to each text above, whose responsibility is it to create and maintain the safety net? Do you agree?
4. Are the safety nets envisioned by these texts still working? What has happened to the promises we made? What are the consequences of having or not having a safety net?

Blessing Over the Second Cup of Wine

Fill the second cup of wine or juice.

We raise our second cup of wine and recite the blessing in honor of the stories we are about to hear: the stories of workers, parents, children, activists, and organizations whose lives are inextricably entwined with the safety net.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Drink the second cup of wine.

The Four Voices

Traditionally in the Passover haggadah we tell the story of the four children: one who is wise, one who is wicked, one who is simple, and one who does not know how to ask questions. In reality, we know that no one child is fully wise, wicked, simple or silent. At one point or another, every child—and for that matter, every adult—demonstrates each of these characteristics.

So too with the safety net. Our relationship to the safety net shifts at different times in our lives. At one point in time we may experience direct benefits from the safety net. At another time we may be employed as providers of safety net services. At yet another time we may contribute as volunteers, donors, or activists. And, at certain times in our lives, we may have no formal interaction with the safety net at all. But as with the four children, taken together we and our community comprise all of these relationships to the safety net.

Today, instead of reading about the four types of children, area residents will speak about the social safety net from a variety of perspectives. We also invite you to take home and read the profiles below of four DC residents and their safety net stories.

Video: SOS DC

Speaker: Sherita Evans, Bread for the City*

Stories from the City

Michelle Washington

Michelle worked since she was 14 years old and eventually had a job as an administrative assistant in the federal government before deciding to attend college for a degree in childhood education. She taught in the DC public schools for years, but one day fell on the steps and was seriously injured. She recuperated during the summer, but doctors said she needed surgery—and when August came around, her principal fired her and refused to sign off on her workman's compensation. She ended up with no job, no workman's comp, and no health insurance.

When you can't work, you risk getting to a place where you feel like you're not worth anything. My elderly parents were taking care of me for years in which I had no income. I became very depressed—never even had the lights on because I couldn't afford the electric bill. My friends would come over and sit in the dark. I remember being down in Eastern Market and some guy was singing "Nobody Wants You When You're Down and Out." And I turned to him and I said "I only have one dollar but I'm going to give it to you because you're so right." I'd believed in the system but the system was failing me—and I was coming to be just like the people you see on the street.

I needed counseling and I needed education. And I needed support. And that's when I found Bread for the City. They have a holistic approach, a multi-disciplinary team that worked not only on your health, but on your mind and your soul. The doctors knew my name and always treated me with respect—which is just what I needed at the time. They were also able to refer me to all kinds of different programs that were here.

That's how eventually I obtained my Social Security Insurance*. SSI denied me at first, as I was having trouble validating my injury. Bread for the City's case manager helped with the paperwork and arranged for me to see a medical specialist who confirmed my disability. Eventually I came to the point where I wake up at 5:30am and dress like I have somewhere to go. And then [I got a] a real reason: I'm now able to share my computer skills with other Bread for the City clients. It's a new niche for me. And I'm so thankful for that, because when you go out to help somebody, you forget about the problems that you have yourself.

Neki Swinton

Neki is a native Washingtonian who has benefited from programs like food stamps, TANF, and Section 8. She's a mother of four, and her oldest is headed to college in the fall. Her new goal is to pursue a degree in communications at UDC.*

I've been on TANF since I was 16 years old. I don't think that everyone understands the fluctuations that you have to go through being on TANF. Having to have every bit of your life combed through but not having any good services offered to you.

I have started to notice behavioral issues in myself that I feel have caused problems with jobs that I've had in the past, relationships— whether family, friends or the absent parents of my children. I've noticed social issues that I have. So I started seeking social behavioral therapy, life coaches, things of that nature. But of course I can't afford it. So it went through the Medicaid insurance, to see if they cover it. I found out that they do, which I would have never known had I not gotten this epiphany and began to dig.

If at 16 I had gotten maybe some mental health, behavioral therapy then I would have been a more functioning adult when I reached adult hood and I would have been a better parent for my kids.

It's hard and you try and you're not really looking for a handout. You're looking for help and the help becomes a continuous handout, which doesn't make you feel like a part of society at all. It makes you feel like a burden. And that's how you get treated.

The last time I went to recertify for TANF and food stamps, I was met at the door with a crowd of people and security officers telling me that it was very crowded and that I wouldn't be seen. I needed to go in and at least get the recertification process started. My food stamps had been cut off. I was using my money that I use to pay my gas and electric, lunch for the kids, and transportation to buy food, which causes a disturbance in my household income and function.

I had to go back three more times to get my TANF and food stamps restored.

I had never seen the room two times consecutively the way that I did. In the past it has been packed but I would go around that time and I would pretty much expect to get in and get out by the close of business, which I would say it would take me three or four hours as opposed to six or eight.

It needs improvement. there are so many people like myself that want to do better but have minor issues in front of them and you don't always know what those issues are. So we do need a little help with identifying and then seeking help. And I think that there are so many people getting lost in the system because they are not getting that function.

Roger Kuhn

Roger is a retired lawyer who lives in DC.

When I walk from the Metro to my comfortable apartment in Cleveland Park, I pass usually two homeless people. And, you know, that bothers me. Why should they be homeless? Granted, some people, there's nothing you can do about it. But I think the homeless services are inadequate in this town.

I think it's the basic responsibility of government to apportion resources in a fair and equitable manner. That doesn't mean that everybody's going to have the same amount of take-home. There are so many reasons why people might be struggling, but I think it's the government's responsibility to help take care of them. People pay taxes. And wealthy people could pay more taxes in order to make this a fairer society.

I would be willing to pay more taxes. I live a very comfortable life. And paying a higher tax rate would not affect me at all. It would have little impact on my life and it would have a major impact on the life of people who can't find housing, can't even afford food.

Okema Wade

Okema Wade is a DC resident who has benefited from various safety net programs: job training, food stamps, affordable housing, child care vouchers, WIC, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("TANF"). Today she is a trainer at SOME's* Center for Employment Training, where she helps other people navigate the safety net and meet their goals.*

Before starting at SOME I was a stay at home mom, using the TANF system. I decided to go to school, knowing that by going to school it would land me a better job. Before I went to school I had to get a daycare voucher for my child. Once I got the daycare voucher it allowed me to stay in school, I graduated from school then I ended up getting in a career. And now, by having that voucher, it enabled me to be as successful as I am today.

The safety net is a good thing to have for people like me that are trying to go to school or go to work. Anything that they want to do and they need somewhere for their child to go during the day... The safety net is a good thing to have in the community.

Let us all say:

*When the safety net supports my neighbor,
my family member,
my acquaintance,
my friend,
so too does it support me.*

Song: Budget Battle of Washington

(Melody: Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho, new lyrics by Cantor Charlie Bernhardt)

Led by Cantor Charlie Bernhardt and Ben Dreyfus

Chorus:

We'll fight the budget battle of Washington Washington Washington
We'll fight the budget battle of Washington 'til we save our safety net

Oh, the Bible tells of Joshua at the battle of Jericho
He told all the people to make some noise and the trumpets began to blow
The voices of the people, they made a mighty sound
And before too long at Jericho the walls came tumbling down.

Chorus

A mother and her children, those hungry, hurt and poor
A homeless man, our elders, too. They're knocking on the door.
We say to the City Council, please heed the words we say.
From folks in need of our support we cannot turn away.

Chorus

So take a tip from Joshua. Together we must stand.
When the people raise their voice as one, no mighty wall can stand.
We fight for right and justice. A righteous goal we've set.
We'll raze those walls of spite and greed and save our safety net!

Chorus

Passover Symbols

The traditional symbols of Passover sit before us on the seder plate. Each food represents an aspect of the story of liberation from an oppressive regime. Many items recall the suffering of our ancestors. Together, they retell the story of triumph over injustice and oppression and represent our hope for the future.

The **matzah** is an iconic symbol of Passover. This bread is unleavened, acknowledging the hastiness of the Israelites' departure from an unjust way of life. This bread of affliction is also the bread of liberation, eaten by people entering freedom. Tonight, we eat matzah to acknowledge our very presence at this Labor Seder, where we gather to learn about vital safety net programs and commit ourselves to work toward their preservation.

The **maror**, or bitter herbs, traditionally represents the bitterness of the lives of the enslaved Jewish people. Tonight, it also represents the bitterness of the lives of DC residents who are turned away at service centers when they try to obtain food stamps, medical assistance, and rental vouchers.

The **karpas**, or green vegetable, symbolizes the arrival of spring. We dip the *karpas* in salt water to remember the tears shed by the Hebrew slaves. For DC safety net advocates, the *karpas* is arrival of the budget, a statement about how we will support our communities. But that *karpas* is also covered with the tears of those who suffer the effects of the millions of dollars in proposed budget cuts.

The **charoset** resembles the texture of the mortar that the Jewish slaves used to make bricks, the material of their everyday labor.

A **roasted shank bone or beet*** symbolizes the Passover sacrifice—literally a lamb whose blood served as a sign to the Angel of Death to spare the Israelites—reminding us that freedom often comes at a price.

The hard-boiled **egg** is mysterious, mentioned in the Talmud as a possible item to be served at the seder but not given any particular significance. Over time, the egg has evolved to symbolize springtime—the cycle of life, fertility, and rebirth, and the promise of a new life amidst pain and struggle.

The **orange** is a modern addition to the seder plate. Susannah Heschel introduced it in the 1980s to symbolize the fruitfulness of communities that give full roles to women, queer Jews, and others who were marginalized in Jewish communities in the past. The orange reminds us that our Passover traditions are not only about remembering the past but that they can and should speak to today's struggles for equality. Tonight, we hope that we will open up ourselves to new opportunities to pursue justice.

Right before the Passover meal, there is a tradition of creating the **Hillel sandwich** in which the bitter *maror* and sweet *charoset* are combined and eaten between two pieces of matzah. This gives us the chance to literally grasp the symbols of the freedom from enslavement. Tonight, we hope that, between our entry into tonight's Labor Seder and our departure at the end of the evening, we too may combine the bitter and the sweet. We will learn how best to temper the bitterness of cuts to safety net programs with the sweetness of the work we do to strengthen these programs.

Pass the matzah, maror, and charoset around so everyone can construct a Hillel sandwich.

We now recite the blessing over bread as we prepare to eat our sandwiches:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the Earth.

Eat the Hillel sandwich.

The Ten Plagues

In a classical seder, even as we celebrate our story of liberation, our joy is reduced when we acknowledge the suffering of the Egyptians as God inflicted ten plagues upon them. Traditionally we remove a drop of wine or juice from our glasses as each plague is named, symbolizing that our joy is not complete. At this seder, even as we celebrate our coming together to take action on the safety net, we pause here to acknowledge the many challenges that still exist. With a depressed economy and thousands of area residents who cannot receive the essential services they need to survive and move forward, we continue to be plagued by injustice.

We read the name of each plague aloud together. As we name each plague, remove a drop of wine or juice from your glass with your finger or spoon, symbolizing that our happiness cannot be complete while injustices persist. More information about each plague follows the initial list.

Homelessness
Hunger
Illiteracy
Unemployment
Affordable Housing Shortages
HIV/AIDS
Domestic Violence
Infant Mortality
Child Abuse and Neglect
Hopelessness

Homelessness

DC shelters are overflowing and homeless services are strained. The number of homeless individuals and people living in homeless families has grown exponentially, but budgets for homeless services have fallen.

Hunger

Hunger in the District is widespread, yet access to benefits is increasingly limited. Two in five DC children are at risk of hunger and 40% of all households with children in the city experienced food hardship over the last two years. The number of residents seeking benefits increased by one third over the last two years, but during that time DC closed two intake centers and eliminated nearly 100 eligibility-determination worker positions. Residents face long lines to access benefits.¹

Illiteracy

DC ranks lowest in the nation for 8th grade math and reading proficiency (12% proficient in reading in DC compared to 29% nationwide).² Nearly one third of DC residents lack the literacy skills they need to earn a living wage, engage in civic affairs, access vital information about health and safety issues, or completely exercise their rights.³

Unemployment

While the DC metro area ranks first in the US for highest average annual salary, it ranks 48th (out of 51) for its unemployment rate. There also is a dramatic geographic disparity in unemployment rates around the city. In September 2009 the unemployment rate in Ward 3 was 3.2% while in Ward 8 it was 28.3%. Additionally, DC's unemployment insurance system fails to cover major life events: spouse relocation and illness and disability are not considered "compelling family reasons for leaving work."

1 (2010). A Balanced Approach for Challenging Times: Recommendations for Supporting Human Needs, Maximizing Federal Funds, and Increasing Revenues in the District of Columbia. 2010 Fair Budget Coalition Report. <http://www.fairbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Fair%20Budget%20Coalition%20Report-FY2011-%20Balanced%20Approach%20for%20Challenging%20Times.pdf>

2 (2009) 2009-2010 Assets and Opportunities Scorecard. Corporation for Enterprise Development. http://scorecard.cfed.org/state_data/district_of_columbia.php

3 (2010) The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2009. National Center for Educational Statistics Institute of Education Sciences. <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>

Affordable housing shortages

One in ten DC households are on the city's housing wait list, and affordable homeownership is increasingly out of reach. DC's Housing Production Trust Fund* will collect just \$17.9 million in FY 2010. This is a huge drop from FY 2008, when HPTF funding totaled \$62 million. As a result, many worthwhile projects, including tenant purchase opportunities, have been stalled. There will be no more funding for new units in two years as part of the Local Rent Supplement program* and this year only 250 low- and moderate-income households will be able to buy homes with support from the Home Purchase Assistance program*, down from 500 in 2007.

HIV/AIDS

DC has the highest rate of new AIDS cases in the US— a rate that is 12 times the national average. At least three percent of DC residents have HIV or AIDS, far higher than the one percent threshold that defines a “generalized and severe” epidemic. This figure translates into 2,984 infected people per every 100,000 people over the age of 12. Shannon L. Hader, director of DC's HIV/AIDS Administration, says: “Our rates are higher than West Africa...they're on par with Uganda and some parts of Kenya.”⁴

Domestic violence

In 2005, domestic violence case filings totaled 8,386, an increase of 3.7% over 2004. In 2005, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) received 27,401 domestic-related crime calls— one every 19 minutes. The number of domestic violence calls to MPD has increased 22% in the past three years and domestic-related calls accounted for 65% of all interpersonal crime calls to MPD in 2005.⁵

Infant Mortality

The District's infant mortality rate is one of the worst among large American cities. Of 7,940 children born in DC in 2005, 108 died before their first birthday, a rate of 13.6 per 1,000 births, twice the national average. In Wards 7 and 8 more than 33% of women did not receive early, regular prenatal care. Of the 447 infants who died from 2001 to 2005, more than 80 percent were born to African-American mothers while only 60 percent of births were to African-American women.⁶

Child abuse and neglect

Almost half of all substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect come from the poorest fifth of DC neighborhoods. The rate of substantiated abuse and neglect in these neighborhoods is seven times higher than in low-poverty neighborhoods and twice as high as in moderate-poverty neighborhoods. Moreover, as with all of these plagues, child abuse and neglect are closely intertwined with poverty. Research indicates that poverty is the leading factor behind child abuse and neglect.⁷

Hopelessness

Limited transparency, minimal support, and poor living conditions breed rampant fear and disempowerment among the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community. A society without a visible backbone and safety net is a powerless and hopeless one, a message that is passed from generation to generation. Young people begin to believe that the choices they make are irrelevant since they don't expect to live past the age of 18 or 19 anyway. It is not until all DC residents have the same opportunities for life's necessities and self-sufficiency, and believe that they are attainable, that we will live in an empowered and hopeful city.

4 (2009) District of Columbia HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD and TB Epidemiology Report 2009 Update.

5 <http://www.dccourts.gov/dccourts/superior/dv/index.jsp>

6 (2008). U.S. National Center for Health Statistics. “Deaths, Final Data for 2005.” http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr56/nvsr56_10.pdf.

7 Child Maltreatment Annual Reports: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data Systems—National statistics on child abuse and neglect.

Song: Just One Kid: A Song About the Safety Net (traditional melody to *Had Gadya*, new lyrics by Joelle Novey)

**Take one kid, just one kid.
And a budget short by a few zuzim.**
Had gadya, had gadya.

If we take away help for her family when the rent's due,
And don't fund shelters where homeless folks can come to.

**(Chorus) Just to cut the budget by two zuzim, hurts
one kid and family, had gadya.**

And his mom may struggle, now that the city's shirking
its role to help her sustain herself by working
and won't assist with rent
and shelters are too small

Just to cut the budget by two zuzim...

And her dad would have better chances at succeeding
with literacy programs to help improve his reading
and mom cannot find work
or a quick assist with rent
and shelters are too small

Just to cut the budget by two zuzim...

And if he can't eat healthy foods that stores sell
and can't go to the doctor when she's not well
and mom cannot find work
and dad can't read too well
or a quick assist with rent
and shelters are too small

Just to cut the budget by two zuzim...

And her grandma may not find healing, peace, or stillness
if she cannot get treatment for a mental illness
and food stamps aren't around
and health care is too steep
and mom cannot find work
and dad can't read too well
and we don't assist with rent
and shelters are too small

Just to cut the budget by two zuzim...

And his family's support could go into the can if
new strict rules get them kicked off of TANF
and don't help grandmas heal
and food stamps aren't around
and health care is too steep
and don't help moms find work
and don't help dads read well
and don't assist with rent
and shelters are too small

Just to cut the budget by two zuzim...

And if we make finances even more unstable
by refusing to tide over her grandpa who's disabled
and cut way back on aid
and don't help grandmas heal
and food stamps aren't around
and health care is too steep
and don't help moms find work
and don't help dads read well
and don't assist with rent
and shelters are too small

Just to cut the budget by two zuzim...

And if kids who need a safer place for them to be
Can't get help in foster or new families
and we can't tide over gramps
and we cut way back on aid
and we don't help grandmas heal
and food stamps aren't around
and health care is too steep
and mom cannot find work
and dad can't read too well
and there's no assist with rent
and shelters are too small

All to cut just two zuzim, hurts one kid and family, *had gadya*.

**A city's net for those in need is how our sages judge it. Is
this any way to go balancing a budget?**

It hurts one kid too many, *had gadya*.

**In the weeks ahead, we still have real choices, and can
come together and raise up our voices.**

Had gadya, had gadya!

There must be ways less unfair and disproportionate
To find new revenues from citizens more fortunate
and still help foster kids
and still tide over gramps
and still provide some aid
and still help grandmas heal
and give out food stamps well
and truly heal the sick
and help moms find good work
and assist with neighbors' rent
and provide shelter for all.

**Because kids and families are worth much more than
zuzim, had gadya, had gadya.**

Speaker: Vincent Gray, DC Council Chair and Mayoral Candidate

Blessing Over the Third Cup of Wine

Fill the third cup of wine or juice.

We raise our third cup of wine and recite the blessing, in honor of action. We focus our thoughts on the power of our community to effect change on the many difficult issues we have named and discussed.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Drink the third cup of wine.

Sefirat HaOmer/Counting the Omer

The *Sefer HaChinuch**, a medieval Jewish commentary, tells us that the Jewish people only were freed from Egypt at Passover in order to receive the Torah at Sinai and fulfill its laws (an event we celebrate seven weeks after Passover, on the holiday of Shavuot*). The seven-week period between Passover and Shavuot is called the *omer** period. Each night we say a blessing and then count the day of the *omer*, as commanded in Leviticus 23:15-16: "You shall then count seven complete weeks after the day following the [Passover] holiday...until the day after the seventh week, when there will be [a total of] 50 days." Many people use this seven-week period as an opportunity for introspection, spiritual searching, and self-improvement.

We who care so deeply about the social safety net are invited to use these seven weeks— which align so closely with the eight weeks of the DC budget review process— as a time for learning and action on the safety net crisis. Just as the *Sefer HaChinuch* tells us that true significance of the Exodus lies in how it changed our communal behavior, the significance of our seder this evening lies at least in part in how we turn our ritual into action. As we recite the blessing and count the *omer* together, take a moment to think about how you will help turn our learning tonight into action during the next eight weeks.

We stand and recite the blessing for counting the omer.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוֵּנוּ עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al sefirat ha'omer.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Who has made us holy through your commandments and commanded to count the *omer*.

הַיּוֹם שְׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם שֶׁהֵם שָׁבוּעַ אֶחָד וְשֵׁשָׁה יָמִים לַעֹמֶר.

Ha'yom sheloshah asar yom, shehem shavua echad veshishah yamim la'omer.

Today is the 13th day of the omer— one week and six days of the omer.

Text Study on the Omer

Exodus 16:1-3

It was the 15th of the second month after they had left Egypt. There in the desert, the entire Israelite community began to complain against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by God's hand in Egypt! There at least we could sit by pots of meat and eat our fill of bread! But you had to bring us out to this desert, to kill the entire community by starvation!"

Michael Strassfeld, *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide and Commentary* (1985).

The omer...serves as a link between Passover and Shavuot. Each day of the omer brings us that much closer to the event of Sinai. ...It is also a reminder of the Pesa[c]h liberation that has just passed and a reminder that it is very easy to slide back into slavery. It is not only the generation of the desert who desired to return to the fleshpots of Egypt....Liberty is easy to lose as we hurry back to the comfort of the old and familiar fleshpots....The easiest route out of Egypt leads back to it or else forward into a new Egypt. ...

These are the [dilemmas] that face us each day as we fulfill the simple ritual of counting from one to forty-nine. So simple a ritual, and yet it is so easy to forget a day, unaccustomed as we are to marking time's passage, seeing one day like another. The challenge is to remember what day it is, who we are, and how close we stand to Sinai. To completely forget even one day is to forfeit the opportunity to recite the *berakhah* [blessing] of the omer, to become lost and to wander from the path to Sinai onto the multitude of well-trodden paths that lead back to Egypt.

Discussion Questions:

1. According to *Sefer HaChinuch*, the significance of the Exodus rests entirely on how it led up to the receipt of the Torah. What parallels to the Exodus have we explored tonight? What is the work we have discussed leading toward? Is participating in this seder a complete act, or is there follow-up needed to complete it?
2. What do you think these two texts imply about the importance and danger of lead-up time? How do they change your feelings (or not) about the need for follow-up effort?

Taking Action!

Song: We Shall Not Be Moved

Led by Cantor Charlie Bernhardt and Ben Dreyfus

Chorus:

We shall not, we shall not be moved.
We shall not, we shall not be moved.
Just like a tree that's planted by the water, we shall not be moved.

We are our brothers' keepers and we shall not be moved.
We are our sisters' keepers and we shall not be moved.
Just like a tree that's planted by the water, we shall not be moved.

Chorus

We're fighting for our families ... **Chorus**
The unions are beside us ... **Chorus**
We are all together ... **Chorus**

Blessing Over the Fourth Cup of Wine

Fill the fourth cup of wine or juice.

We raise the fourth cup of wine and recite the blessing as a toast to a brighter, more compassionate future. With hope in our hearts we drink.

ב בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Drink the fourth cup of wine.

Next year in Jerusalem: A New Promise

Traditionally, the Passover seder ends with a statement of longing and hope: “*Lashanah haba’ah birushalayim*/ Next year in Jerusalem!”

This collective exclamation expresses our longing for redemption, for a return to the promised land. Tonight, these words take on new meaning as we too long for a world restored: a Washington, DC where a parent does not need to worry about her child’s next meal or fear for the effects of malnutrition on her son’s developing body and mind; where an unemployed teen does not need to worry about whether his job training program will be discontinued, depriving him of opportunities for future employment; where a senior does not need to worry about whether she will be able to afford next month’s rent or need to sacrifice food in order to afford medicine.

Let us join in solidarity as we look forward to a changed world, a world in which a strong and healthy safety net fully protects society’s most vulnerable.

Tonight we recommit ourselves to a pledge that JUFJ has made along with 300 other individuals and faith, neighborhood, political, service, and business organizations in the District of Columbia:

Creed of a Just and Inclusive Community:

We are committed to realizing a vision of the District of Columbia as a “city on a hill,” a model of justice, inclusion, and compassion; a community which respects the rights and dignity of all its members while striving for the common good.

We believe that such a community:

- Ensures a secure and affordable home to all;
- Provides adequate jobs, a living wage, and income security for all;
- Provides all with the education and training necessary for an improved quality of life;
- Guarantees environmental health and safety to all;
- Ensures that all have access to excellent medical care;
- Remedies the diseases of substance abuse and mental illness with encouragement, support, and quality treatment services;
- Provides our incarcerated brothers and sisters with humane treatment and the opportunity for rehabilitation;
- Maintains an effective “social safety net” that can minimize the impact of crises on the lives of women, men, and children; and
- Exercises self-determination vis-à-vis local budget, policies, and law.

Closing: Jacob Feinspan, Jews United for Justice

Song: La'shanah Ha'ba'ah Birushalayim

Led by Cantor Charlie Bernhardt and Ben Dreyfus

La'shanah ha'ba'ah, la'shanah ha'ba'ah, la'shanah ha'ba'ah birushalayim (x2)

La'shanah ha'ba'ah birushalayim ha'benuyah,

La'shanah ha'ba'ah birushalayim ha'benuyah!

Next year in a rebuilt Jerusalem!

Glossary

Berakhah: Hebrew word for “blessing.”

Bread for the City: A nonprofit organization that provides vulnerable residents of Washington, DC, with comprehensive services, including food, clothing, medical care, and legal and social services.

DC Healthcare Alliance: A public program for District residents who do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid. The health benefits are provided by private doctors, clinics, and hospitals in DC.

Haggadah: The Hebrew word for “telling” or “narrative,” it is the name of the text that sets out the order of the Passover seder. Reading the Haggadah fills the commandment that each Jew must “tell your child” about the liberation from slavery in Egypt as described in the Book of Exodus.

Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP): HPAP enables low- to moderate-income families purchase homes in the District of Columbia. Qualified applicants receive no-interest loans for down payment and closing costs to purchase single-family houses, condominiums, or cooperative units.

Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF): The HPTF is a source of public funds intended to produce and preserve units of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents. At least 40% of all funds must be used to serve households with incomes below 30% of the area median income (AMI).

Local Rent Supplement program: A program created in 2006 to give rent supplements to very low-income DC residents on the housing wait list (about 52,000 people at that time). The program also contains incentives for the development of new low-income housing units.

Omer: The seven-week period between Passover and Shavuot. An omer is a unit of measure. In the days of the Temple, an omer of barley was harvested and brought to the Temple as an offering on the second day of Passover. Each day of the omer is counted, which reminds us of the link between Passover and Shavuot— that the redemption from slavery was not complete until the Jews received the Torah.

Passover: The name of this holiday comes from the Hebrew word “pesach,” whose root meaning is to pass through, to pass over, to exempt, or to spare, referring to the story that Angel of Death passed over the homes of the Jews when slaying the first-born sons in Egypt, the 10th plague. Pesach is also the term for the sacrificial offering of a lamb that was made in the Temple on this holiday.

Roasted shank bone: (called *zeroa* in Hebrew) A roasted shank bone symbolizing the Pesach sacrifice, a lamb that was offered in the Temple, then roasted and eaten as part of the seder meal. Since the destruction of the Temple, the *zeroa* serves as a reminder of the sacrifice; it is not eaten or handled during the seder. Vegetarians often replace the shank bone with a beet, as mentioned in the Talmud.

Safety net: Programs designed to provide a minimal level of security or support to the poor or people vulnerable to falling into poverty, in areas such as food, shelter, education, childcare, and healthcare.

Section 8: Now known as the Housing Choice Voucher Program, this is a federal housing program that provides housing assistance to low-income renters (below 50% of the Average Median Income, or AMI) and homeowners in the form of rental subsidies, limiting the monthly rent payment of the recipient to 30% of her or his income.

Seder: A Hebrew word meaning “order,” this is what we call the ritual festive meal eaten the first one or two nights of Passover. The meal is called a seder because there is specific information that must be included and tradition has come to specify a particular order.

Sefer HaChinuch: Hebrew for “The Book of Education,” it is a medieval Jewish commentary published in 13th century Spain that discusses the 613 commandments given to the Jews in the Torah (the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).

Shavuot: Also known as the Festival of Weeks, it occurs seven weeks after Passover. Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah at Sinai. The holiday traditionally begins by staying awake all night and studying sacred texts.

SOME: So Others Might Eat is an interfaith, community-based organization that offers a comprehensive, holistic approach to caring for the homeless and extremely poor citizens of DC. SOME provides three categories of services: emergency (meals, clothing, and health care), recovery (job training, addiction treatment, counseling, and other support services to permanently move its clients from the street to independent, self-reliant living), and stability (long-term affordable housing).

SSI/Supplemental Security Insurance: Part of the federal Social Security system, SSI is a cash payment program for aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income.

Talmud: Derived from the Hebrew word for study, the Talmud is a collection of texts that record the oral law and commentary on it.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): TANF is a federally-funded program that gives block grants to states to support poor families with children. Each state maintains its own eligibility requirements, sets payment amounts, and decides what services to offer. While on aid, there is a component requiring non-exempt clients to be enrolled in a job-training program or attempt to find employment.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC): WIC is a federal assistance program providing healthcare and nutrition to low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, and to infants and children under the age of five who are part of families earning below 185% of the federal poverty level.

Department of Health and Human Services 2009 Poverty Guidelines:

Persons in Family or Household	48 Contiguous States and D.C.
1	\$10,830
2	14,570
3	18,310
4	22,050
5	25,790
6	29,530
7	33,270
8	37,010
>8 persons	Add \$3,740 for each additional person

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009 Poverty Guidelines released February 28, 2009.

Congratulations

UFCW Local 400

Is Proud to Join with the

Jews United for Justice 9th Annual Community Labor Seder



*Sharing Your Vision of working for Justice
across America,
bringing Communities together.*

 **UFCW**
a VOICE for working America
Local 400

C. James Lowthers
President

Thomas P. McNutt
Secretary-Treasurer

4301 Garden City Drive, Landover, MD 20785 301-459-3400
www.ufcw400.org



Please join DC Vote for
**DC Emancipation
Advocacy Day on April 16**

as we advocate for
legislation that will bring
DC closer to achieving full
democracy.

Registration and Information:
www.dcvote.org



In solidarity
with Jews United for Justice
everywhere



the
hotel, restaurant, laundry, parking
and food service members
of Local 25 UNITE HERE
wish you a very Happy Passover!

**D.C. Employment
Justice Center**

Securing, protecting, and promoting
workplace justice in the
D.C. metropolitan area

Free Legal Advice on Employment Law Matters
at our Workers' Rights Clinic:
Bread for the City
1525 7th St., NW
6-7:30 p.m. Every Wednesday

(202) 828-WORK • www.dcejc.org • e-mail: justice@dcejc.org

DC EMPLOYMENT
JUSTICE CENTER

DC Jobs with Justice

celebrates

***Jews United for Justice
and the
2010 Labor Seder***

*Putting faith to action to
save our social safety net.*

888 16th St, NW suite 520
Washington, DC 20006
202-974-8224
www.dcjwj.org



Congratulations to JUFJ for your powerful public service

*32BJ is united with you to continue improving life for
working families and our communities*



Michael P. Fishman
President

Valarie Long
Vice President

Jaime Contreras
District Chair

NEXT YEAR IN DC!

with JUFJ

Steve Metalitz / Kit Gage



Where giving and opportunity meet

With assets of \$330 million, the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region is a “community of givers” dedicated to giving back and making our communities better places to live.

Join us by learning more at www.thecommunityfoundation.org.

Let's Get Engaged...

in study...in worship...in social action...in
community



An egalitarian synagogue founded in 1975, serving the
GLBT community and all who wish to participate in an
inclusive environment.

Rabbi Toby Manewith

Erev Shabbat Services, 8:30 pm, Fridays

Shabbat Morning Services, 10:00 am, 2nd & 4th

Saturdays

DCJCC, 16th and Q Streets, NW

Bet Mishpachah is proud to partner with Jews United for
Justice on many areas of shared values and mutual
interest.

www.betmish.org

The Jewish Labor Committee

Putting Jewish Values To Work

www.jewishlaborcommittee.org

Great Job

JUFJ!



We
Applaud
your
efforts
to pre-
serve
the
Safety
Net!

JFGH is a non-sectarian, nonprofit agency providing
support and services to individuals with disabilities in the
Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.



HIAS

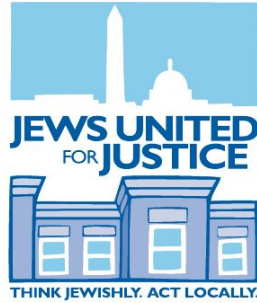
*We must remind the world that the story of Passover is not
over. Its enduring message demands that we never forget that
'you shall not oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in
Egypt.'*

— Rabbi Morris Allen, March 21st 2010, Washington DC.



Join HIAS Young Leaders DC to advocate for
refugees and immigrants, globally and locally.
Visit youngleaders.hias.org for more
information.

Congratulations to JUFJ's hardworking volunteers and staff
for another timely and powerful
Labor Seder!



The Board of Directors of Jews United for Justice

Shelley Moskowitz, *President*
David Mackoff, *Treasurer*
Adina Rosenbaum, *Secretary*

Elissa Froman
Sharlene Kranz
Michael Rubin
Rabbi Bob Saks

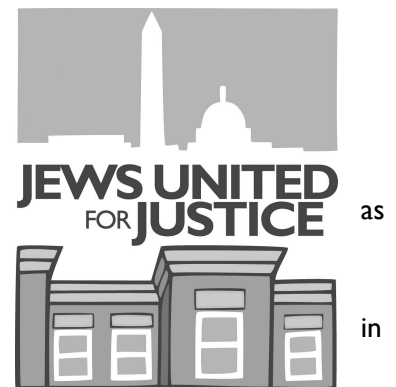
Sy Sokatch
Jevera Temsky
Jon Wheeler

The staff and board of Jews United for Justice would like to thank: Rabbi Esther Lederman; all of our seder speakers and participants; Henry Silberman and the rest of the staff at Adas Israel Congregation; all of our seder cosponsors, and our Labor Seder coordinator, Grace Wallack.

Thanks also to our wonderful labor seder volunteers: Laura Bellows, Nathaniel Berman, Cantor Charlie Bernhardt, Elina Bravve, Rivka Burstein-Stern, Jacob Diamond, Emily Dorfman, Ben Dreyfus, Ben Firschein, Max Frantz, Rachael Freedman, Elissa Froman, Emily Goodstein, Sarah David Heydemann, Ann Hoffman, Jodie Honigman, John Huennekens, Rachel Hutt, Lori Leibowitz, Ken Lemberg, Rachael Levy, Liza Lieberman, Ilana Lipsett, David Mackoff, Joelle Novey, Tovah Pentelovich, Louis Perwein, Jessie Posilkin, David Rabin, Scott Rechler, Roberta Ritvo, Dahlia Rockowitz, Adina Rosenbaum, Josh Rosenthal, Mike Rubin, Miriam Savad, Susan Shuller, Roz Seidenstein, Brynn Shader, Elissa Silverman, Alanna Sobel, Leah Staub, Emmy Stup, Ariela Summit, Jevera Temsky, Jodi Tirengel, Barbara Weitz, and everyone else who helped make tonight's seder a success!

Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) leads Washington-area Jews to act on our shared Jewish values by pursuing justice and equality in our local community.

Through educational forums, programs, and campaigns, JUFJ has worked for the past ten years to build relationships and mobilize the Jewish community to demand and win meaningful change for all area residents. Our work is grounded in Jewish text as well as the Jewish experience of both prejudice and privilege, weaving together and strengthening members' progressive and Jewish identities. JUFJ enables Jews to practice and live out our sacred tradition of *tikkun olam*/repairing the world by working solidarity with local partners for a more just and equal metropolitan community.



JUFJ envisions a healthy, fair, and safe Washington area where the rights and dignity of all residents are respected and their voices are heard, where working hard guarantees a decent living, and where everyone has access to high-quality health care and affordable housing. We believe that the only way to build such a community is for Jews to join with our neighbors to demand social change.

Jews United for Justice ☆ 1413 K St NW, 5th Floor ☆ Washington, DC 20005 ☆ 202-408-1423 ☆ info@jufj.org

www.jufj.org

THINK JEWISHLY. ACT LOCALLY.