



AND WE



CRY OUT



EX 2:23



**JEWS UNITED FOR JUSTICE
2020 LABOR SEDER**

original art by Ellen Weinstein

2020 LABOR SEDER SPONSORS

SIGNS

SEIU 32BJ is the largest union of property service workers in the U.S. We are united to raise standards at work and improve conditions in our communities so that one day “working poor” will be a contradiction in terms. seiu32bj.org

OUTSRETCHED ARM

American Postal Workers Union represents more than 200,000 USPS employees and retirees, and nearly 2,000 private-sector mail workers. For more than four decades, APWU has fought for dignity and respect on the job for the workers we represent, as well as for decent pay and benefits and safe working conditions. As an AFL-CIO affiliate, the APWU supports the struggle for social and economic justice for all working families. apwu.org

James & Hoffman is a D.C. based law firm with a nationwide litigation practice and a focus on creative resolution of labor and employment disputes. Rooted in an abiding commitment to workers’ rights, we fight to protect the legal rights of all workers to fair wages, freedom from discrimination, safe and healthful working conditions, and justice in the workplace. jamhoff.com

Joshua and Nicole Mintz

Temple Micah is a spirited congregation, striving to create a Judaism infused with meaning and relevance. Together, we attempt to answer the question of what it means to live a fully American and a fully Jewish life. Temple Micah is a welcoming Jewish home where you can bring your whole self and be your best self. We approach our Judaism with a lightness of heart and a sense of humor. In everything we do, we challenge ourselves to do better. To us, Reform is a verb. templemicah.org

MIGHTY HAND

Avi Wallace

Bet Mishpachah is a congregation for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Jews, and their friends and allies including 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 gather for weekly Shabbat services, educational and social events, social action/social justice community service, and holidays. betmish.org

Carol Stern and Miriam Eisenstein

Dan Mauer

Kehila Chadasha is the Washington area’s “shul without walls.” A small and warm community, Kehila meets in schools, homes, community centers and parks. Kehila offers activities for a wide range of ages, interests and levels of religious observance. We have stimulating adult lectures, exciting Sunday School field trips, creative family onegs and holiday observances that reflect our rich heritage and culture. e-kehila.org

ONE DC's mission is to exercise political strength to create and preserve racial and economic equity in Shaw and the District. They seek to create a community in DC that is equitable for all. The people of ONE DC envision the nation's capital as a place where low income, poor, and immigrant communities are organized, educated, and trained to take action to create and preserve social and economic equity. onedconline.org

Sheet Metal Workers Local 100 represents Skilled Construction Workers in the Sheet Metal Industry. Sheet Metal Workers' Local 100 provide the best trained and safest workers in the industry. We are committed to state-of-the art training for our members. We care about quality construction because we live in the communities where we build. So from drawing board to grand opening, the members of the Washington D.C. Building and Construction Trades' Council are true partners in the growth of our community. smart100.org

LIBERATOR

The Flemberg Family

Joel Cohen

Temple Rodef Shalom is a thriving, vibrant, inclusive, diverse, tolerant, sacred, loving Reform Jewish congregation located in the Northern Virginia suburbs just outside Washington, DC. Since our founding in 1962, we have grown into the largest Jewish congregation in Virginia, serving over 1,700 households from McLean, Arlington, Falls Church, Vienna and other nearby Northern Virginia communities. templerodefshalom.org

Washington Hebrew Congregation finds meaning in our relationship to worship, to knowledge, to social justice, but most of all in our relationship to one another. A vibrant community that is as diverse as it is inclusive, as large as it is intimate, as concerned with the world as it is with the needs of every individual; it is a community that is caring and compassionate. whctemple.org

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Sharon and Jay Levy

UNITE HERE Local 25

We have come together at this time for many reasons. A traditional Passover seder is a festive meal in which we remember and reenact the ancient Jewish story of liberation from slavery in Egypt. Over the centuries, thousands of different versions of the Passover haggadah, or “narrative,” have been written. This haggadah has been prepared to bring the Jewish, labor, and activist communities together to retell the story of the Exodus in a time many of us feel we are actually living that story. Like the story of our time, the Passover story is one of a tyrannical leader, persecution, oppressive policies, impossible work demands, misery, destruction, and finally, we pray... a successful struggle for freedom.

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

B'CHOL DOR VA'DOR / IN EVERY GENERATION

Welcome! The Jewish people have been preparing for this seder for thousands of years.

For some of us, this year marks the first time we have attended a seder, or the first time we have celebrated a seder alone or online. Some of us have sat at a seder table dozens of times with hundreds of people. No matter your journey to this moment, we are here together, in spirit, to hope, struggle, and glimpse liberation.

The traditional haggadah exhorts us: *B'chol dor vador chayav adam lirot et atzmo k'eelu yu yatzah miMitzrayaim*. In every generation we must each see ourselves as though we ourselves were freed from Mitzrayim.¹

Torah calls us to act on this memory of being vulnerable, feared outsiders. In the Jews United for Justice community, we live this out by working with people who are calling out today from the narrow and oppressive places of our society. As Jews, our memories of oppression, our story of liberation, and our history of being liberation workers in many movements and lands are fundamental to who we are and how we must live. In the next generation we promise to show up with the resolve of a people who were once denied our power.

So tonight, we weave together the stories of generations past and present. As we move through the seder we will celebrate our ancestors, our elders, ourselves, and our future, remembering moments of resilience and hope amidst despair.

♪ **HINEI MA TOV** ♪

(Traditional)

[Click here to listen to this song.](#)

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

(How good and pleasant it is for siblings to sit together!)

¹ In our haggadah tonight we use this ancient name, which means “the narrow place” and suggests constriction and oppression, instead of “Egypt,” to avoid allusion to a modern country that is as much a place of struggle for liberation as any in our world today.

HADLAKAT NEROT / CANDLE LIGHTING

READER:

In the light of the Passover candles,
We celebrate the spirit of freedom,
Our candles a beacon of liberation
For our people, for all people.
It is our task to make from fire
Not an all-consuming blaze
But the light in which we see each other.
Each of us distinct, yet
Each of us bound up in one another

Adapted from Seder for a Better World by The Workmen's Circle

The lighting of the candles separates the shadow from the light, Shabbat from the rest of the week, normal days from holy days, spring from winter, justice from oppression. It marks a moment of difference. May the light of the candles guide us in our pursuit of justice and show us the future that we are building together.

As the candles are lit, we say together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב

*Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.*

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe,
who makes us holy with *mitzvot* and commands us to kindle the festival light.

SHEHECHEYANU / ARRIVING IN GRATITUDE

The *Shehecheyanu* blessing gives thanks for the arrival of any long-awaited occasion such as a holiday or a new beginning, and honors the sacredness of each moment that arises anew. Though the moment we are living through is almost too hard for words, we are grateful to be experiencing it together, in whatever form that means for us this year, as part of a community committed to the ongoing fight for justice, compassion, and love.

Let us say together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה

*Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam,
shehecheyanu vekiyemanu 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.

BLESSING OVER THE FIRST CUP

All are invited to pour a little grape juice or wine into your glass.

READER:

As is appropriate for free people relaxing over a shared meal, we drink four cups of wine or grape juice during the seder.

The first cup is for our ancestors, those who persevered in hard times and those who came before us in the work of repairing the world. Our ancestors dreamed of a better world and they worked for those dreams: they organized, resisted, walked off the job, raised money, raised kids, spoke truth to power, migrated, ran for office, fed their communities, taught their friends, sued, sat down in the streets, marched. They joined forces with other dreamers of every class, race, and religion. When they won, they rejoiced. When it was hard, they had each other. Like the Israelites at the Red Sea, they sang, they danced, they loved.

READER:

We raise our first glass to all those who came before us.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ 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.

HAVRUTA/ MEETING

Relationships are at the heart of community organizing. Let's take a few minutes to connect with the other people at our seder or with our own selves:

If you are sharing your seder with others, please start by sharing your name and how you are connected to this community or came to attend this seder. Then, or if you are celebrating by yourself, please share or reflect quietly on a favorite Passover memory or a question you have about the holiday.

MAGGID / THE TELLING

AVADIM HAYINU / WE WERE ENSLAVED

READER:

The ancient story of our ancestors is interwoven with the stories of every generation.

ALL:

We were slaves to Pharaoh in the land of Mitzrayim, and the Holy One took us out of there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. And if the Holy One had not freed our ancestors, we and our children and our children's children might be there still.

READER:

All of us are descended from ordinary people who dreamed and fought for a better future. We live in a world shaped by their wild successes even as it is still imperfect. We are the fulfillment of their dreams just as we are the ancestors of future generations who will inherit the world we make today.

ALL:

As Emma Lazarus, the Sephardi-American activist and poet of the Statue of Liberty wrote, "Until we are all free, we are none of us free."

And as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said "no one is free until we are all free."

READER:

Jewish tradition teaches: *Lo alecha ham'lacha ligmor v'lo atah ven chorin l'hibatel mimenah*: we are not required to finish the work but we cannot quit either. The enslaved Israelites stood up to Pharaoh and fled Mitzrayim — but we are still none of us truly free.

This work will not be completed in our lifetime. And yet, each step toward freedom, toward a more just society, is worthwhile. By remembering what we have already done, we grow stronger for the next step.

♪ AVADIM HAYINU / WE WERE SLAVES ♪

[Click here to listen to this song.](#)

עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ

עַתָּה - בְּנֵי חוֹרִין

Avadim hayinu, hayinu

Ata b'nai horin, b'nai horin

Avadim hayinu, ata, ata, b'nai horin

Avadim hayinu, ata, ata b'nai horin, b'nai horin

(Once we were slaves. Today we are free people!)

READER:

How did the Israelites come to be enslaved? Like many immigrant families, Joseph and his brothers came to Mitzrayim in search of safety and sustenance. They needed food during a great famine in their homeland.

At first, they were welcomed fully. But as time passed and the Pharaoh who had welcomed them died, they came to be feared as strangers and threats. The new Pharaoh plotted to neutralize the imagined threat by oppressing the Israelites with harsh labor in the fields and cities, in agriculture and construction.

Pharaoh's xenophobia turned murderous. He sought to rip families apart and stamp out the hope of the next generation. Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, "Every boy that is born to the Israelites shall be thrown into the Nile, but let every girl live."

In those days of terror, women resisted. The midwives Shifra and Puah helped Israelite mothers birth safely. Children were hidden. When one woman's baby son could no longer be hidden at home, Yocheved put him in a basket and placed it among the reeds of the Nile. His oldest sister, Miriam, watched. Parents and children separated: a story we still know all too well.

Pharaoh's daughter Batya went to the river to bathe and found the baby. She named him Moses, which means "drawn from water," and vowed to raise him as her own. Miriam stepped out of the reeds and offered her own mother as a nursemaid — and so the baby was raised both a child of slaves and a child of privilege.

KARPAS / HOPE

The parsley or other green vegetable on our seder plate symbolizes spring and renewal. We dip it in salt water to remember the tears of anguish, and also of hope, shed by our ancestors and all downtrodden peoples. Sometimes our tears water the sprouts of action, as it is written in Psalm 126: *hazor'im b'dimah, b'rinah yiktzoru*, those who plant tears will reap joy.

Our suffering and our hope are intertwined. One enslaved woman's baby, threatened with death, finds safety in the arms of a princess.

Take your green vegetable and dip it in the salt water.

We say together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei p'ri ha-adamah.

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

YACHATZ / BREAKING THE MATZAH

Matzah is an iconic Passover symbol. Paradoxically, this bread of affliction that we ate as enslaved people is also the bread of liberation eaten by people entering freedom. The bread is unleavened because the Israelites fleeing Pharaoh had no time for their bread to rise. We break the middle matzah and keep one half before us so as we tell the story of our affliction we see a visible symbol of brokenness before us.

All are invited to break the matzah now, keeping one half on the plate and reserving the other half to serve as the afikoman.

SEDER PLATE

Each food on the seder plate represents an aspect of the ancient Exodus story.



Matzah is an iconic Passover symbol and something of a paradox. This bread of affliction — that we ate as slaves — is also the bread of liberation — eaten by people entering freedom. The bread is unleavened, because the Israelites fleeing Pharaoh had no time for their bread to rise.



The **maror**, or bitter herb, represents the bitterness of the enslaved Jewish people's lives.



The **karpas**, or green vegetable, symbolizes the arrival of spring and hope for the future.



The **charoset**, a sticky mixture of fruits and nuts, recalls the mortar the Israelite slaves used to make and hold together the bricks they used in their work. Jews around the world use a dazzling variety of fruit and flavors to make *charoset*. The deliciousness of the *charoset* reminds us that all work — even hard labor — should have meaning, dignity, and value.



A **roasted shank bone** or **beet** symbolizes the Passover sacrifice, a lamb whose blood served as a sign to spare the Israelites during the final plague. The Hebrew word for this bone, *zeroa*, is the same word the haggadah uses to describe God's outstretched arm (*zeroa netuya*) that delivered us into freedom. Tonight we vow to extend our own arms and commit ourselves to ending injustices.



The origins of the hard-boiled **egg** are mysterious. Over time the egg has come to symbolize springtime — the continuous cycle of life and fertility.



The **orange** is a modern addition, by Susannah Heschel, symbolizing the fruitfulness of including all the “segments” of our community — women, queer and trans Jews, Jews of Color, Jews with disabilities, and others who were historically marginalized. May we repudiate oppression and exclusion as if we are spitting out bitter seeds.

READER:

Time passed, and Moses grew up. He watched the enslaved Israelites toil. One day it all changed: he saw one of Pharaoh's overseers beating one of the Israelite slaves and a rage rose in him. Moses killed the overseer and fled Mitzrayim. A lifetime of privilege melted away in the face of the violence of oppression. Sometimes we need to be confronted with an unacceptable status quo before we are ready to act for justice.

As the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote: "We must affirm that every human life is a reflection of divinity, and every act of injustice mars and defaces the image of God in man." For as Torah teaches, "God created humans in God's own image, in the image of God, God created them" (Genesis 1:27).

ARBA KUSHIYOT / FOUR QUESTIONS

The traditional four questions ask about the ways tonight is different from all other nights. Today, we weave together some traditional answers with JUFJ's answers to how we organize for justice and equality in our region.

ALL: On all other nights we eat leavened bread or matzah. Why on this night only matzah?

Matzah is the bread of affliction — the simple food of a people with few resources and no time to cook. But is also the bread of liberation — eaten by people rushing to freedom. There was no time to let the dough rise as the Israelites prepared to leave Mitzrayim.

Matzah is a symbol of necessity. When you are surviving day to day or leaving behind the life you've known or living through a pandemic, you must work with the resources you have. Community organizing, too, is about working with what we have — as little as flour and water — to gather ordinary people who can together make power yield to conscience. In a world full of injustice, with finite resources, JUFJ's commitment to making change compels us to be thrifty and inventive.

ALL: On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables. Why on this night do we make certain to eat bitter herbs?

Maror, the bitter herb, reminds us of the bitterness of our ancestors' enslavement — and of the bitter struggles that we face today. May the day soon come when the bitterness of poverty, racism, and pandemic ceases; when everyone in our region has what they need to live and thrive, and a real voice in democracy no matter the color of their skin, where they are from, or how much money they have.

The JUFJ community works to show up proudly as Jews to bring about that day. We vow that the bitterness of injustice will not leave our tongues as long as anyone is forced to taste it. We are committed to using our power to amplify those who have been systematically shut out, silenced, or ignored.

ALL: On all other nights we dip food only once, if at all. Why on this night do we dip twice?

First we dip our parsley in salt water to mingle tears with new life and renewal. Then, we combine *maror*, the bitter herb, with *charoset*, a sweet fruit and spice mix. The *charoset* symbolizes the mortar our ancestors used in their forced labor and reminds us that the bitterness of slavery was sweetened by the hope of freedom.

Although our world and our region are heart-sickeningly broken, JUFJ's organizing strives to remain optimistic and pragmatic. Our fear, anger, and frustration are real. But when we season them with hope, determination, and vision — not erasing what's hard but trying to work with it — they fuel our work for change.

Dipping and mixing also represents our diversity as a community. Tradition teaches that we left Mitzrayim and stood together at Sinai with a “mixed multitude.” In our JUFJ community today, we are religious and secular Jews, non-Jewish fellow travelers and allies, people of many genders and sexualities, white Jews and Jews of Color.

Every single person in our community has the capacity to create change, take action, bring others into our community, follow and lead, and continually hone our knowledge and skills. We are — each one of us — needed, especially in this moment.

ALL: On all other nights we eat sitting up. Why on this night do we recline?

Long ago, the wealthy rested on couches during their feasts. Slaves were not allowed to rest, even while they ate. Though we may not be eating on couches today, we celebrate the freedom to observe these seders, even in these constrained circumstances. Whether virtual or in person, connection, food, discussion, and rest are all vital to continuing our struggles for freedom in a world where many are still oppressed.

Community means more than friendships. It means our liberation is bound up in the liberation of others. JUFJ works in partnership with all kinds of people and organizations because none of us has the power to make change alone. We must build relationships of mutual respect, humility, and commitment — and also take time to connect as human beings.

May this seder help us all get up afterward, ready to continue our work for justice.

KOREICH / A SANDWICH OF SYMBOLS

Hillel, an early Jewish proto-rabbi, began the custom of making a kind of sandwich from the Passover foods. Remembering his innovation, we make sandwiches out of matzah, *maror* and *charoset*, tasting freedom in one bite. Everyone is invited to make a sandwich and reflect on your own vision of what freedom looks and tastes like.

BLESSING OVER THE SECOND CUP

All are invited to pour a little grape juice or wine into your glass.

This second cup is for our own elders, the people who founded our community and led our first campaigns.

JUFJ was founded by a small group of people who heard the call of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel to work for social justice in our time. They emerged from a process of learning, ready to show up in their generation.

READER:

We raise our second glass to those who founded and sustained our community in its early years, nurturing the seed of what it was to become.

בָּרוּךְ 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 second cup.

READER:

Back in Mitzrayim, our story continues:

Years went on. The Israelites cried out for freedom. Moses in exile heard that cry — whether through the miraculous presence of the Divine or a nagging conscience inside — and knew he had to return and face Pharaoh. He asked himself, as many of us have at times, “who am I to be able to do this?” Yet we are all of us capable of being part of the struggle for liberation. We do not stand alone.

Moses went to Pharaoh and cried, “Let my people go!” Pharaoh refused. God responded with escalating tactics — a series of ten plagues. The ten plagues devastated Mitzrayim and opened the way to our people’s liberation.

When unjust power is entrenched, it takes struggle to uproot it. All the people of Mitzrayim suffered because Pharaoh would not free our people — and our joy at liberation must always be tempered with awareness of the costs and collateral damage.

Today we list ten struggles plaguing us all today and invite everyone to imagine that we are Pharaoh, facing a choice and being pressured to act.

Although it is most certainly a plague, we have not included the novel coronavirus in this list of ten plagues. This disease was not brought upon us — or anyone else — as punishment, in the way Torah tells us the ancient plagues were visited purposefully on our oppressors. We are all in this together. Instead, we recite a list of societal plagues that have magnified and multiplied the devastating effects of this pandemic.

We dip a finger in our glass and take out a drop for each plague. Our happiness cannot be complete while injustices persist. May these plagues push us to act.

ESSER MAKOT / THE 10 PLAGUES

1. Racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, and hate
2. Private profit before human lives
3. Exploitative low-wage jobs
4. Homelessness, eviction, displacement, and un-affordable housing
5. Corruption and money in politics
6. The criminal injustice system
7. Inequitable educational systems
8. A broken immigration system and a tattered social safety net
9. Gender-based violence and discrimination
10. Environmental destruction

READER:

Only after the tenth and most devastating plague, the killing of the first-born sons of Mitzrayim, did Pharaoh relent. The Israelites packed and fled. No time to let the bread rise, no time to sweep the floor, no time to let the news sink in. Like many of us, our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, or before, and like today's refugees and immigrants, they went out of Mitzrayim.

Once the Israelites left, Pharaoh changed his mind yet again. He gathered his armies to give chase. Soon the Israelites stood with the Red Sea before them and Pharaoh's armies bearing down behind.

Sometimes there is nothing to do but to make a new way forward. Tradition teaches that Moses stretched his staff out over the water and that one person, Nachshon, perhaps followed by his tribe, walked into the sea. Only when he was up to his nose and about to have to swim did the waters open up. The Israelites followed through the parted waters onto dry ground.

ALL:

We honor those today who let go of everything but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought, who became other...

— Marge Piercy, Ashkenazi-American poet, novelist, liturgist, and activist

DAYEINU / IT'S (NEVER) ENOUGH!

Though *dayeinu* means "it would have been enough," we know that each step toward our liberation was necessary but not sufficient. Winning is important, even when it is not the end of the story. When we and our partners win, we move real resources, build power, engage and excite people, change the narrative about what's possible, and set a precedent for a more powerful next step. We celebrate our community's many successes over this last year, even as we redouble our efforts for the struggles we face ahead.

Let us sing:

🎵 **DAYEINU** 🎵

[Click here to listen to this song.](#)

אלו הוציאנו ממצרים ... דַּיְנוּ
אלו נתן לנו את־השַׁבָּת ... דַּיְנוּ
אלו נתן לנו את־התּוֹרָה ... דַּיְנוּ

Eelu hotzi'anu mi-Mitzrayim... Dayeinu
(If God had taken us out of Egypt... *Dayeinu*)

Eelu natan lanu et ha'Shabbat... Dayeinu
(If God had given us Shabbat... *Dayeinu*)

Eelu natan lanu et ha'Torah
(If God had given us the Torah... *Dayeinu*)

BLESSING OVER THE THIRD CUP

All are invited to pour a little grape juice or wine into your glass.

The third cup is for ourselves, for this community, gathered at our individual tables, on our screens, and in the virtual phonebanks, hearings, and meetings that continue even in this moment.

For as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote, “there is no limit to the concern one must feel for the suffering of human beings, that indifference to evil is worse than evil itself, that in a free society, some are guilty, but all are responsible.”

And as the great Black lesbian feminist author and activist Audre Lorde wrote, “Life is very short and what we have to do must be done in the now.”

We take responsibility for what must be done now. We are all ages, all colors, all kinds of backgrounds and stories. We are phone-callers, testifiers, sign-holders, fund-raisers, regular folks, policy wonks, parents and grandparents, aunties and friends and colleagues. And together we are what makes change possible.

READER:

We raise our third glass to each other, and the love, support, and resilience we share.

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 third cup.

HAVRUTA: TABLE DISCUSSION

If you have a discussion partner, take a few minutes to read this text out loud to each other and talk through some of the discussion questions.

This piece was taken from a conversation between Abigail Pogrebin and Rabbi Jeffrey Sirkman reflecting on how this Passover is (or isn't) different from all other Passovers:

We are going to open the door for Elijah, and if we ever needed the Messiah to come... we need it now. A great scholar — Harvard theologian Harvey Cox — writes about Elijah being the perennial no-show, and that's the lesson. The lesson isn't that Elijah is going to come; the lesson is that you're going to open the door, there's no Elijah, now what are you going to do?

Well, you have to live as though you are Elijah's emissary. You have to bring hope to a world that is dark. What do Jews do when the world is dark?... [W]e are going to look at a no-show again — Elijah's not going to be at the door — and we are going to say, OK, we know you didn't come, but we are going to try to act and live as if you did.

— Rabbi Jeffrey Sirkman, *The Forward*, March 30, 2020

Discussion Questions:

- What thoughts or feelings does this text spark for you?
- What are you doing to stay hopeful? How can others help create this hope for you?
- What can you do to “act and live” as if Elijah had come? What are some of the ways you want to push yourself to show up for justice right now and in the coming year?

CALL TO ACTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it crystal clear that we are all dependent on one other and on each other's physical, economic, social, and spiritual wellbeing, no matter where we come from, what we look like, or how much money we have. We know that the only way to truly address this crisis is through collective action to support and protect everyone in our region, especially those communities who are most vulnerable. We know this will require strong leadership from our local governments and powerful activism from everyday people to hold those governments accountable. And we also know that the choices our governments make now to help us weather the pandemic have the potential to chart a better course for the future of our communities once this crisis passes.

But we need you to make it happen. Please take action NOW:

If you live in Maryland:

Please use JUFJ's Action Alert to ask Governor Hogan and your state legislators to expand protections for some of the state's most vulnerable residents during the pandemic: jufj.org/hogan-response

All people have a right to be safe and to thrive in our state, regardless of immigration status or interaction with the criminal justice system. There is a public health crisis brewing in Maryland's jails and prisons because of the pandemic. Ask Governor Hogan to issue an executive order to dramatically reduce mass incarceration and get people in detention centers basic necessities like soap, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies: jufj.org/hogan-decarceration

If you live in DC:

Childcare is essential to families, but the pandemic has placed childcare providers in a precarious position. Shuttered childcare services would devastate DC families. Ask DC's Mayor and Council to provide urgently-needed relief: jufj.org/childcare-action

DC's primary is June 2, followed by a Ward 2 special election June 16, with most polling places closed due to the pandemic. Request an absentee ballot early at vote4dc.com, or download the "Vote 4 DC" smartphone app and request your ballot through your phone. You have until May 26 to request an absentee ballot and until election day to send the ballot in.

No matter where you live:

Sign up to get JUFJ emails — it's the best way to stay connected with opportunities to get involved and respond to the issues of the moment: jufj.org/email

And consider a gift to JUFJ to power our collective work for justice that is now more important than ever: jufj.org/donate

♪ **WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED** ♪

(Traditional melody with a few new lyrics)

[Click here to listen to this song.](#)

Chorus:

We shall not, we shall not be moved (2x)
Just like a tree that's planted by the water
We shall not be moved.

We're fighting for all people...
Though we may be distant...
We're all in this together...

BLESSING OVER THE FOURTH CUP

All are invited to pour a little grape juice or wine into your glass.

The fourth cup is for the youngest leaders in our community. We owe it to them to make a better present and future.

Young people are the leaders of the future and already the leaders of today. Youth movements are leading the way on preventing gun violence, fixing a broken immigration system, stopping disastrous climate change, and so much more. Young people can remind those of us who have grown cynical how things *should be*, for they have vision and the bravery to call for their ideals. It's time to take our youth seriously. JUFJ is tremendously proud of all the young people who have canvassed, testified, called, and organized for change with us

READER:

We raise our fourth glass to the young people who are leading the way.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי א-לֹהֵינוּ 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 fourth cup.

ELIJAH AND MIRIAM

We remember the young women of the Exodus story for their defiant spirits and their swift action. The midwives Shifra and Puah refused to follow Pharaoh's commands. Yocheved, Miriam, and Batya together defied Pharaoh's cruel decree. After the Israelites crossed the Sea of Reeds, Miriam led the women in spontaneous song. According to rabbinic legend, as long as Miriam lived, a well of water accompanied the wandering Israelites through the wilderness.

Legend says that the prophet Elijah appears in every generation to see if we have yet made a truly just society. This reminds us to keep alive the vision of a world radically perfected, loving, and just. How can we welcome that future? Each of us has something invaluable and unique to offer, something only we can bring to the table. How will we offer ourselves? How will we welcome each others' offerings? How can we be like Miriam, Shifra, Puah, Nachshon, Yocheved, and Batya in our times?

We sing together:

♪ ELIJAHU HANAVI / MIRIAM HANEVIAH ♪

[Click here to listen to this song.](#)

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתְּשֻׁבִי אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּלְעָדִי
בְּמַהְרָה יָבֹוא אֵלֵינוּ
עִם מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד

*Eliyahu hanavi, Eliyahu HaTishbi, Eliyahu HaGiladi
bim'herah ve'yameynu, yavo ei'leinu
im mashiach ben David, im mashiach ben David.*

Elijah the Prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah the Giladite
May he soon come to us, with Mashiach the son of David.

מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה עֵז וְזִמְרָה בְּיָדָהּ
מִרְיָם תִּרְקֹד אֶתְנוּ לְהַגְדִּיל זִמְרַת עוֹלָם
מִרְיָם תִּרְקֹד אֶתְנוּ לְתַקֵּן אֶת-הָעוֹלָם
בְּמַהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ הִיא תְּבִיאֵנוּ
אֶל מִי הַיְשׁוּעָה

*Miriam ha-ne'vi'ah, oz v'zimrah b'yadah.
Miriam tirkod itanu l'hagdil zimrat olam.
Miriam tirkod itanu l'taken et ha-olam.
Bimheyrach ve'yameynu hi te'vi'einu el mey ha-ye'shuah, el mey ha-ye'shuah.*

Miriam the prophet, strength and song in her hand
Miriam, dance with us to grow the world's song.
Miriam, dance with us to repair the world.
She will bring us to the waters of redemption, speedily and in our days.

NIRTZAH / CONCLUSION

READER:

Our challenge this year, as every year, is to feel as if we personally went free from Pharaoh. To show up as if the memory of enslavement was still bitter in our mouths, and the sweetness of freedom as real as fresh fruit. This year, may we work for justice and liberation for all people here in our homes, our city, our county, our state, our country, and our world.

We promise to each other:

ALL:

We are cultivating hope in our hearts.

We are building understanding and connection between people.

We are working for a vision of racial justice, economic justice, civil rights and democracy, and human rights for all.

READER:

The Passover seder ends with a statement of hope: *lashanah haba'ah Birushalayim!* Next year in a redeemed Jerusalem. The ancient phrase expresses our longing for a perfected world. May it come — for our region, our country, and our world — speedily and in our days.

We conclude our seder with thanks for our food, for our community, and for this work.

Let us sing together:

♪ B'RICH RACHAMANA / BLESSED IS THE COMPASSIONATE ONE ♪

[Click here to listen to this song.](#)

בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא
מְלַכָּא דְעָלְמָא
מְרִיחַ דְּהַאי פְּתָא

*Brich rachamana
malka d'alma
marei d'hai pita*

Blessed is the merciful One,
Ruler of the world,
Provider of this bread.

♪ SANCTUARY ♪

Oh Lord prepare me,
to be a sanctuary
pure and holy
tried and true.
And with thanksgiving,
I'll be a living sanctuary for You

OUR GRATITUDE

Although we were not able to gather in person this year, we are so grateful to the people and organizations who were ready to support us in making this the best Labor Seder yet. To:

All of the staff and clergy at Adas Israel Congregation for hosting us so lovingly and graciously year after year, and for allowing us to change our seder plans in response to current events.

Rabbi David Shneyer, who has led the music at our seders for many years.

Ben Dreyfus, who stepped in to record the beautiful songs accompanying this seder.

Ellen Weinstein created the beautiful poster and cover art. ellenweinstein.com

SEIU for supporting the printing of our past haggadahs. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) unites 2 million diverse members in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. SEIU members working in the healthcare industry, in the public sector and in property services believe in the power of joining together on the job to win higher wages and benefits and to create better communities while fighting for a more just society and an economy that works for all of us, not just corporations and the wealthy. seiu.org

Max's Kosher Catering, which has provided the food at our past seders and who were so flexible in this challenging time. theshalomgroup.com

All the JUFJ leaders and volunteers who were ready to donate their time as seder table captains and members of the kitchen, setup, and cleanup crews.

Thank you!

This haggadah was conceived, written, and compiled by Yael Horowitz, Elizabeth Heyman, Rebecca Ennen, and Rabbi Elizabeth Richman with inspiration and excerpts from the Freedom Seder Haggadah by our friends and colleagues at Jewish Community Action in Minnesota, and their Executive Director, Carin Mrotz.

2020 design by Chase Carter

ABOUT JEWS UNITED FOR JUSTICE

Since our founding in 1998, JUFJ has led Jews across Greater Washington and Baltimore to act on our shared Jewish values by pursuing justice and equality in our local community.

One day, everyone in the Washington-Baltimore region will have what they need to live and thrive, and a real voice in democracy, no matter the color of their skin, where they are from, or how much money they have. Our government will focus on equity and justice, and will respond to the needs of poor and working people, whether Black, brown, or white, who were once systemically barred from resources and power. We work so that our Jewish community is a proud and valued partner in bringing about that day through multiracial, multifait, cross-class movements working for social, racial, and economic justice.

Through organizing campaigns, education and training forums, and large-scale events, JUFJ builds relationships and mobilizes the Jewish community to demand and win meaningful change for all area residents. Our work is grounded in Jewish text and tradition, and the historical Jewish experience of both persecution and privilege. JUFJ helps Jews live out our sacred, shared tradition of tikkun olam by working in solidarity with local partners for a more just and equal region and world.

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