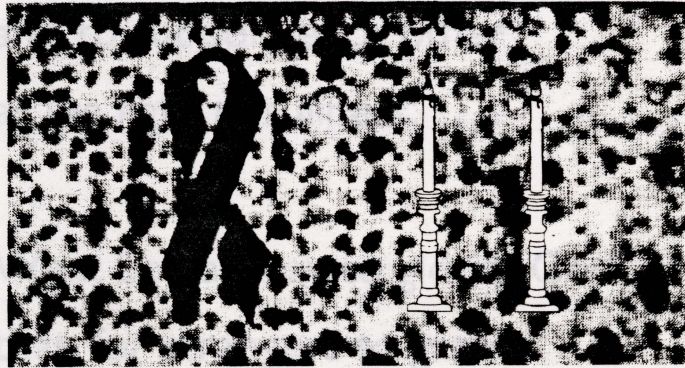


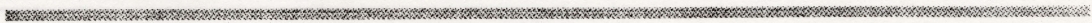
Eileen

SEDER OF HOPE

**AN INTERFAITH PASSOVER GATHERING
FOR PEOPLE TOUCHED BY AIDS**



Sponsored by the AIDS Task Force
of the Community Relations Council
The Jewish Federation of Rhode Island



SEDER OF HOPE

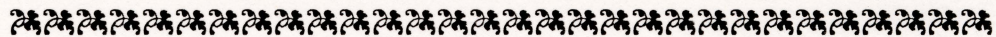
AIDS and Passover
have brought us together
to celebrate God
and the liberation of our people
and to support each other
as we fight this illness.

What better way to glorify God
than for strangers to gather
to love
support
and offer hope
to one another?



SEDER OF HOPE

- Leader: How good it is to gather, in a rainbow of affections and orientations, in the presence of a God who loves without limit and forever.
- Group: How sweet it is to gather, women and men together, in the presence of a God who transcends human limits and categories.
- Leader: How pleasant it is to gather together in the presence of a God who hears the prayers of all people.
- Group: How fine it is to gather, people with firm beliefs together with people with questions in their hearts, in the presence of a God who values deeds of caring and justice far above the recitation of creeds. ❀



- Leader: Tonight we join in an ancient ceremony - among the oldest on earth. For more than three thousand years we have come together to live and relive the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt.
- Group: The Haggadah is the script of a living drama, not the record of a dead event. In every generation we bring it alive by bringing to this ancient story the stories of our own lives.
- Leader: Defiant Jews in the ghettos, persecuted Russian Jews; yes, even Jews at Auschwitz boldly continued the Seder tradition. Wherever and whenever Jews have felt the sting of oppression- they have looked to the Haggadah for a message of hope.
- Group: Thus we gather here tonight to remember the suffering of ALL our enslaved ancestors.
- Leader: But tonight we add a new layer of meaning. Tonight we remember the immense suffering of our own time; the suffering that AIDS and HIV have brought to men, women and children the world over.
- Group: The history of Passover and the history of AIDS reveal the very best and very worst in people. Tonight, let us celebrate the liberation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt - and offer prayers that another liberation, from a virus that has taken so many of our loved ones, is close at hand. ❀

THE CALL

Reader: One empty chair stands at our table tonight - a symbol of those who are not here to celebrate and pray along with us. We invite the souls of all who are missing, the souls of all who were snatched from our midst, to sit with us together at the Seder. This invitation was uttered by Seder celebrants in the Vilna ghetto in 1942 . . . and we repeat it tonight. For on this night we are united in history and in hope.

Group: As we stood together in Egypt, at Sinai, at the gates of Auschwitz, so may we stand together today to resist illness and despair. For we will all be present at the final redemption. ❀

THIS WE ACKNOWLEDGE

Group:

*AIDS is like another world
A world of disease
A world of fear
A world of death*

*But AIDS is not of another world
AIDS touches our lives
Our families
Our communities
Our world*

*We dedicate ourselves
To those AIDS has taken from us
To their memories
To their courage
To their lives ❀*

Barry Block and Rabbi Daniel Freeland

THIS IS OUR CHALLENGE


Group:

*We are faced with a challenge,
We the lovers,
We the parents,
We the children,
We the friends,
We the neighbors,
We the faces in the crowd.*

*Each of us faces a responsibility;
Each of us shares a challenge
To enhance the lives
Of people living with AIDS.*

*In the face of darkness,
Through times of despair,
We create hope;
We make the light.*

*Together we can sing,
Together we can eat,
Together we can pray.*

*As we listen to the stories,
We hear.
As we share memories,
We smile.
A moment lived
Can be a moment of holiness.
Let each of us strive
To make it so *

Barry Block and Rabbi Daniel Frelander

KINDLING OF THE LIGHTS

Group: *Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu, me-lech ha-o-lam, a-sher
ki-de-sha-nu be-mits-vo-tav, ve-tsi-va-nu le-had-lik neir shel yom tov.*

Group: Praised be our Eternal God, Ruler of the universe: You hallow us with Mitzvot, and command us to kindle the holiday lights. ❀

KIDDUSH: BLESSING OVER THE WINE

Group: *Ba-ruch at-a, A-do-nai, Eh-lo-hei-nu meh-lech ha-o-lam, bo-rei p'ri
ha-gaf-en.*

Group: Blessed are you, O God, Ruler of the world, who forms the fruit of the vine.

(Drink the wine) ❀

KARPAS: PARSLEY OR GREEN VEGETABLE

Leader: Now we give thanks for the springtime of the year, when earth is no longer in bondage to winter, when leaves break free from buds and new life is everywhere.

Group: We pick up these fresh green sprigs of parsley and offer thanks. Spring is a time for hope and joy, but no life can be without some sorrow. We dip our green plant in this salt water, which is like tears, and remember sorrows past and present. ❀

(Dip and eat the parsley)



THE PASSOVER STORY

Leader: There is a beginning to everything, except to God, who was and is and will always be. The beginning of this story took place before any of us can remember - so long that if it had not been told over and over again, as we are telling it now, it would have been quite forgotten.

Group: Many years ago, a group of Jews lived in a country called Canaan. For one year, and then another, and another, in this country, there was no rain, and no food could grow. So the Jews went down to the land of Egypt, where there was water and food to spare. For many years, they lived in friendship with the Egyptians.

Leader: But the good years ended. The kind Pharaoh died and a cruel Pharaoh came to power. This Pharaoh said "There are too many of the children of Israel living among us. They are different from us, and their God is different from our Gods. We will force them to be our slaves. We will make them bake bricks and build cities and storehouses for us, and we will not pay them for their work."

Group: So it happened that the Israelites lost their freedom and worked as slaves in the hot Egyptian sun. When our people suffered so greatly, they called to God for help, and God heard their cry. God called one of our own people, Moses, to lead us, and Moses dared to say to Pharaoh, again and again. "Let my people go."

Song - Let my people go
Leader: Again and again, nine times, Egypt was struck with mighty plagues. Frogs overran the land. The rivers turned red as blood. Insects ate all the grain. Each time a new trouble came, Pharaoh was frightened and promised Moses he would set the Jews free. But nine times Pharaoh hardened his heart and broke his promise. At last Moses said to the children of Israel, "make yourselves ready tonight."

Group: On that night the worst trouble came to Egypt. The first born son in every Egyptian home died. But miraculously, the Israelites were spared. God had warned the Israelites to mark their homes with the blood of the lamb so their homes would be passed over. Then all the Jewish families, with their bundles on their shoulders, and God in their hearts, fled from the cruel Pharaoh.

Leader: On that night of marvels, the waters of the Red Sea parted to allow the Israelites to cross as if on dry land. Then the water flowed back so the Egyptians could not follow.

Group: Because the evil passed over their homes, because our ancestors passed over the Red Sea, we have ever after, in thankfulness, called our holiday Passover. Let us give thanks for our freedoms, then and now.

Leader: The Passover story is filled with miracles, and so is the story of AIDS. Manna from heaven, the parting of the Red Sea - these were miraculous events.

Group: Howard Ashman's beautiful songs for Aladdin, The Little Mermaid and Beauty and the Beast, Paul Monette's award winning book Becoming a Man, David Blitz's fashion creativity and David Potash's paintings. These people had the drive and hope to create beauty despite the relentless and aggressive virus within their bodies. Their courage is a miracle worthy of celebration tonight and all nights. ❀



EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS ON THE SEDER PLATE

Leader: What is the meaning of Pesah?

Reader: This **roasted lamb bone** is called Pesah. The blood of the lamb was used to mark Jewish homes and the Haggadah recalls that the Holy One "passed over" (pasach) the homes of the Israelites but smote the Egyptians. Tonight, however, it reminds us that AIDS "passes over" no one; all are vulnerable. No community has been spared.

Leader: What is the meaning of the **matzo** next to the Seder plate?

Reader: Matzo is unleavened bread, bread that has nothing to make it rise. Because our ancestors had to leave Egypt in such haste, they didn't have time to bake bread. Matzo is often called the bread of affliction. We in our day are afflicted by the scourge of AIDS, producing pain as hard and unyielding as matzo.

Leader: And what is the meaning of **moror**?

Reader: Moror means bitter herbs. We eat it to remind ourselves that the lives of our ancestors were made bitter by slavery in Egypt. Tonight let us remember those whose lives have been made bitter by illness and prejudice.

Leader: And what is the meaning of the **egg**?

Reader: The egg is the symbol of springtime and new life. We have it on our table as a sign of our thanksgiving and for spring. Let us always remember to reserve some small space for hope - even in the face of AIDS. And let us be grateful for those who work to conquer AIDS, and those who open their hearts to comfort the afflicted.

Leader: And what is the meaning of the **karpas**?

Reader: Earlier in the service we explained this is the green of springtime, hope and new life.

Leader: What is the **haroset**?

Reader: This fruit mixture represents the mortar (straw and clay) used to make bricks for the pharaohs. Tonight let it remind us of the walls some people build between themselves and those living with HIV and AIDS. ❧

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

- Leader: As Jews we know a probing mind can be an instrument of God's service. How is this Seder different from all other Seders?
- Group: At every Seder, we remember the oppressed among us and pray for their redemption. But this Seder is different because we focus on people oppressed by the plague of our times - AIDS and HIV. We sadly acknowledge that people touched by AIDS and HIV carry two heavy burdens - the burden of illness and the burden of hatred. We pray this Passover gathering helps heal some of the wounds caused by unnecessary hatred.
- Leader: All diseases are tragic and heartbreaking. Cancer, diabetes, heart disease - all lead to human suffering, tears, and death. Yet why is AIDS different from any other illness?
- Group: In America, AIDS has hit hardest gay men, I.V. drug users and people of color. Because AIDS has devastated these already oppressed groups, the haters of the world have used AIDS to advance their own intolerant beliefs. While all diseases bring suffering, no other disease of our time has brought the hatred, fear and prejudice of AIDS.
- Leader: On all other Seder nights we gather with friends and family to celebrate Passover. Why on this night are we gathering with friends and strangers alike?
- Group: AIDS and Passover have brought us together to celebrate God and the liberation of our people and to support each other as we fight this illness. Some of us are living with HIV or AIDS. Some of us love people with HIV or AIDS. And some of us have lost loved ones to AIDS. What better way to glorify God than for strangers to come together to love, support and offer hope to one another?
- Leader: On this Seder night we offer special blessings to those who have been touched by AIDS. But this is just one night. How can we continue to provide education for the uninfected and compassion for the sick?
- Group: As in the traditional Haggadah, not all questions are answered. Only by finding answers ourselves do we experience the true meaning of the Exodus. ❀

THE FOUR CHILDREN

Leader: Four times the Torah bids us to tell our children about the Exodus from Egypt. Four times the Torah repeats: "And you shall tell your child on that day . . ." From this our tradition infers there are different kinds of children: one who is wise, one who is wicked, one who is simple and one who does not know how to ask. Each child frames the question differently. Each demands a different response. Yet every child is a blessing. How we deal with diversity, and how we can discover the blessing within it, is perhaps the theme of the story of the four children.

Reader: The wise person asks about AIDS and HIV; What is this terrible disease and what do my values say about alleviating the suffering and pain of others?

Reader: It is the wise who want to know how they can be of service to others.

Reader: The wicked person says about AIDS and HIV: What is this disease to YOU?

Reader: Since the person says to YOU and not to US, he rejects the essentials of our faith; the unity of God and the community. To this person we respond: in a very real sense, we must understand we are all living with AIDS. The wicked withdraw from anything beyond themselves, and thus from their own redemption.

Reader: The simple person asks, "What is this suffering I see?"

Reader: To the person of open simplicity, educate by giving straightforward answers.

Reader: The fourth person does not know how to ask. In this case, you must begin to tell the story of AIDS yourself. ~~24~~

THE FIFTH CHILD

Leader: On this night, we remember a fifth child. This is the child who did not survive to ask. Therefore, we ask for that child: why? Yet we are like the simple child. We have no answer. We can only follow the footsteps of Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, who could not bring himself to speak of the Exodus at night until Ben Zoma explained it to him through the verse:

Group: "In order that you remember the day of your Exodus all the days of your life" (Dt. 16:3).

Reader: "The days of your life" indicates the daylight, those times when life is easy and pleasant. "All the days of your life" includes the night - the bad times as well. Especially then, in the times of pain and persecution, we must remember the miracle of freedom. May our Haggadah, our telling - of the Exodus this night, inspire us to faith and courage. ❀

THE TEN PLAGUES

Leader: Our glasses are filled with sweet wine. As we remember the ten plagues, we pour ten drops of our wine. In this way, we diminish our own pleasure and show we take no joy when others suffer. Each drop of wine represents hope and prayer that people will cast out the plagues that threaten everyone everywhere they are found, beginning in our own hearts.

Group:

*The making of war
The teaching of hate and violence
Pollution of the earth
Perversion of justice and government
Fomenting of vice and crime
Neglect of human needs
Oppression of nations and peoples
Corruption of culture
Suppression of knowledge
Erosion of freedoms ❀*

THE ELEVENTH PLAGUE

Leader: To these plagues we add the plague of our times, the AIDS plague. We pour a drop of wine in memory of those we have lost while we pray for those living with AIDS and HIV in the hope that soon there will be better treatments available. ❀

KORECH: CONTINUITY WITH PAST TRADITION

Leader: Preserving a bond with the observance of our ancestors, we follow a practice of Hillel, from the time when the Temple stood. He combined the matzo and moror and ate them together, so that he might observe the precept handed down to him; "They shall eat the paschal lamb with matzo and moror together."

Group: Together they shall be: the matzo of freedom, the moror of slavery. For in the time of freedom, there is knowledge of servitude. And in the time of bondage, the hope of redemption. So also, the misery of AIDS has called forth miracles of love, sweetness, courage, laughter and generosity. Judaism teaches us life is never all of one piece.
(According to an ancient custom, moror and haroset are eaten between two pieces of matzo.) ❀

AWARENESS AND HEALING

Reader: *Grief can have a quality of profound healing because we are forced to a depth of feeling that is usually below the threshold of awareness.* ❀

Stephen Levine

AIDS has taken its toll and many of us are numb. We've got a lot of grieving to do, and some major weeping and wailing. We need to open up to where our pain lives, where our loss is stored. We need to cry alone, and we need to cry together.

Even as we celebrate our living, we need to mourn our losses. AIDS opens up a great sadness for us as individuals and as a community. To discount our sadness, or to ignore it, is to deny ourselves the opportunity to heal.

Personal grief opens us to being more fully human. We become aware of how deep and far our feeling goes, of how big we are. Community grief joins us together and makes us stronger. Through our grief, we become more vulnerable, more inclusive, more alive than ever before.

The Color Of Light: Daily Meditations For All Of Us Living With AIDS, October 28th

KADDISH

All Rise

Leader: The Kaddish, the prayer we say in memory of those who have died, actually makes no direct reference to death. Rather, it is a remarkable affirmation of faith and life in a dark time. Following the example of the Kaddish, let us remember and be grateful for those whose lives have been a blessing.

People are now encouraged to speak aloud the names of those they have lost to AIDS.

Group: *Yit-ga-dal v'yit-ka-dash she-mei ra-ba. b'al-ma di-v'ra chir-u-tei, v'yam-lich mal-chu-tei b'cha-yei-chon u-v'yo-mei-chon u-v'cha-yei de-chol beit Yis-ra-eil, ba-a-ga-la u-viz-man ka-riv, v'im-ru: A-mein.*

Ye-hei sh'mei ra-ba m'va-rach l'a-lam u-l'al-mei al-ma-ya Yit-ba-rach v'yish-ta-bach, v'yit-pa-ar, v'yit-ro-mam v'yit-na-sei, v'yit-ha-dar v'yit-a-leh v'yit-ha-lal sh'mei d'kud'sha, b'rich hu, L'ei-la min kol bir-cha-ta v'shi-ra-ta, tush-b'cha-ta v'neh-cheh-ma-ta da-a-mi-ran be-al-ma, v'im'ru: A-mein. ❀

KADDISH: ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let the glory of God be extolled, let his great name be hallowed in the world whose creation He willed. May His kingdom soon prevail, in our own day, our own lives, and the life of all Israel, and let us say: Amen.

Let His great name be blessed for ever and ever.

Let the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, be glorified, exalted, and honored, though He is beyond all the praises, songs and adorations that we can utter, and let us say: Amen.

For us and for all Israel, may the blessing of peace and the promise of life come true, and let us say: Amen.

May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens, let peace descend on us, on all Israel, and all the world, and let us say: Amen ❀

THE CUP OF ELIJAH

- Leader: The prophet Elijah healed the humble sick and helped the widowed. As to the end of his days on earth, his disciple Elisha had a vision of Elijah being carried to the skies in a chariot of fire.
- Group: Legend has it that Elijah returns to earth, from time to time, to befriend the helpless.
- Leader: This man of mystery became associated with the End of Days, with the Messianic hopes of our people. The prophet Malachi promised that Elijah would come to turn the hearts of parents to children, and the hearts of children to parents, and to announce the coming of the Messiah when all people would celebrate freedom.
- Group: Hence, he has a place at every Seder, but especially this one. We set a cup of wine and open the door for Elijah that he may enter bringing hope and healing.
- Leader: As we evoke the spirit of Elijah, healer of the sick, we pray for all those in need of healing. 🕯️

THE CUP OF ACCEPTANCE

- Leader: As our Seder draws to a close, we raise our cups once more. This cup reminds us of our covenant with God and of the tasks that still await us. God has given us a great challenge: It is our purpose to hope in difficult times; It is our purpose to serve. 🕯️

KIDDUSH: BLESSING OVER THE WINE

- Group: *Ba-ruch at-a, A-do-nai, Eh-lo-hei-nu meh-lech ha-o-lam, bo- rei p'ri ha-gaf-en.*
- Group: Blessed are you, O God, Ruler of the world, who forms the fruit of the vine. (Drink the wine) 🕯️

T'FILLAT HADERECH: PRAYER FOR THE JOURNEY

May we be blessed as we go on our way

May we be guided in peace

May we be blessed with health and joy

May this be our blessing: Amen.

May we be sheltered by the wings of peace

May we be kept in safety and in love

May grace and compassion find their way to every soul

May this be our blessing: Amen ✡



Sources: This Haggadah was compiled, often with adaptations, from the following books and services:

A Feast of History by Chaim Raphael

A Seder Service for a Growing Family by Frances Fox Sandmet

A Passover Seder for the AIDS Community by The UAHC Pacific Southwest Council and The UAHC Regional AIDS Committte/Camp Tikvah

Passover Seder for the AIDS Community (unpublished), ed. Rabbi Robert Miller, Newton Centre, MA.

"How good it is to gather", from the Shabbat siddur of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, San Francisco

The Color of Light, Daily Meditations For All of Us Living With AIDS
by PerryTilleraas

This Haggadah also contains original material by: Roberta Lisker-Goldsmith, Julie Gutterman, and Marc Paige

Cover Design by: Arthur Richter

Inside Design by: Roberta Lisker-Goldsmith and David Philip Goldsmith