

ט"ו בשבט ~ Tu B'Shevat

הגדה ~ Haggadah



Boston Workers Circle ~ Arbeter Ring
05 February 2023 ~ 5783

<https://circleboston.org/>



1.

SONG: Hiney Ma Tov

(lyrics from Psalm 133:1, composer unknown)

Hiney ma tov uma nayim
 Shevet akhim gam yakhad
 Hiney ma tov uma nayim
 Shevet akhim gam yakhad
 Hiney ma tov
 Shevet akhim gam yakhad
 Hiney ma tov
 Shevet akhim gam yakhad

Hebrew:
How good and pleasant it is
for siblings to live together in unity.

Oy vi gut un vi voyl es is
 Mitkinder ale tsuzamen.
 Oy vi gut un vi voyl es is
 Mitkinder ale tsuzamen.
 Oy vi voyl es iz
 Mitkinder ale tsuzamen.
 Oy vi voyl es iz
 Mitkinder ale tsuzamen.

Yiddish:
Oh how good it is,
siblings all together.

2.

Welcome!

Tu B'Shevat has been celebrated many different ways in Jewish history, changing to meet the needs of each generation. It has been a pagan festival, a tax deadline to calculate agricultural tithing, and a kabbalist mystical observance. But it's always about the trees, to celebrate and honor them for what they contribute to the world: a Jewish Arbor Day. Today we mark our twelfth annual Boston Workers Circle Arbeter Ring Tu B'Shevat seder, adapting it to our needs as secular progressive Jews in the 21st century. We welcome Kavod as cosponsor.

Share: In person, introduce yourself to your table, and share something that is special to you about a tree or fruit (for example, your favorite type of tree or fruit). Folks online, please enter the breakout room, introduce yourself and share your story. You can also "share" your food visually.

[introductions and sharing]

3.

Tu B'Shevat means the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat, with Tu representing the Hebrew letters *tes* and *vov*, which also represent the numbers 9 plus 6. You can do the math!

As with many of our holidays, Tu B'Shevat has pagan origins and may date back to worship of Asherah, an ancient Semitic goddess of fertility, whose spirit resided in trees. There was a special festival in honor of

Asherah halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, which usually occurred during the month of Shevat.

In Temple days over 2000 years ago, Tu B'Shevat was literally the birthday of the trees for accounting purposes, determining which year the tree's fruit could be harvested and which fruit would be tithed as an offering to the Temple.

4.

The idea of a Tu B'Shevat seder was developed by 17th-century kabbalists, Jewish mystics living in Palestine. The original text for the Tu Bishvat seder, *Pri Etz Hadar*, is an excerpt from the Sephardic/Mizrahi book of customs *Sefer Hemdat Yamim*. They took the New Year for Trees and turned it into the New Year for the Tree of Life. Similar to a Passover seder, the Tu B'Shevat seder included scripted discussions, four cups of wine, and ritual foods.

The Tu B'Shevat seder has been further adapted in modern times by early Jewish settlers in Palestine and more recently as an opportunity to highlight environmental issues, land occupation in Israel/Palestine and the US, and concerns for basic human rights around the world. Now it's our turn.

5.

Today we reclaim this festival of Tu B'Shevat in its original spirit: as a festival that celebrates the liberatory power of creation. One of the most elemental lessons we can learn from the natural world is that rebirth and liberation are not only possible but *inevitable*. For those engaged in the work of social justice, this lesson has powerful significance indeed.

Our 21st century Tu B'Shevat acknowledges the unity of all people and calls on us to learn, to reflect, and to take action. This Tu B'Shevat, we listen to ancient calls about the Tree of Life and Tree of Wisdom, and to our own understanding of environmental, political, and social justice. We come prepared to take on the responsibility of *tikkun olam*, the work of repairing our broken world. On this holiday, then, we have gathered to consider trees and the world and climate in which trees grow, and what trees mean today around the world.

6.

Many in our community are scared and anxious about the current national and international situation. Especially relevant to the spirit of Tu B'Shevat are concerns related to addressing the threat of climate change. The Covid-19 pandemic is another sign that we are out of balance with the earth. Let us take those examples as a call to action - not despair. We stand for hope and healing even in the face of the current challenges. We stand with those who are standing up to save our planet.

In this seder, we will taste the fruits and nuts and juices that come from trees. We will also be tasting of the Tree of Life and the Tree of Wisdom, which grow within us when we act for deep justice. And because all wisdom carries responsibility, we will be asked to take action while the flavors are still bitter and sweet in our mouths.

The kabbalists ate different foods to represent four levels or worlds of existence.

The first world is *Assiyah*, or Action, the physical world around us.

The second is *Yetzirah*, or Formation, the world of feelings and emotions.

The third is *Beriyah*, or Creation, the world of intellect and the mind.

The fourth is *Atzilut*, or Emanation, the world of spirituality.

7.

THE FIRST WORLD עֲשִׂיָּה

Assiyah - the first world, is the world of action. It is the physical world represented by earth and the season of winter. In the world of Assiyah, we drink white wine and eat fruits with hard outer shells and soft insides.

The white wine symbolizes the sleep that descends upon nature when the sun's rays begin to weaken. In winter, the earth is sometimes barren, covered with snow. In winter, we layer ourselves in clothing, blanketing ourselves from the cold just as the earth covered in snow is insulated.

All are invited to pour white wine/grape juice.

Let us say together:

We are grateful for our beautiful, bountiful earth that shelters and sustains us. May we be wise shepherds of this precious gift, guarding this green earth for the generations who come after us.

All are invited to drink the first cup.

8.

Assiyah is represented by fruit with tough shells on the outside for solid protection, such as pomegranates and nuts. Removing the hard shells exposes a fleshy vulnerable inside. The shell which conceals also protects.

Some of us are like this fruit. Hard on the outside, difficult to get to know, protected against possible hurt, yet underneath our hard shell is a soft and sweet heart filled with compassion and love. Fruits strong on the outside and sweet on the inside can also represent our sweat and efforts to build a better world.

Let us say together:

May we have the courage to reveal ourselves, to connect with others in compassion, to love, to repair, to help heal.

All are invited to eat from among the first fruits, such as oranges and pistachio nuts.

9.

Every seder tells a story in response to four questions. Today we ask the following questions at our Tu B'Shevat seder:

1. What do I know about the place where I live?
2. Where do material things come from?
3. How do I connect to the earth?
4. What is my purpose as a human being?

10.

What do I know about the place where I live?

Trees are particular about the place they live. A tree can tell us a lot about the history of its place and how humans have acted upon it. In the tree, we can see the effect of human settlement and industry as well as natural events, like storms or fires.

So let us recognize that we are on stolen, unceded indigenous land, and that this land we now call home has

been and continues to be cared for by the Pawtucket, Massachusetts, and Mashpee Wampanoag peoples. May we remember to be grateful to them and this land, as many of us are descended from those who were forced to flee land, family, and communities of their own.

And just as we honor today the Jewish traditions of the world-nourishing Tree of Life, we note that the Tree of Life is also an important Native American symbol, particularly among the Ojibwe, Lakota, Oneida, and Pacific Northwest native peoples. The birch and cedar trees we also see here in New England are especially revered.

11.

Speaking Tree (*Joy Harjo, US Poet Laureate, the first Native American to hold that honor*)

I had a beautiful dream I was dancing with a tree. —Sandra Cisneros

Some things on this earth are unspeakable:
Genealogy of the broken—
A shy wind threading leaves after a massacre,
Or the smell of coffee and no one there—
Some humans say trees are not sentient beings,
But they do not understand poetry—

Nor can they hear the singing of trees when they are fed by
Wind, or water music—
Or hear their cries of anguish when they are broken and bereft—

Now I am a woman longing to be a tree, planted in a moist, dark earth
Between sunrise and sunset—

I cannot walk through all realms—
I carry a yearning I cannot bear alone in the dark—

What shall I do with all this heartache?

The deepest-rooted dream of a tree is to walk
Even just a little ways, from the place next to the doorway—
To the edge of the river of life, and drink—

I have heard trees talking, long after the sun has gone down:

*Imagine what would it be like to dance close together
In this land of water and knowledge. . .*

To drink deep what is undrinkable.

12.

How much do we really know about the places we live? Each physical locale in which our communities are built has a geological, biological, and cultural story. This question should make us learn and tell those stories. Then we can become rooted where we live, work, and play.

13.

Where do material things come from?

Everything we eat has its roots in the natural world. And everything we eat passes through many human hands before it comes into our hands. Strawberries are too delicate to be picked by machine. The perfectly ripe ones even bruise at too heavy a human touch. It hit her then that every strawberry she had ever eaten--every piece of fruit--had been picked by calloused human hands. Every piece of toast with jelly represented someone's knees, someone's aching back and hips, someone with a bandanna on her wrist to wipe away the sweat. Why had no one told her about this before?

~Alison Luterman, "Every Piece of Fruit"

14.

In 1942, with many away fighting in World War II, the United States and Mexico created the Bracero Program of temporary work visas to Mexicans who would work the fields and then return to Mexico. The name of the program itself reflects the inhumane attitude towards the workers. They were nothing but "braceros" or arms, there to harvest the crops and nothing more. Today, why do we bemoan inflation and supply chain problems due to the shortage of workers while we detain and mistreat potential immigrants on the southern border?

15.

SONG: Bracero

(Phil Ochs)

Wade into the river
 Through the rippling shallow water
 Steal across the thirsty border
 Bracero
 Come bring your hungry bodies
 To the golden fields of plenty
 From a peso to a penny
 Bracero

Oh, welcome to California
 Where the friendly farmers
 Will take care of you

Come labor for your mother
 For your father and your brother
 For your sisters and your lover
 Bracero
 Come pick the fruits of yellow
 Break the flowers from the berries
 Purple grapes will fill your bellies
 Bracero

Oh, welcome to California
 Where the friendly farmers
 Will take care of you

And the sun will bite your body
 As the dust will draw you thirsty
 While your muscles beg for mercy
 Bracero
 In the shade of your sombrero
 Drop your sweat upon the soil
 Like the fruit your youth can spoil
 Bracero

Oh, welcome to California
 Where the friendly farmers
 Will take care of you

When the weary night embraces
 Sleep in shacks that could be cages
 They will take it from your wages
 Bracero
 Come sing about tomorrow
 With a jingle of the dollars
 And forget your crooked collar
 Bracero

Oh, welcome to California
 Where the friendly farmers
 Will take care of you

And the local men are lazy
 And they make too much of trouble
 Besides we'd have to pay them double
 Bracero
 Ah, but if you feel you're fallin'
 If you find the pace is killing
 There are others who are willing
 Bracero

Oh, welcome to California
 Where the friendly farmers
 Will take care of you

16.

What does Fair Food and Food Justice mean to you?

Can we find more food for which the growers and processors have been fairly paid?

Can we find ways to support growers and processors fighting for fair pay?

Can we eat more food that is locally grown?

Can we support farmers' markets that work to subsidize shoppers who are on low incomes? And how do we decide what we'll do when the food that supports our best values costs more – sometimes significantly more – than other food?

Tu B'Shevat is an opportunity to think about our individual relationships to the earth and sources of food we eat. Tu B'Shevat is also a chance to come together as a community. We are able to look up from our texts and glance around at the faces of people gathered here - the members of our community - the people with whom we share values. When we sit down together in our community, we have the chance to contemplate the foods on our tables and be inspired to discuss these questions.

Action: At the end of this Haggadah, there is a list of a variety of organizations that support a sustainable world, fair food, and food justice.

17.

How do I connect to the earth?

In the Jewish tradition, the first human was called *Adam*: earthling. All that we are, all that we are made of, all that we live on, comes from the earth. We may try to separate ourselves from the rhythms of nature. We may heat and air condition our houses and cars, but we cannot live separate from the earth. We may shape the earth but we can never completely control it. We belong to the earth; the earth does not belong to us.

The words of early Native Americans who were displaced from the land by European settlers resonate today.

18.

Chief Luther Standing Bear of the Oglala band of Sioux, from *Land of the Spotted Eagle*:

We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and winding streams with tangled growth, as "wild." Only to the white man was nature a "wilderness" and only to him was the land "infested" with "wild" animals and "savage" people. To us it was tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery. Not until the hairy man from the east came and with brutal frenzy heaped injustices upon us and the families we loved was it "wild" for us.

The Lakota was a true naturalist--lover of Nature. He loved the earth and all things of the earth, the attachment growing with age. The old people came literally to love the soil and they sat or reclined on the ground with a feeling of being close to a mothering power. It was good for the skin to touch the earth and the old people liked to remove their moccasins and walk with bare feet on the sacred earth. Their teepees were built upon the earth and their altars were made of earth. The birds that flew in the air came to rest upon the earth and it was the final abiding place of all things that lived and grew. The soil was soothing, strengthening, cleansing, and healing....

19.

Woody Guthrie's radical ballad, *This Land is Your Land*, has often been sanitized and sung as a patriotic anthem, ignoring a history of stolen land, lives, and labor. Tellingly, David Silverman entitles his recent book on the history of the Wampanoags, Plymouth colony, and Thanksgiving, *This Land is Their Land*. This Yiddish version was created in solidarity with Indigenous, Black, and immigrant voices calling for power, reparation, and justice in this land.

20.

Song: Dos Land Iz Dayn Land (*This is Your Country*)*(based on "This Land Is Your Land" by Woody Guthrie**Yiddish text by Linda Gritz, Daniel Kahn, Michael Alpert, and Josh Waletzky)***Yiddish lyrics**

Kh'hob mir gevandert unter hashamayim,
 Aroys fun midber, vi mi-mitsrayim,
 Gezukht a nayem Yerushalayim,
 Dos iz a land far mir un dir.

REFRAIN:

Dos land iz dayn land, dos land iz mayn land
 Fun Kalifornye biz Elis Ayland,
 Fun di groyse oz'res biz di breyte yamen,
 Dos iz a land far mir un dir.

Ikh gey ariber di berg un teler,
 Arumgeringt fun zise keler.
 Di ritshkes murmlen, di feygl zingen:
 Dos iz a land far mir un dir.

Kh'ze a groysn moyer mit a shild vos vornt:
 Vil men araynet, shteyt az me tor nit
 Nor af yener zayt, shteyt dortn gornit
 Ot iz di zayt far mir un dir.

REFRAIN

Gey ikh mir voglen, di zun fun oybn,
 Nor beyze vintn tseblozn shtoybn,
 Durkh di tumanen, her ikh gezangen:
 Dos iz a land far mir un dir.

Af nase gasn, in tife shotns,
 Ze ikh vi mentshn betn nedoves
 Bay aza dales, darf ikh zikh klern
 Tsi dos iz a land far mir un dir.

Es ken shoyn keyner undz nit farshtern,
 Di fraye vegn undz nit farvern.
 Nito keyn tsamen, ven nor tsuzamen.
 Dos iz a land far mir un dir.

REFRAIN**English translation**

I wandered under the heavens
 Out of the desert, as though from Egypt,
 Looking for a new Jerusalem,
 This is a country for me and you.

This is your country, this is my country,
 From California to Ellis Island,
 From the Great Lakes to the wide seas,
 This is a country for me and you.

I walk over mountains and valleys
 Surrounded by sweet voices.
 The streams murmur, the birds sing:
 This is a country for me and you.

I see a big wall with a sign that warns:
 If you want to enter, it says it's forbidden
 But on the other side, it says nothing,
 That is the side for you and me.

I go wandering, the sun above,
 But evil winds are blowing dust,
 Through the haze, I hear singing:
 This is a country for me and you.

On wet streets, in deep shadows,
 I see people begging for change.
 To see such poverty, I must wonder,
 If this is a country for me and you.

There's no one who can stop us,
 Or forbid us the paths of freedom.
 There are no barriers, if only we are united.
 This is a country for me and you.

21.**Earth's Embroidery** (translated from the original Hebrew)

Solomon Ibn Gabirol, 11th century Sephardic Jewish poet during the Golden Age of Spain:

With the ink of its showers and rains,
 with the quill of its lightning, with the hand of its clouds,
 winter wrote a letter upon the garden, in purple and blue.
 No artist could ever conceive the like of that.
 And that is why the earth, grown jealous of the sky,
 embroidered stars in the folds of the flower-beds.

22.***What is my purpose as a human being?***

"Are the trees of the field human?" Deuteronomy 20:19

One might also ask: What is the purpose of a tree? A tree does not live to be a resource. It has a worth and a meaning beyond our needs. And so we have a purpose and a worth beyond our roles as producers and consumers. Let us each think about our own purpose and what we can do to repair the world.

As the prophet Isaiah said, "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia tree, the myrtle, and the olive tree; I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane tree, and the larch together that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together."

23.

We might wonder what miniscule difference we as individuals or community members and activists can make in the vast scheme of things. Maimonides teaches us that we should consider the entire world as if it were exactly balanced between acts of righteousness and acts of evil. The very next action we take, therefore, can save or condemn the world. Let us work to end environmental racism, where black and brown communities are burdened with a disproportionate share of polluted water, toxic waste sites, trash transfer stations, and highways.

24.

Let us proclaim that Black Lives Matter.

Let us proclaim that water is life.

Let us stand with all people, led by indigenous people who understand the connection between caring for the land and our own survival.

COVID-19 is not a disease; it is a symptom of an exhausted planet. The renewal of a healthy relationship to our one shared mother, planet Earth, is the cure. We are of the Earth, and have everything we need to heal. The cure for COVID-19 is here. It is us.

--James Maskalyk and Dave Courchene

25.

Let us work to repair our physical world, to reverse the harm we humans have knowingly or unknowingly done to our precious earth. May the world's trees be filled with the glory of their ability to renew themselves for new blossoming and growth, from the beginning of the year to its end, so that our lives too will be renewed and filled with compassion, concern for the earth and each other, and freedom, justice, and peace.

The strength of a tree lies in its flexibility to bend so it does not break in powerful winds.

26.

THE SECOND WORLD

יְצִירָה

Yetzirah, the second world, is the world of Formation. It is the world in which we cause a transformation of raw materials, such as making bricks from clay. It is the emotional world represented by water and the season of Spring. In the world of Yetzirah, we drink white wine with a dash of red and eat fruits with soft outsides and hard inner cores.

White wine with a dash of red symbolizes the gradual deepening of color, the reawakening of colors in nature as the sun brings them back to life.

All are invited to pour white mixed with a dash of red wine/grape juice.

27.

Let us say together:

As we drink the second cup, we remember to treasure those soft and unprotected people and fruits of the earth.

All are invited to drink the second cup.

Yetzirah is represented by fruit with pits to protect the heart of the fruit, such as dates and olives. The pits, far from being a useless by-product, can represent planting seeds and sharing our values with others and with the next generation.

Let us say together:

May our hearts be open to the feelings and needs of ourselves and others, allowing the warmth of our caring to flow throughout the world.

All are invited to eat from among the second fruits, such as olives, dates, and cherries.

28.

Olives have played an important role in our history. They are the raw material we transform into food and soap, and are an ancient sign of peace. The olive tree is a sign of hope that, despite the enormity of destruction, life can be restored. When the great flood began to subside, Noah sent out a dove. "The dove came back to him toward evening, and there in its bill was a leaf it had picked from an olive tree."

-Genesis 8:11

We remind ourselves of the delicate balance we walk between our peoples and others, between truths in competition, and between justice and mercy.

Our task now is to engage in the work of repairing the damage done across the land called Israel and Palestine, and to create conditions in which Jews and Palestinians can make new relationships within and between their communities. All over the world, people of conscience, both Jews and non-Jews, have begun this work in so many ways, symbolized by the planting of olive saplings in fields destroyed in the course of the occupation of Palestinian lands and the building of the Separation Wall.

29.

We are told this ancient Jewish story: Two men were fighting over a piece of land. Each claimed ownership and bolstered his claim with apparent proof. To resolve the dispute, they went to the rabbi. The rabbi listened but couldn't come to a decision. Each one seemed to be right. Finally, the rabbi said, "Since I cannot decide to whom this land belongs, let us ask the land." He put his ear to the ground and after a moment straightened up. "Gentlemen, the land says it belongs to neither of you, but that you belong to it."

~Richard H. Schwartz, *Judaism and Global Survival*

30.

SONG: We Belong to the Earth (Magpie)

A strand in the web are we,
 A strand in the web, I believe.
 To own it we cannot dare to dream,
 It's a web that we didn't weave. (2x)
 We belong to the Earth,
 We all belong to the Earth,
 It's not that she belongs to us,
 It's we belong to her. (2x)

In sun and in wind and in rain
 Is a seed of what will be
 It awakens a power that grows down below
 It courses through you and through me (2x)

We belong to the Earth...

And when our spirits take flight.
 We lay our bodies down.
 Our ashes may be carried away on the wind,
 But return to the birthing ground. (2x)

We belong to the Earth....

31.

The manufacture of clothing is a concrete example of the transformation of raw materials. Morris Rosenfeld, sweatshop worker and poet, described the dehumanizing conditions in many Yiddish poems. Written over 100 years ago, these poems are sadly relevant today.

32.

Ikh Bin A Mashin (*I Am A Machine*)

(excerpt; Yiddish text by Morris Rosenfeld; English translation by Max Rosenfeld)

Es roysht in fabrik azoy vild di mashinen
 Az oftmol farges ikh in roysh az ikh bin.
 Ikh ver in dem shreklehkn tuml farloyrn
 Mayn ikh vert dort botl, ikh ver a mashin.

So wild is the roar of machines in the sweatshop,
 I often forget I'm alive—in that din!
 I'm drowned in the tide of the terrible tumult—
 My ego is slain; I become a machine.

Ikh arbet un arbet un arbet on khesbin.
 Es tut zikh un tut zikh un tut zikh on tsol.
 Far vos un far vemen? Ikh veys nit, ikh ken nit.
 Vi kumt a mashin gor tsu denken amol?

I work, and I work, without rhyme, without reason—
 Produce, and produce, and produce without end.
 For what and for whom? I don't know, I don't wonder—
 Since when can a whirling machine comprehend?

33.

On this day 111 years ago, the Bread and Roses textile workers' strike in Lawrence Massachusetts was in full swing. After 9 weeks of the workers showing strength and resolve in the face of bloody and violent police brutality, the mill owners gave in to the workers' demands for better pay and working conditions.

34.

Song: Bread and Roses (lyrics by James Oppenheim, adapted by Brivele; music by Mimi Farina)

[Labor activists and suffragists Rose Schneiderman and Helen Todd are each credited with coining the slogan "Bread and Roses." The slogan inspired James Oppenheim's poem "Bread and Roses," published in December 1911. The Lawrence textile strike of January to March 1912 was also known as the "Bread and Roses Strike."]

As we go marching, marching
 In the beauty of the day
 A million darkened kitchens
 A thousand mill lofts gray
 Are touched with all the radiance
 That a sudden sun discloses
 For the people hear us singing
 "Bread and roses! Bread and roses!"

As we go marching, marching,
 We battle too for men
 For patriarchy hurts us all
 And it has got to end
 Our lives shall not be sweated
 From birth until life closes
 Hearts starve as well as bodies:
 Give us bread, but give us roses

As we go marching, marching
 Unnumbered women dead
 Go crying through our singing
 Their ancient call for bread
 Small art and love and beauty
 Their drudging spirits knew
 Yes it is bread we fight for
 But we fight for roses, too!

As we go marching, marching
 The people hear our call:
 The rising of the women
 Means the rising of us all

No more the drudge and idler
 Ten that toil where one reposes
 But a sharing of life's glories
 Bread and roses! Bread and roses!

35.**THE THIRD WORLD****בְּרִיָּאָה**

Beriyah, the third world, is the world of Creation. It is the world of thoughts represented by air and the season of summer. In the world of Beriyah, we drink red wine with a dash of white, reminding us that as the land becomes warmer and the colors of the fruits deepen as they ripen, we too become warmer and more open.

All are invited to pour red mixed with a dash of white wine/grape juice.

Let us say together:

May we dedicate ourselves to the work of making peace—in our homes, our communities, our nation, and the world.

If each of us is a peacemaker, who will be left to make war?

All are invited to drink the third cup.

36.

Beriyah is represented by fruits with no shells or pits, such as figs and grapes. Such fruits, which have no protection inside or out, can represent peace, which is also fragile and requires great care and attention.

Let us say together:

May our thoughts and actions be integrated. May we create harmony in our lives and in the world.

All are invited to eat from among the third fruits, such as figs and grapes.

37.

My environmental work probably is different from most environmental folks, who start exclusively from a nature-based perspective. I do value plants and animals; I'm a gardener, and I feel connected to the environment. But my approach is more about sustaining all the life on the planet. I've been asking that question [always] about humans; my thinking has broadened to include plants and animals. I see my ecological work as the evolution of the work I've done to think about making life sustainable for everyone. How are we paying attention to the most marginalized and left-out? Our planet is definitely on the list of marginalized, overlooked, and abused."

-- Rev. Mariama White-Hammond, Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space, City of Boston

38.

I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is.

Why should I be studying for a future that soon may be no more, when no one is doing anything to save that future? And what is the point of learning facts when the most important facts clearly mean nothing to our society?

It is still not too late to act. It will take a far-reaching vision, it will take courage, it will take fierce, fierce determination to act now, to lay the foundations where we may not know all the details about how to shape the ceiling. In other words, it will take cathedral thinking. I ask you to please wake up and make changes required possible. --Greta Thunberg, Climate Activist and Founder of the School Strike Movement

39.

The war in Ukraine has taken a huge toll on the Ukrainian people and land. The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant has been under attack and is currently under Russian control. Shelling has damaged the nuclear power plant, the largest in Europe, raising the specter of another Chernobyl nuclear disaster, also located in Ukraine.

40.

SONG: Healing River

(Fran Minkoff and Fred Hellerman)

Oh healing river, send down your waters,
Send down your waters upon this land.
Oh healing river, send down your waters,
And wash the blood from off the sand.

This land is parching, this land is thirsting.
No seed is growing on the barren ground.
This land is parching, this land is thirsting.
Oh healing river, send your water down.

Oh seed of freedom, awake and flourish,
Let the deep roots nourish, let the tall stalks rise.
Oh seed of freedom, awake and flourish,
Proud leaves uncurling unto the skies.

Oh healing river, send down your waters,
Send down your waters upon this land.
Oh healing river, send down your waters,
And wash the blood from off the sand.

41.

From the seeds of the fruits we eat, what can we harvest? How do we separate what can nurture ourselves and others from what must now be cast aside? From the harvest, the farmer sets aside seeds for the next generation's planting. From what we have harvested, what will we shelter and tend and plant for the future?

The carob has a special place in Jewish life. During the war with Rome, the Israelites lived under a siege and managed to survive by eating the fruit of the carob tree.

A Talmudic story is told about Honi, who saw an old man planting a carob tree.

Honi laughed. "Foolish man", he said, "do you think you will still be alive to eat the fruit of this tree?" The old man replied, "I found trees in the world when I was born. My grandparents planted them for me. So, too, I am planting for my grandchildren."

Just as the old man planted for his children with no expectation of reward or recognition, we can also seed hope in others with small, selfless actions. We can perform acts of kindness for neighbors, use encouraging words with our siblings, take care of the environment, and give *tsedokah*. Each deed is like a tiny seed, destined to nurture good feelings and serve as an example for others to follow.

The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.

42.

Fruits with many small seeds—such as carobs, figs, strawberries, kiwis, and pomegranates—represent the small and important actions we can take every day to instill goodness and hope. Notice that there is no relationship between the size of the seed and the size of the tree into which it grows. We learn from this that we can't anticipate how much our small actions can mean to another person.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We applaud our students in the Hey 5th grade shule class who led a solidarity protest with City Life Vida Urbana and their youth in front of the Massachusetts State House earlier today to demand more stable and affordable housing in Massachusetts and the removal of the state-wide ban on rent control.

43.

THE FOURTH WORLD

אַצִּילוּת

Atzilut, the fourth world, is the world of Emanation. It is the purely spiritual world represented by fire. In the Autumn world of *Atzilut*, we drink deep red wine and eat no fruit, for this world cannot be represented by any fruit. However, it can be suggested by the scent of a fragrant fruit. A pleasant scent delights and benefits the soul, rather than the body.

All are invited to inhale the fragrance of fruits such as lemon.

Now let us pause for a minute of silence.

Close your eyes.

Picture your ideal self....

Realize that's the real you....

[After a minute]

Now let go of all images and rest in the silence; then slowly open up your eyes.

44.**SONG: Kh'hob Dem Kheyshek** (*I Have Yearning*)

(based on *I am Willing* by Holly Near; Yiddish lyrics by Yuri Vedenyapin)

Yiddish lyrics

kh'hob dem gloybn, kh'hob dem kheyshek,
zayn fartsveyflt tor men nit,
mir gedenken doynes kemfers
far banayung un far likht.

mayn mishpokhe filt a veytik,
un mayn shtot iz ful mit tsar,
s'iz dos gantse land dershrokn,
es filt di velt a shvern gzar.
zoln kinder zen alts klorer,
un di firers kliger zayn;
blozt shoyn, vintn fun banayung,
zol es baysn, s'iz keday.

I am open and I am willing
For to be hopeless would seem so strange
It dishonors those who go before us
So lift me up to the light of change.

helf mir, boym, un halt mayn dayge,
helf mir, midber, halt mayn shrek,
mikh farkishef, royte shkie,
nem, du yam, mayn trer avek.

English translation

I have faith, I have yearning,
To be despondent is not allowed,
We remember generations of activists
For renewal and for light.

My family feels pain,
And my town is full of sorrow.
The whole country is frightened,
The world feels a hard decree.
May children see more clearly
And the leaders be wiser;
Blow, winds of renewal,
Let it bite, it's worth it.

Help me, tree, and stop my worry,
Help me, desert, stop my fear,
Enchant me, red sunset,
Ocean, take my tears away.

45.

The pure red wine represents the full bloom of nature before the cold winter.
As nature expends its last bit of energy, a full cycle is completed.

All are invited to pour red wine/grape juice.

Let us say together:

May we become strong, like healthy trees, with solid roots in the ground and with our arms open to the love that is all around us.

All are invited to drink the fourth cup.

46.

Let us commit ourselves to exploring this celebration of our ancient and rich Jewish heritage, shaping it with our own secular vision.

And let us commit ourselves to *tikkun olam*, healing the earth, in honor of Tu B'Shevat.

Let us say together:
 We build on foundations we did not lay.
 We warm ourselves at fires we did not light.
 We sit in the shade of trees we did not plant.
 We drink from wells we did not dig.
 We profit from persons we did not know.
 We are not alone in the work that lies before us.
 We are ever bound in community.
 We build the land of peace and justice together.
 ~Christine Robinson, adapted by Mark Harris

And so we close our Tu B'Shevat Seder—the Seder for the Trees, the Birthday of the Trees.

47.

SONG: The Tide is Rising

(Rabbi Shoshana Meira Friedman and Yotam Schachter)

The tide is rising, and so are we!
 The tide is rising, and so are we!
 The tide is rising, and so are we!
 This is where we are called to be!
 This is where we are called to be!

The **task is mighty**, and so are we!...

The **land is holy**, and so are we!...

The **storm is raging**, and so are we!...

The **sun is shining**, and so are we!...

The **world is ready**, and so are we!...

The **tide is rising**, and so are we!...

MANY THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

Boston Workers Circle Center for Jewish Culture and Social Justice/Arbeter Ring is a multigenerational community, as well as an arts and culture center, where Jewish identity is rooted in cultural heritage and the pursuit of a better world. We explore Jewish identity and build Jewish community through educational, cultural, and social justice programming for every generation. circleboston.org

Kavod is a community led by young Jews in Greater Boston, committed to each other and to building a liberated world for all people. We live out our values through vibrant Jewish ritual, transformative social justice organizing, and collective responsibility. <https://www.kavodboston.org>

SOME RESOURCES FOR ACTION

We might wonder what difference we as individuals or community members and activists can make in the vast scheme of things. Maimonides teaches us that we should consider the entire world as if it were exactly balanced between acts of righteousness and of evil. The next action we take, therefore, can save or condemn the world. The resources below offer some ways to make a difference.

CLIMATE ACTION

Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action

Dayenu is launching another [Taking Down Goliath Jewish climate organizing training](#) this February 21, 23, and 28. This three-part training for young people ages 18-32 will help participants analyze the climate crisis, build their organizing community, ground their climate work in Jewish teachings, form Dayenu Circles and take action. All participants will be offered an optional \$50 stipend.

Find a local group working on climate or climate justice issues in your city, state, or community and partner with them, such as [Jewish Climate Action Network](#) or [UU Mass Action](#).

Talk with those you love about the climate crisis -- keep the conversation alive.

ACE (Alternatives for Community & Environment) builds the power of communities of color and low-income communities in Massachusetts to eradicate environmental racism and classism, create healthy, sustainable communities, and achieve environmental justice. http://www.ace-ej.org/get_involved

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

United American Indians of New England is a Native-led organization of Native people and supporters who fight back against racism, supporting Indigenous struggles in New England and throughout the Americas.

<http://www.uaine.org/>

The Black Marsh Rematriation Project is where members of the Massachusett and Nipmuc tribes are working to purchase and preserve a 64-acre plot of farmland on their traditional lands. Their goals include restoring native food systems and the matriarchal principles of earth-centered stewardship. Go to <https://bit.ly/agtrustma> and use the password AT1234 when prompted to access the page and learn more on how you can contribute.

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Help to raise funds for Palestinian olive tree farmers:

<https://goodshepherdcollective.org/olive-tree-planting>

Support a Palestinian family business:

Just minutes from the historical Sea of Galilee, in the village of Rameh, at 550m altitude reaching 50 Acres (200 Dunams) wide lays a pasture of +1000-year old olive trees. For centuries, Rameh has been famed for growing the richest, most spectacular olives, providing an even more unique and exquisite taste that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. For the past 100 years, the olive orchard has been cultivated by the Khalafs, a Palestinian family that has deep roots in the Rameh region and takes great care in growing, cultivating and producing the most exquisite 100% organic olive oil.

<https://www.khalafolives.com/>

Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine (active in Massachusetts)

The **Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine** raises awareness about Israel's use of water as a weapon against the people of Palestine.

<https://www.waterjusticeinpalestine.org/water-justice>

FOOD JUSTICE With the pandemic highlighting and exacerbating the inequities and inequalities in our society, including in the Boston area, addressing food insecurity is a priority and moral imperative. More than one million people in Massachusetts are food insecure - food banks are overwhelmed with need and community groups are struggling to meet demand.

Greater Boston Food Bank - <https://www.gbfb.org/> The largest hunger-relief organization in New England and among the largest food banks in the country. Healthy food is acquired through food industry product donations and purchased with financial contributions and distributed through 60 direct distribution programs and through over 530 member agencies. Innovative distributions also provide food directly to clients including a brown-bag program for seniors, school-based farmers-market style pantries for children and their families, and mobile markets in underserved communities. Another effective organization, Food for Free <https://www.foodforfree.org> works with over 100 Boston area groups.

The Food Project - <http://thefoodproject.org/> Engages young people in personal and social change through sustainable agriculture. Works with 120 teenager activist leaders and thousands of volunteers to farm on 70 acres in Dorchester, Roxbury and other parts of Boston, Lynn, Beverly, Wenham, and Lincoln. Food from the farms is donated to local hunger relief organizations, and distributed through CSA programs and farmers markets. Also serves as a resource to others to create change in their own communities.

PROJECT BREAD: <https://www.projectbread.org/hunger-by-the-numbers> connects people in the community to resources and works to change policies to address community needs.

WINTER FARMERS MARKETS / FARM SHARES

One way to support the web of healthy food is to have a farm share - often called a CSA. There are many options, and they all support local farmers directly. For more information including CSAs available where you live, visit:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/community-supported-agriculture-csa-farms>

GARDENING & COMPOSTING

With renewed attention to composting, and a new state law about large establishments being required to compost, there are more options for all of us to do more.

Use your town composting service if available, or lobby your town to start curbside compost pickup. All Whole Foods accept compost.

Garbage to Gardens offers curbside pickup in some areas: <https://garbagetogarden.org>

Black Earth offers curbside pick up in some areas. <https://blackearthcompost.com>

Thank you for attending our Tu B'Shevat seder!

We value your feedback. Please make comments or suggestions via the QR code, the link below, or on the next page.

<https://bit.ly/EvalTu>



Please use this page to make comments and suggestions on this ritual and/or to volunteer to help with our holiday celebrations. If you fill out this page, please email it to ritual@circleboston.org or mail it to Linda Gritz, Chair, Ritual Committee, Boston Workers Circle, 6 Webster Street, Brookline, MA 02446.

Thank you very much for attending our holiday celebrations and for taking the time to share your thoughts and ideas.

This program was created by the Boston Workers Circle Ritual Committee and is updated each year. We welcome your comments and suggestions for next year's rituals.

NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

The Ritual Committee creates and updates Workers Circle rituals, currently including Rosh Hashonah, Yom Kippur, Tu B'Shevat, and Passover. We welcome new members!

If you are interested in participating in this work, please check this box: