



Chaplaincy Services of  
Jewish Federation of  
Northeastern New York

The Golub Center  
184 Washington Avenue Ext  
Albany NY 12203-5306



**Jewish Life Newsletter**

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of Northeastern New York

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**Upcoming Jewish Holidays 2020-2021**

HOLIDAY	DATE
Purim	Mon. night Mar. 9 – Tues. Mar. 10
Passover (8 days)	Wed. night April 8 – Thurs. April 16
Shavuot (2 days)	Thurs. night May 28 – Sat. May 30
Rosh Hashanah (2 days)	Fri. night Sept. 18 – Sun. Sept. 20
Yom Kippur	Sun. night Sept. 27 – Mon. Sept. 28
Sukkot (7 days)	Fri. night Oct. 2 – Fri. Oct. 9
Shmini Atzeret	Fri. night Oct. 9 – Sat. Oct. 10
Simhat Torah	Sat. night Oct. 10 – Sun. Oct. 11
Hanukkah	Thurs. night Dec. 10 – Fri. Dec. 18
Tu B'Shevat	Tues. night Jan. 26 – Wed. Jan. 27



Jewish Federation  
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

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**Celebrate Purim: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 (beginning Monday evening)**

Purim is a joyous and fun holiday filled with merriment. Like many other early spring holidays, it includes costumes and silliness. The celebration of Purim begins with the story in the Book of Esther, also called the Megillah (muh-GILL-ah).

The heroes of the story are Esther, a beautiful young Jewish woman living in Persia, and her cousin Mordecai, who raised her as an adopted daughter. Esther was taken to the harem of King Ahasuerus of Persia, and he chose her to be Queen. However, Mordecai told her to keep their Jewish identities a secret, which she did.

The villain of the story is Haman (HAY-men), an arrogant, egotistical advisor to the king. Haman hated Mordecai because Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman. Therefore, Haman plotted to destroy the Jewish people. In a speech that is all too familiar to Jews, Haman told the king,



King Ahasuerus

“There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your realm. Their laws are different from those of every other people’s, and they do not observe the king’s laws; therefore, it is not befitting the king to tolerate them.” (Esther 3:8)

The king gave permission to Haman to exterminate all of the Jews. Haman created a lottery to pick the execution date. *The word Purim refers to the “lots”* Haman pulled in the lottery to decide the date of the extermination.

Mordecai persuaded Esther to speak to the king on behalf of the Jewish people. This was a dangerous thing for Esther to do because entering the king’s court uninvited was punishable by death. Esther fasted for three days to prepare and dressed in her royal finery. Then she went to the king and was warmly welcomed.

Later at a banquet, she told him of Haman’s plot to kill her people. Haman was hanged on the gallows that had been prepared for Mordecai. The Jewish people were saved. Everyone celebrated the victory.

**Making Purim Fun for Your Residents**

Here are some fun ways to celebrate the holiday.

**Read the Book of Esther.** Read the whole book or the abbreviated version in this newsletter. Use funny voices. Pass out groggers or other noisemakers and make noise whenever Haman’s name is read.

**Bake hamantashen.** The recipe is in this newsletter. Your residents can share holiday memories as they shape the dough.

**Make “shlach mahnehs” bags and give them out.** Decorate

paper bags or paper plates and bake hamantashen. Buy some candy, fruit, dried fruit, or nuts (use two types of food). Use trinkets for those who can’t have food. Put in packages and deliver to every resident. Residents, volunteers, or even staff may deliver these tasty gifts.

**Wear a costume to work.** A few Queen Esthers, Mordecais, Hamans, or King Ahasueruses will liven up your facility. If you’re delivering “shlach mahnehs” (cont. pg. 2)

**Inside This Issue**

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## Making Purim Fun for Your Residents (cont.)

(continued from pg. 1)  
packages, it's especially fun to do it in costume.

**Hold a mask-making workshop.** Use balloons and papier-mâché, paper plates, and brown bags. Gather together feathers, sequins, glitter, and glue. Let your residents make Queen Esther, the King, Haman, or Mordecai.

**Stamp out the name of Haman.** When we tell the story, we make noise to blot out Haman's name. Write Haman's name on the sole of your shoes to "stamp him out" as you read the story.

of Purim included in our newsletter.

**Make a grogger.** Synagogues use noisemakers to blot out Haman's name. Using paper plates or tin cans and dried beans, make and decorate your own grogger (or see below for inexpensive groggers).

**Have a party!** On Purim we celebrate Jewish survival. So party! It's traditional to have a festive dinner and dress in costumes, so use any of the suggested activities to make the day special.

### Purim Music

There is no real Purim music that is traditional. Most of what you'll find on CDs is modern Israeli or American and will not be familiar to your residents.

However, if you're having a Purim party or a carnival, all of your residents would probably enjoy some lively **Klezmer music**. Klezmer (a Yiddish word derived from the Hebrew for "instruments") is lively music that was played at weddings and other happy occasions. Usually it features a violin, clarinet, and tambourine.

Go to [Hatikvahmusic.com](http://Hatikvahmusic.com), [Amazon](http://Amazon.com), or [Barnes and Noble](http://BarnesandNoble.com) and look at their Klezmer offerings. There are many good bands (e.g. Klezmatics, Klezmer Conservatory Band, Andy Statman, Maxwell Street Klezmer Band) that play lively music that everyone will love!

### When You Have Sad News:

Facilities with monthly programs:

**Please notify us when a resident passes away!**

- *We may try to go to a funeral or shiva* (during the week after the funeral, when the family receives condolence callers.)
- Also, it is jarring to get the news just before a program. *With advanced notice, the Chaplaincy visitor might prepare and conduct a brief memorial service with residents.*

### Reminiscing about a Topsy-Turvy Holiday

Purim plays (called Purim-shpiels), carnivals, men dressing up as women (and vice-versa) are some of the memories your residents may have of this holiday.

They may have gone to a carnival where they tried to knock off Haman's head with a ball or guessed the number of candies in a jar. Maybe they won goldfish.

When they were older, they might have gone to a Purim masquerade

ball. It was also a time when the rabbis allowed men to get drunk.

Sometimes the reading of the Megillah (the Book of Esther) may have been accompanied by silly songs or skits that poked fun at the synagogue, the rabbi, teachers, or community politics.

**Purim has always been a time to be silly and turn the world upside-down!**

### Silly Jingle

You may hear this rhyme:

Heint iz Purim

Morgen iz Oyse

Gib mir a pfennig

Und varf mir ah-royse!

Today is Purim  
Tomorrow it's gone  
So give me a penny  
And send me along!

*(Said by children  
bringing goody baskets—  
shahlach mahnehs—  
to family and friends.)*



Purim Groggers

## Baking Hamantashen

Various reasons are given for eating these triangular pastries. Some say they are reminiscent of the tri-cornered hat worn by Haman and the other officers of the Persian court. In Hebrew, they are called *oznay Haman*—Haman's ears. Tradition holds that Haman had pointy ears—like Mr. Spock! They are filled with poppy seed, prune, apricot, or other fillings. The actual origin of hamantashen may be a German pastry "*mun taschen*," or poppy seed pockets, which, in a play on words, became "humuntaschen" with the Yiddish pronunciation of hamantashen. **Whatever the origin, eat and enjoy!**

*This recipe yields about 4 dozen cookies.*

### Dough

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup oil
- 1/3 cup margarine
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 4 cups flour
- 3 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 egg beaten for glaze

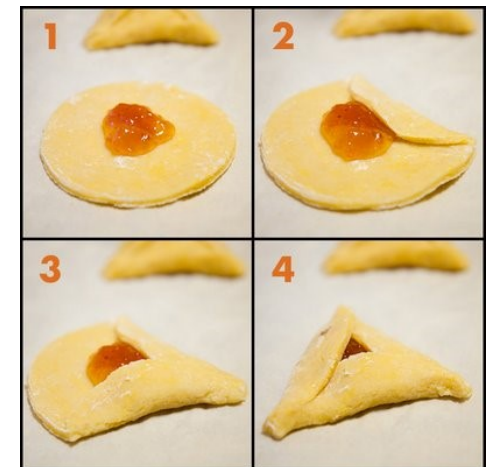
### Traditional fillings:

- Apricot or prune jam
- Poppy-seed filling in a can

### Non-traditional fillings:

- Other types of jam
- Chocolate chips or spread

- 1) Preheat oven to 350° F.
- 2) Blend sugar, oil, and margarine.
- 3) Add eggs and juice.
- 4) Add dry ingredients and roll into a ball.
- 5) Refrigerate for one hour.
- 6) Divide dough into four parts. Roll out each piece very thinly (1/8 inch) on a floured board. With the rim of a glass or a cookie cutter, cut circles into the dough.
- 7) Place 1/2 to 2/3 teaspoon of filling in the middle of each circle.
- 8) To make into triangles: pull together right and left sides of each circle so that they meet in the center, leaving the bottom side down. Lift the bottom side up to meet the other two sides, forming a triangle. Seal the sides very lightly; they will easily open in the oven revealing the filling.
- 9) (Optional) Brush dough with beaten egg before baking.
- 10) Place on greased cookie sheets. Bake for approximately 20 minutes until light brown.



**PLEASE WATCH for our Jewish resident survey coming to your email box soon.**

**We need to know how many Jewish residents you have, so that we can deliver egg matzah for Passover, which begins at sundown on WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8.**

**ARE YOU THE NEW ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR? PLEASE SEND US YOUR NAME, FACILITY, AND EMAIL ADDRESS, SO THAT WE CAN UPDATE OUR RECORDS!!!**

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## The Story of Purim (very abbreviated)



Many years ago in far away Persia, there lived a king named AHASHVERUS (Ah-hahsh-VER-us). He had a beautiful queen named VASHTI (VASH-tee). KING AHASHVERUS invited all the men in the Capital to a feast with lots of drinking. He commanded QUEEN VASHTI to show off her beauty to the men at the feast. But VASHTI refused to appear before the men. The King became so angry, he consulted with his advisors and announced that she could no longer be queen.



AHASHVERUS wanted a new queen, so he sent his messengers to look for the most beautiful young women in Persia. Among the women, they found a young Jewish woman named ESTHER. She was living with her cousin MORDECAI, a very pious and good man. When the King saw lovely ESTHER, he chose her as his Queen. MORDECAI instructed her not to tell the King she was Jewish, and so she did not tell him.



One day when MORDECAI was at the palace, he overheard two of the guards plotting to kill the King. He used messengers to tell ESTHER about the evil plot. The Queen warned KING AHASHVERUS (in Mordecai's name), who had the guards killed immediately.

The King's Prime Minister at that time was HAMAN (HAY-men), a very wicked man. He wanted everyone to bow down to him. Almost everyone did; however MORDECAI refused to bow down. HAMAN became very angry at MORDECAI and at all the Jews. He decided to have all the Jews in the land of Persia killed. The date was chosen by lottery, and the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar (Ah-DAHR) was the date chosen for the terrible deed.



Of course the Jews were frightened, and MORDECAI begged ESTHER to save her people. ESTHER said that she would try. She appeared before the King in her most beautiful robes and invited the King and HAMAN to a banquet. At that banquet, the King asked ESTHER what she wanted so badly. ESTHER invited the King and HAMAN to join her at another banquet the next night, and then she would tell them.

Later that night, the King could not sleep, so he called for one of his servants to read to him from his diary. The servant read to AHASHVERUS about how MORDECAI had saved his life. The King wanted to reward MORDECAI, but did not know how to do so. In the morning, he asked HAMAN, "There is a man I must reward. How shall I do so?" HAMAN thought the King was talking about him, and he was very happy. He said, "I would dress this man in royal robes and have him led through the streets on a royal horse. Let one of the King's officers run before the horse and shout 'This is what the King does when he wants to honor someone!' Let everyone see the man you have chosen to honor." The King then told HAMAN that MORDECAI was the man to be so honored, and HAMAN was to lead him through the streets!

Later that same day was the second private banquet to which Queen ESTHER had invited the King and HAMAN. The King said to ESTHER, "You look unhappy. What is bothering you enough to invite us to two banquets?" ESTHER answered, "O King, HAMAN is going to kill my people. He has built a gallows on which to hang my cousin MORDECAI. Please save my cousin and my people."

The King loved ESTHER very much and remembered that MORDECAI had saved his life. He called his palace guards and ordered them to hang HAMAN on the gallows that HAMAN had prepared for MORDECAI.

So, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar, the Jews, instead of being killed, celebrated a happy holiday. They called the day "PURIM" (POOR-im), which means "lots" in Persian. MORDECAI became a wise and caring Prime Minister in place of HAMAN. Today, people send pastries called Hamantashen to one another and give charity to the poor in celebration of ESTHER'S bravery.

