



Shabbes: The Holiday That Comes Every Week / Tu B'Shevat: Celebrating Trees!

What Should I Know about Shabbes? (pronounced "SHAH-bess")

- **Shabbes is the Jewish Sabbath, a day of rest that lasts from sundown Friday until darkness on Saturday. For an observant family, it is the holiest holiday—on par with Yom Kippur!**
- It is a day of rest and reflection with special foods, songs, and rituals.
- It is a day of refraining from work and business activities, freeing one to engage in prayer and reflection, eating festive meals, and celebrating with friends.
- When our residents were children, it may have been a day on which they were torn between Shabbes activities and prohibitions, and normal American weekend activities.
- When they were growing up, Shabbes was an important part of most of our Jewish residents' lives. Re-creating it will bring a connection to an important part of their spiritual lives.

Why is Shabbes Important to Your Residents?

- It was a celebration that their parents brought from Europe, where Jews always closed their businesses in obedience to the 4th Commandment to "remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy."
- While parents in America may have had to work on Saturday, almost every Jewish family had a feast on Friday night with white tablecloths, fine china, and the best food they could afford. The meal began with sweet wine and a braided hallah bread, then included soup and chicken. It was a time for the family (maybe across generations) to be together.
- Even today, when residents' families may no longer observe a full Shabbes to Saturday night, many still had a special, traditional meal on Friday night, including children and grandchildren.
- Their mothers or grandmothers lighting Shabbes candles may be one of your Jewish residents' earliest memories.

Upcoming Jewish Holidays 2019

HOLIDAY	DATE
Tu B'Shevat	Sun. night Jan. 20 - Mon. Jan. 21
Purim	Wed. night Mar. 20 - Thurs. Mar. 21
Passover (8 days)	Fri. night April 19 - Sat. April 27
Shavuot (2 days)	Sat. night June 8 - Mon. June 10
Rosh Hashanah (2 days)	Sun. night Sept. 29 - Tues. Oct. 1
Yom Kippur	Tues. night Oct. 8 - Wed. Oct. 9
Sukkot (7 days)	Sun. night Oct. 13 - Sun. Oct. 20
Shmini Atzeret	Sun. night Oct. 20 - Mon. Oct. 21
Simhat Torah	Mon. night Oct. 21 - Tues. Oct. 22
Hanukkah	Sun. night Dec. 22 - Mon. Dec. 30

Jewish Life Newsletter

Jewish Federation of
Northeastern New York

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

Phone: 518.783.7800, ext. 228
Fax: 518.783.1557
Email: bmagidson@jewishfedny.org

Rabbi Beverly W. Magidson
Director

Robert R. Kovach
President and CEO, JFNENY

Shabbes Memories



LED Shabbes "candles"

Your residents may have grown up in homes where Shabbes was mostly celebrated with the Friday night rituals: The Sabbath was welcomed in song as the Queen of Days, and the table was set as if royalty were dining. A **white tablecloth** was spread on the table and then set with the **nicest china and silver** available. The mother **lit candles** to mark the beginning of the Sabbath; everyone sang Shalom Aleychem to welcome the legendary Sabbath angels. Then the father said the blessing (*Kiddish*) over **sweet wine**. Next, a **wonderful braided egg bread, or hallah**, was served. The meal may have started with **gefilte fish**, an Eastern European specialty. The traditional **chicken soup with noodles** was next, followed by **roast chicken**. Side dishes might have been a **noodle pudding** (*luckshen kugel*), and maybe a **carrot tzimmes**. Even as adults, residents' families may have shortened the rituals and still enjoyed the food and family togetherness. **Shabbes recipes are in the insert.**

Inside This Issue

Shabbes:
What, Why, and How

Making Shabbes Dinner

Covering One's Eyes
Blessing One's Family
Reminiscing

TU B'SHEVAT for Trees

Shabbes Music

Shabbes Recipes

Upcoming Holidays 2019

Some Traditional Shabbes Treats

Convenience Foods & Mixes

I. Gefilte Fish: (served as an appetizer)
Easiest purchased in a jar and served cold with a dollop of ground horseradish. However, the seniors to whom we've spoken in our travels routinely tell us, "That's not the REAL thing." Some other options:

(1) **Warm it up:** put the entire contents of jar in a pan and warm it up. An even nicer treat: add 2 scraped, cut-up (1" rounds) carrots and a cut-up onion, boil until the carrots are soft.

(2) **Buy it frozen:** (available at Price Chopper, 1892 Central Avenue, Colonie, and some other stores in the kosher frozen food section.) Cook according to the package instructions.

II. Chicken Soup with Matzah balls: Families might eat matzah balls in chicken soup anytime, and they're a nice treat, though best known at Passover time. While they're not difficult to make from scratch, the matzah ball mix for sale in the market is excellent. Just be sure to follow the directions. Alternatively, you may buy jars of broth with matzah balls or Tabatchnick frozen soup in the kosher frozen food section. (An alternative in the traditional soup would be fine noodles or rice.)

Recipes

Potato Kugel (Pudding)

5 medium potatoes, cubed
1 large onion, diced
3 eggs
1 1/2 teaspoons salt (optional)
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 cup margarine
1/3 cup flour (matzo meal on Passover)

Blend all ingredients in a food processor or blender until potatoes are medium consistency. You may like it fine or a bit coarse. (Use diet margarine and PAM, if you wish, but don't reduce amount of margarine.)

Pour into preheated, lightly-oiled 9" round or loaf pan and bake at 350°F or until golden brown, about 1 1/2 -2 hours. When doubling the recipe, use 9"x13" pan. Source: http://www.jewishfood-list.com/recipes/recipe_index.html

Dried Fruit & Carrot Tzimmes (“TZIH-mess”)

A tzimmes is a mishmash of different foods. Sometimes tzimmes includes only carrots and is called a carrot tzimmes. Sometimes tzimmes includes meat, sweet potatoes, and prunes and is called a gantze tzimmes (a tzimmes with everything in it). This recipe is a meatless tzimmes with dried fruit.

2 cups water
1/2 cup honey
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
2 lbs. mixed dried fruit
2 cups sliced carrots

Combine water, honey, and cinnamon; bring to a boil. Add remaining ingredients and return to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until carrots are done and fruit is tender. Serve warm.

Source: *Bergen Record and Jewish Week, Sept 1992*

Noodle Kugel (Pudding)

Here's a simple recipe from Kashrut.com

1 lb. wide egg noodles
1/2 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. vanilla
1/8 tsp. salt
1/2 cup raisins
Either: 3 tbsps. melted margarine or 1/4 cup apple sauce
Optional: 1 apple cut up

1. Cook noodles according to directions on the package.
2. Beat the eggs; gradually add the sugar until thick and light in color.
3. Add the rest of ingredients except for noodles, mixing between items.
4. Fold eggs and sugar into the noodles.
5. Pour into two 8"x 8" or 9"x 9" greased pans or one 8"x 11" greased pan.
6. Bake for 45 minutes at 350°F.

Shalom Aleychem

This is the best-known of the many songs for the Shabbat table. It is sung before dinner and welcomes the angels (or messengers) of peace to the Sabbath table. I have seen residents who appear to be unresponsive mouthing the words of this song! Shalom Aleychem means "Peace be unto you" or "Welcome to you." This melody, a classic, was actually written by Rabbi Israel Goldfarb on May 10, 1918.

שָׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם – Shalom Aleychem

Andantino *mf*

1. Sha - lom a - ley - chem mal - a - chey ha - sha - ret mal -
 4. Tzet - chem l' - sha - lom mal - a - chey ha - sha - lom, mal -
 a - chey el - yon; mi - me - lech
 a - chey el - yon; mi - me - lech

Fine

mal' - chey ham' - la - cheem, ha - ka - dosh ba - ruch hu.
 mal' - chey ham' - la - cheem, ha - ka - dosh ba - ruch hu.

2. Bo - a - chem l' - sha - lom mal - a - chey ha - sha - lom,
 3. Bar - chu - nee l' - sha - lom mal - a - chey ha - sha - lom,
 mal - a - chey el - yon,
 mal - a - chey el - yon,

mi - me - lech mal' - chey ham' - la - cheem ha -
 mi - me - lech mal' - chey ham' - la - cheem ha -

1. ka - dosh ba - ruch hu.
 ka - dosh ba - ruch

2. *D. C. al Fine*

Peace unto you. Messengers of
 the King of Kings,
 The Holy One, praised be He.
 May you come in peace, bless
 in peace,
 And go forth in peace.

שָׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם מְלַאכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת,
 מְלַאכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן,
 מִמְּלַךְ מְלֻכֵי הַמְּלָכִים,
 הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

Making Shabbes Dinner

One way to really bring back Shabbes memories is to re-create Shabbes dinner or some part of it. Here's how to do the non-religious parts of it:



1. **Set a table** with a nice white tablecloth, dressy napkins, “nice” china, and electric candlesticks. You can get electric candlesticks or LED tea lights from synagogue gift shops, or you may also buy battery-operated window candles at Christmas time. They may have “pewter” or “brass” bases. Make sure they have no Christmas-y red and green trim!

2. **Serve concord grape juice** in wineglasses.

3. **Get a hallah.** They are available on Fridays at many area supermarkets. Try the **Price Chopper at 1892 Central Ave. (it has a large kosher department).** Also available at **Shop Rite, Hannaford, BJ's, and the New Mt. Pleasant Bakery on Crane Street in Schenectady, or Variety Pizza on Madison Avenue near Allen Street in Albany,** where you must call ahead for hallah (518) 438-4333. **Serve traditional Shabbes dishes.** Recipes are in this newsletter's insert.

4. **Play Jewish music.** We have a free CD of Yiddish music (call Chaplaincy Services, (518) 783-7800 ext. 228) or get the easily ordered CDs: *In the Fiddler's House* by Itzhak Pearlman or *Mamaloshen* by Mandy Patinkin. Theodore Bikel's *Classic Jewish Holiday and Shabbat Songs,* is available on Amazon.

Women cover their eyes while saying the blessing over the Shabbes candles. Usually a blessing is said before an act, but saying the blessing would begin Shabbes, when lighting a fire is prohibited. Therefore the candles are lit first, then women cover their eyes while saying the blessing. After that, the women may then look at the light. The candles provide light for Shabbes dinner.

BLESSING ONE'S FAMILY

At the beginning of Shabbes dinner, a husband would sing the praises of his wife by chanting Chapter 31 of the biblical Book of Proverbs

The parents (sometimes just the father) would bless the children with “May God bless you as He blessed Ephraim and Manasseh” for the boys and “May God bless you as He blessed Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah” for the girls, along with the Priestly blessing from the biblical book of Numbers 6:24.

What blessings would your residents want for their children and grandchildren?

Reminiscing about Shabbes

Here are some good topics for reminiscing:

-Did your family observe Shabbes in some way?

-Did your mother light candles? How many did she light? (Most lit two, but some lit one for each child or family member.) Did your mother have a ritual for lighting? (There are traditional rituals when doing this.)

-Did your father say Kiddish on wine?

-What did your family eat? Did you eat dinner with your grandparents?

-Did you have pre-Shabbes chores?

-Did your father go to shul (synagogue)?

-Did your mother go to Shul? (Many women were uneducated in reading Hebrew prayers and didn't go.)

-Were there things you weren't allowed to do?

-Were there things you looked forward to doing?

This would be a great opportunity to ask whether the men celebrated becoming b'nai (singular, bar) mitzvah. If they did, it was probably much smaller than today and might have even been mid-week. The women might have had brothers who celebrated the occasion. Bat mitzvahs for girls were unheard-of until the 1960's. Some women may have participated in adult bat mitzvah programs later in their lives.



Tu B'Shevat for Trees

Monday, January 21, 2019

What do I need to know about Tu B'Shevat?

The holiday's roots are in Israel where it is the middle of the rainy season. It marks the beginning of the new growing season which, historically, was an important time when people began tithing their fruits to bring them to the Temple in Jerusalem in the tree's fourth year.

It is a very minor holiday. Its name literally means “The 15th of Shevat,” which is its date on the Jewish calendar. It is the “New Year for the Trees.”

Your residents will remember celebrating it mostly in two ways:

- (1) Donating money to plant trees in Israel, where the land was desert and swamp.** The money was donated to the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in honor of an event or in memory of a special person. (You may still do this by calling 1-800-542-TREE or via www.jnf.org/jnf-tree-planting-center/. They are \$18 each. **Tree certificate is above.**)
- (2) Eating “bawksr,” which is the Yiddish word for carob pods.** These are hard and bitter, but were imported from Israel. They may not have even done that.

Here are Some Program Ideas for Tu B'Shevat

Have a Tu B'Shevat Seder (“SAY-dehr”). This is a program at which different fruits are eaten, in a certain order, with readings to explain the order. **A word of caution: most Jews associate the word “Seder” with Passover. A Seder for Tu B'Shevat is a new custom with which most of your residents will not be familiar.**

You can find an example of a brief, simple one at <http://velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/files/tubhaggadah-kids.pdf>. You may also get one by **calling Chaplaincy Services at (518) 783-7800, ext. 228.**

Plant something. If you plant parsley, it may be ready to harvest for your Passover Seder. **(Passover begins at sundown on Fri., April 19, 2019.)** No matter what you plant, your residents will enjoy watching it grow during the cold weeks following the holiday.

Talk about trees. Your residents may have grown up donating money to plant trees in Israel. During the 1930's and 40's, Tu B'Shevat became a popular time to do this. Jews immigrating to Israel from Eastern Europe found a swampy and desert land; planting trees made the land more farmable. Jews in the United States donated money to plant trees, using it as an opportunity to memorialize a deceased loved one or honor a living one. If you mention a *pushke* (PUSH-kah) or **little blue box**, you may hear more about this. A *pushke* is a charity canister. The blue box was a *pushke* for tree money. Talk about physically planting trees, either here or on a trip to Israel. Talking about trees and gardens is a nice way to bring the hope of spring into a northeastern New York winter's day!

Add a Tu B'Shevat dish to your menu. Try serving one of the fruits mentioned in the biblical book of Deuteronomy: *Wheat (i.e. baked items), barley, figs, dates, olives, grapes, and pomegranates.* Other dried or fresh fruits are nice, too.

Celebrate trees. Sing songs about trees, show videos, paint a picture, draw a mural. It will remind all of you that spring WILL come—eventually.