



SIMCHAT TORAH

Temple Israel Presents
“How to Simchat Torah”
A guide for celebrating Simchat Torah

WHAT IS SIMCHAT TORAH?

Simchat Torah immediately follows Sukkot, and is the last of the major autumn holidays that begin with Rosh Hashanah. In Jewish synagogues around the world, we read a portion of the Torah each week in sequential order. Simchat Torah is the holiday that celebrates finishing the final book of the Torah and starting over at the beginning. Simcha means joy, so this is our joyous holiday of singing and dancing with the Torah!

COMMON CUSTOMS

On the evening on Simchat Torah, the last section of Deuteronomy is read and then the very beginning of Genesis is read. To do this, we unroll the entire Torah around the sanctuary, and everyone has an opportunity to hold it and see the scroll. As part of the Simchat Torah celebration, all the Torah scrolls in a congregation are removed from the ark and paraded around the synagogue. These are called *hakafot* (circuits).

At Temple Israel, we also celebrate the Consecration of our new Religious School students at Simchat Torah. We invite them up to the bimah for a special blessing as they begin their formal Jewish education.

IDEAS OF HOW TO INVOLVE KIDS ON SIMCHAT TORAH

Make your own Israeli flag to wave during the festivities on Simchat Torah! Be resourceful and use materials you already have at home such as a paper towel roll for the flagpole, a dowel rod laying around, an old piece of white cloth, construction paper and paint, etc.

Make an edible Torah craft: You can use anything that will roll up like a Torah. Tortillas, lunchmeat, lettuce, etc. Get creative!

SIMCHAT TORAH FOODS

We provide sweet treats to make sure that Torah leaves a taste as sweet as honey with our new students. Our custom has always been to eat caramel or candy apples!

Please feel free to contact Rabbi Amy Feder
afeder@ti-stl.org or 314-432-8050 with any questions
regarding Simchat Torah.

