



December 2021

This month learn about programs for you this winter, thoughts about food and perspectives from growing older.

1. **Joining Rabbi Helfand's Class:** Information and **yes!!** you can jump in and join us now! It has been a fabulous beginning for our Hazak Class, **Sacred Space and Sacred Time**, taught by Rabbi Corey Helfand on Thursday mornings at 11am.

Class follow up from the Rabbi,

- A. You can access all documents for the class: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CPBjBZbtK7KhSYCiAT6BSnJtMd3fU3Yh?usp=sharing>. New materials will be posted each week.
- B. You can access all class recordings here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2TEYnS6GHurP16B2RznTnA-2vIMm_PZc
- C. For those who need, the Zoom information with the phone login details are below. This will be our link going forward. **Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85428276819?pwd=c0YwY2QrWUE3ZkxibIN1Z081YkkwZz09>

Meeting ID: 854 2827 6819, Passcode: ShalomOKC

One tap mobile: [+13017158592](tel:+13017158592), [+185428276819](tel:+185428276819)#, ..., *075252691# US (Washington, DC)

2. **A Concert!!** **Craig Taubman in Concert**. Sunday, December 12th 4PM (In-Person and Livestream). Register and join the fun!

Ohr Kodesh is bringing internationally-acclaimed musician Craig Taubman and his band to perform!

Craig's songs bridge traditional Jewish themes and ancient teachings with passages and experiences of contemporary Jewish life. He speaks a language that is both comfortable and acceptable to children and adults. His Jewish recordings are an integral part of the community, weaving song and spirit into the fabric of Jewish life.

Join us for this joyful concert with the whole family!

3. Coming soon: **Zoom on January 24th at 7:30 pm - Dr. Sheila Brush on alternative medicine and medical marijuana**. New laws in Maryland. New options for alternative health care! We have so many questions about how these options can help us with arthritis, pain management and anxiety. More details will follow soon.

Coming in February a *Lunch and Learn* session on Chocolate with the potential for in person tasting! Stay tuned for our details.

4. **Celebrate Tu BiShvat** (Hebrew: ט"ו שבט) occurring Sun, Jan 16, 2022 – Mon, Jan 17, 2022
Plant a tree for someone you hold dear. Plant a tree in your yard or you can use these links to support the important efforts to plant trees world-wide.

Plant a tree in Israel link: **For JNF**. <https://usa.jnf.org/jnf-tree-planting-center/>

Plant a tree US forest Service National Forest Service link:
<https://shop.alivingtribute.org/products/plant-a-tree-in-honor>

5. **Best Foods to bring for Shiva** (from “My Jewish Learning” website)

“The Talmud states that it’s forbidden for mourners to cook for themselves on the first day of mourning. Even if it didn’t, most mourners are not exactly in the perfect state of mind to start whipping up a feast for guests. As such, extended family members and friends typically provide tons of food for the mourners, oftentimes enough to last the entire seven days of shiva.

The most commonplace Jewish foods at a shiva are deli sandwich platters, baked pasta dishes, loads of baked goods, and sliced fruit platters. All gestures are appreciated, but if the same food is being presented to the mourning family day after day, it can be overkill, even when it’s something sweet. So it’s important to check in with the family, or the person helping to coordinate the shiva, to find out what kinds of foods the family needs, and which they’ve already received.”

“Everyone’s palate and dietary needs are different, so there’s no one-dish-fits-all for mourners. How do you determine the best thing to bring? By asking, of course! Or, as to not overwhelm the mourning family, ensure that a point person, or team, has been chosen to keep track of incoming food. Another option is to use a website like [Caring Organizer](#) or [Meal Train](#) to organize meals.”

Here are some suggestions to consider from the article: Paper goods, Nuts and dried fruit, gift cards, finger foods, challah, soup and frozen foods. To read the complete article, here is the link.

https://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/the-best-foods-to-bring-to-shiva/?utm_content=bufferca39b&utm_medium=social&utm_source=thenosher&utm_campaign=buffer&fbclid=IwAR1Qu1y9MLmDF8VIRaRpYe4mQ9CY6BI3YGQw--Ad1dPd58P0i5BiMjYKSt0

6. **Speaking of Food:** I had an email exchange with **Streits**. I was unable to buy their bullion mixes online or in the local Kosher markets so I wrote them. Here is some interesting history about Streits:

"Aron Streit, Inc. (sold under the name **Streit's**) is a Kosher food company founded in New York City, best known for its product Streit's Matzo. It is the only family-owned and operated matzo company in the United States, and distributes matzo in select international markets. Streit's 47,000-square-foot matzo factory, was a surviving piece of the Lower East Side's Jewish heritage.

At the turn of the 20th century, Jews, along with other European immigrants, were crammed into the many unsanitary tenements of the Lower East Side. In 1915 they made up 60 percent of the Lower East Side population. Because of the large Jewish presence, Jewish-centric businesses like Streit's opened and flourished. However, because of the poor living conditions, as soon as they financially could, many Jewish families moved out of the tenements to new areas of industry in New York City, namely uptown and Brooklyn, slowly making Streit's a relic of the past.

Since the 1980s the Lower East Side has experienced hyper-gentrification and the neighborhood is now a burgeoning area with rising rents. The Streit family even considered at one point opening a café or bar that serves matzo, to go with the Lower East Side's new nightlife scene. But on December 20, 2007, it was announced that the factory had been listed for sale for \$25,000,000. The Streit's family cited noise complaints, congested streets, and their desire to modernize equipment, as the reasons for their eventual move. Its realtor, Massey Knakel Realty Services, commented "the building will most likely be torn down and converted into luxury condominiums. Midtown East-based Cogswell Realty bought the factory for \$30.5 million in 2015. Cogswell closed on the properties, which together span roughly 50,000 square feet, in May 2015. Cogswell Lee Development and Gluck, which is also the project's architect, are developing the condo building, and plan to festoon the lobby with Streit's memorabilia.

The new Streit's factory replaced the matzo factory in Manhattan and warehouse and dry pack facility. Bag-and-box mixes like the matzo ball and soup mix, potato pancake mix, and most of the other side items were made in New Jersey for years.

And they wrote me back:

Dear Sandra Walter,

We are still making this product. Unfortunately, we have been out of it for a while but are making more now and it should become available again in a few weeks. Thank you for your patience.

Best,

Matthew Horbacewicz

Aron Streit Inc.

"American Made – Family Owned"

Orangeburg, NY 10962

mhorbacewicz@streitsmatzos.com

As of two weeks ago, I can find the soup mixes on the store's shelves again!

6. **I am thinking about food right now!** Articles about "impossible meats" including beef, chicken, shrimp and pork have me contemplating vegan naming conventions and kosher laws.

Even the strict kosher laws of Israel's ultra-orthodox may potentially change with the new government coalition change. "Israel's new governing coalition, one of the few not to include ultra-Orthodox parties in the past 45 years, has moved to loosen the ultra-Orthodox grip on food certification and a raft of other religious and social policies, ranging from bans on Sabbath transit to exemptions for ultra-Orthodox men from military service.

Few of the changes that have been discussed will touch more Israelis on a daily basis than revamping food inspections. Under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's government, the kosher certificates granted by alternative inspectors.....will soon carry the same authority as the country's Chief Rabbinate, an office long dominated by the ultra-Orthodox."

On another front, if the product is called "impossible pork" and is certified as a purely vegan plant-based product, why doesn't it qualify as Kosher? "The largest and most influential certifier of kosher products in the world has declined to endorse Impossible Pork, even though nothing about its ingredients or preparation conflicts with Jewish dietary laws."

"The Impossible Pork, we didn't give an 'OU' to it, not because it wasn't kosher per se," said Rabbi Menachem Genack, the CEO of the Orthodox Union's kosher division. "It may indeed be completely in terms of its ingredients: If it's completely plant-derived, it's kosher. Just in terms of sensitivities to the consumer ... it didn't get it."

Want to read the entire articles? Here are some links to satisfy your hunger for the details!! Thoughts? I'm interested in your feedback.

Impossible pork article

<https://www.jta.org/2021/09/27/food/plant-based-impossible-pork-is-here-but-will-it-be-kosher>

Ultra-Orthodox choke on Israel's kosher revamp

by [*The Washington Post*](#) | November 21, 2021 at 4:16 a.m.

7. People Are Sharing Life Perspectives That Changed When They Got Older

Buzz Feed

Here are some of the most eye-opening ones:

"That everything I did had to be perfect. Most of the time, 'good enough' is just that — good enough." "Perfection is rarely required in the real world." — [u/Prematurid](#)

"I spent a lot of time when I was younger worrying about what other people thought of me, when actually, most people are just thinking about themselves and worrying about what other people think of them." — [u/Mapi_Birthday](#)

"Just because I find something easy to do doesn't mean it comes easily to others." "Just because someone else can do something doesn't mean I can." — [u/fluentindothraki](#)

"I became a less judgmental person as I grew older."

"The fact that I used to make comments without thinking about others' feelings or situations made me realize how much of a jerk I was. I regret all of it, of course, but we all go through situations where we are judged without thinking. Looking at other people's perspectives changed my life entirely." —[u/DarkWarrior1998](#)

8. About 25 Hazak members and others enjoyed our November Movie Night and our conversation with director Jonathan Gruber. Thanks to Natalie Cantor for her support and thanks to John Walter for his photos.

Thinking of you all! Take care. Be safe. There is always a place for you at our table.

Sandy