

Chat during Freedom Seder, April 10, 2020

Led by Rabbi Brian Walt with Special Guest Rabbi Arthur Waskow

(Edited to omit most individual names and condensed when same point noted many times)

We are grateful:

- This congregation
- That my sister has joined us from Portland, OR!
- Music
- Food and shelter
- I'm so grateful for being with all of you, and for life!
- Jewish Voice for Peace
- Connections, birds
- That my back feels better
- This community and the opportunity to celebrate Passover with Rabbis Brian and Waskow!
- For these faces which I remember from my childhood
- Health
- I am thankful for how so many people have reached out despite social distancing to make this time easier on all.
- Good friends, near and far.
- Trillium
- Local activists
- Our family, those of us here and those in other places
- Love and freedom to move and dance and garden
- Blessed connection....
- Frozen mangos
- Full employment
- The generosity of this congregation in welcoming guests!
- Waves and smiles from behind masks
- Forced collective consciousness
- For having my third seder for the year!
- Friends, family and community.
- Good health and laughter
- Spring and the beauty of nature
- Fire
- My ancestors
- The sharing for our Palestinian brothers and sisters.

- Bernie Sanders values of equity.
- All who've dedicated their lives to save lives in the medical field!
- Never has there been a Pesach with as much hand washing!!

Comments while R. Arthur Waskow speaking about the history of Freedom Seders and the plagues

- Perhaps the current virus is a modern plague?
- Perhaps it is Capitalism that is the modern plague!
- The Kings Bay Plowshares 7 acted on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King who pointed to the triplets, racism, militarism, and poverty, (and add the 4th - ecocide) that must be challenged because they work intricately intertwined, always. When we rid the world of nuclear weapons & of racism, poverty will be eliminated. The COVID19 attacking human lungs is a parallel of what the earth's lungs are feeling.
- We have 2-3 types of taste buds for sweet, sour & salt each, but 22-23 types of taste buds for Bitters! (NPR story)
- Here's another powerful story from Arthur from his work in 1964.
<https://www.iheart.com/artist/reggie-harris-pete-seeger-31092185/songs/democratic-national-convention-1964-37624937/>

Who do you honor:

- Thank you Dear Arthur
- It would be enough to have a Freedom Seder, but a Freedom Seder with Rabbi Arthur Waskow....Dayenu!
- Thank you to Arthur and everyone! Amazing story.
- My daughter, a doctor
- My childhood Rabbi
- The medical people in NYC and our contingent from Ithaca who went down to NYC hospitals to help out
- ICSD food and transportation staff
- The many who made our wonderful masks!
- Individuals in Ithaca who are supporting people who need help
- Cashiers at grocery stores
- The farmers who are growing our food
- Parents with small children
- ICSD food and transportation staff
- The grocery store clerks and workers who are ensuring that we are fed and healthy. who never signed up to be heroes, and yet, often do not have the choice to stay home...
- The first responders in my family and all those first responders, the service workers,

- My father, a pediatrician, who taught me health techniques which I have passed on which I hope are helping others who get COVID-19 to get a more mild case.
- People who smile to one another on the streets
- People who work to keep our society going like those who collect our garbage.
- Farmers who are growing food
- The sanitation workers
- The Grocery clerks and delivery men and all those who are staying separate
- I want to honor all who are care takers of the sick, the elderly, and the poor. I want to honor my sister Clare will be sentenced on May 29th to be with the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 and others incarcerated who need to be liberated from prisons and need our reparations
- The young people who are sacrificing their ordinary lives due to the inaction and unjust actions of the adults in our world!
- Researchers trying to understand this virus and find treatments and a vaccine, elder care takers
- All the activists--thank you so much!
- Single parents with young children at home
- I want to honor my brother and all other doctors working on the front lines right now.
- Nurses who are not being paid enough
- I want to honor my aunts, who are nurses, and all other nurses working on the front lines right now.
- Individual from Mutual Aid Tompkins who is working to distribute donated items to people in need
- I want to honor my cousin, a dietician in a hospital, and all the other non-doctors non-nurses in the healthcare field on the front lines.
- We honor our daughter, who has been shopping for food for us.
- We honor our leaders in government who are making wise choices and helping to protect and care for us
- I want to honor my friend, a restaurateur providing free meals for not only children out of school but also their entire families, and all others working to make this time easier on those facing economic hardships from COVID19.
- I want to honor teachers, and all of whom have been continuing to engage their students even though schools are closed and work for their education and betterment, and also all other educators working hard to make sure students still have some continuity while out of school.
- All the mask-makers and all the companies who are diverting their industries to manufacturing PPE's and ventilators.

As we move toward the end of the seder a few last comments:

- On voters: if the Republican Voter ID ideas are to go through, then we MUST make sure that Boards of Election provide FREE photo IDs for those who do not have one--most of whom are the impoverished.
- Here's a quote from Don't Forget to Breathe:

- Nothing should go back to normal. Normal wasn't working
- And our physical distancing is a privilege that people in Gaza, prison, and other crowded places don't have.
- If we go back to normal, we will have lost the lesson. May we rise up and do better.
- Yes, and for those in Detroit or Gaza that don't have water, to wash hands
- If anyone needs a mask, email me at maradances@yahoo.com I can mail them
- Check the Kings Bay Plowshares 7.org to find out about the nonviolent symbolic action
- That is my favorite story. Because we don't part the sea by waiting — we have to act!!
- Earlier, thanks to a Catholic group was given. I, myself, come from a mixed family. A Catholic father and a Jewish mother--I am a Cashew, I'm a nut! One thing relating to matzah--in the Catholic Church, the Eucharistic bread is flat/unleavened. Why? Because they believe that Jesus' Last Supper, when he gave the commandment to "eat of this bread, for it is my body", was a Passover Seder. A lot of people realize that the Last Supper is said to have been a Seder, but not all realize that the Catholic Church continues to honor that by using unleavened bread for Eucharist (though it's not quite like our modern matzah.)
- By Doug Mishkin (song writer) :Let us retell the story of our struggle for the promised landLet us remember how freedom is won so our children will understand. Once we were slaves in Egypt, our people and our land were apart. But when Moses stood before that troubled sea, he could. Make those waters part. Once we were slaves in America, we were given white men's names. They scattered our families, they shattered our lives, while they kept us bound in chains. Then we marched strong in Selma, we looked the racists right in the heart, And when Martin stood before that troubled sea, he could make those waters part. Somewhere tonight lives a free man. Somewhere else freedom's just a song of the heart, We must find the river flowing between them, And we must make those waters part. Now we are slaves in our own time The many at the hands of the few, And we who've crossed the sea of slavery before, Must remember what we must do: In the name of the falsely imprisoned, in the name of all the homeless at heart, In the name of all the history that binds us, We must make those waters part. Troubled seas rising around us Sometimes the promised land seems hidden from view So we retell these stories, that's how we start – To make those waters part.

Thank you were plentiful throughout the evening and as we concluded

- Thank you for your music. So, so grateful for your beautiful singing and strumming! Pure and holy!
- Amen!!!! Thank you, Brian! Wonderful!! Wow!!
- Yes, Welcome Arthur!
- I have thanked the Grady's several times
- That's the perfect ending message! This is a moment for transformation for our country.
- Thank you Elan for inviting me tonight! I am honored to have participated.
- Yes, thank you for that message, Rabbi Brian. And for this entire wonderful and inspiring Seder. I'm happy to have been able to join Tikkun v'Or tonight.
- Thanks for all who support freedom for all
- Thank you for inviting me to read during that segment. I'm honored to be among such an inspiring group of activists.
- Shabbat shalom and Pesach to all. So lovely to hear such inspiring and comforting words.
- Big love and joy in my heart. thank you dear community.

- Thank thank thank --just wonderful!! Meaningful, joyful, thoughtful... love to all!
- Thank you, everyone who made this happen!!
- Rabbi Brian, I've always wished I could attend a Seder of yours. Although this pandemic is bitter, what a sweetness to get to attend your Seder, and even more so with Rabbi Arthur here too!
- So nice to see so many familiar faces! thanks to everyone who organized and made this possible!!!!