

# **A TU B'SHVAT MAILING FOR JEWS ACROSS AND BEYOND BARS**



Shvat 5783 ~ January 2023

Dear friends,

Chag Sameach! Happy Tu B'Shvat!

We are writing to you on behalf of Matir Asurim: Jewish Prisoner Care Network. *Matir Asurim* literally translates as “The One Who Frees Captives.” This phrase from Jewish liturgy refers to God's power to act for freedom and humanity's ability to manifest godliness through working for freedom.

We are a newly-formed group of advocates, Jewish clergy, loved ones of incarcerated people, and people with direct experience of incarceration. We have been meeting regularly since Tevet 5781/January 2021, guided by the questions: What are incarcerated Jews experiencing? What support do incarcerated Jews need that is not being met? We know that many Jewish communities have not done enough to support people inside and people impacted by the prison system. Since we began meeting, we have started a penpal program and have been creating these holiday mailings, and have been working on building and deepening our relationships with you. We are really glad to be building community with you, across and beyond prison walls.

We would really love to get your input about how these mailings can be the most supportive to you, and we would also love to include your brilliance and wisdom in future holiday mailings! At the end of this letter, we have included a few forms: a feedback form, so you can let us know what you want to be receiving in these mailings and a penpal interest form, if you would like to sign up to be a penpal. If you have any writing (short essays, reflections, poetry, drawings, etc) related to any of the Jewish holidays or Jewishness in general, please feel welcome and invited to send us your submissions so that they can be included in future mailings.. All of the filled out forms can be sent to us at:

Matir Asurim: Jewish Prisoner Care Network  
PO Box 18858  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Tu B'Shvat is known as the birthday of trees. It is translated to mean the 15th day of Shvat and has been celebrated for 1000's of years, traced back to the time of the temple. Tu B'Shvat invites us into a practice of noticing the subtle shifts taking place all around us. It marks a turning point in the depths of winter—the sap slowly begins to rise in the trees, the daylight stretches just a little bit longer, our focus shifts from deep inside ourselves towards the outside world. Tu B'Shvat welcomes us into a time of softening, of connecting with that which remains unseen to us. Here we are, in the in-between, in holy liminality, a place for us to pause and to honor the slow, gradual changes that grow within us like trees and like forests. May this Tu B'Shvat wrap us in blessings of liberation and justice like the waters that begin to rush as the ice begins to melt.

We are looking forward to connecting with you, and, together, embodying the Jewish value and visioning a world where all are free.

With care,  
all of us at Matir Asurim: Jewish Care Network for Incarcerated People

## WHO WE ARE

**Matir Asurim: Jewish Prisoner Care Network connects Jewish spiritual, cultural, and communal resources to people who have experienced incarceration.<sup>1</sup> We:**

- Offer opportunities for incarcerated Jews and those exploring Judaism to learn Jewish content that reflects the diversity of our people (including race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, ability, religious beliefs and practices, and other aspects of identity);
- Connect incarcerated people, their loved ones, and chaplains with our network and shared resources;
- Provide individual and collective spiritual care, counseling, and prayer services;
- Offer *Divrei Torah* (commentary on the weekly Torah portion), holiday and study resources, instructional videos, music and liturgy recordings, and a pluralistic range of prayer options;
- Facilitate relationship-building between incarcerated people and Jewish communities on the outside through pen-pal correspondence and *chevrutah* (text study partnership)
- Educate ourselves and other Jewish organizations about mass incarceration and how to strengthen our community's support for people who are directly impacted
- Commit to integrating people who have experienced incarceration in our network at all levels of involvement, including the writing of this statement

We are striving toward a world free from oppression, where aspects of social identity like race, class, and gender no longer limit our safety, opportunities, and agency to live into the fullness of our sacred potential. We are striving toward a world where individuals are mutually accountable to one another and where wrongdoing is addressed through reparative and transformative justice, guaranteeing the human dignity of all parties. We are striving toward a world where all people are provided with the conditions for healing trauma and for *teshuvah* (repentance/restoration), surrounded by resources,

guidance, and social support networks. We are striving toward a world where nobody is isolated and everyone has opportunities to connect to something larger than ourselves—whether to community, culture, or spirituality. Within that world, we envision a Judaism that is radically welcoming and accessible to all seekers.

**We believe: Incarceration does not keep our communities healthy and safe.** Mass incarceration disproportionately impacts Black and Indigenous people, people of color, queer and trans people, immigrants, disabled people, and poor and working class people. To fight for a world where prisons are obsolete is to fight all systems of oppression. **Incarceration cuts individuals off from the social, cultural, spiritual, and educational supports they need and deserve as human beings.** While people are incarcerated, those on the outside must ensure they are provided with opportunities to explore their religious traditions as part of the rights and dignities that befit their humanity. **We know that incarcerated people have incredible Torah to share** and are essential members of our Jewish communities. All Jewish communities will be strengthened by creating more connections across prison walls. We believe that people who are directly impacted by mass incarceration are the visionaries and leaders of all anti-carceral work.

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<sup>1</sup> Including but not limited to youth detention, prison, forensic and substance-use treatment facilities, parole, halfway houses, and house arrest.



art by Nellie Kurz

## TU B'SHVAT

*Val Schlosberg*

Tu B'Shvat is often referred to as the “New Year of the Trees” or even the “birthday of the trees.” In the Northern Hemisphere, it corresponds to the time of sap rising, and reminds us that even in the heart of winter, life is always in the process of returning.

But why celebrate the birthday of the trees? Well, aside from the ways that trees literally make each of our breaths possible, always breathing out what we are breathing in and vice versa, in Jewish tradition trees also partner with us to nurture spiritual vitality, too.

Take this saying, from the Midrash (commentary on Torah), Avot d'Rabbi Natan 2:31: **“Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai used to say: If you are holding a sapling in your hands, and someone announces the Messiah’s arrival, plant the sapling! After that, go meet the Messiah.”** So precious are the saplings, that their planting should take precedence even over the meeting of the long-awaited Messiah. To me, this short saying affirms that personal spiritual enlightenment can not come before collective, practical tending of the world in which we live.

This idea is reflected in a famous story from the Talmud, too: **“One day, [a righteous man named Honi] was walking along the road when he saw a certain man planting a carob tree. Honi said to him: This tree, after how many years will it bear fruit? The man said to him: It will not produce fruit until seventy years have passed. Honi said to him: Is it obvious to you that you will live seventy years, that you expect to benefit from this tree? He said to him: That man himself found a world full of carob trees. Just as my ancestors planted for me, I too am planting for my descendants.”** (Taanit 23a: 15) Even though the man planting the carob tree knew he would never see its fruits, he planted the tree in the hopes that just as he himself was able to be born into a world full of carob trees, future generations would benefit from the trees he planted in his lifetime.

In our current context of climate crisis, we can recognize that we and our next generations have inherited great destruction and tragedy from the neglectful choices of recent history, as well as a responsibility to care for the precious ecosystems that still exist. In the fight for climate justice, as well as struggles for justice and liberation more broadly, we recognize that just as those who came before us fought for a more just world for us, not knowing if they would ever see the fruits of their labor, so to can we strive toward a better world, even if the impact of our efforts reach beyond our individual lifetimes.

This Tu B'Shvat, consider the life-sustaining gifts that your ancestors (of blood or other lineage!) “planted” for you. How can you tend these gifts and plant their seeds for the next generation? However small the “sapling” of your gift, or of your dream for the future, know that to let it root in your heart and in your life is the greatest mitzvah!

Chag sameach—may you have a joyful and meaningful holiday!

## YOU ARE A TREE

*Chaplain Julie*

Seeds  
must be planted and nourished  
to grow

Like a tree  
you are planted in this world  
to grow and bear fruit

Spirituality  
the fertile soil that nourishes  
your growth

Taking root  
you are supported  
by the source of the sun and moon

Bearing fruit  
you return the gifts

Abundance is yours

What seeds are you planting now? How will you nourish these seeds so they grow and bear fruit?

## LOVE LETTER ON OAKDALE: A MEDITATION, A SPELL

*mozel o ginsberg*

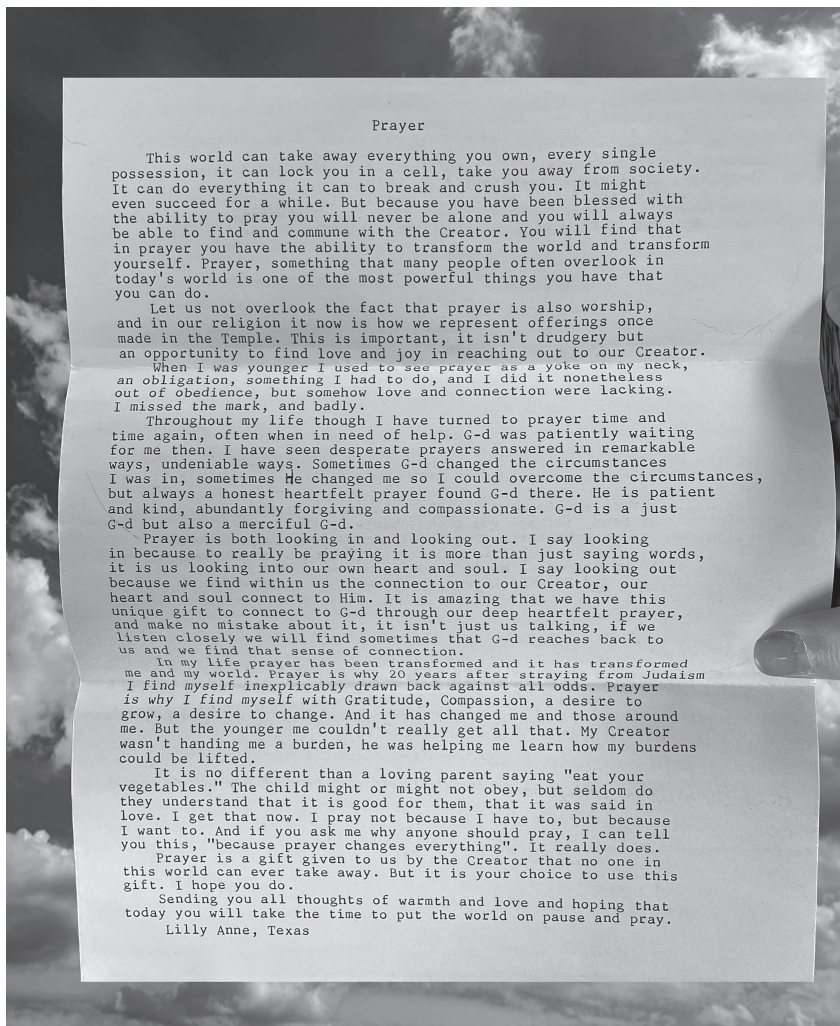
These searing afternoons of winter and collated discontent  
blind multiplicity of mind  
towards  
our infinities;  
see us  
howling polyphonic prayers of  
Bop Kabbalist Hallelujah  
in a periwinkle age of  
Aquarius foraging for comfort in the  
nebulous black eye of Source that  
is as much my Soul as sapphire

stranded

And yet

Let us awaken  
Slowly, as tendrils, dendrolatrous  
Unto earth  
Becoming, becoming, becoming  
Come!  
Beckons the tree  
Become! Become! Become!  
Beneath the tree—a labyrinth  
of deeper time than patience  
and soil  
and root  
and sap  
of wonder, of awe  
unabashed and beloved

a curious symphony of mumbling mycelium  
a sacred hearth of buried star dust  
aching to emerge anew  
again  
and  
again  
and  
again  
and  
again  
blooming broadly and breaking beyond



### Prayer

This world can take away everything you own, every single possession, it can lock you in a cell, take you away from society. It can do everything it can to break and crush you. It might even succeed for a while. But because you have been blessed with the ability to pray you will never be alone and you will always be able to find and commune with the Creator. You will find that in prayer you have the ability to transform the world and transform yourself. Prayer, something that many people often overlook in today's world is one of the most powerful things you have that you can do.

Let us not overlook the fact that prayer is also worship, and in our religion it now is how we represent offerings once made in the Temple. This is important, it isn't drudgery but an opportunity to find love and joy in reaching out to our Creator.

When I was younger I used to see prayer as a yoke on my neck, an obligation, something I had to do, and I did it nonetheless out of obedience, but somehow love and connection were lacking. I missed the mark, and badly.

Throughout my life though I have turned to prayer time and time again, often when in need of help. G-d was patiently waiting for me then. I have seen desperate prayers answered in remarkable ways, undeniable ways. Sometimes G-d changed the circumstances I was in, sometimes He changed me so I could overcome the circumstances, but always a honest heartfelt prayer found G-d there. He is patient and kind, abundantly forgiving and compassionate. G-d is a just G-d but also a merciful G-d.

Prayer is both looking in and looking out. I say looking in because to really be praying it is more than just saying words, it is us looking into our own heart and soul. I say looking out because we find within us the connection to our Creator, our heart and soul connect to Him. It is amazing that we have this unique gift to connect to G-d through our deep heartfelt prayer, and make no mistake about it, it isn't just us talking, if we listen closely we will find sometimes that G-d reaches back to us and we find that sense of connection.

In my life prayer has been transformed and it has transformed me and my world. Prayer is why 20 years after straying from Judaism I find myself inexplicably drawn back against all odds. Prayer is why I find myself with Gratitude, Compassion, a desire to grow, a desire to change. And it has changed me and those around me. But the younger me couldn't really get all that. My Creator wasn't handing me a burden, he was helping me learn how my burdens could be lifted.

It is no different than a loving parent saying "eat your vegetables." The child might or might not obey, but seldom do they understand that it is good for them, that it was said in love. I get that now. I pray not because I have to, but because I want to. And if you ask me why anyone should pray, I can tell you this, "because prayer changes everything". It really does.

Prayer is a gift given to us by the creator that no one in this world can ever take away. But it is your choice to use this gift. I hope you do.

Sending you all thoughts of warmth and love and hoping that today you will take the time to put the world on pause and pray.

Lilly Anne, Texas

## A TU B'SHVAT REFLECTION ON POSSIBILITY AND CERTAINTY

Virginia Avniel Spatz

Tu B'Shvat celebrates fresh possibilities, even though Spring is still a way off in the Northern Hemisphere. The holiday asks us to consider that things happen under ground, things we can't sense directly, which will eventually bring forth new growth. The earth, and much around us, may appear hard and unyielding. But Tu B'Shvat prompts us to entertain new possibilities we cannot yet experience. In recent years, I've found inspiration is an odd, often-overlooked episode in the Book of Genesis...a two verse story about a tree.

Wedged between more famous tales of Genesis are verses less often remarked. Please note, BTW, that this old Jewish story focuses on Abraham alone, not on Sarah or anyone else in the household—I'm leaving these sources as is, with room for more imagination and interpretation... Anyway, late in Gen. Chap 21, Abraham and Abimelech settle as neighbors but dispute over water. The men resolve the conflict with a covenant, and the episode concludes:

Abraham planted an *eshel* in Beer-sheva, and called there on the name of YHVH, "El-Olam," the Everlasting God. Abraham resided in the land of the Philistines for many days. (Gen 21:33-34).

Pausing at this planting offers a little respite and refreshment for Tu B'Shvat and beyond.

The Hebrew word "*eshel*" is unusual in the Bible. It appears only here (Gen 21:33) in the Torah and then twice more in the whole Hebrew Bible (1 Sam 22:6, 1 Sam 31:13). The singularity of the word was an opening for ancient readers' imagination. The Talmud records discussion suggesting "*eshel*" could be an inn, an orchard, or a specific kind of tree, and inventing tales about Abraham's hospitality.



One commentary thread uses the letters of the word, E-Sh-L as an acronym spelling out: food (א/E), drink or lodging (ש/SH), and escort (ל/L): אכילה *akhilah* (food) + שתיה *shetiyah* (drink) or שכילה *shekhivah* (repose, place to lodge) + לוייה *levayah* (escort). A related suggestion rearranges the letters to ,ל-א-ש , forming the word “*sha-al*, to ask.” Abraham would ask visitors what they desired and offer it to them at this “*eshel*.”

The noun, “*eshel*,” is related to an older root, “[eish] = fire,” and to verbs meaning “to glitter, be polished” and “to be thick, substantial; to be pressed, dark; to make firm, found.”



...For centuries, teachers wondered and argued about this word. Teachers' ideas reflected their realities, ways that Jews related to non-Jewish neighbors, for example. Eventually, some scholars decided “*eshel*” was a particular kind of tree, and much of the mystery and imagination left the way this verse was discussed—a warning, perhaps, that possibility does not thrive where there is too much certainty...

The Babylonian Talmud relates: After guests enjoyed and tried to thank him, Abraham would suggest they “thank and praise and bless the One Who spoke and the world was created” (Sotah 10a). The text doesn't mention whether Abraham insisted, or if hospitality continued for folks who didn't share his theology. Still, somewhere at the root of “*eshel*,” and this one-verse Genesis episode, is “glitter” of a welcoming sit—tent, inn, or shade tree(s)—where hospitality calls to glitter of passers-by, offering space for folks to pause, rest, refresh, and (if so moved, I personally imagine) call out to the divine eternal in individuals, the collective, and the created world...and the fiery, glittery, well-established and sturdy roots of it all.

May a few moments with trees, and odd, uncertain tales, bring fresh growth to all.

## TU B'SHVAT INSTALLMENT OF THE ADVENTURES OF FELONIOUS MONK

*Dina-Hasida Mercy*

Felonious Monk is celebrating Tu B'Shvat with a (daydream) hike in the Holyland! He is resting against an olive tree that is hundreds of years old. He reflects on how peaceful it is here with an ancient symbol of peace (remember the dove and the olive branch from the story of Noah?). He says a quiet prayer asking peace for all the inhabitants of this much-loved corner of the earth before taking up the trail again.



Note added 5785: This fanciful creature is **unrelated to comedian Felonious Munk**, whose projects include Beyond Bars Podcast

## THE BEREZE PROJECT

Dvoyre R

*The Bereze Project is a play that explores rootedness; where and how we plant ourselves and trees. The inspiration for Bereze (birch in yiddish) was a trip to northern Wisconsin where an Ojibwe radio station (WOJB) DJ shared that if listeners were having a hard time, to think about what those who came before us would want. I sensed that my bubbe (grandma) would've wanted me to plant a tree for her, but I also knew that the Jewish National Fund (where she'd sent donations) was deeply responsible for displacing and uprooting Palestinian people and olive trees. I looked around and realized I was surrounded by birch trees (and that there had also been many birch in the area where my bubbe had grown up—present day Belarus). In 2017, I had the chance to visit her former shtetl (town) and some of the trees there. More than five years later, I'm still wrestling with questions of how to best honor my ancestors, and build solidarity in the present, especially around indigenous sovereignty here on Turtle Island (North America) and in Palestine.*

### Opening Scene

**D:** I'm on Ojibwe land. Surrounded by hundreds of birch, *bereze* in yiddish, their thin skin everywhere. The tribal radio's DJ reminds listeners to think on what our ancestors would want. No question, Fannie, my *bobe*, would want another tree. Adding to her JNF *pushke*, dreaming of saplings, saving enough to plant them. When I turned five, she framed a colorful certificate announcing one rooted in my honor. Her own fifth birthday spent near northern *bereze* forests in Starobin, along the Slutsk river.

**R:** The stories about birch bark, *wiigwaas* in Ojibwe; how it got its marks and what is protected beneath its skin, were sometimes written upon their subject. *Wiigwaasbakoon*, the scrolls, were filled with markings made by people's teeth. Some of these scrolls were just returned, 275 years later, to their people.



**D:** The massive book containing some 300 years of burial records (including Fannie's *zayde* Lazar), for the cemetery along the Slutsk river was smuggled out during the war. I depart Turtle Island with Lazar's burial coordinates folded inside my passport.

**E:** Birch have simple leaves with toothed edges called margins. They often appear in pairs, but are really borne on spur-like, two-leaved, lateral branchlets.

**D:** In Starobin, locals explain that a new town was built after the war to house potash miners and that they'd made sure to give it a name that wouldn't sound Jewish. We speed past miles of blurred white trunks; so many *bereze* on the bus from the Minsk airport. During the war, some 10,000 Jewish people in and around the city fled to these forests.

**R:** When the Israelis seize land, Palestinians head out to plant olive seedlings, because land with fruit trees isn't confiscated quite as often. The JNF has planted over 240 million trees; mostly pine that grow over the ruins of Palestinian villages. The Knesset debated whether to put up markers with the

Arabic place names for destroyed towns. No one disputed the destruction; the disagreement was whether to interrupt enjoyable hikes with such reminders.

**D:** We were always searching, in Belarus & Poland, for traces. Was that half of a faint Jewish star on a gate? Part of a well described in a memorial book? A few trees were clues themselves, but more often, they stood where other things used to.

**E:** Due to efficient seed propagation, birch trees often act as colonizers.

**R:** In 1921, the census of the land now considered Belarus, listed Tuteshi as an ethnicity. Checking that box meant that you understood yourself to be of these forests, with no other allegiances.

**D:** Some Tuteshi grandchildren, fleeing bombs and bayonets would, like my *bobe*, cram themselves into the steerage of ships, sniffing pine needles at the bottom of their bags when the stench got too strong. Finding their way to different northern forests where their Ojibwe cousins were inventoried as bounty.

**R:** The Treaty of Detroit was signed in 1807, between the US and four nations; the Odawa, Ojibwe, Wyandot and Potawatomi. Millions of mostly forested acres were stolen, and the people forced to move. Such legalities were often signed under 'treaty trees,' including one in Gross Isle, fifteen miles from Fannie's new home.

**E:** They are also considered enhancers of biodiversity, and contribute to forest resilience.

**D:** We stayed away from the Boreal edges now laced with post-Chernobyl radiation. Canopies that half sheltered partisans and dybbuks turned loose from lightning strikes through the midline of trunks.

**R:** There's a cypress tree stump in Israel enclosed in glass and reinforced with steel bars. Planted by Herzl in 1898 and chopped down in 1915. Zionists kept moving it, but have now determined that permanent armor is its best protection.

**D:** An old man took me to a house where people with Fannie's last name had lived. Turns out it's now the state forestry office. A tree, he reminded me, is not a forest. It's at the mercy of the wind and weather. But a bunch of trees together; these could gird each other.

**E:** As the interior of a tree grows, its outer bark begins to crack and peel. For those with exfoliating bark like birch, it's easier to observe.

# 2022 MATIR ASURIM YEAR IN REVIEW

January 15th, 2023

Dear friends,

Matir Asurim is celebrating two years together. In December, members wrote up a year in review, so that we could see all that happened in 2022. This helps us celebrate, learn from our mistakes, and plan for the future. As always, we welcome your input and feedback: what should we be doing more or less of, prioritizing in the year to come?

With gratitude,

The Matir Asurim team

## Organization

- Conversations about disability, *chevruta*, *kashrut*, *machloket* (sacred dispute) and more
- Did deep thinking about ways to have inside leadership, pilot proposal & project of inside leadership including sending meeting minutes to folks inside
- Had our first intern! Did teach in with other *T'ruah* rabbinic interns
- We had folks take breaks and come back
- Many new & returning members in core organizing

## Penpals

- Held five penpal trainings & matching processes this year
- Held two stand-alone card-making events (RH and Hanukkah)
- 36 current penpal relationships
- Lots of checking in around penpal relationships in our network. Laid the groundwork for thinking about conflict in penpal relationships. Had some penpal break ups
- Office hours for penpals at the beginning of the year
- Penpals are reading books together

## Jewish resources

- Newsletters have gone out on all the festivals! Reaching SO many people! Spread around through chaplains and networks
- Sent 7 holiday mailers to 61 inside community members! With fancy layouts!
- Resource team began planning and compiling additional resources outside of holiday mailings including a *Guide for Daily Prayer* and a *How to Advocate for Kosher Food* inside prisons resource
- Began strategizing about how to ensure our mailings make it through the prison mailrooms, creating a plan to call all prison mailrooms every 3 months
- Published 3 powerful pieces of Torah from inside community members in the holiday mailings
- Members lead services in prisons; connected people with opportunities to lead davening inside
- Had a lot of mail returned
- Had a successful phone call with a prison chaplain in Ohio and sent Jewish books

## Communications

- Started email newsletter with 233 subscribers
- Have 1200 followers on instagram
- Got interviewed for two articles in progress (Sojourners and Jewish Currents)

## Membership & Wellness team began!

- Hosted two public political education events: Torah of Abolition on Shavuot, and Jewish Traditions of Mutual Aid. Hundreds of people attended events
- Made an internal collective political education skill building plan and facilitated two months of collective learning and made a plan for the coming year
- 101 people filled out our volunteer interest form, did about 25 one on one conversations
- Created more resources to smooth onboarding

## MATIR ASURIM “SHUTIM”

### Relationships ~ Partnerships ~ new friends

- Did many 1:1s with folks at other orgs to learn about inside/outside structures
- Flying Over Walls (Bay area chapter of Black and Pink), Sick of it (NYC), Essie Justice Project (Oakland), Drop Life Without Parole (Boston, MA)
- Text study with Masjid al Rabia (a queer mosque in Chicago) between penpal programs
- Partnered with Hadar, second year of summer students compiling resources

### Fundraising

First year we did fundraising! And had a fundraising team! And got donations!

- Total non-grant fundraising for 2022: \$9045.42!
- Donations from over 120 people!
- Current recurring donors: 5
- Jewish Zine Archive organized a fundraiser for us. We split our Mutual Aid fundraising event \$ with Trans Asylum Seekers Network and supporting a Matir Asurim member to take a paralegal class
- Got our first grant!!!
- Total fundraising for this year should exceed 11k

“*Shutim*” is a new column in Matir Asurim mailings that responds to a question that folks inside are asking about how to do Jewish practices that draw from historical precedent and collective wisdom.

“*Shutim*” means questions and answers—an acronym for ‘*she'eilot*’ and ‘*teshuvot*,’ which has been traditionally a method of Jewish conversation where people send letters to other communities and teachers in order to get advice for how to do Jewish practices in unprecedented situations.

Historically “*Shutim*” have at times reinforced power dynamics between far-away leaders and teachers as “experts” in contrast to the people posing questions who are seeking answers. We are looking to subvert this dynamic and draw upon knowledge from the resources that we all have access to, including experiences of folks who are currently or formerly incarcerated as well as drawing on the wisdom of Jewish texts.

We will be answering questions that we have received from our incarcerated community members.

**Question: Can you recite “*Ha-motzi*”, the blessing for bread before you eat, if you do not have access to challah or bread? (For example, over noodles or crackers?)**

What have *you* done in this situation?

Write your answer to:

Matir Asurim: Jewish Prisoner Care Network,  
PO Box 18858  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

(Please indicate if you have access to JPAY and we will add you to our contacts, for a faster exchange) and we’ll include your answer (“teshuva”) when we explore this question in our next mailing.

***All responses needed by February 13th.***

**Have a question you’d like to pose to the Matir Asurim “*Shutim*” column?**

Write to us at the above address. (Please indicate if you have access to JPAY and we will add you to our contacts, for a faster exchange).

## Help us name this Newsletter!

We have been creating this mailing for nearly 2 years now! Through the mailing we have studied together, prayed together, dreamed, celebrated, grieved, and transformed together. Now the time has come for us to give this newsletter an official name! As always, we would love your feedback!

**Vote on the name for Matir Asurim's newsletter!**

Write your answer to:

Matir Asurim: Jewish Prisoner Care Network  
PO Box 18858  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

**ALL VOTES NEED TO BE RECEIVED  
BY MAR 15 AT THE LATEST.**

Let us know your choice from the list below:

- **Eit Ratzon** (Hebrew for "the time/season of our desire")
- **Taste of Manna** (manna is the magical unknowable substance that G-d fed the Jewish people while they wandered the desert for 40 years)
- **Makor** (meaning, "the source")
- **From the Fringes**
- **The Word**
- **The Scroll**
- **D'ror Yikra** ("he shall proclaim freedom")  
or **D'ror Yikar** (sweet freedom)



**We would love to include your  
voices, ideas, dreams, artwork  
and your brilliant Torah in  
upcoming newsletters.**

### UPCOMING DATES & DEADLINES

please send contributions by the following dates

**PURIM: FEB 13, 2023**

**PESACH: MAR 15, 2023**

**SHAVUOT: MAY 4, 2023**

You can also send us writing that is  
not directly related to the Holidays!



Submissions can be sent to  
Matir Asurim: Jewish Prisoner Care Network  
PO Box 18858  
Philadelphia, PA 19143